

# Pittsburg ISD Junior High Student Handbook

## 2024-2025



*If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of disability, please contact the district at 903-856-3628.*

**Note:** *School board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit [www.pittsburgisd.net](http://www.pittsburgisd.net). Below is the text of PISD's policy FFI(LOCAL) as of the date this handbook was finalized for this school year.*

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## **Pittsburg Independent School District**

402 Broach Street  
Pittsburg, Texas 75686  
Phone: 903-856-3628  
<http://www.pittsburgisd.net>

### ***Board of Trustees***

**Greg Miller**  
President

**Christian Yantis**  
Vice President

**Ricky Parker**  
Secretary

**Bryan Berry**

**Vernon Rowe**

**Linsey Harwell**

**Mario Willis**

### ***Administration***

**Terry Waldrep**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Beth Anne Dunavant**  
Deputy Superintendent

**Jonathan Hill**  
Assistant Superintendent

**Kristanne Moore**  
Assistant Superintendent

### ***Pittsburg Independent School District Mission Statement***

Pittsburg ISD, in partnership with our community, will empower each student to make the most of his or her abilities through a safe, nurturing, and challenging educational environment.

### ***District Goals***

- Expect and promote high achievement for all students.
- Attract and retain highly qualified personnel.
- Provide a safe, secure and healthy educational environment.
- Develop programs and services to promote parent/community involvement.

**Campus Administration**

**Pittsburg Junior High School**

313 Broach St.  
Pittsburg, Texas 75686  
Phone: 903-856-6432  
Fax: 903-855-3357  
<http://www.pittsburgisd.net>

*Administration*

*Principal*

**Jennifer Styles**

*Assistant Principal*

**Luke MacBeath**

*Special Programs Coordinator*

**Johnna Owen**

**Counselor**

**Stacey Stuard**

*Security Officer*

*Office Personnel*

**Shannara Hashaway**

**Beatriz de la Rosa**

**Presleigh Wetzel**

Principal's Secretary

PEIMS Clerk

Receptionist

## **Campus Information and Requirements**

### *Schedules and Calendars*

**School Opening/Closing Information:** The buildings will be open at 7:30 a.m. for students. Students are not permitted in the buildings before this time unless they have permission from a teacher or administrator.

No student should arrive on campus prior to 7:30 a.m. Upon arrival, students should report to their first period class. Students must leave campus immediately after classes are dismissed for the day. All students not participating in after school activities should leave campus by 3:30 p.m.

**Office Hours:** The office hours for Pittsburg Junior High School are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**School Day Schedule:** For attendance purposes, the school day is from 7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. All students are required to be regular and punctual in their attendance.

**Calendar of School Events:** To prevent program conflicts during the year, it is necessary that all activities be scheduled on the activity calendar in the Principal's office at the beginning of the school year or as soon thereafter as possible. The sponsor of the respective group is responsible for setting the date on the calendar.

The Calendar of School Events may be accessed at <http://www.pittsburgisd.net> by choosing District Calendars, then Pittsburg Junior High School Calendar from the menu.

## **Preface Parents and Students:**

Welcome to the new school year!

Education is a team effort. Students, parents, teachers, and other staff members working together will make this a successful year.

The Pittsburg Jr. High School Student Handbook is a general reference guide that is divided into two sections:

**Section One: Parental Rights** describes certain parental rights as specified in state or federal law.

**Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students** is organized alphabetically by topic. Where applicable, the topics are further organized by grade level.

**Note:** Unless otherwise noted, the term “parent” refers to the parent, legal guardian, any person granted some other type of lawful control of a student, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The Student Handbook is designed to align with law, board-adopted policy, and the Student Code of Conduct, a board-adopted document intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. The Student Handbook is not meant to be a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules in any given circumstance.

In case of conflicts between board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any Student Handbook provision, the district will follow board policy and the Student Code of Conduct.

Therefore, parents and students should become familiar with the Pittsburg ISD Student Code of Conduct. To review the Code of Conduct, visit the district’s website at [https://www.pittsburgisd.net/321121\\_2](https://www.pittsburgisd.net/321121_2). State law requires that the Code of Conduct be prominently displayed or made available for review at each campus.

The Student Handbook is updated annually; however, policy adoption and revisions may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed policy changes by attending board meetings and reviewing communications explaining changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions. The district reserves the right to modify the Student Handbook at any time. Notice of revisions will be provided as is reasonably practical.

Although the Student Handbook may refer to rights established through law or district policy, it does not create additional rights for parents and students. It does not, nor is it intended to, represent a contract between any parent or student and the district.

A hard copy of either the Student Code of Conduct or Student Handbook can be requested at the main office of each campus.

**Note:** References to board policy codes are included for ease of reference. The hard copy of the district’s official policy manual is available for review in the district administration office, and an unofficial electronic copy is available at <https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline?key=264>.



The policy manual includes:

- Legally referenced (LEGAL) policies that contain provisions from federal and state laws and regulations, case law, and other legal authorities that provide the legal framework for school districts.
- Board-adopted (LOCAL) policies that articulate the board's choices and values regarding district practices.

For questions about the material in this handbook, please contact:

Jennifer Styles

Principal Pittsburg Jr. High

The following forms were completed during the online registration process.

- Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of Student Handbook],
- Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information,
- Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education (if you choose to restrict the release of information to these entities), and
- Consent/Opt-Out Form for participation in third-party surveys.

[See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 10 and **Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey** on page 11 for more information.]

If you have difficulty accessing this handbook because of a disability, please contact:

Jennifer Styles

Principal Pittsburg Jr. High

## **Section One: Parental Rights**

This section describes certain parental rights as specified in state or federal law.

### **Consent, Opt-Out, and Refusal Rights**

#### **Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation**

Unless required under state or federal law, a district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without obtaining prior written parental consent.

**Note:** An evaluation may be legally required under special education rules or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

#### **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking**

Before a student receives instruction on the prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence and sex trafficking, the district must obtain written consent from the student's parent. Parents will be sent a request for written consent at least 14 days before the instruction will begin.

##### **Annual Notification**

Students receive instruction related to the prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) makes Page 6 recommendations for curriculum materials, and the school board adopts the materials and determines the specific content of the instruction. For further information, see the district's abuse prevention instruction website at [www.pittsburgisd.net](http://www.pittsburgisd.net)

In accordance with state law, a parent may:

- Review, receive a copy of, or purchase a copy of curriculum materials depending on the copyright of the materials. As required by law, any curriculum materials in the public domain used in this instruction will be posted on the district's website at the location indicated above.
- Remove his or her child from any part of this instruction without academic, disciplinary, or other penalties.
- Become involved in the development of this curriculum by becoming a member of the district's SHAC or attending SHAC meetings. (See the campus principal for details.)
- Use the district's grievance procedure concerning a complaint. See Complaints and Concerns on page 39 and policy FNG for information on the grievance and appeals process.
- [See **Dating Violence on page 46; and Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children on page 33**]

#### **Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service**

The district will not provide a mental health care service to a student or conduct a medical screening of a student as part of the district's intervention procedures except as permitted by law.

The district has established procedures for recommending to a parent an intervention for a student with early warning signs of mental health concerns, substance abuse, or suicide risk.

The district's mental health liaison will notify the student's parent within a reasonable amount of time after the liaison learns that a student has displayed early warning signs and provide information about available counseling options.

The district has also established procedures for staff to notify the mental health liaison regarding a student who may need intervention.

The Mental health liaison for the Jr. High School is:

*Sonya Hall*

*Counselor*

*Shall@pittsburgisd.net*

The mental health liaison can provide further information regarding these procedures as well as curriculum materials on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment or support on and off campus, and accessing available student accommodations provided on campus.

#### **Consent to Display a Student's Original Works and Personal Information**

Teachers may display a student's work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement without seeking prior parental consent. These displays may include personally identifiable student information. Student work includes:

- Artwork
- Special projects
- Photographs
- Original videos or voice recordings
- Other original works

However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying a student's work on the district's website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the district (such as a campus or classroom website), or in district publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods of mass communication.

#### **Consent to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction if a Student is Under Age 14**

A student under age 14 must have parental permission to participate in the district's [Parenting and Paternity Awareness Program](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/child-support/programs-and-initiatives/parenting-and-paternity-awareness-papa/papa-educators/papa-curriculum) (<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/child-support/programs-and-initiatives/parenting-and-paternity-awareness-papa/papa-educators/papa-curriculum>). This program was developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE) to be incorporated into health education classes.

#### **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student when Not Already Permitted by Law**

State law permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission when it:

- Is to be used for school safety,
- Relates to classroom instruction or a cocurricular or extracurricular activity,
- Relates to media coverage of the school, or

- Relates to the promotion of student safety as provided by law for a student receiving special education services in certain settings.

In other circumstances, the district will seek written parental consent before making a video or voice recording of a student.

Please note that parents and visitors to a classroom, both virtual and in person, may not record video or audio or take photographs or other still images without permission from the teacher or other school official.

### **Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment — spanking or paddling a student — may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and district policy FO(LOCAL).

However, in accordance with law, the district may not administer corporal punishment if a student's parent submits a signed, written statement prohibiting its use.

A parent who does not want corporal punishment administered to his or her child must complete the online form during the annual registration process. This signed statement must be submitted each school year. A parent may revoke this prohibition at any time during the school year by providing a signed statement to the campus principal.

#### **Note:**

- District personnel may use discipline methods other than corporal punishment if a parent requests that corporal punishment not be used.
- If the district knows that a student is in temporary or permanent custody of the state (through foster care, kinship care, or other arrangements), corporal punishment will not be administered, even when the student's caregiver or caseworker has not submitted a signed statement prohibiting its use.

### **Limiting Electronic Communications between Students and District Employees**

The district permits teachers and other approved employees to use electronic communications with students within the scope of professional responsibilities, as described by district guidelines.

For example, a teacher may create a social networking page for his or her class to relay information regarding class work, homework, and tests. A parent is welcome to access such a page.

However, text messages sent to an individual student are only allowed if a district employee with responsibility for an extracurricular activity must communicate with a student participating in that activity.

The employee is required to include the student's parent as a recipient on all text messages.

The employee is required to include his or her immediate supervisor and the student's parent as recipients on all text messages.

The employee is required to send a copy of the text message to the employee's district email address.

A parent who does not want his or her child to receive one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee should contact the campus principal.

## Objecting to the Release of Directory Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, permits the district to disclose appropriately designated “directory information” from a student’s education records without written consent.

“Directory information” is information that, if released, is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy. Examples include:

- A student’s photograph (for publication in the school yearbook)
- A student’s name and grade level (for communicating class and teacher assignments)
- The name, weight, and height of an athlete (for publication in a school athletic program)
- A list of student birthdays (for generating schoolwide or classroom recognition)
- A student’s name and photograph (posted on a district-approved and -managed social media platform)
- The names and grade levels of students submitted by the district to a local newspaper or other community publication (to recognize the A/B honor roll for a specific grading period)

Directory information will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of this information. Any objection must be made in writing to the principal or during online registration<sup>1</sup>. [See **Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent’s Response Regarding Release of Student Information**, included in the forms packet.]

The district requests that families living in a shelter for survivors of family violence or trafficking notify district personnel that the student currently resides in such a shelter. Families may want to opt out of the release of directory information so that the district does not release any information that might reveal the location of such a shelter.

As allowed by state law, the district has identified two directory information lists — one for school-sponsored purposes and a second for all other requests.

For the following school-sponsored purposes—all District publications and announcements—directory information shall include student name; photograph; date of birth; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; grade level; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; and enrollment status.

If a parent does not object to the use of his or her child’s information for these school-sponsored purposes, the school will not ask permission each time the district wants to use the information for these purposes.

If a parent does not object to the use of the student’s information for these purposes, the school **must** release this information when requested by an outside entity or individual.

The district has identified the following as directory information. If a parent objects to the release of the student’s information included on the directory information response form, this objection also applies to the use of that information for school-sponsored purposes, such as:

- Honor roll
- School newspaper
- Yearbook
- Recognition activities

- News releases
- Athletic programs

**Note:** Also see **Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records** on page 15.

#### **Objecting to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

Unless a parent has advised the district not to release his or her student's information, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires the district to comply with requests from military recruiters or institutions of higher education to provide the following information about students:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone listing

Military recruiters may also have access to a student's district-provided email address, unless a parent has advised the district not to release this information.

#### **Participation in Third-Party Surveys**

##### ***Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey***

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) provides parents certain rights regarding participation in surveys, the collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.

A parent has the right to consent before a student is required to submit to a survey funded by the U.S. Department of Education that concerns any of the following protected areas:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family
- Sex behavior or attitudes
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, and ministers
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility for a program

A parent may inspect the survey or other instrument and any corresponding instructional materials used in connection with such a survey. [See policy EF(LEGAL) for more information.]

##### ***"Opting Out" of Participation in Other Types of Surveys or Screenings and the Disclosure of Personal Information***

The PPRA gives parents the right to receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

- Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from the child for the purpose of marketing, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information to others.

- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student.

Exceptions are hearing, vision, or spinal screenings, or any physical examination or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA for more information.]

A parent may inspect:

- Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes
- Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

The ED provides extensive information about the [Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/protection-pupil-rights-amendment-ppra-general-guidance) (<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/protection-pupil-rights-amendment-ppra-general-guidance>), including a [PPRA Complaint Form](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint) (<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint>).

### **Removing a Student from Instruction or Excusing a Student from a Required Component of Instruction**

See **Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 7 and **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking** on page 7 for information on a parent's right to remove a student from such instruction.

### **Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence in Grades 3-12**

State law designates the week of September 17 as Celebrate Freedom Week and requires all social studies classes to provide the following:

- Instruction concerning the intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution
- A specific recitation from the Declaration of Independence for students in grades 3-12.

Per state law, a student may be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence if any of the following apply:

- A parent provides a written statement requesting that his or her child be excused.
- The district determines that the student has a conscientious objection to the recitation.
- A parent is a representative of a foreign government to whom the U.S. government extends diplomatic immunity.

[See policy EHBK(LEGAL) for more information.]

### **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags**

A parent may request that his or her child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be made in writing.

State law, however, requires that all students participate in one minute of silence following recitation of the pledges.

[See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** on page 83 and policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.]

### **Religious or Moral Beliefs**

A parent may remove his or her child temporarily from the classroom if a scheduled instructional activity conflicts with the parent's religious or moral beliefs.

The removal may not be used to avoid a test and may not extend for an entire semester. The student must also satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by state law.

### **Tutoring or Test Preparation**

A teacher may determine that a student needs additional targeted assistance for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills based on:

- Informal observations
- Evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests
- Results from diagnostic assessments

The school will always attempt to provide tutoring and strategies for test-taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible.

In accordance with state law and policy EC, districts must obtain parental permission before removing a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the days the class is offered.

If a district offers tutorial services to students, state law requires a student with a grade below 70 for a reporting period to attend.

[For questions about school-provided tutoring programs, contact the student's teacher and see policies EC and EHBC. See **Required State Assessments** on page 85 for information regarding required accelerated instruction after a student fails to perform satisfactorily on certain state-mandated tests.]

### **Right of Access to Student Records, Curriculum Materials, and District Records/Policies**

#### **Parent Review of Instructional Materials**

A parent has the right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered, whether instruction is delivered in-person, virtually, or remotely.

The district will make instructional materials available for parent review no later than 30 days before the school year begins and for at least 30 days after the school year ends. However, tests that have not yet been administered will not be made available for parent examination.

The district will provide login credentials to each student's parent for any learning management system or online learning portal used in instruction to facilitate parent access and review.

A parent is also entitled to request that the school allow the student to take home instructional materials the student uses. The school may ask the student to return the materials at the beginning of the next school day.

A school must provide printed versions of electronic instructional materials to a student if the student does not have reliable access to technology at home.



### **District Review of Instructional Materials**

A parent may request that the district conduct an instructional material review in a math, English Language Arts, science, or social studies class in which the parent's student is enrolled to determine alignment with state standards and the level of rigor for the grade level.

The district is not required to conduct an instructional material review for a specific subject area or grade level at a specific campus more than once per school year.

For more information about requesting an instructional material review, contact the campus principal.

### **Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent**

A noncustodial parent may request in writing that he or she be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to his or her child's misconduct that may involve placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) or expulsion. [See the Student Code of Conduct and policy FO(LEGAL) for more information.]

### **Participation in Federally Required, State-Mandated, and District Assessments**

In accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a parent may request information regarding any federal, state, or district policy related to his or her child's participation in required assessments.

### **Student Records**

#### ***Accessing Student Records***

A parent may review his or her child's records. These records include:

- Attendance records
- Test scores
- Grades
- Disciplinary records
- Counseling records
- Psychological records
- Applications for admission
- Health and immunization information
- Other medical records
- Teacher and school counselor evaluations
- Reports of behavioral patterns
- Records relating to assistance provided for learning difficulties, including information collected regarding any intervention strategies used with the child, as the term "intervention strategy" is defined by law
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to the child
- Teaching materials and tests used in the child's classroom

### ***Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records***

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and eligible students certain rights regarding student education records.

For purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is anyone age 18 or older or who attends a postsecondary educational institution. These rights, as discussed here and at **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 10, are the right to:

- Inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.
- Request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA.
- Provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student’s records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- [File a complaint](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint) (<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint>) with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements.

Both FERPA and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy.

Before disclosing personally identifiable information from a student’s records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information.

Virtually all information pertaining to student performance — including grades, test results, and disciplinary records — is considered confidential educational records.

Inspection and release of student records is restricted to an eligible student or a student’s parent unless the school receives a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student’s education records. A parent’s rights regarding access to student records are not affected by the parent’s marital status.

Federal law requires that control of the records goes to the student as soon as the student:

- Reaches the age of 18;
- Is emancipated by a court; or
- Enrolls in a postsecondary educational institution.

However, the parent may continue to have access to the records if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and, under limited circumstances, when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student’s education records without written consent of the parent or eligible student when school officials have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records.

Legitimate educational interest may include:

- Working with the student
- Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student’s case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities
- Compiling statistical data

- Reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility
- Investigating or evaluating programs

School officials may include:

- Board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals
- Teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or medical staff)
- A person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a specific institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer)
- A person appointed to serve on a team to support the district's safe and supportive school program
- A parent or student serving on a school committee
- A parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties

FERPA also permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information without written consent:

- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, the Texas Education Agency, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or, in certain cases, other child welfare representatives.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, district/system, or postsecondary educational institution to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which the student already is enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses directory information-designated details. [See **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** on page 10 to prohibit this disclosure.]

Release of personally identifiable information to any other person or agency — such as a prospective employer or for a scholarship application — will occur only with parental or student permission as appropriate.

The *Registrar* is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The *Registrar* is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated.

A parent or eligible student who wants to inspect the student's records should submit a written request to the custodian of records identifying the records he or she wants to inspect.

Records may be reviewed in person during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will be available to explain the record and to answer questions.

A parent or eligible student who submits a written request and pays copying costs of ten cents per page may obtain copies. If circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review the records.

You may contact the custodian of records for currently enrolled students at:

*Beatriz Delarosa*

*Registrar*

313 Broach st, Pittsburg, TX 75686

[Bdelarosa@pittsburgisd.net](mailto:Bdelarosa@pittsburgisd.net)

903-856-6432

A parent or eligible student may inspect the student's records and request a correction or amendment if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights.

A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the appropriate custodian of records. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If after the hearing the records are not amended, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to place a statement in the student's record.

Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course or on an examination is handled through the complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a teacher can be changed only if the board of trustees determines that the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading guidelines.

[See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 87, **Complaints and Concerns** on page 39, and Finality of Grades at policy FNG(LEGAL).]

The district's student records policy is found at policy FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) and is available at the principal's or superintendent's office or on the district's website at [www.pittsburgisd.net](http://www.pittsburgisd.net).

**Note:** The parent's or eligible student's right of access to and copies of student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records — such as a teacher's personal notes about a student shared only with a substitute teacher — do not have to be made available.

#### **Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications**

A parent may request information regarding the professional qualifications of his or her child's teachers, including whether the teacher:

- Has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and

- Is currently teaching in the field or discipline of his or her certification.

The parent also has the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to the child.

## **A Student with Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances**

### **Children of Military Families**

[The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children](https://www.dodea.edu/partnership/interstatecompact.cfm) (<https://www.dodea.edu/partnership/interstatecompact.cfm>) entitles children of military families to flexibility regarding certain district and state requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities
- Enrollment in the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN)
- Graduation requirements

The district will excuse absences related to a student visiting a parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who is:

- Called to active duty
- On leave
- Returning from a deployment of at least four months

The district will permit **no more than five** excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

Additional information may be found at [Military Family Resources at the Texas Education Agency](https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/military-family-resources) (<https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/military-family-resources>).

### **Parental Role in Certain Classroom and School Assignments**

#### ***Multiple-Birth Siblings***

State law permits a parent of multiple-birth siblings (for example, twins, triplets) assigned to the same grade and campus to request in writing that the children be placed in either the same classroom or separate classrooms.

Written requests must be submitted by the 14th day after the students' enrollment. [See policy FDB(LEGAL) for more information.]

#### ***Safety Transfers/Assignments***

The board or its designee will honor a parent's request to transfer his or her child to another classroom or campus if the district has determined that the child has been a victim of bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by Education Code 37.0832.

The board may transfer a student who has engaged in bullying to another classroom. The board will consult with the parent of a child who has engaged in bullying before deciding to transfer the child to another campus.

Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the superintendent for more information.

The district will honor a parent's request for the transfer of his or her child to a safe public school in the district if the child attends a school identified by the Texas Education Agency as persistently dangerous or if the child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds.

The board will honor a parent's request for the transfer of his or her child to a neighboring district if the child has been the victim of sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether the assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for the assault. In accordance with policy FDE, if the victim does not wish to transfer, the board will transfer the assailant.

#### **Student Use of a Service/Assistance Animal**

A parent of a student who uses a service/assistance animal because of the student's disability must submit a written request to the principal before bringing the service/assistance animal on campus. The district will try to accommodate a request as soon as possible but will do so within ten district business days.

#### **A Student in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)**

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district will provide enrollment and registration assistance, as well as other educational services throughout the student's enrollment, to any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state, sometimes referred to as substitute care).

A student in the conservatorship (custody) of the state who enrolls in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year.

The district will assess the student's available records to determine transfer of credit for subjects and courses taken before the student's enrollment in the district.

The district will award partial course credit when the student only passes one half of a two-half course. [For provisions on partial course credit for students who are not in the conservatorship of the state, see EI(LOCAL).]

A student in the conservatorship of the state who is moved outside the district's or school's attendance boundaries — or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state and moved outside the district's or school's boundaries — is entitled to remain at the school the student was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest grade level at that particular school.

If a student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets its graduation criteria.

For a student in the conservatorship of the state who is eligible for a tuition and fee exemption under state law and likely to be in care on the day preceding the student's 18th birthday, the district will:

- Assist the student with the completion of applications for admission or financial aid.
- Arrange and accompany the student on campus visits.

- Assist in researching and applying for private or institution-sponsored scholarships.
- Identify whether the student is a candidate for appointment to a military academy.
- Assist the student in registering and preparing for college entrance examinations, including (subject to the availability of funds) arranging for the payment of examination fees by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).
- Coordinate contact between the student and a liaison officer for students formerly in the conservatorship of the state.

If you have questions, please contact the district's foster care liaison:

*Terri Werth*

*Information Service and Support*

*402 Broach St.*

*Pittsburg, TX 75686*

[twerth@pittsburgisd.net](mailto:twerth@pittsburgisd.net)

*(903) 856-3628*

[See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration** on page 47.]

#### **A Student Who Is Homeless**

A parent is encouraged to inform the district if his or her child is experiencing homelessness. District staff can share resources that may be able to assist families.

A student who is homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain district provisions, including:

- Proof of residency requirements
- Immunization requirements
- Educational program placement (if the student is unable to provide previous academic records or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness)
- Credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year (if the student enrolled in the district after the beginning of the school year), per State Board of Education (SBOE) rules
- Assessment of the student's available records to determine transfer of credit for subjects and courses taken before the student's enrollment in the district
- Awarding partial credit when a student passes only one half of a two-half course
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities
- Graduation requirements

Federal law allows a student who is homeless to remain enrolled in the "school of origin" or to enroll in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing.

If a student who is homeless in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, state law allows the student to request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied by the district's eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL). The district will expedite local timelines, when possible, for prompt dispute resolution.

For more information on services for students who are homeless, contact the district's homeless education liaison:

Terri Werth

Information Service and Support

402 Broach St.

Pittsburg, TX 75686

[twerth@pittsburgisd.net](mailto:twerth@pittsburgisd.net)

(903) 856-3628

### **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services**

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individuals listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services.

This system links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine whether the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

### ***Special Education Referrals***

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or to a district administrative employee of the school district, the district must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district must give the parent prior written notice of whether it agrees or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the [Notice of Procedural Safeguards](https://fw.escapps.net/Display_Portal/publications) ([https://fw.escapps.net/Display\\_Portal/publications](https://fw.escapps.net/Display_Portal/publications)). If the district agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

**Note:** A request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally; it does not need to be made in writing. Districts must still comply with all federal prior-written notices and procedural safeguard requirements as well as the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of having a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district to respond within the 15 school-day timeline.

If the district decides to evaluate the student, it must complete the student's initial evaluation and evaluation report no later than 45 school days from the day it receives a parent's written consent. However, if the student is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or



more school days, the evaluation period will be extended by the number of school days equal to the number of school days that the student is absent.

There is an exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If the district receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the written report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30 due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

Upon completing the evaluation, the district must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

Additional information regarding special education is available from the school district in a companion document titled [Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process](https://fw.escapps.net/Display_Portal/publications) ([https://fw.escapps.net/Display\\_Portal/publications](https://fw.escapps.net/Display_Portal/publications)).

#### **Contact Person for Special Education Referrals**

The designated contact person regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is

*Johnna Owen*

*Special Programs Administrator*

[Jowen@pittsburgisd.net](mailto:Jowen@pittsburgisd.net)

903-856-6432

For questions regarding post-secondary transitions, including the transition from education to employment, for students receiving special education services, contact the district's transition and employment designee:

#### **Section 504 Referrals**

Each school district must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's Section 504 program. Districts must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes:

- Notice
- An opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records
- An impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel
- A review procedure

#### **Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals**

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is:

*Johnna Owen*

*Special Programs Administrator*

[Jowen@pittsburgisd.net](mailto:Jowen@pittsburgisd.net)

***Notification to Parents of Intervention Strategies for Learning Difficulties Provided to Students in General Education***

In accordance with state law, the district will annually notify parents if their child receives assistance for learning difficulties. Details of such assistance can include intervention strategies. This notice is not intended for those students already enrolled in a special education program.

**A Student Who Receives Special Education Services with Other School-Aged Children in the Home**

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, state law permits the parent or guardian to request that other students residing in the household be transferred to the same campus — if the grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus.

The student receiving special education services would be entitled to transportation; however, the district is not required to provide transportation to other children in the household.

The parent or guardian should contact the school principal regarding transportation needs prior to requesting a transfer for other children in the home. [See policy FDB(LOCAL) for more information.]

**A Student Who Speaks a Primary Language Other than English**

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English.

If the student qualifies for these services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

**A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504**

A student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law — and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services — may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine whether the student needs services and supports under Section 504 in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as defined in federal law.

**Section Two: Other Important Information for Parents and Students**

This section contains important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements.

It is organized alphabetically to serve as a quick-reference guide. Where applicable, the topics are further organized by grade level.

Parents and children should take a moment together to become familiar with the issues addressed in this section. For guidance on a particular topic, please contact a campus administrator.

## **Admission**

### **Documents Required for Admission:**

- An official city, county or state birth certificate
- An up-to-date immunization record signed by a physician or by public health personnel
- Social Security card
- A copy of the student's most recent report card or transcript (strongly recommended)

### **General Admission Requirements:**

1. The student must live in the District with a parent or legal guardian or one of the student's parents  
must live in the District, even if the student does not live with that parent.
  - To be eligible for admission based on the parent's residence in the District, the court that issued a final order in a divorce proceeding must have designated that parent as a managing or possessory conservator for the student.
  - The parent enrolling a student based on only the parent's residence in the District must provide a copy of a current final order, signed by the judge and showing a file stamp from the court, designating the parent as a managing or possessory conservator.
2. The student is under age 18 and lives in the District with an adult resident of the District who has  
accepted an Assignment and Acceptance of Responsibility for Minor Student from the student's parent or  
legal guardian. The District has educational guardianship forms to be completed by  
both the parent  
and the person with whom the student lives.
3. The student under the age of 18 must be enrolled by a parent, legal guardian, or adult resident  
who has a valid Power of Attorney for that student. A student who is 18 or older, who is  
legally  
married, or who has ever been legally married and who has not graduated from high  
school may  
enroll him/herself.
4. The adult enrolling the student must present current immunization records or make  
arrangements  
to begin immunizations as soon as possible. A student may be provisionally admitted to  
the  
District schools if the student has begun the required immunizations and continues to  
receive the  
necessary immunizations as rapidly as is medically feasible. The school must ensure  
that the  
required immunizations are received on schedule.

If a student transfers from one school district to another, a grace period of no more than 30 days may be allowed at the new district while awaiting the transfer of the immunization record, during which time the student may be provisionally enrolled.

5. No later than 30 days after a student has been enrolled, the adult enrolling the student must  
provide a copy of a birth certificate or other acceptable identification for the student and copies of the education records from the school the student last attended.

The application for admission and enrollment forms are official government records, and it is a crime to provide false information of any kind or false records for identification. School officials may ask parents or another adult enrolling a student to provide evidence that they are bona fide residents of the District. If school officials have reason to question the legitimacy of a student's residency information, they may investigate to determine the student's actual place of residence. If the District finds that a student is not a District resident, the student will be withdrawn, and school officials will take the necessary legal steps to recover the maximum tuition fee the school District can charge or the amount the Board of Trustees budgets as an expense per student. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide and maintain accurate directory information to the office.

A person who knowingly falsifies information on a form required for a student's enrollment in the District will be liable to the District if the student is not eligible for enrollment but is enrolled on the basis of false information. For the period during which the ineligible student is enrolled, the person is liable for the maximum tuition fee the District may charge or the amount the District has budgeted per student as maintenance and operating expense, whichever is greater.

#### **Non-Resident Student Admission Requirements:**

A nonresident student wishing to transfer into the District must file an application for transfer with the Campus Principal. All transfers are then subject to approval by the Superintendent on a space-available basis by grade, subject, and campus.

Any transfer student residing in Texas will be admitted tuition-free to all campuses in the District to the extent the cost of education for such transfer student does not exceed the state revenue received by the District for a resident student.

Students who have been expelled from other Districts will not be enrolled until the matter has been resolved with the home District, and the transfer has the consent and approval of the building Principal and the Superintendent. For students transferring from another District's alternative education program, PISD will count any time spent by the student in an alternative education program in the district from which the student transferred toward the mandatory placement requirement. Students entering with incomplete placement requirements will be required to enroll in PISD's DAEP and fulfill the requirements as outlined by PISD.

#### **Local Policy**

Pittsburg ISD is a District of Innovation and abides by local policy in relation to non-resident transfer students. Therefore, non-resident transfer students must abide by all rules and regulations governed by Pittsburg ISD or be subject to revocation of transfer status.

The following will result in revocation of transfer status:

Non-resident transfer students who have been accepted as a district transfer may have such transfer status revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of:

- suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expelled.
- Non-resident students not meeting the state 90% attendance standard will be subject to immediate revocation of transfer status.
- Non-resident students whose parent/guardian is uncooperative in addressing the student's behavior or truancy concerns will be subject to immediate revocation of transfer status

## **Absences/Attendance**

Regular school attendance is essential. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's education. The student and parent should avoid unnecessary absences.

Two important state laws are discussed below — one dealing with compulsory attendance and the other with how attendance affects the award of a student's final grade or course credit.

### **Compulsory Attendance**

#### ***Ages 6-18***

State law requires that a student who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached their 19th birthday, shall attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended-year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

State law requires a student in kindergarten-grade 2 to attend any assigned accelerated reading instruction program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program based on a diagnostic reading instrument.

A student will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program before or after school or during the summer if the student does not meet the passing standards on an applicable subject area state assessment.

#### ***Age 19 and Older***

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 19th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year. If the student incurs more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the district may revoke the student's enrollment. The student's presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. [See policy FEA for more information.]

### **Compulsory Attendance — Exemptions**

#### ***All Grade Levels***

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for the following activities and events, as long as the student makes up all work:

- Religious holy days
- Required court appearances
- Appearing at a governmental office to obtain U.S. citizenship
- Taking part in a US naturalization oath ceremony
- Serving as an election clerk

- Health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences related to autism services
- Absences resulting from a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, with certification by a physician
- For students in the conservatorship of the state:
  - An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
  - Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.

For children of military families, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian going to, on leave from, or returning from certain deployments. [See **Children of Military Families** on page 18.]

### ***Secondary Grade Levels***

The district will allow a student to be absent for up to two days per school year to serve as:

- An early voting clerk, provided the district's board has authorized this in policy FEA(LOCAL), the student notifies his or her teachers, and the student receives approval from the principal prior to the absences; or
- An election clerk, if the student makes up any work missed.

The district will allow a student in grades 6-12 to be absent for the purpose of sounding "Taps" at a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran.

### **Absences for Extracurricular Activities**

Absences for extracurricular activities approved by the principal will be classified as excused absences. The principal may approve additional absences upon request. The District will make no distinction between absences for UIL activities and absences for other extracurricular activities approved by the Board.

### **Compulsory Attendance — Failure to Comply**

#### ***All Grade Levels***

School employees must investigate and report violations of the compulsory attendance law.

A student who is absent without permission from school, any class, any required special program, or any required tutorial will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

#### ***Students with Disabilities***

If a student with a disability is experiencing attendance issues, the student's ARD or Section 504 committee will determine whether the attendance issues warrant an evaluation, a reevaluation, and/or modifications to the student's individualized education program or Section 504 plan, as appropriate.

#### ***Ages 6-18***

When a student age 6-18 incurs three or more unexcused absences within a four-week period, the law requires the school to send notice to the parent.

The notice will:

- Remind the parent of his or her duty to monitor the student's attendance and require the student to attend school.
- Request a conference between school administrators and the parent.
- Inform the parent that the district will initiate truancy prevention measures, including a behavior improvement plan, school-based community service, referrals to counseling or other social services, or other appropriate measures.

The truancy prevention facilitator for the district is:

*Crata Johnson*

*Cjohnson@pittsburgisd.net*

For any questions about student absences, parents should contact the facilitator or any other campus administrator.

A court of law may impose penalties against the parent if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. The district may file a complaint against the parent if the student incurs ten or more unexcused absences within a six-month period in the same school year.

If a student age 12-18 incurs ten or more unexcused absences within a six-month period in the same school year, the district, in most circumstances, will refer the student to truancy court.

[See policies FEA(LEGAL) and FED(LEGAL) for more information.]

#### **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade**

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student must attend the class at least 90 percent of the days it is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days may receive credit or a final grade if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal, that allows the student to fulfill the class's instructional requirements. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the judge presiding over the case must also approve the plan before the student receives credit or a final grade.

With the exception of absences due to serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment, all absences, excused or unexcused, may be held against a student's attendance requirement. To determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for any absences, the principal or attendance committee will consider:

- Whether the student has mastered the essential knowledge and skills and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- Whether the student has completed makeup work satisfactorily. If the student completes makeup work, absences listed under **Compulsory Attendance — Exemptions** on page 25 and absences for extracurricular activities will be considered extenuating circumstances.
- Whether the student or the student's parent had any control over the absences.
- Any information presented by the student or parent to the committee about the absences.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the board by following policy FNG(LOCAL).

### **Official Attendance-Taking Time**

The district will take official attendance every day at **10:00a.m.**

A student absent for any portion of the day, should follow the procedures below to provide documentation of the absence.

### **Documentation after an Absence**

A parent must provide an explanation for any absence upon the student's arrival or return to school. The student must submit a note signed by the parent. The campus may accept a phone call from the parent but reserves the right to require a written note.

A note signed by the student will not be accepted unless the student is age 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law.

The campus will document in its attendance records whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

**Note:** The district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence, unless the absence is an exemption under compulsory attendance laws.

The attendance office is open by 7:30 am. If we do not receive a written note from you within three days of the absence, it will be considered unexcused. All parents are allowed to submit a written note to the school for student absences for a combination of reasons listed below for a total of five (5) absences per year. The five (5) absences will be documented as excused. After the total of five (5) absences has been accrued, any further absences must be documented with either a medical excuse from a doctor, or the child may be excused from attendance by our school nurse.

Absences may be excused for the following reasons:

- The student is attending a funeral for an immediate family member.
- Student Illness
- Student medical appointments that could not be scheduled outside school hours. (Refer to Absences for Doctor and Dental Appointments below.)
- The student is participating in an activity that was approved by the local school board (field trip)
- The student misses school for the purpose of observing a religious holiday, including one day for traveling in each direction if travel is involved.
- The student is required for a court appearance, when documented by an attorney or court official.
- The student is temporarily absent due to a documented appointment with a healthcare professional IF that student commences classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment.

Absences will be UNEXCUSED for the following reasons:

- Truancy-failure to attend school for no excusable reason
- Frequent illness or appointments that are not substantiated by documentation
- Failure to Notify- absences not reported within three (3) days of the occurrence.
- Other:
  - Student absences to babysit, or
  - Staying home to help around the house, or



- Missing school to accompany parent or sibling to appointments, or
- Automobile problems

### **Absences for Doctor and Dental Appointments**

Absences for appointments with doctor, dentists, orthodontists, physical therapists, and other health care professionals will be classified as excused absences for attendance purposes if the student returns to school on the same day as the appointment and presents a note from the health care provider stating the time of the appointment and the time the student left the health care provider's office. This note also should be signed by the parent or accompanied by a note from the parent. If the appointment is at the end of the school day and the student has been at school all day up to that time, the absence will be excused if the student brings a note from the health care provider the following day.

### **Absences due to Personal Illness:**

When a student's absence for personal illness exceeds four consecutive days, the student shall present a statement from a physician or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. If the student has established a questionable pattern of absences, the attendance committee may also require a physician's or clinic's statement of illness after a single day's absence as a condition of classifying the absence as one for which there are extenuating circumstances.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the absence to determine whether an absence will be excused or unexcused.

### ***Certification of Absence Due to Severe Illness or Treatment***

If a student is absent because of a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, a parent must provide certification from a physician licensed to practice in Texas specifying the student's illness and the anticipated period of absence related to the illness or treatment.

**Hall Passes:** Valid hall passes will be required of any student not in an assigned classroom. During lunch periods, students are to remain in the designated areas.

**Sweeps:** Sweeps will be conducted before 1<sup>st</sup> period and between each period thereafter. After the tardy bell rings, teachers will shut their door and any student in the hall will be swept to the front of the cafeteria where they will fill out a tardy slip.

**Tardies:** Instructional time is viewed as a precious resource. Consequently chronic tardiness is a serious problem. Students who arrive to class after the first 15 minutes will be counted absent for the class. Tardies are cumulative for all classes for each semester.

1 <sup>st</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> tardies	Warning	7 <sup>th</sup> tardy	1 day of after school det. for each tardy
4 <sup>th</sup> tardy	1 day of lunch detention for each tardy	8 <sup>th</sup> tardy	2 days of after school det. for each tardy
5 <sup>th</sup> tardy	2 days of lunch detention for each tardy	9 <sup>th</sup> tardy	3 days of after school det. for each tardy
6 <sup>th</sup> tardy	3 days of lunch detention for each tardy	10 <sup>th</sup> + tardy	1 day of ISS for each tardy

**Make-up Work from Absences:** Students will make up assignments and tests after being absent, including absences as a result of suspension or participation in a school activity. They

will receive a zero for any assignment or test not made up within the allowed time. Students will be given time **equal to the number of days absent**. Assignments given **prior** to the absence are due **by the end of the CLASS PERIOD** on the day the student returns **including exams**. **It is at the teacher's discretion what he/she deems appropriate for make-up work. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE TEACHER REGARDING ANY MISSED/MAKE-UP WORK.**

As described in EIA (LOCAL) PHS permits a student who meets the criteria detailed in the grading guidelines, a reasonable opportunity to redo an assignment or retake a test for which the student received a failing grade. The failing grade will be replaced with a passing grade, if the student demonstrates mastery on the test or assignment he/she completes to improve the failing grade. The grading guidelines follow:

- initial grade must be 69 or below.
- Students will have three school days after the failing grade is entered in the gradebook to schedule the redo/retake opportunity with the teacher before or after school.
- The redo/retake must be completed within seven school days after the failing grade is entered in the gradebook
- The day the grade is entered in the gradebook is counted as day "zero" followed by day "one"
- The redo/retake will only address the content and TEKS assessed by the initial assignment
- The redo/retake may be in a different format or order to ensure academic honesty
- A student who has an opportunity to attempt or complete an assignment/test in the class time allotted and refuses to do so, **WILL NOT BE AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO REDO/RETAKE.**

A student who receives a zero or failing grade on an assignment/test as a result of academic dishonesty will not be afforded the redo/retake opportunity.

### **Academic Dishonesty/Cheating**

Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary penalties, including but not limited to loss or reduction of assignment grade. Broadly defined, academic dishonesty/cheating occurs any time that a student knowingly submits work under his/her own name that was obtained through the efforts of someone else. Common examples would include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Copying from another student's paper
- Using unauthorized information while taking a test (cheat sheet)
- Paraphrasing someone else's homework
- Giving information to another student to complete assignments
- Obtaining or giving answers during a test

### **Accountability under State and Federal Law**

Pittsburg ISD and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of accountability is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, including:

- The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), based on academic factors and ratings

- A School Report Card (SRC) for each campus in the district, compiled by TEA
- The district's financial management report, which includes the financial accountability rating assigned to the district by TEA
- Information compiled by TEA for the submission of a federal report card that is required by federal law

Accountability information can be found on the district's website at [www.pittsburgisd.net](http://www.pittsburgisd.net). Hard copies of any reports are available upon request to the district's administration office.

TEA maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at [TEA Performance Reporting Division](https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting) (<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting>).

### **Awards and Honors**

*Students may earn awards and honors. Examples include attendance awards, student of the month or other citizenship awards, honor roll, National Honor Society membership, and the like*

### **Bullying**

The district strives to prevent bullying, in accordance with the district's policies, by promoting a positive school culture; building healthy relationships between students and staff; encouraging reporting of bullying incidents, including anonymous reporting; and investigating and addressing reported bullying incidents.

Bullying is defined in state law as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school

Bullying includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined in state law as bullying that is done using any electronic communication device, including:

- A cellular or other type of telephone
- A computer
- A camera
- Electronic mail
- Instant messaging
- Text messaging
- A social media application

- An internet website
- Any other internet-based communication tool

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include:

- Hazing
- Threats
- Taunting
- Teasing
- Confinement
- Assault
- Demands for money
- Destruction of property
- Theft of valued possessions
- Name-calling
- Rumor-spreading
- Ostracism

The district will integrate into instruction research-based content designed to reduce bullying that is appropriate for students' age groups.

Students in secondary grades will participate in:

- Instruction on the brain's ability to change and grow so the student recognizes bullying behavior can come from a developmental need to acquire more social skills, can change when the brain matures and learns better ways of coping, and is not an unchangeable trait
- Discussions that portray bullying as undesirable behavior and a means for attaining or maintaining social status at school, and that discourage students from using bullying as a tool for social status
- Instruction designed so that students recognize the role that reporting bullying behaviors plays in promoting a safe school community

The district will use an age-appropriate survey regarding school culture that includes relevant questions on bullying to identify and address student concerns.

Each campus has a committee that addresses bullying by focusing on prevention efforts and health and wellness initiatives. The committee will include parents and secondary students. For more information on this committee, including interest in serving on the committee, contact the campus principal.

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or witnesses the bullying of another student, the student or parent should notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible. Any district employee aware of a report of a bullying incident will relay the report to an appropriate administrator. Procedures for reporting allegations of bullying may be found on the district's website.

A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by calling the Bullying Hotline at 903-853-9997, or completing the online form located at <https://www.pittsburgisd.net/30256> 1.

The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and related misconduct. The district will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged victim and the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying.

If an investigation determines that bullying occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action and may, in certain circumstances, notify law enforcement. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying.

The district will provide research-based interventions, which may include counseling options, for students who engage in bullying behaviors, students who are targeted by bullying behaviors, and any student who witnessed bullying behaviors.

Any action taken in response to bullying will comply with state and federal law regarding students with disabilities.

Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited.

Upon recommendation of the administration, the board may transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parent, the board may transfer the student to another campus in the district.

The parent of a student who has been determined to be a victim of bullying may request that the student be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. [See **Safety Transfers/Assignments** on page 19.]

A copy of the district's bullying policy is available in the principal's office, superintendent's office, and on the district's website, and is included at the end of this handbook as an appendix.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL).

### **Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Other Work-Based Programs**

The district offers career and technical education programs. For a list of the CTE programs, contact your child's counselor

. Admission to these programs is based on interest and the development of the student's graduation requirements.

District policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap in its vocational programs, services, or activities, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

District policy also prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The district will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in all educational and vocational programs.

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the Title IX coordinator and the ADA/Section 504 coordinator.

[See Nondiscrimination Statement on page 84 for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator and ADA/Section 504 coordinator.]

### **Cafeteria**

Breakfast and lunch are served daily in the school cafeteria. Breakfast is served between 7:30 a.m. and 7:50 a.m. Students may bring lunches from home or may purchase meals. Students assigned to In-School Suspension (ISS), will not follow the regular lunch schedule but will eat as a group with the assigned instructor.

### **Meal Prices**

Meal prices are determined by the Pittsburg ISD Board of Trustees, and the prices of these meals are subject to change

#### **Pittsburg Primary, Elementary, and Intermediate School**

Breakfast	FREE for all students
Lunch	FREE for all students
Staff	\$5.50
Adult Visitor	\$6.00
Child Visitor	\$5.00

Deliveries from vendors (local restaurants) are not allowed for students. Parents may bring purchased lunches to the office for their children only.

### **Free and Reduced-Price Food Program**

PISD schools participate in the federal Student Nutrition Programs, which provide free and reduced price lunch programs to students based on family income levels. Households that have difficulty in paying for school meals should contact the PISD Foodservice Department and apply for free or reduced price meals. The District maintains strict confidentiality as to whether students participate in the program. Parents who would like more information about the program or an application should contact Chris Hackett, Director of Food Service, at 402 Broach Street, 903-856-3628.

### **LUNCH MONEY NOW**

The Child Nutrition Department would like to inform everyone of a great program we have online. All employees, parents, guardians, and grandparents, of Pittsburg ISD students are able to use the Lunch Money Now program located on the Child Nutrition page of the Pittsburg ISD website. This program allows anyone, who has registered, to set text or email alerts, free of charge, for their child's lunch account balance. The program will alert you when the balance in the account falls below any amount you set. Parents can also see what the child is purchasing. The program has an option for loading money onto your child's account for a fee of \$2.50 each time you add money. Please note, there is no charge for looking at your child's account or for setting up the alerts.

This program provides an effective way to keep up with your child's account. The Child Nutrition Department makes every effort to notify parents if their child's account has a negative balance, however sometimes letters do not get received and phone numbers have changed leaving us with no way to contact the parent. Signing up with this program will allow you to be in control of your child's account. School employees may use the program as well.

To access the program, Lunch Money Now, go to [www.pittsburgisd.net](http://www.pittsburgisd.net) click on the Lunch Money Now link underneath the Quick Links on the right-hand side of the page. If you have not created an account, go to Create an Account. Fill in the information, create your own username and password, and click register. OR you can click on the Classic Login link in the paragraph of the welcome letter on the Lunch Money Now page and search the balance there. You must have the Student ID#, the last four digits of the Social Security number, and the student's birthdate to access accounts.

### **Celebrations**

Although a parent or grandparent may provide food to share for a school-designated function or for a student's birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Discuss any classroom allergies with the teacher before bringing food to share.

Occasionally, the school or a class may host functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers to provide food.

Outside of the above mentioned Celebrations, food, candy, and drinks other than water are not permitted in classrooms. Food and drinks must be consumed only in the cafeteria and designated areas during scheduled student lunches. Careless disposal of gum and food in drinking fountains, on furniture, or on floors presents sanitation and cleaning problems and requires costly repairs. Water in a sealable container is permissible. Students who disregard the rules concerning food, candy and drinks will receive disciplinary action.

### **Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at [www.pittsburgisd.net](http://www.pittsburgisd.net). Trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking.

#### **Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child.

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

A child who has been or is being sexually abused may exhibit physical, behavioral, or emotional warning signs, including:

- Difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches
- Verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior
- Withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school

Be aware that children and adolescents who have experienced dating violence may show similar physical, behavioral, and emotional warning signs. [See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 48 and **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking** on page 7.]

### **Warning Signs of Trafficking**

Child trafficking of any sort is prohibited by the Penal Code. Sex trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, into sexual abuse, assault, indecency, prostitution, or pornography. Labor trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, to engage in forced labor or services.

Traffickers are often trusted members of a child's community, such as friends, romantic partners, family members, mentors, and coaches. Some traffickers contact victims online.

Possible warning signs of sexual trafficking in children include:

- Changes in school attendance, habits, friend groups, vocabulary, demeanor, and attitude
- Sudden appearance of expensive items (for example, manicures, designer clothes, purses, technology)
- Tattoos or branding
- Refillable gift cards
- Frequent runaway episodes
- Multiple phones or social media accounts
- Provocative pictures posted online or stored on the phone
- Unexplained injuries
- Isolation from family, friends, and community
- Older romantic partners

Additional warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:

- Being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- Being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit
- Being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for students
- Owning a large debt and being unable to pay it off
- Not being allowed breaks at work or being subjected to excessively long work hours
- Being overly concerned with pleasing an employer and/or deferring personal or educational decisions to a boss



- Not being in control of his or her own money
- Living with an employer or having an employer listed as a student's caregiver
- A desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so

[See **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking** on page 7.]

#### **Reporting and Responding to Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children**

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused, trafficked, or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

A child who has experienced sexual abuse or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Children may be more reluctant to disclose sexual abuse than physical abuse and neglect and may only disclose sexual abuse indirectly. As a parent or trusted adult, it is important to be calm and comforting if your child or another child confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

If your child is a victim of sexual abuse, trafficking, or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information on counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs.

To find out what services may be available in your county, see [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp) ([http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention\\_and\\_Early\\_Intervention/Programs\\_Available\\_In\\_Your\\_County/default.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp))

Reports of abuse, trafficking, or neglect may be made to the CPS division of the DFPS at 1-800-252-5400 or on the web at [Texas Abuse Hotline Website](http://www.txabusehotline.org) ([www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)).

#### **Further Resources on Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children**

The following websites include resources to help increase awareness of child abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children:

- [Child Welfare Information Gateway](https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/whatiscan.pdf) (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/whatiscan.pdf>)
- [KidsHealth, For Parents, Child Abuse](https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-abuse.html) (<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-abuse.html>)
- [Office of the Texas Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team](https://gov.texas.gov/organization/cjd/childsextrafficking) (<https://gov.texas.gov/organization/cjd/childsextrafficking>)
- [Human Trafficking of School-aged Children](https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/human-trafficking-of-school-aged-children) (<https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/human-trafficking-of-school-aged-children>)
- [Child Sexual Abuse: A Parental Guide from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault](https://taasa.org/product/child-sexual-abuse-parental-guide/) (<https://taasa.org/product/child-sexual-abuse-parental-guide/>)
- [National Center of Safe Supportive Learning Environments: Human Trafficking in America's Schools](https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/human-trafficking-americas-schools) (<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/human-trafficking-americas-schools>)

#### **Class Rank/Highest-Ranking Student (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

See top 10% Guidelines or contact Special Programs Coordinator

## **Class Schedules**

All students are expected to attend school for the entire school day and maintain a full class schedule.

## **College and University Admissions and Financial Aid**

For two school years following graduation, a district student who graduates as valedictorian or in the top ten percent of his or her class is eligible for automatic admission into four-year public universities and colleges in Texas if the student:

- Completes the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program
- Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.

The student is ultimately responsible for meeting the admission requirements of the university or college, including timely submission of a completed application.

If a college or university adopts an admissions policy that automatically accepts the top 25 percent of a graduating class, the provisions above will also apply to a student ranked in the top 25 percent of his or her class.

The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of automatically admitted students to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshmen. From the summer 2023 term through the spring 2025 term, the University will admit the top six percent of a high school's graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through a holistic review process.

As required by law, the district will provide written notice concerning the following:

- Automatic college admission
- Curriculum requirements for financial aid
- Benefits of completing the requirements for automatic admission and financial aid
- The Texas First Early High School Completion Program, which requires a student to provide an official copy of assessment results and transcripts, as applicable, to receive credit for the assessments and credits required for early graduation under the program
- The Texas First Scholarship Program
- The Future Texas Teachers Scholarship Program

Parents and students will be asked to sign an acknowledgment that they received this information.

Students and parents should contact the school counselor for further information about automatic admissions, the application process, and deadlines.

## **Communications**

### **Parent Contact Information**

In order to ensure that classroom instruction is not disrupted and that students have the opportunity to concentrate on coursework, interruptions of the school day will be kept to a minimum. The arrangement of meals, personal schedules, after-school activities, and student transportation should be made before the student arrives on the campus.

**Communication from Students at School:** Office telephones are for school business and may be used by students only in cases of emergency or illness.

**Communication with Students at School:** Critical messages and deliveries from home during the school day will be held in the office until the Principal or designated staff member determines an appropriate time to contact students. Students will be called out of class only for emergencies.

**Food Deliveries:** Food deliveries from vendors (local restaurants or food providers) will not be accepted. Parents may bring purchased lunches to the office for their child only. Deliveries of beverages are limited to unopened can drinks or sealed containers of water.

A parent is legally required to provide in writing the parent's contact information, including address, phone number, and email address.

A parent must provide the contact information to the district upon enrollment and again within two weeks after the beginning of each following school year while the student is enrolled in the district.

If the parent's contact information changes during the school year, the parent must update the information in writing no more than two weeks after the date the information changes.

A parent may update contact information by *contacting the campus registrar*.

#### **Automated Emergency Communications**

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. An emergency situation may include early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to the campus due to severe weather, another emergency, or a security threat. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes.

[See Safety on page 88 for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation.]

**Emergency School Closing Information:** Notice of changes in regular school days and regular school hours brought about by emergency situations such as severe weather will be released from the Office of the Superintendent at the earliest possible time to the local newspaper, radio, and television stations. Because it is important that school telephone lines remain open during emergency situations, the District strongly encourages parents to refer to these media announcements rather than to telephone the campus.

#### **Emergency School-Closing Information Sources**

STAR FM 96.9, Channel 7- KLTV, Automated District-Wide Text Messages and Phone Calls

#### **Automated Nonemergency Communications**

Your child's school periodically sends information by automated or pre-recorded messages, text messages, or real-time phone or email communications that are closely related to the school's mission and specific to your child, your child's school, or the district.

Standard messaging rates of your wireless phone carrier may apply.

If you do not wish to receive such communications, please contact your child's principal.

#### **Complaints and Concerns**

When parents see a problem developing, they should assist the school in dealing with it before it reaches a critical stage. The District urges parents to contact the appropriate teacher, counselor, or administrator at the earliest possible time. These early contacts set a cooperative mood and can prevent serious problems.

Usually, student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed informally by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal.

#### **Conferences, Notes or Phone Calls:**

Each teacher has a time set aside each day for planning and conferencing. If you would like to visit with your child's teacher, please call the school to schedule an appointment during the teacher's conference period. You may request to visit the teacher in person or request that he/she call you during his/her conference period. You may also contact the teacher via the school's email system.

For those complaints and concerns that cannot be resolved informally, the board has adopted a Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances policy at FNG(LOCAL). This policy can be viewed in the district's policy manual, available online at <https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline?key=264>. The complaint forms can be accessed at the principal's or superintendent's office.

To file a formal complaint a parent or student should complete and submit the complaint form. In general, the written complaint form should be completed and submitted to the campus principal in a timely manner.

If the concern is not resolved, a parent or student may request a conference with the superintendent.

If the concern is still unresolved, the district provides a process for parents and students to appeal to the board of trustees.

### **Conduct**

#### **Applicability of School Rules**

The board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that defines standards of acceptable behavior — on and off campus, during remote and in-person instruction, and on district vehicles — and outlines consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules.

During summer instruction, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the school year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

#### **Campus Behavior Coordinator**

Each campus has a campus behavior coordinator to apply discipline management techniques and administer consequences for certain student misconduct, as well as provide a point of contact for student misconduct. The contact information for each campus behavior coordinator is available on the district's website at <https://www.pittsburgisd.net/> and the coordinator for this campus is listed below:

**Jr. High**  
Luke MacBeath  
Assistant Principal  
313 Broach St.  
Pittsburg, TX 75686  
903-856-6432  
Lmacbeath@pittsburgisd.net

### **Student Expectations**

In order for any school to be successful, the environment must be one conducive to learning. Successful schools have clearly defined rules of operation, consistent application of those rules, and a conscientious attitude on the part of their students, staff, and community in complying with those rules. As is the case in any community, “abiding by the law” must come from the individual. The atmosphere sought in PISD schools is one in which respect from one person to another is readily observed and in which a proper balance exists between each person’s right to be an individual and his responsibilities to function as a member of a larger community. Each individual must recognize that his/her personal rights do not extend beyond other’s rights, and compliance with reasonable rules of behavior takes priority over self-interest. **For a more detailed description concerning discipline, please refer to the Student Code of Conduct.**

The Student Code of Conduct contains standards for student conduct, general misconduct violations, and procedures for removal from the regular educational setting. PISD alternatives to the regular educational setting include In-School Suspension (ISS), Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP), suspension, and expulsion.

Consideration will be given, as a factor in each decision concerning suspension, removal to a disciplinary alternative education program, expulsion, or placement in a juvenile justice alternative education program, regardless of whether the decision concerns a mandatory or discretionary action, to as provided by Section 37.001:

- (A) self-defense;
- (B) intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct;
- (C) a student's disciplinary history; or
- (D) a disability that substantially impairs the student's capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student’s conduct

After-School detention is held on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons from 3:30 to 4:30. Students/parents must arrange transportation from detention.

Detentions may be rescheduled without additional disciplinary action 3 times per semester by the parent or guardian prior to the assigned detention.

At all levels of this discipline plan, actions will be documented and a letter sent to the parents by mail or by the student. The teacher will receive a copy, and a copy will be filed in the Assistant Principal’s office.

Students should be aware that after-school activities, whether school-related or not, are not acceptable excuses for missing detention, I.S.S. Students who are assigned to I.S.S. are ineligible to practice, to participate in, or to attend extracurricular activities during this assignment.

Students placed in DAEP for any mandatory or discretionary reason are not allowed to attend or participate in school-sponsored or school-related extracurricular or co-curricular activities during the period of DAEP placement. This restriction applies until the student fulfills the DAEP assignment at this or another school district.

In case of severe disciplinary infractions, disciplinary progression may be circumvented by an administration

### **Deliveries**

Except in emergencies, delivery of messages or packages to students will not be allowed during instructional time. A parent may leave a message or a package, such as a forgotten lunch, for the student to pick up from the front office during a passing period or lunch.

### **Disruption of School Operations**

Disruption of school operations is not tolerated and may constitute a misdemeanor offense. As identified by state law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.

Disruption of classes or other school activities while on or within 500 feet of district property includes:

- Making loud noises
- Trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity
- Entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct

Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district is also considered a disruption.

### **Social Events**

School rules apply to all school social events. Guests attending these events are expected to observe the same rules as students, and a student inviting a guest will share responsibility for the conduct of his or her guest.

A student attending a social event will be asked to sign out when leaving before the end of the event and will not be readmitted.

A parent interested in serving as a chaperone for any school social events should contact the campus principal.

## Truancy

Truancy, the absence from school without the knowledge and consent of the student's parent or guardian, is prohibited. Truancy includes an unexcused absence for one or more periods of the school day. Major changes to the truancy law were made by the 77th Legislature, and the District is required to notify all parents at the beginning of school concerning the new truancy law as defined by Senate Bill 1432. Requirements regarding truancy are as follows:

### Sec. 25.095. Attendance Warning Notices.

- (a) A school district or open – enrollment charter school shall notify a student's parent in writing at the beginning of the school year that if the student is absent from school on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year or on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period:
  - (1) The student's parent is subject to prosecution under Section 25.093; and
  - (2) The student is subject to prosecution under Section 25.094 or to referral to a juvenile court in a county with a population of less than 100,000 for conduct that violates that section.
- (b) A school district shall notify a student's parent if the student has been absent from school, without excuse under Section 25.087, on three days or parts of days within a four-week period. The notice must:
  - (1) Inform the parent that:
    - (A) It is the parent's duty to monitor the student's school attendance and require the student to attend school; and
    - (B) The parent is subject to prosecution under Section 25.093; and

Request a conference between school officials and the parent to discuss the absences.

- (c) The fact that a parent did not receive a notice under Subsection (a) or (b) does not create a defense to prosecution under Section 25.093 or 25.094.
- (d) In this section, "parent" includes a person standing in parental relation.

For truancy offenses, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with District policy. Previous offenses will be considered in the determination of consequences. Further acts of truancy will continue to be classified as discipline violations and may result in assignment to the Alternative Education Program or may result in more severe disciplinary measures.

If any parent or person standing in parental relation to a student fails to require the student to attend school, that person will be warned in writing by the District that attendance is immediately required. If, after this warning, a parent or person standing in parental relation intentionally, knowingly, or with criminal negligence fails to comply, that person will be subject to punishment as provided by law unless inability to compel the student to attend school can be established. In that case, the student will be subject to action by the juvenile court.

Family Code, Section 54.021, states that a justice of the municipal court may suspend a student's driver's license if the student has engaged in truant conduct.

**Administration has the right to assign consequences as it deems fit in accordance to policy and suitable for offenses.**

Family Code, Section 54.021, states that a justice of the municipal court may suspend a student's driver's license if the student has engaged in truant conduct.

### **Counseling**

The district has a comprehensive school counseling program that includes:

- A guidance curriculum to help students develop their full educational potential, including the student's interests and career objectives
- A responsive services component to intervene on behalf of any student whose immediate personal concerns or problems put the student's continued educational, career, personal, or social development at risk
- An individual planning system to guide a student as the student plans, monitors, and manages the student's own educational, career, personal, and social development
- Systems to support the efforts of teachers, staff, parents, and other members of the community in promoting the educational, career, personal, and social development of students

The district will make a preview of the program, including all materials and curriculum, available to parents to review during school hours.

### **Academic Counseling**

A counselor is available to assist students in educational and personal/social counseling. Students may schedule appointments through the Counselor's Office before classes begin, during lunch periods, and after school. To be excused from class to see the counselor, students must have an appointment from the Counselor's Office. Students must sign in and out with the secretary.

Pittsburg Junior High School offers the opportunity for parents to meet with a Counselor to discuss the guidance and counseling program provided for their student. Following this personal review of the Pittsburg Junior High School program, parents wishing to exclude their student from any aspect of the Pittsburg Junior High School guidance and counseling program may provide Pittsburg Junior High School with a written request specifically outlining the program or programs from which they wish to exclude their student.

### **Personal Counseling**

A counselor is available to assist students in educational and personal/social counseling. Students may schedule appointments through the Counselor's Office before classes begin, during lunch periods, and after school. To be excused from class to see the counselor, students must have an appointment from the Counselor's Office. Students must sign in and out with the secretary.

If your child has experienced trauma, contact the school counselor for more information.

### **Credit by Examination — If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject**

A student who has previously taken a course or subject but did not receive credit or a final grade for it may, in circumstances determined by the principal or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit or a final grade by passing an examination approved by the district's board of trustees on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject.



Examples of prior instruction include incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a nonaccredited school. The opportunity to earn credit by examination after the student has had prior instruction is sometimes referred to as “credit recovery.”

The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an examination.

If a student is granted approval to take an examination for credit, the student must score at least 70 on the examination to receive credit for the course or subject.

[See the school counselor and policy EHDB(LOCAL) for more information.]

### **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration — If a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject**

A student will be permitted to earn credit by examination for an academic course or subject area for which the student had no prior instruction for advancement or to accelerate to the next grade level.

The examinations offered by the district are approved by the district’s board of trustees. Testing windows for these examinations will be published in district publications and on the district’s website. A student may take a specific examination only once per testing window.

The only exceptions to the published testing windows will be for examinations administered by another entity or to accommodate a student experiencing homelessness or a student involved in the foster care system.

When another entity administers an examination, the student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity.

If a student plans to take an examination, the student or parent must register with the school counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. [See policy EHDC for more information.]

### **Credit by Examination Dates**

September 19-20	Register by August 16
November 7-8	Register by October 11
January 9-10	Register by November 15
June 4-5	Register by May 9

### **Acceleration**

Students in Grades 6-12

A student in grade 6 or above is eligible to earn course credit on examinations approved by the board with:

- A passing score of at least 70 with instruction  
or
- at least 80 without instruction on examinations approved by the board.

A student may take an examination to earn high school course credit no more than twice. If a student fails to achieve the designated score on the applicable exam before the beginning of the school year in which the student would need to enroll in the course according to the school's high school course sequence, the student must complete the course.

### **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (All Grade Levels)**

Students learn best, and their welfare is best served, in a school environment that is free from dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

Students are expected to treat peers and district employees with courtesy and respect, avoid offensive behaviors, and stop those behaviors as directed. District employees are likewise expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly address inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office *or on the district's website at*

[https://files.gabbart.com/957/pittsburg\\_isd\\_nondiscrimination\\_policy\\_new2020.pdf](https://files.gabbart.com/957/pittsburg_isd_nondiscrimination_policy_new2020.pdf).

### **Dating Violence**

Dating violence will not be tolerated at school. To report dating violence, see **Reporting Procedures**, on page 50.

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship or any of the person's past or subsequent partners. This type of conduct is considered harassment if it is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical or sexual assaults
- Name-calling
- Put-downs
- Threats to hurt the student, the student's family members, or members of the student's household
- Destroying property belonging to the student
- Threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship
- Threats to harm a student's past or current dating partner
- Attempts to isolate the student from friends and family
- Stalking
- Encouraging others to engage in these behaviors

In accordance with law, when the district receives a report of dating violence, a district official will immediately notify the parent of the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator.

The counselor's office has information about the dangers of dating violence and resources for seeking help.

For more information on dating violence, see:

- Texas Attorney General's office [recognizing and responding to dating violence flier](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/child-support/papa/session%2010/recognizing-relationship-violence-en.pdf) (<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/child-support/papa/session%2010/recognizing-relationship-violence-en.pdf>)
- The CDC's [Preventing Teen Dating Violence](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teendatingviolence/fastfact.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teendatingviolence/fastfact.html>)

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law that negatively affects the student.

### **Harassment**

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation
- Threatening, intimidating, or humiliating conduct
- Offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors
- Physical aggression or assault
- Graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes
- Other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property

### **Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment**

Sexual harassment and gender-based harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student are prohibited.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature
- Sexual advances
- Jokes or conversations of a sexual nature
- Other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact that a reasonable person would not construe as sexual in nature, such as comforting a child with a hug or taking the child's hand. However, romantic, sexual, and other inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Gender-based harassment includes physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on a student's gender, the student's expression of characteristics perceived as stereotypical for the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity.

Gender-based harassment can occur regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student may include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors
- Physical aggression or assault
- Threatening or intimidating conduct
- Other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property

### **Retaliation**

Retaliation against a person who makes a good-faith report or participates in an investigation of discrimination, harassment, or dating violence is prohibited. A person who makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

### **Reporting Procedures**

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent. [See policy FFH(LOCAL) and (EXHIBIT) for other appropriate district officials to whom to make a report.]

Upon receiving a report, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH. If not, the district will refer to policy FFI to determine whether the allegations, if proven, constitute bullying, as defined by law and policy FFI. If the alleged prohibited conduct also meets the statutory and policy definitions for bullying, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted. [See **Bullying** on page ]

The district will promptly notify the parent of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district. In the event alleged prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parent of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy FFH.

### **Investigation of Report**

Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated.

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student. However, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and comply with law.

If a law enforcement or other regulatory agency notifies the district that it is investigating the matter and requests that the district delay its investigation, the district will resume its investigation at the conclusion of the agency's investigation.

During an investigation and when appropriate, the district will take interim action to address the alleged prohibited conduct.

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action and, in some cases, corrective action will be taken to address the conduct. The district may take disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct was not unlawful.

All involved parties will be notified of the outcome of the district investigation within the parameters and limits allowed under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL).

### **Discipline Management**

Campus and District rules and procedures have been established to ensure student safety and to promote student learning. In general, discipline is designed to correct misconduct and to encourage all students to adhere to their responsibilities as citizens of the school community. The Student Code of Conduct provides information to parents regarding expectations for behavior, consequences of misconduct, and procedures for administering discipline.

Teachers and Principals may impose campus or classroom rules in addition to those found in the Student Code of Conduct. These rules may be posted in classrooms or given to the student and may or may not also constitute violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

The Student Code of Conduct contains standards for student conduct, general misconduct violations, and procedures for removal from the regular educational setting. PISD alternatives to the regular educational setting include In-School Suspension (I.S.S), Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP), suspension, and expulsion.

### **Student Management Plan**

**Student Management Plan:** The following Student Management Plan will be used by Pittsburg Junior High School for students in all grade levels who violate classroom, campus, or District rules of behavior. Before a student is referred to the Assistant Principal, the teacher must have documentation of step one.

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Step One:   | Individual Teacher Action<br>1) Student - teacher conference<br>2) Contact the parent  |
| Step Two:   | Referral to Assistant Principal/Counselor/Detention<br>Detention will be assigned for a minimum of 2 days. Students are required to bring assignments and do school work during this time. Missing a day of detention without an administrator's approval will result in the student moving to step six. |
| Step Three: | Referral to Assistant Principal/Detention/Letter given to student for parent notification<br>Detention will be assigned for a minimum of 3 days. Missing a day of detention without the administrator's approval will result in the student moving to step six.  |
| Step Four:  | Referral to Assistant Principal/Detention/Letter given to student for parent notification<br>After-School detention will be assigned for a minimum of 2 days. Missing a day of detention without the administrator's approval will result in the student moving to step six.                             |
| Step Five:  | Referral to Assistant Principal/Detention/Parent Notification<br>After-School detention will be assigned for a minimum of 3 days. Missing a day of   |

detention without the administrator's approval will result in the student moving to step six.

- Step Six: Referral to Assistant Principal/Assignment to ISS/ Parent Notification  
Assignment to ISS will be for a minimum of 2 successful days. Assigned work must be completed satisfactorily and approved by ISS Coordinator before the student is released.
- Step Seven: Referral to Assistant Principal/Assignment to ISS/Parent Notification  
Assignment to ISS will be for a minimum of 3 successful days. Assigned work must be completed satisfactorily and approved by ISS Coordinator before the student is released.
- Step Eight: Referral to Assistant Principal/Assignment to ISS/Parent Notification  
Assignment to ISS will be for a minimum of 5 successful days. Assigned work must be completed satisfactorily and approved by ISS Coordinator before the student is released.
- Step Nine: Referral to Assistant Principal/Assignment to ISS/Parent Notification  
Assignment to ISS will be for a minimum of 10 successful days. Assigned work must be completed satisfactorily and approved by ISS Coordinator before the student is released.
- Step Ten: Referral to Assistant Principal/Assignment to DAEP Program/Parent Conference.  
Assignment to DAEP will be for a minimum of 10 successful days. Assigned work must be completed satisfactorily and approved by DAEP Coordinator before the student is released from DAEP.
- Step Eleven: Alternate Placement or Expulsion

### **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment—spanking or paddling the student—may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and policy FO (LOCAL) in the district's policy manual.

Corporal punishment shall be limited to spanking or paddling the student and shall be administered in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The student shall be told the reason corporal punishment is being administered.
2. Corporal punishment shall be administered only by the principal or designee.
3. Corporal punishment shall be administered only by an employee who is the same sex as the student.
4. The instrument to be used in administering corporal punishment shall be approved by the principal.
5. Corporal punishment shall be administered in the presence of one other District professional employee and in a designated place out of view of other students.

The District shall honor a parent's written request that corporal punishment not be administered to his or her child; however, the District shall impose other disciplinary measures consistent with the offense.

### **Discrimination**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 48.]

## **Distribution of Literature, Published Materials, or Other Documents**

### **School Materials**

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with the prior approval of the principal, sponsor, or teacher. Such items may include school posters, newspapers, yearbooks, brochures, flyers, and the like.

All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.

### **Nonschool Materials**

#### ***From Students***

Students must obtain prior approval from the campus principal before selling, posting, circulating, or distributing more than 25 copies of written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any nonschool material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. Approval will be granted or denied within two school days.

A student may appeal a decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes nonschool material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without approval will be removed.

[See policy FNG(LOCAL) for student complaint procedures.]

#### ***From Others***

No person or group will sell, circulate, distribute, or post on any district premises written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that is not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization, except as permitted by policy GKDA.

To be considered for distribution, any nonschool material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the campus principal for prior review. The campus principal will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies DGBA or GF for more information.]

Prior review will not be required for:

- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.
- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours in accordance with policy GKD(LOCAL) or a noncurriculum-related student group meeting held in accordance with policy FNAB(LOCAL).
- Distribution for electioneering purposes during the time a school facility is being used as a polling place, in accordance with state law.

All nonschool materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from district property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

## Dress and Grooming

The district's dress code teaches grooming and hygiene, prevents disruption, and minimizes safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following:

### Dress Code 23-24

**Examples of prohibited school dress and grooming include but are not limited to the following:**

<b>Tattoos and Piercings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Students may wear earrings, ear studs, or (ONE) nose <u>STUD</u>. · All other facial, tongue, or body piercings are prohibited (Ex: Bars, Gauges, Spacers, etc.)</li><li>· Excessively large or distracting earrings are prohibited (Administrators discretion)</li><li>· Exposed tattoos that are lewd, vulgar, or depict profanity or prohibited items</li><li>· Grills or temporary mouth inserts are prohibited</li></ul>
<b>Hairstyles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Facial hair must be neatly trimmed and groomed.</li><li>· Hairstyles for all students must be kept well-groomed and free from styles that are distracting (i.e. Mohawks, stripes, spikes, unnatural colors)</li><li>· Hair cannot extend into the face for <b>any student</b></li><li>· Hair combs or picks are prohibited</li></ul>
<b>Hats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Headgear of any kind at any time in the buildings or hallways between 7-4pm</li></ul>
<b>Shoes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Lack of shoes</li><li>· House slippers</li><li>· Cleats</li></ul>
<b>Shirts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· See-through shirts revealing undergarment or tank top</li><li>· Strapless, backless, spaghetti straps, tank/tube tops, halters, midriff (crop) tops</li><li>· Shirts with no sleeves</li><li>· Shirts that are off the shoulder</li><li>· Shirts with large armholes</li><li>· Shirts that expose cleavage</li><li>· Muscle shirts</li><li>· Shirts that fall below the wrists</li><li>· Shirts with vulgar or inappropriate messages and/or images</li></ul>
<b>Shorts/pants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Shorts that fall four inches above the knee</li><li>· Cut-offs</li><li>· Shorts/pants that are distressed or contain rips above the knee. SKIN SHOULD NOT BE EXPOSED FOUR INCHES ABOVE THE KNEE.</li><li>· Sagging pants/shorts (all layers of pants and shorts must fit around the waist without a belt)</li></ul>



<b>Dresses/skirts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Dresses or skirts that fall four inches above the knee including slits in the dress or skirt.</li> </ul>
<b>All clothing items</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <b>Pajamas, sleepwear or blankets are PROHIBITED</b></li> <li>· Sunglasses</li> <li>· Clothing with <u>large</u> rips, tears, or holes (no skin visible more than four inches above the knee)</li> <li>· Tight or revealing clothing</li> <li>· See-through clothing</li> <li>· Visible undergarments or dressing without appropriate undergarments</li> <li>· <b>Dance clothes, tights, or tight-fitting athletic wear</b></li> <li>· Chains used as belts, to secure wallets, or as necklaces</li> <li>· Any clothing that advertises or depicts tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs or any other substance that students are prohibited from having or using at school</li> <li>· Any clothing with pictures, emblems, symbols, slogans, or writings that are lewd, offensive, vulgar or obscene, contain sexual innuendos</li> <li>· Any clothing or grooming that depicts crime, violence, or gang association</li> <li>· <b>Any clothing that inappropriately exposes the body, midriff or cleavage</b></li> <li>· Any spiked or studded jewelry</li> <li>· Any garment that has writing or images in the buttocks area</li> <li>· Bandages used to cover piercings or other dress code issues</li> <li>· Leggings; a dress or skirt must be worn over leggings and must reach at least four inches above the knee</li> <li>· Trench coats or large clothing</li> <li>· Any other clothing deemed inappropriate by the campus administration</li> </ul>

If the principal determines that a student's grooming or clothing violates the school's dress code, the student will be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school and return to the classroom. If the problem cannot be corrected at school, the principal will work with the student and parent to obtain an acceptable change of clothing for the student in a way that minimizes loss of instructional time.

Repeated or severe offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources**

### **Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Cell Phones, and Other Electronic Devices**

The district permits students to possess personal cell phones for safety purposes; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. [See **Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials** on page 99 for graphing calculator applications on computing devices.]

A student must have approval to possess other personal telecommunications devices on campus such as laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

The use of cell phones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event.

If a student uses a telecommunications device without authorization during the school day, the device will be confiscated.

The parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal's office for a fee of \$15.

- 1st offense: \$15.00 fee, phone returned to parent/guardian
- 2nd offense: \$15.00 fee, phone returned to parent/guardian, After school detention
- 3rd offense: \$15.00 fee, phone returned to parent/guardian, ISS
- 4th Offense: \$15.00 fee, phone returned to parent/guardian, DAEP

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or the student's parent will be disposed of after the notice required by law. [See policy FNCE for more information.]

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Searches** on page and policy FNF for more information.]

**Headphones:** Headphones are not to be worn at school or brought into the classroom unless they are being used for educational purposes with the teacher's knowledge for a classroom activity.

### **Radios, CD Players, and Other Electronic Devices and Games:**

Students are not permitted to possess such items as radios, CD players, tape recorders, camcorders, DVD players, cameras, or electronic devices or games during the school day. This includes the time the student first enters onto school property in the morning until 3:26. These items are considered contraband and will be collected and turned in to the Assistant Principal. Any device that has the capability of sending or receiving communications may be subject to the cell phone fees and disciplinary action.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunications devices.

#### **Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices**

Students must obtain prior approval to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook).

All personal devices must be turned off during the instructional day when not in use for approved instructional purposes. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

#### **Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources**

District-owned technology resources may be issued to individual students for instructional purposes. Use of the district's network systems and equipment is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

#### **Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources**

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether on district-owned or personally owned equipment, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content — commonly referred to as “sexting” — will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement.

This type of behavior may constitute bullying or harassment, as well as impede future endeavors of a student. We encourage parents to review with their child the ["Before You Text" Sexting Prevention Course](https://txssc.txstate.edu/tools/courses/before-you-text/) (<https://txssc.txstate.edu/tools/courses/before-you-text/>), a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of sexting.

In accordance with state law, the district prohibits the installation or use of TikTok or any successor application or service on a district device, along with any other social media application or service determined by the governor.

Any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the district's computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. In some cases, the consequence may be expulsion.

## **Emergent Bilingual Students**

A student who is an emergent bilingual student is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. A Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC), consisting of both district personnel and at least one parent representative, will determine whether the student qualifies for services. The student's parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC. However, pending the receipt of parental consent or denial of services, an eligible student will receive the services to which the student is entitled and eligible.

To determine a student's level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from a variety of assessments. If the student qualifies for services, and once a level of proficiency has been established, the LPAC will designate instructional accommodations or additional special programs that the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR Spanish, may be administered to an emergent bilingual student up to grade 5. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to emergent bilingual students who qualify for services.

If a student is considered an emergent bilingual student and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's ARD committee will make instructional and assessment decisions in conjunction with the LPAC.

## **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations**

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships.

Some extracurricular activities may include off-campus events. Students are required to use transportation provided by the district to and from the events. Exceptions may only be made with the approval of the activity's coach or sponsor.

Eligibility for many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL), a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, or music activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. Students and parents can access the [UIL Parent Information Manual](https://www.uil texas.org/athletics/manuals) (<https://www.uil texas.org/athletics/manuals>) online. A hard copy can be provided by the coach or sponsor of the activity on request.

To report alleged noncompliance with required safety training or an alleged violation of safety rules required by law and the UIL, please contact the curriculum division of TEA at (512) 463-9581 or [curriculum@tea.texas.gov](mailto:curriculum@tea.texas.gov).

[See [UIL Texas](https://www.uil texas.org/) (<https://www.uil texas.org/>) for additional information on all UIL-governed activities.]

Generally, a student who receives a grade below 70 at the end of a grading period in any academic class may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.

If a student is enrolled in a state-approved music course that participates in UIL Concert and Sight-reading Evaluation, and the student receives a grade below 70 in any course at the end of a grading period, the student may perform with the ensemble during the UIL evaluation performance, but is ineligible for other extracurricular activities for at least three weeks.

In addition, the following applies to all extracurricular activities:

Examples of **University Interscholastic League (UIL)**: As a member of the University Interscholastic League, Pittsburg High School is governed by its regulations. Each coach-sponsor will present a thorough explanation of all rules and regulations to participating students. For further details concerning eligibility, see the "Constitution and Contest Rules" published by the University Interscholastic League.

**UIL Grade Requirements and Eligibility:** Pittsburg ISD has a nine (9)-week grading period. This change affects how eligibility will be determined for the first six weeks of school. Grades must be checked for all participants at the end of the first six weeks of the school year regardless of the length of the grading period. Students who pass at the first 6-week check, remain eligible until the end of the nine-week grading period. A student who receives, at the end of any grading period (after the first six-weeks of the school year), a grade below 70 in any class may not participate in extracurricular activities for three school weeks. An ineligible student may practice or rehearse; however, the student regains eligibility after the seven calendar day waiting period has ended following a grading period.

\*Pittsburg Jr. High School will follow the U.I.L. requirements and guidelines as stated in the U.I.L.

Side-By-Side manual.

**Co-curricular Activities:** Students at Pittsburg Junior High School have the opportunity to enroll in courses of interest that involve after-school activities. The following programs are available.

**Band:** Band is an organization for all Pittsburg Junior High School students who are proficient on any standard band instrument and/or have the approval of the director. Band members participate in school and community activities.

**Cheerleading:** Cheerleaders are under the supervision of their respective sponsors and are required to conduct themselves at all times in such a manner as to reflect the trust and honor bestowed upon them. They shall, when participating in out-of-town activities, be governed by school policy concerning school sponsored trips. Cheerleaders are governed under the rules and guidelines set forth by the Pirate Cheerleader Handbook for the current year.

**Athletics:** Since athletics is an extracurricular activity and is a privilege, not a requirement of the state, the following criteria have been established at Pittsburg Junior High School to be eligible for participation.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade**

1. A student cannot be 14 years of age before September 1 of that year.
2. A student must have had satisfactory citizenship during the previous year and a satisfactory disciplinary record. A student must have approval from the Junior High Athletic Coordinator to be in athletics.
3. A student must have all athletic paperwork on file (physical, release, transportation)

4. A student must have completed the 6<sup>th</sup> grade physical education with a positive attitude, an ability to get along with peers, and a commitment to hard work.
5. A student must try and provide their own transportation home from practices and games. Coaches will help as much as they can but will have other duties after practice and games that they are responsible for.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

1. A student cannot be 15 years of age before September 1 of that year.
2. Students will not be allowed in athletics if there was a constant disruption with any area of athletics (travel to and from games, locker room, practice)
3. A student entering 8<sup>th</sup> grade athletics must have shown a commitment to learning and hard work during 7<sup>th</sup> grade athletics.
4. A student could re-enter the second semester if the coaches and principal feel he/she has cleared themselves of all disruptions, distractions, or any other problems that caused them to be dismissed from athletics.
5. A student must try and provide their own transportation home from practices and games. Coaches will help as much as they can but will have other duties after practice and games that they are responsible for.

If any of these criteria are not met, a meeting with the student and coach (principal if needed) is required. Possible results from this meeting could be: (1) Student placed on athletic probation. (2) Student will be allowed to participate in athletics, with close observation of his or her school performance. (3) Student will not be allowed to participate in athletics or a game suspension could result. The amount of time for the suspension will be determined by the coaches or principal.

These areas of behavior also apply to classroom and any other time the student will be representing PISD. PISD will follow all UIL Junior High rules and regulations that are written in the UIL constitution.

Travel to and from athletic contest will be with the team. In case of emergency only, the student will be released to the parents only. The athletic department feels this builds our team unity and each student will be in charge of turning in game equipment when they return.

**Student Organizations:** Students are encouraged to become involved in school organizations and activities. Student activity handbooks provide detailed information for tryouts, membership, and student responsibilities for each organization. As with any office held or activity in which one participates, there is always a commitment of time and energy. Those who choose to participate in any leadership role should accept the responsibilities of their duties with a sincere and serious attitude.

### **National Junior Honor Society:**

**Seventh Grade:** Students will be eligible candidate for induction into the Pittsburg Junior High School NJHS, provided they meet the selection criteria established by the NJHS Faculty Council. The induction ceremony will be held in the spring each year.

- Candidates must be in attendance at Pittsburg Junior High School for one semester prior to induction.

- Candidates must have an accumulative average of 95 or above in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. The selection will be based upon grades at the end of the fall semester of seventh grade. Grades in advanced courses will be weighted by 10 points. Candidates will also be evaluated on the basis of service, leadership, citizenship, and character.
- Members are required to perform a minimum of ten (10) hours of community service **each semester**, not to include required chapter activities. Record of hours must be turned in to chapter advisor by announced deadline and do not carry over each semester. Failure to complete service hours shall be grounds for dismissal.
- Members who fall below the standards, which were the basis of their selection, shall be placed on probation for the following nine week period. Grades will be reported to the advisor at the end of each nine week period. Members must meet with the advisor to provide a plan for improvement. If the average is not brought back up to the standards the following nine week period, they are dismissed from the chapter. Failure to attend meetings, complete service hours, or participate in chapter activities are grounds for dismissal.
- Members who are sent to the office for discipline more than once per school year will be dismissed. Assignment for ISS for more than two days will be grounds for automatic dismissal from the chapter.

**Student Council:** The Student Council promotes citizenship, scholarship and leadership values among the students at PJHS. Representatives from each grade level are elected by popular vote in the fall. To sign up for a place on the ballot, students must have and maintain an average of 70 or above in all courses and have good standing on discipline and attendance issues. It is understood that the Student Council is not a governing body for the school. This is the legal responsibility of the faculty, Principal, and the Superintendent, who are responsible to the Board of Trustees.

The Council has the following objectives:

- To promote good citizenship
- To provide leadership training and experience for students
- To improve school spirit and morale
- To plan and sponsor campus activities
- To encourage cooperation between the student body and the administration
- To inspire other students to achieve success by being a good role model

## **Fees**

Basic educational program materials are provided at no charge to a student. However, a student is expected to provide his or her own supplies, such as pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks. A student may also be required to pay certain other costs, fees, or deposits, including:

- Materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations.
- Admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.

- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, and the like.
- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. [See **Buses and Other School Vehicles** on page 104.]
- A maximum fee of \$50 for an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit or has not been awarded a final grade because of absences and whose parent chooses the program for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirements. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.
- In some cases, a fee for a course taken through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN).

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the principal. [See policy FP for more information.]

### **Fundraising**

Only school-sponsored, principal-approved fundraising may take place on the campus. Tickets or articles of any kind are not to be sold on school property by students or outside organizations except by special permission of the Principal.

### **Gang-Free Zones**

Certain criminal offenses, including gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next-highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. Gang-free zones include a school bus and any location in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

### **Gender-Based Harassment**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 48.]

### **Grading Guidelines**

*Grades 7-8 Grading Information*



In grades 7-8, all grades shall reflect student performance in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Teachers in every subject area shall record a minimum of 15 individual grades on separate assignments per grading period. Grades may be determined from a composite of the following: daily papers; notebooks; quizzes; homework assignments; teacher observations of participation, skills, demonstrations, or performances; short compositions; unit, chapter, or skills tests; projects; major reports/compositions; journals; and portfolios. Documentation of observable skills will be kept in a grade book. A grade that is determined from only one source is not acceptable.

### **Grades 7-8 Progress Reports**

Interim progress reports shall be issued after the third week and the sixth week of each grading period for all students who have a grade average of 75 or below. Supplemental progress reports may be issued at the teacher's discretion. (See policy EIA LOCAL)

The District will make such information available to sponsors of extracurricular activities in which the student participates. This notice will stipulate that the student will have the remainder of the nine-weeks to achieve the grade of 70 or above and that the student will be suspended from extracurricular activities if the grade is below 70 at the end of the nine-week period.

The District may require any student with a grade lower than 70 to attend tutorial sessions.

### **Grades 7-8 Grade Reporting Periods**

- The school year is comprised of two semesters, each consisting of approximately ninety days.
- Each semester consists of two nine-week reporting periods.

### **Grades 7-8 Nine Weeks Averages and Report Cards**

Students shall receive numerical scores in all subjects. PISD has the right to not accept credits of a student coming from another school if the credits transferred are not from an accredited school as established by the Texas Education Agency. The transcripts of foreign exchange students will be evaluated based on individual merit.

The following procedure will be used when computing a student's nine-week grade:

A minimum of fifteen (15) **distinct** grades will be recorded with at least three grades in the major grades category. Grades shall be equally distributed among three intervals within the nine-weeks grading period.

### *Grades 7-8 Grading Information (continued)*

#### **Major Grades: 60%**

May include:

Major Tests (including 6 weeks tests)  
Special Projects  
Research Papers  
Lab Practicals  
Reports

#### **Minor Grades: 40%**

May include:

Daily Work  
Homework  
Notebooks/Folders  
Oral Reports  
Class work  
Lab Practice  
Daily Tests  
Pop Tests  
Check Tests  
Spelling Tests

### **Grades 7-8 Semester Average**

In computing a semester average, the two nine-week's grades are added together then divided by two. At the end of the year, both semesters are added together and divided by two to calculate the yearly average. Each yearly average must be a 70 or better to earn credit for the course.

Report cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every nine weeks.

**Top 10% Guidelines:** 7<sup>th</sup> grade- Add semester averages together for Writing, Reading, Math, Science and Social Studies to calculate 7<sup>th</sup> grade total value. Advanced classes will be weighted 10 points. 8<sup>th</sup> grade- Add first semester average with 3<sup>rd</sup> nine weeks for each subject (ELA, Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies) to calculate 8<sup>th</sup> grade total value. Advanced classes will be weighted 10 points. To calculate the overall average, add 7<sup>th</sup> grade total value and 8<sup>th</sup> grade total value, then divide by twenty.

**Advanced Courses:** Pittsburg ISD provides advanced courses in math, reading, science, and social studies. Students must meet certain criteria in order to participate in advanced courses.

An average of 80 or above must be maintained for each grading period (including the three-week and six weeks progress reports). If a student fails to maintain this 80 average at any of the three intervals, he/she will be placed on academic probation. The student is subject to removal, if he/she falls below an average of 80, once again, at a consecutive or non-consecutive grading period. A committee of qualified and knowledgeable members will meet to determine if the student should be removed.

***Makeup Work from Absences*** Students will make up assignments and tests after being absent, including absences as a result of suspension or participation in a school activity. They will receive a zero for any assignment or test not made up within the allowed time. Students will be given time equal to the number of days absent. Assignments given prior to the absence are due by the end of the CLASS PERIOD on the day the student returns including exams. It is at the teacher's discretion what he/she deems appropriate for make-up work. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE TEACHER REGARDING ANY MISSED/MAKE-UP WORK.

**Late Work:** Students have one day after the assignment is due to turn in the assignment in for a grade no higher than 70. If the student neglects to turn the assignment in the second day, the grade will become a zero in the grade book.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the use of another person's original ideas or writing as one's own without giving credit to the true author. Plagiarism shall be considered cheating and the student shall be subject to disciplinary action that may include confiscation of any or all documents or assignments related to the act of plagiarism, grade penalties, and disciplinary penalties. Credit will not be given for any document confiscated as a result of plagiarism. (See policy EIA LOCAL)

**Students with Disabilities:** Decisions regarding grading procedures for a student with a disability who is receiving services under IDEA or Section 504 may be made by the Student Intervention Team (SIT) or the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee (ARDC). The SIT and ARDC will ensure that the annual goals and instructional objectives of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) are met. The classroom teacher will ensure the success of the student through implementation of the specified modifications or accommodations. If the student does not demonstrate success (as documented by an average of 70 or above), it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to initiate an ARDC or SIT meeting. The classroom teacher is responsible for the implementation and documentation of the modifications or accommodations.

**Resource Materials:** In the event that PISD is unable to provide appropriate resources (i.e. textbooks, graphing calculators); the student shall not suffer an academic penalty.

**Promotion and Retention:** In grades 1-8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in language arts, mathematics, and either science or social studies. When a Skills Checklist is used instead of number grades, students must master 70% of the objectives on the language arts, mathematics, and either science or social studies checklist to be promoted to the next grade level.

In addition, at certain grade levels a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the State Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and April 15 and is a Texas resident during the week that the STAAR is administered the first time.

In order to be promoted to grade 6, students enrolled in grade 5 must have performed satisfactorily on the Mathematics and Reading sections of the grade 5 assessments in English or Spanish.

In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the Mathematics and Reading sections of the grade 8 assessments in English.

Parents of a student in grade 5, or 8 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. Such students will have two additional opportunities to take the test. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policy EIE.]

### *Other Grading and Credit Information (continued)*

Certain students—some with disabilities and some with limited English proficiency—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, counselor, or special education director.

#### **Students with Disabilities**

Decisions regarding grading procedures for a student with a disability who is receiving services under IDEA or Section 504 may be made by the Student Intervention Team (SIT) or the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee (ARDC). The SIT and ARDC will ensure that the annual goals and instructional objectives of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) are met. The classroom teacher will ensure the success of the student through implementation of the specified modifications or accommodations. If the student does not demonstrate success (as documented by an average of 70 or above), it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to initiate an ARDC or SIT meeting. The classroom teacher is responsible for the implementation and documentation of the modifications or accommodations.

#### **Harassment**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 48.]

#### **Hazing**

Hazing is defined as an intentional, knowing, or reckless act, on or off campus, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student for the purpose of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in a student organization if the act meets the elements in Education Code 37.151, including:

- Any type of physical brutality
- An activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the student's mental or physical health, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement to small spaces, calisthenics, or consumption of food, liquids, drugs, or other substances
- An activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that violates the Penal Code
- Coercing a student to consume a drug or alcoholic beverage in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe the student is intoxicated

The district will not tolerate hazing. Disciplinary consequences for hazing will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report this to the principal, superintendent, or law enforcement official.

[See **Bullying** on page 33 and policies FFI and FNCC for more information.]

## **Health — Physical and Mental**

### **Illness**

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she will not be attending that day.

State rules require schools to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for certain periods of time. For example, if a child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications. Students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea-free without use of diarrhea-suppressing medications for 24 hours.

A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent.

The district is required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) or our local/regional health authority. The school nurse can provide information from DSHS on these notifiable conditions.

The school nurse is available to answer any questions for parents who are concerned about whether or not their child should stay home.

### **Immunization**

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized.

For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. You may access the [DSHS exemption form \(https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunization-unit/texas-school-child-care-facility-immunization/texas-immunization-exemptions\)](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunization-unit/texas-school-child-care-facility-immunization/texas-immunization-exemptions) online or by writing to this address:

Texas Department of State Health Services  
Immunization Section, Mail Code 1946  
P.O. Box 149347  
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis
- Polio
- Measles, mumps, and rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (chicken pox)

- Meningococcal
- Hepatitis A

The school nurse can provide information on immunization requirements. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. registered and licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a lifelong condition.

For information on immunization against bacterial meningitis and college enrollment and attendance, see **Bacterial Meningitis** on page .

[See the DSHS's [Texas School & Child Care Facility Immunization Requirements](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunization-unit/texas-school-child-care-facility-immunization) (<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunization-unit/texas-school-child-care-facility-immunization>) and policy FFAB(LEGAL) for more information.]

### Lice

Head lice is very common among children. Although not an illness or a disease, head lice spread through head-to-head contact during play, sports, nap time, and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones.

The district does not require or recommend that students be removed from school because of lice or nits.

If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to discuss a treatment plan using an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student undergoes one treatment, the parent should contact the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments, how best to get rid of lice, and how to prevent lice from returning.

The district will provide notice to parents of elementary school students in an affected classroom without identifying the student with lice.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website [Managing Head Lice in School Settings and at Home](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/texas-school-health/skilled-procedures-texas-school-health/managing-head-lice-school) (<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/texas-school-health/skilled-procedures-texas-school-health/managing-head-lice-school>) and from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website [Head Lice Information for Parents](https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/parents.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/parents.html>).

[See policy FFAA for more information.]

### Medicine at School

If a student must take medication during school hours, the student's parent must provide the medication. All medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be kept in the nurse's office and be administered by the nurse or another authorized district employee. A student may be authorized to possess his or her own medication because of asthma or a severe allergy as described below or as otherwise allowed by law.

The district will not purchase nonprescription medication to give to a student.

In accordance with policy FFAC, authorized employees may administer:

- Prescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Nonprescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request. **Note:** Insect repellent is considered a nonprescription medication.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

An elementary or secondary student may possess and self-apply sunscreen to avoid overexposure to the sun. An elementary student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to the student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and asks for help applying it. If a secondary student needs assistance with sunscreen application, please address the need with the school nurse.

Whether a student is at the elementary or secondary level, if sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the school nurse so that the district is made aware of any safety and medical issues.

#### **Asthma and Severe Allergic Reactions**

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her health-care provider and the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication.

If the student has been prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parents should discuss this with the school nurse or principal.

See also **Food Allergies** on page 69.

#### **Unassigned Epinephrine Auto-injectors**

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized [*school personnel and/or school volunteers*] who have been adequately trained to administer an unassigned epinephrine auto-injector to a person who is reasonably believed to be experiencing a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

#### **Unassigned Medication for Respiratory Distress**

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized and trained [*school personnel and/or school volunteers*] to administer a medication for respiratory distress on a school campus or at a school-related activity to a person reasonably believed to be experiencing symptoms of respiratory distress. .

For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

### **Unassigned Opioid Antagonists**

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board **will adopt a** policy (pending approval) to allow authorized and trained school personnel at each campus that serves students in grades 6-12, including the Intermediate Campus, to administer an opioid antagonist, such as Narcan or Naloxone, to an individual who is reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose.

One or more authorized and trained individuals will be present on each campus subject to this policy during regular school hours.

### **Steroids**

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for physician-prescribed medical use only.

Body building, muscle enhancement, or the increase of muscle bulk or strength through the use of an anabolic steroid or human growth hormone by a healthy student is not a valid medical use and is a criminal offense.

### **Mental Health Support**

The district has implemented programs to address the following mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse concerns:

- Mental health promotion and early intervention
- Building skills to manage emotions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and engage in responsible decision-making
- Substance abuse prevention and intervention
- Suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention (interventions after a suicide in a community)
- Grief, trauma, and trauma-informed care
- Positive behavior interventions and supports
- Positive youth development
- Safe, supportive, and positive school climates

If a student has been hospitalized or placed in residential treatment for a mental health condition or substance abuse, the district has procedures to support the student's return to school. Please contact the district's mental health liaison for further information.

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication that is intended to alter perception, emotion, mood, or behavior.

A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. [See policy FFEB for more information.]



For related information, see:

- **Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation** on page 6 and **Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service** on page 7 for the district's procedures for recommending a mental health intervention and the mental health liaison's contact information;
- **Counseling** on page 46 for the district's comprehensive school counseling program;
- **Physical and Mental Health Resources** on page 70 for campus and community mental and physical health resources; and
- **Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health** on page 71 for board-adopted policies and administrative procedures that promote student health.

### **Physical Activity Requirements**

#### ***Junior High/Middle School***

The district will ensure that students in middle or junior high school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.

For additional information on the district's junior high and middle school student physical activity programs and requirements, please see the principal.

#### ***Temporary Restriction from Participation in Physical Education***

Students who are temporarily restricted from participation in physical education will not actively participate in skill demonstration but will remain in class to learn the concepts of the lessons.

### **Physical Fitness Assessment**

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3-12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year by contacting the campus PE teacher.

#### ***Athletics Participation***

For certain extracurricular activities, a student must submit certification from an authorized health-care provider. The certification must state that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the relevant program, including:

- A district athletics program
- District marching band
- Any district extracurricular program identified by the superintendent

This examination is required in the first year of middle school competition and the first and third years of high school competition. During the alternate years, the student must complete a medical appraisal form, and the results of this appraisal may prompt the district to require a physical examination.

Students should be aware of the rare possibility of sudden cardiac arrest, which in athletes is usually caused by a previously unsuspected heart disease or disorder. A student may request an electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) to screen for such disorders, in addition to his or her required physical examination.

See the UIL's explanation of [sudden cardiac arrest](https://www.uil-texas.org/health/info/sudden-cardiac-death) (<https://www.uil-texas.org/health/info/sudden-cardiac-death>) for more information

## **Physical Health Screenings/Examinations**

### ***Spinal Screening Program***

School-based spinal screening helps identify adolescents with abnormal spinal curvature at an early stage when the curve is mild and may go unnoticed. Early detection is key to controlling spinal deformities. Spinal screening is non-invasive and conducted in accordance with the most recent nationally accepted and peer-reviewed standards.

All students who meet the Texas Department of State Health Services criteria will be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. As appropriate, students will be referred for follow-up with their physician.

For information on spinal screening by an outside professional or exemption from spinal screening based on religious beliefs, contact the superintendent or see policy FFAA(LEGAL).

## **Special Health Concerns**

### ***Bacterial Meningitis***

Please see the district's website at [https://www.pittsburgisd.net/109239\\_2](https://www.pittsburgisd.net/109239_2) for information regarding meningitis.

**Note:** Entering college students must show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five-year period prior to enrolling in and taking courses at an institution of higher education. Please see the school nurse for more information, as this may affect a student who wishes to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus.

[See **Immunization** on page 63.]

### ***Diabetes***

In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. See the school nurse or principal for information. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL) for more information.]

### ***Food Allergies***

Parents should notify the district when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially an allergy that could result in dangerous or life-threatening reactions either by breathing, eating, or touching the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse or campus principal if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, based on the Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) *Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies at Risk for Anaphylaxis* found on the DSHS [Allergies and Anaphylaxis](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/texas-school-health/allergies-anaphylaxis) website (<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/texas-school-health/allergies-anaphylaxis>)

When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, an individual care plan will be developed to assist the student in safely

accessing the school environment. The district's food allergy management plan can be accessed from the school nurse

[See **Celebrations** on page 37 and policy FFAF for more information.]

### ***Seizures***

To address the care of a student with a seizure disorder while at school or participating in a school activity, a parent may submit a seizure management and treatment plan to the district before the beginning of the school year, upon enrollment of the student, or as soon as practicable following diagnosis of a seizure disorder.

[See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** on page 24 and contact the school nurse for more information.]

### **Tobacco and E-Cigarettes Prohibited (All Grade Levels and All Others on School Property)**

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarette (e-cigarette), or any other electronic vaporizing device while on school property or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, e-cigarettes, or any other electronic vaporizing device by students and all others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the Student Code of Conduct and policies FNCD and GKA for more information.]

### **PISD Tobacco/Vaping/Drug Use**

#### **Possession (ONLY)**

1 st Offense: DAEP (30/10 day placement)

2 nd Offense: DAEP (60 days NO REVIEW)

\*If drug possession contains THC automatic 60 day DAEP placement NO REVIEW

#### **Vaping (no THC)/Tobacco Products**

1 st Offense: DAEP (60 days/30 day review)

2 nd Offense: DAEP (60 days NO 30 day review)

3 rd Offense: DAEP (Semester)

\*If drug possession contains THC automatic 60 day DAEP placement NO REVIEW

#### **Vaping (THC)/Drug Usage**

1 st Offense: DAEP (60 days NO 30 day review)

2 nd Offense: (Same School Year): Expulsion

#### **Distribution**

1 st Offense: DAEP (Semester)

2 nd Offense (Same School Year): Expulsion

## **Health-Related Resources, Policies, and Procedures**

### **Physical and Mental Health Resources**

Parents and students in need of assistance with physical and mental health concerns may contact the following campus and community resources:

- The campus full-time nurse:

#### **Jr. High**

Lori Hooper

313 Broach St.

Pittsburg, TX 75686

903-856-6482

LHooper@pittsburgisd.net

- The campus full-time school counselor:

#### **Jr. High**

Stacey Stuard

313 Broach St.

Pittsburg, TX 75686

903-856-6482

Sstuard@pittsburgisd.net

### **Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health (All Grade Levels)**

The district has adopted board policies that promote student physical and mental health. (LOCAL) policies on the topics below can be found in the district's policy manual, available at <https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline?key=264>.

- Food and nutrition management: CO, COA, COB
- Wellness and Health Services: FFA
- Physical Examinations: FFAA
- Immunizations: FFAB
- Medical Treatment: FFAC
- Communicable Diseases: FFAD
- School-Based Health Centers: FFAE
- Care Plans: FFAF
- Crisis Intervention: FFB
- Trauma-informed Care: FFBA

- Student Support Services: FFC
- Student Safety: FFF
- Child Abuse and Neglect: FFG
- Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation: FFH
- Freedom from Bullying: FFI

In addition, the District Improvement Plan details the district's strategies to improve student performance through evidence-based practices that address physical and mental health.

The district has developed administrative procedures as necessary to implement the above policies and plans.

For further information regarding these procedures and access to the District Improvement Plan, please contact:

*Beth Anne Dunavant*

*402 Broach St.*

*Pittsburg, TX 75686*

*903-856-3628*

*bdunavant@pittsburgisd.net*

#### **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)**

Information regarding the district's SHAC is available at [www.pittsburgisd.net](http://www.pittsburgisd.net).

Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings will be posted at each campus administrative office at least 72 hours before the meeting. Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings, meeting minutes, and a recording of each meeting will be posted on the district website at

[https://www.pittsburgisd.net/566497\\_3](https://www.pittsburgisd.net/566497_3).

**Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking** on page 7, and policies BDF and EHAA. For more information.]

#### **Student Wellness Policy/Wellness Plan**

To encourage healthy habits in our students, the district has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement it. For questions about the content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan, please contact

*Laurie Smith*

*lsmith@pittsburgisd.net*

#### **Homework**

Homework policies will be communicated by the teacher of the course.

#### **Law Enforcement Agencies**

**Police Intervention:** Certain situations/violations are likely to result in the police being called. When this occurs, parents will be informed as soon as possible. The following situations/violations are likely to result in police intervention:

- Theft (dollar value usually determines seriousness)
- Physical assaults
- Fire, explosives, and weapons violations
- Criminal mischief or vandalism
- Drug and alcohol violations
- Disorderly conduct (i.e. offensive language, fighting, etc.)
- Other appropriate investigations

**Disruptions:** In order to ensure student safety and sustain an educational program free from disruption, state law permits the District to take action against any person -- student or non-student -- who:

- Interferes with the movement of people in an exit, an entrance, or a hallway of a District building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interferes with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Uses force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interferes with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to District property.
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving District property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disrupts classes while on District property or on public property that is within 500 feet of District property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending a required class or activity; entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with profane language or any misconduct.
- Interferes with the transportation of students in District vehicles.

**Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, and Weapons:** Under state and federal law, a student is not allowed to possess, sell, give away, or use alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco products, guns, or other weapons on school property or at a school related or school-sanctioned activity, on or off school property. Having one of these items in a privately owned vehicle that the student may have driven to school and parked on District property is also prohibited. A more detailed description concerning discipline may be found in the Student Code of Conduct

### **Questioning of Students**

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, including without parental consent, if necessary, if it is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances, the principal will:

- Verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question the student at school.
- Ordinarily make reasonable efforts to notify the parents, unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- Ordinarily be present for the questioning or interview, unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

### **Students Taken into Custody**

State law requires the district to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs for comparison in an investigation.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs to establish a student's identity where the child may have engaged in conduct indicating a need for supervision, such as running away.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services (CPS), Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive from a juvenile court to take a student into custody.

Before a student is released to a legally authorized person, the principal will verify the person's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the person's authority to take custody of the student.

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will attempt to notify the parent, unless the legally authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a student's release to a legally authorized person, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

#### **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors that occur in school, on school property, or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property. These personnel will also be notified if the principal has reasonable grounds to believe the student has engaged in certain conduct.
- All appropriate district personnel regarding a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

#### **Leaving Campus**

Student attendance is crucial. Appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours if possible. Except for extenuating circumstances, students will not regularly be released before the end of the school day. Repeated instances of leaving early will result in disciplinary action.

Parental consent is required before any student leaves campus for any part of the school day.

For students in elementary and middle school, a parent or authorized adult must come to the office and show identification to sign the student out. A campus representative will ask the student to report to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, we cannot allow any unescorted adult to go to the classroom or other area to pick up the student. If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's wishes regarding release from school.

Under no circumstances will a student in elementary or middle school be released unaccompanied.

#### **During Lunch**

Students must be signed out by a parent or guardian. If a student is late to the next class returning from lunch it will result in a Tardy.

#### **At Any Other Time during the School Day**

Students will be allowed to leave school during the school day only with the sign out of parent or guardian. Students who leave without permission are subject to disciplinary action

#### **Check-Out Procedures**

If you must pick your child up early for an emergency or an appointment, you must do so before 2:45. If you need your child between 3:00 and the end of the school day, you will need to wait until our regularly scheduled dismissal time of 3:30. Changes in how a child will go home at dismissal must be made before 2:45 each day. Due to the busy nature of the office and the classroom at the end of the day, we will not be able to accept any change requests after 2:45.

#### **Lockers/Cubbies**

Items of a non-school nature should not be placed in lockers or cubbies. Students are responsible for all items left in lockers or cubbies.

School lockers and cubbies are school property and are subject to inspection by administrative authorities. Any damage to a locker could result in the student being held financially responsible for such damage. Students requiring locker maintenance should notify the grade-level Principal.

#### **Lost and Found**

A lost and found collection box is located in the campus office. A student who loses an item should check the lost and found box. The district discourages bringing personal items of high monetary value to school, as the district is not responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.



## **Makeup Work**

### **Makeup Work Because of Absence**

Students shall make up assignments and tests after excused absences, including absences as a result of suspension. Students have one day for every day they were absent to turn in their work. The student shall receive a zero for any assignment or test not made up in the allotted time. The burden of responsibility for completing makeup work rests entirely upon the student rather than the teacher.

The student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time so that the teacher and student may plan any makeup work. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school. With limited exceptions, all absences count for the 90 percent threshold set in state law regarding attendance for credit or final grade. [See **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade** on page 27.]

A student involved in an extracurricular activity must notify his or her teachers ahead of time about any absences.

A student will be permitted to make up tests and turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with timelines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

### **DAEP Makeup Work**

See campus Principal

### ***Elementary and Middle/Junior High School Grade Levels***

#### **In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) Makeup Work (All Grade Levels)**

##### ***Alternative Means to Receive Coursework***

While a student is in ISS or OSS, the district will provide the student with all course work for the student's foundation curriculum classes that the student misses as a result of the suspension.

##### ***Opportunity to Complete Courses***

A student removed from the regular classroom to ISS or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FO(LEGAL) for more information.]

## **Nondiscrimination Statement**

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, the district does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law in providing education services, activities, and programs, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The district provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

In accordance with Title IX, the district does not and is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The requirement not to discriminate extends to employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX

Coordinator (see below), to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

Other federal laws that prohibit discrimination include Title VI, Section 504, the Age Discrimination Act, the Boy Scouts Act, and Title II.

The district has designated and authorized the following employee as the Title IX Coordinator to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or gender-based harassment:

*Beth Anne Dunavant*

*402 Broach St.*

*Pittsburg, TX 75686*

*903-856-3628*

*bdunavant@pittsburgisd.net*

Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-business hours, by mail, phone, or email. During district business hours, reports may also be made in person. Upon the district receiving notice or an allegation of sex-based harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly respond in accordance with the process described at FFH(LOCAL).

The following district representatives have been designated to address concerns or inquiries about other kinds of discrimination:

- For concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability, see the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator:

- *Kelly Hobbs*

*402 Broach St.*

*Pittsburg, TX 75686*

*903-856-3628*

*khobbs@pittsburgisd.net*

- For all other concerns regarding discrimination, see the superintendent:

- *Terry Waldrep*

*402 Broach St.*

*Pittsburg, TX 75686*

*903-856-3628*

*twaldrep@pittsburgisd.net*

[See policies FB, FFH, and GKD for more information.]

### **Nontraditional Academic Programs**

*The district reserves the right to offer nontraditional programs, such as special evening programs for dropout recovery, an early college high school, or flexible school day program in very special circumstances. See the campus principal for a description of each program and the categories of students it is designed to serve.*

## **Parent and Family Engagement**

### **Working Together**

Experience and research tell us that a child succeeds in education with good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. A parent's involvement and engagement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child every day to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 46.]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, school counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 84.]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [See **Volunteers** on page 110 and policy GKG for more information.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees that develop educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For more information, see policies BQA and BQB and contact:

*Beth Anne Dunavant*

*402 Broach St.*

*Pittsburg, TX 75686*

*903-856-3628*

*bdunavant@pittsburgisd.net*

- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and assisting the district in aligning local community values with health education instruction, human sexuality instruction, instruction on prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking,

and other wellness issues. [See **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** on page 72 and policies BDF, EHAA, FFA for more information.]

- Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child's emotional or mental well-being.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. Regular board meetings are held on the third Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the Central Office Board Room at 402 Broach St. An agenda for a regular or special meeting is posted no later than 72 hours before each meeting at 402 Broach St, and online at <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Public/Organization/1450>. [See policies BE and BED for more information.]

## **Parent and Family Engagement Policy**

### **Pittsburg ISD Parent and Family Engagement Policy**

(ESSA Section 1116)

1. Pittsburg ISD will reach out to all parents and family members and implement programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents and family members in programs consistent with the requirements of ESSA Section 1116. Such programs, activities, and procedures shall be planned and implemented with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children. Section 1116 (a)(1)

Input will be solicited through varied means including scheduled meetings during the school day, evening events, and through electronic communications.

2. Pittsburg ISD receives Title I, Part A funds. Our goal is to plan and implement effective parent and family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance. Therefore, Pittsburg ISD will develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy. Section 1116 (a)(2) The policy shall be incorporated into the District Improvement Plan (DIP) and establish the LEA's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family involvement.

Pittsburg ISD will: involve parents and family members in jointly developing the District Improvement Plan (DIP) under section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1111(d). Section 1116 (a)(2)(A)

Pittsburg ISD will provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary in planning and implementing effective parent and family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, which may include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education. Section 1116 (a)(2)(B); (a)(2)(C); (a)(2)(D)

The policy shall be reviewed, evaluated, and revised annually by the Pittsburg ISD District Planning Committee whose membership is comprised of school, community, and parent stakeholders.

3. To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, Pittsburg ISD shall:

- provide assistance to parents of children, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the challenging State academic standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of the parent and family engagement program, and how to monitor a child's progress (Section 1116) (e) (i);
  - provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement (ii); and educate teachers and staff in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school (Section 1116) (e)(2).
  - ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand (Section 1116) (e)(3)(5) and (iv).
- (ESSA Sección 1116)

1. El Distrito Escolar de Pittsburg se contactará con los padres y familiares e implementará programas, actividades, y procedimientos para la integración de los padres y familiares en programas coherentes con los requisitos de la ESSA Sección 1116. Tales programas, actividades, y procedimientos serán planificados e implementados con una consulta significativa a los padres de los niños participantes. Sección 1116 (a)(1)

El aporte será solicitado a través de varios medios incluyendo reuniones programadas durante el día escolar, eventos en las tardes y a través de la comunicación electrónica.

2. El Distrito escolar de Pittsburg recibe fondos de Título I, Parte A. Nuestro objetivo es planificar e implementar la participación de los padres y familias en las actividades para mejorar el desempeño académico del estudiante y el rendimiento escolar. Por lo tanto, el distrito escolar de Pittsburg desarrollará y distribuirá en conjunto y en acuerdo con los padres y familias de los niños participantes, una política escrita de participación de los padres y la familia. Sección 1116 (a)(2) La política está incorporada en el Plan de Mejoramiento del Distrito (DIP) y establece las expectativas y objetivos de la LEA para una participación significativa de los padres y la familia.

El Distrito Escolar de Pittsburg involucrará a los padres y familiares en conjunto a desarrollar el Plan de Mejoramiento del Distrito (DIP) bajo la sección 1112, y el desarrollo de apoyo a los planes de mejoramiento bajo los párrafos (1) y (2) de la sección 1111(d). Sección 1116 (a)(2)(A)

El Distrito Escolar de Pittsburg proporcionará la coordinación, la asistencia técnica, y cualquier apoyo necesario en la planificación e implementación efectiva de la participación a las actividades de los padres y la familia para mejorar el desempeño académico y rendimiento escolar, la cual puede incluir una consulta significativa los empleadores, líderes comerciales y organizaciones filantrópicas, o

individuos con experiencia efectiva en el compromiso de padres y familiares relacionadas con la educación. Sección 1116 (a)(2)(B); (a)(2)(C); (a)(2)(D)

La política será revisada y evaluada anualmente por el Comité de Planificación del Distrito Escolar de Pittsburg cuya afiliación está comprometida con la escuela, la comunidad, y los padres interesados.

3. Asegurar la participación efectiva de los padres y apoyar la colaboración entre escuelas, los padres y la comunidad para mejorar el desempeño académico del estudiante, el Distrito Escolar de Pittsburg:

- proporcionará ayuda a los padres de hijos, según corresponda, en el entendimiento de temas tales como la exigencia de los estándares académicos Estatales, evaluaciones académicas Estatales y locales, requisitos de los programas de compromiso de los padres y la familia, y cómo monitorear el progreso del niño (Sección 1116) (e) (i);
- proporcionará materiales y entrenamiento para ayudar a los padres a trabajar en conjunto con sus niños y a mejorar su desempeño, tales como cursos de alfabetización y uso de la tecnología, según corresponda, para fomentar la participación de los padres (ii); y capacitar a los profesores y empleados a cómo llegar en una forma efectiva a los estudiantes, comunicarse mejor con ellos y trabajar con los padres en igualdad de condiciones, implementar y coordinar programas para padres y construir lazos entre los padres y la escuela (Sección 1116) (e)(2).
- asegurar que la información relacionada con la escuela y los programas de padres, reuniones y otras actividades sea enviada a los padres de los niños participantes en un formato y, en la medida de lo posible, en el idioma en que los padres puedan entender (Sección 1116) (e)(3)(5) y (iv).

#### **School - Parent Compact**

#### **Pittsburg ISD**

#### **School - Parent Compact**

We value your role as a parent or guardian in working to help your child achieve high academic standards. Below are some ways you and our school staff can build and maintain a partnership to share the responsibility for supporting your child's education.

#### **School Responsibility**

- Provide high quality curriculum and learning materials
- Provide assistance in understanding academic achievement standards and assessment and monitoring your child's academic progress
- Provide opportunities for ongoing communication including conferences, progress reports, phone calls, emails, and other forms of electronic communication

### **Parent Responsibility**

- Ensure that your child attends school regularly
- Encourage your child to show positive school behavior
- Review your child's homework
- Encourage positive use of your child's extracurricular time
- Participate in decisions relating to the education of your child

Please review this School – Parent Compact with your child. This Compact may be discussed with your child's teacher or principal as it relates to your child's school progress. Thank you for your support and involvement in your child's education.

Please contact the person below for more information.

<b>Campus</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
Primary	Jyl Wood	903-856-6482
Elementary	Heather Griffin	903-856-6472
Intermediate	Todd Newman	903-855-3395
Junior High	Jennifer Styles	903-856-6432
High School	Rustin Ramsey	903-856-3646

### **Student/Family/School Success Agreement**

Success comes from an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation. The following plan is designed for all parties involved to review, discuss and agree upon so that students can learn, teachers can teach, parents can parent, and success can be achieved by all.

Student: I will work and achieve to the best of my ability. Therefore, I agree to do the following:

- Attend school regularly and be on time to class
- Share notes, assignments, and other school information with my family
- Complete homework on time
- Show respect for my school, other people, and myself
- Obey the code of conduct and other rules and follow procedures while on school grounds, on the bus, and at all school-sponsored activities
- Do my best in my work and in my behavior
- Work cooperatively with my classmates to have a positive and safe school
- Make reading a daily habit
- Dress appropriately

School: We want all our students to achieve academically and socially. Therefore, we agree to do the following:

- Communicate regularly with students and families regarding attendance and student performance
- Treat each student with respect and help each student to reach his/her fullest potential
- Provide appropriate and effective instruction in a positive and safe learning environment
- Be a positive role model
- Seek ways to involve families in the school's activities
- Encourage reading activities for the family
- Enforce appropriate dress

Family: We want our student to be successful, achieve academically and behave appropriately at school. Therefore, we agree to encourage him/her by doing the following:

- Assure that my student attends school regularly, is on time, and has the necessary supplies
- Communicate regularly with my student's teachers and school staff
- Check daily for notes, assignments, homework or other school information and monitor for completion
- Know and support all District/school policies and rules
- Support the school in its efforts to provide a safe and positive learning environment
- Encourage good study habits at home
- Volunteer time and/or support activities at my student's school
- Read with my student and let him/her see me read
- Promote and ensure appropriate dress

To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call your child's campus Jr. high School 903-856-6432

### **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence**

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags** on page 12.]

State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, at the beginning of the first class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day.

[See policy EC for more information.]



## **Prayer**

Each student has a right to pray individually, voluntarily, and silently or to meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt school activities. The school will not encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

## **Promotion and Retention**

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or proficiency. In making promotion decisions, the district will consider the following:

- Teacher recommendation
- Grades
- Scores on criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessments
- Any other necessary academic information as determined by the district

## **Elementary and Middle/Junior High Grade Levels**

In grades 2-8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in three of the following areas: English language arts/reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.

## **Repeating — Grade-8 at Parent Request**

A parent may request in writing that a student repeat kindergarten, or any grade in grade 1-8. Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate.

## **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences**

Report cards with each student's performance and absences in each class or subject are issued at least once every 9 weeks.

After the third week and sixth week of a grading period, parents will receive a progress report if their child's performance in any course/subject area is near or below 70 or is below the expected level of performance. If a student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent will be asked to schedule a conference with the teacher.

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the superintendent or designee pursuant to the board-adopted policy. Grading guidelines are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See **Grading Guidelines** on page 61 and policy EIA(LOCAL) for more information.]

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher. If the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG(LOCAL).

The district may communicate academic information about a student electronically, including for progress reporting purposes. An electronic signature will be accepted by the district, but parents are entitled to request a handwritten signature of acknowledgment instead.

## **Retaliation**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 48.]

## **Required State Assessments**

### **STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) for Grades 3-8**

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels are required to take the state assessment, called STAAR, in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3-8
- Reading, annually in grades 3-8
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

### **Standardized Testing for a Student Enrolled Above Grade Level**

If a student in grades 3-8 is enrolled in a class or course intended for students above his or her current grade level in which the student will be administered a state-mandated assessment, the student will be required to take an applicable state-mandated assessment only for the course in which he or she is enrolled, unless otherwise required to do so by federal law.

A student in grades 3-8 shall be assessed at least once in high school with the ACT or the SAT if the student completes the high school end-of-course assessments in mathematics, reading/language arts, or science prior to high school.

### **Requesting Administration of STAAR/EOC in Paper Format**

STAAR and EOC assessments are administered electronically.

A parent or teacher may request that a STAAR or EOC be administered to a student in paper format. The district may grant this request for any single administration for up to three percent of the number of students enrolled in the district. Requests will be granted in the order in which they are received.

Requests for paper format for a spring administration of a STAAR or EOC must be submitted no later than December 1 each school year.

### **Standardized Testing for a Student in Special Programs**

Certain students — some with disabilities and some classified as emergent bilingual students — may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director.

STAAR Alternate 2 is available for eligible students receiving special education services who meet certain criteria established by the state as determined by the student's ARD committee.

An admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee for a student receiving special education services will determine whether successful performance on the EOC assessments will be required for graduation within the parameters identified in state rules and the student's personal graduation plan (PGP).

For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director

### **Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on STAAR or EOC**

If a student does not perform satisfactorily on a required state assessment in any subject, the district will provide accelerated instruction for the student in the subsequent school year by:

- Assigning the student to a teacher who is certified as a master, exemplary, or recognized teacher if one is available in the grade and subject matter of the state assessment on which the student did not perform satisfactorily, or
- Providing supplemental instruction.

A student may be required to attend any assigned supplemental instruction program before or after school or during the summer.

The district will provide transportation for supplemental instruction during the summer.

When a student fails to perform satisfactorily on a required state assessment in the same subject area for two or more years, the district shall develop an accelerated education plan. Parents are encouraged to participate in developing this plan.

### **Safety**

Student safety on campus, at school-related events, and in district vehicles is a high priority of the district. The cooperation of students is essential to ensuring school safety. A student is expected to:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow all behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct or set by district employees.
- Help secure the campus by keeping all exterior doors closed, latched, and locked unless the door is actively monitored by a district employee.
- Follow instructions from teachers and other district employees regarding classroom doors.
- Remain alert to any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member, and promptly report any incidents to a district employee. A student may make anonymous reports about safety concerns by submitting an online report at <https://www.pittsburgisd.net/30256>.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

### **Emergency Situations**

In case of an emergency, it is essential for all persons to obey promptly and to follow the prescribed procedures as quickly as possible. Teachers will give students instructions and will supervise the students during the drill or emergency. Students are to cooperate and to follow instructions given by school officials.

**Emergency Procedures:** In case of an emergency, it is essential for all persons to obey promptly and to follow the prescribed procedures as quickly as possible. Teachers will give students instructions and will supervise the students during the drill or emergency. Students are to cooperate and to follow instructions given by school officials.

### **INTRUDER IN THE BUILDING**

PURPOSE: TO KEEP PEOPLE SAFE.

- WHEN TO USE:
- 1) UNEXPECTED SITUATION.
  - 2) INTRUDER ON CAMPUS.
  - 3) OFFICE COMMAND "INTRUDER".
- WHAT TO DO:
- 1) TEACHERS SHOULD DECIDE WHAT IS BEST FOR THE STUDENTS. EXIT THE BUILDING IF POSSIBLE.
  - 2) IF THE INTRUDER IS CLOSE BY, SHUT, LOCK AND BARRICADE THE DOOR. EXIT THE CLASSROOM WINDOW WITH SAFETY BAG IF POSSIBLE.

NOTE: IF AN "INTRUDER" COMMAND IS GIVEN BETWEEN CLASSES, STAFF MEMBERS ARE TO MOVE STUDENTS OUTSIDE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. DIRECT STUDENTS TO EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH OR THE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD.

### **SHELTER IN HALL/CLASSROOM**

PURPOSE: TO KEEP PEOPLE SAFE DURING BAD WEATHER.

- WHEN TO USE:
- 1) DURING SEVERE WEATHER SUCH AS A TORNADO.
  - 2) OFFICE COMMAND "BAD WEATHER".
- WHAT TO DO:
- 1) MOVE STUDENTS TO A SAFE AREA.
  - 2) ASSUME CROUCHED POSITION AGAINST THE WALL.
  - 3) ACCOUNT FOR AND MAINTAIN CONTROL OF STUDENTS.
  - 4) HOLD UP THE GREEN SIGN IF ALL STUDENTS ARE ACCOUNTED FOR. HOLD UP THE RED SIGN IF A STUDENT IS MISSING.

### **SITE EVACUATION**

PURPOSE: TO KEEP PEOPLE SAFE BY RELOCATING TO A SAFE PLACE.

- WHEN TO USE:
- 1) FIRE ALARM.
  - 2) OFFICE COMMAND "EVACUATE".
- WHAT TO DO:
- 1) EXIT THE BUILDING BY DESIGNATED ROUTE.
  - 2) TAKE GRADEBOOK & SAFETY BAG. LEAVE DOOR OPEN.
  - 3) ACCOUNT FOR AND MAINTAIN CONTROL OF STUDENTS.
  - 4) HOLD UP THE GREEN SIGN IF ALL STUDENTS ARE ACCOUNTED FOR. HOLD UP THE RED SIGN IF A STUDENT IS MISSING.

## **Accident Insurance**

Soon after the school year begins, parents will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost accident insurance that would help meet medical expenses in the event of injury to their child.

## **Insurance for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs**

The district may purchase accident, liability, or automobile insurance coverage for students and businesses involved in the district's CTE programs.

## **Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies**

Periodically, the school will conduct preparedness drills of emergency procedures. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

## **Preparedness Training: CPR and Stop the Bleed**

The district will offer instruction in CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED) at least once to students enrolled in grades 7-12. The instruction can be provided as part of any course and is not required to result in CPR or AED certification.

The district will annually offer students in grades 7-12 instruction on the use of bleeding control stations to respond to traumatic injury. For more information, see:

- [Homeland Security's Stop the Bleed](https://www.dhs.gov/stopthebleed) (<https://www.dhs.gov/stopthebleed>)
- [Stop the Bleed Texas](https://stopthebleedtexas.org/) (<https://stopthebleedtexas.org/>)

#### **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

All parents are asked each year to complete a medical care authorization form, providing written parental consent to obtain emergency treatment and information about allergies to medications or drugs. Parents should contact the school nurse to update emergency care information (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, and the like).

The district may consent to medical treatment, including dental treatment, if necessary, for a student if:

- The district has received written authorization from a person having the right to consent;
- That person cannot be contacted; and
- That person has not given the district actual notice to the contrary.

The emergency care authorization form will be used by the district when a student's parent or authorized designee cannot be contacted. A student may provide consent if authorized by law or court order.

Regardless of parental authorization for the district to consent to medical treatment, district employees will contact emergency medical services to provide emergency care when required by law or when deemed necessary, such as to avoid a life-threatening situation.

#### **Emergency School Closing Information**

Notice of changes in regular school days and regular school hours brought about by emergency situations such as severe weather will be released from the Office of the Superintendent at the earliest possible time to the local newspaper, radio, and television stations. Because it is important that school telephone lines remain open during emergency situations, the District strongly encourages parents to refer to these media announcements rather than to telephone the campus.

#### **Automated Emergency Communications**

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes. State law requires parents to update contact information within two weeks after the date the information changes.

If the campus must close, delay opening, or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will also alert the community in the following ways: *post a notice on the district website and social media accounts, send an automated voice call and/or text message, and send alerts to local news sources.*

#### **Schedule Changes**

*A student or parent must schedule an appointment with the student's counselor to discuss schedule changes. Parent permission is required.*

## **School Facilities**

### **Asbestos Management Plan (All Grade Levels)**

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's asbestos management plan is available in the central administrative office. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the district's designated asbestos coordinator:

Scott Henninger or Kenneth Shelton

903-856-6462

### **Food and Nutrition Services**

The district participates in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily in accordance with standards set forth in state and federal law.

Some students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. The district may share information such as a student's name and eligibility status to help enroll eligible children in Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) unless the student's parent requests the student's information not be disclosed.

Participating students will be offered the same meal options as their peers and will not be treated differently from their peers.

To apply for free or reduced-price meal services, contact:

*Chris Hackett*

*402 Broach St.*

*Pittsburg, TX 75686*

*903-856-3628*

*chackett@pittsburgisd.net*

[See policy CO for more information.]

Additionally, PISD breakfast and lunch to all children at "NO CHARGE". This program helps to ensure that all students receive nutritious meals. During the 2023-24 school year, PHS will provide breakfast and lunch each day in the high school cafeteria. Students may bring lunches from home or parents may bring their children meals. Students assigned to In-School Suspension, ISS, will not follow the regular lunch schedule but will eat as a group with the assigned instructor.

Parents should continually monitor their child's meal account balance. When a student's meal account is depleted, the district will notify the parent. The student may continue to purchase meals according to the grace period set by the school board. The district will present the parent with a schedule of repayment for any outstanding account balance and an application for free or reduced meals.

If the district is unable to work out an agreement with the student's parent on replenishment of the meal account and payment of any outstanding balance, the student will receive a meal. The district will make every effort to avoid bringing attention to the student.

The following information is published as required by the USDA for participation in the National School Lunch Program:

“In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

“Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

“To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant’s name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. **fax:**

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. **email:**

[Program.Intake@usda.gov](mailto:Program.Intake@usda.gov)

“This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”

The responsible state agency that administers the program is the [Texas Department of Agriculture](https://www.texasagriculture.gov/Home/Contact-Us) (<https://www.texasagriculture.gov/Home/Contact-Us>), which can be reached at (800) TELL-TDA (835-5832) or (800) 735-2989 (TTY).

The local agency that administers the program is the district. See **Nondiscrimination Statement** on page 78 for the name and contact information for the Title IX coordinator, ADA/Section 504 coordinator, and superintendent for other concerns about discrimination.

### ***Vending Machines***

The district has adopted and implemented the state and federal policies for food service, including guidelines to restrict student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines, see the campus principal. [See policy FFA for more information.]

## **Pest Management Plan**

The district is required to follow integrated pest management (IPM) procedures to control pests on school grounds. Although the district strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, periodic indoor and outdoor pesticide use is sometimes necessary to ensure a safe, pest-free school environment.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area.

Parents who have questions or who want to be notified of the times and types of applications prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact the district's IPM coordinator:

*Scott Henninger or Kenneth Shelton*

*903-856-6462*

## **Conduct Before and After School**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities. Whether a school activity is on or off district premises, students must follow the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day. Misbehavior will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

## **Library**

The library is open for independent student use during the following times with a teacher permit:

### **Use of Hallways during Class Time**

During class times, loitering or standing in the halls is not permitted, and a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Use by Students Before and After School**

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place.

The following areas are open to students before school, beginning at 7:30 a.m.

- *cafeteria*
- *classrooms for educational assistance*

Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing an activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

Students must leave campus immediately after dismissal of school in the afternoon, unless the student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult.



### **Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

Student-organized, student-led noncurriculum-related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the principal before and after school. These groups must comply with the requirements of policy FNAB(LOCAL).

A list of these groups is available in the principal's office.

### **School-Sponsored Field Trips**

The district periodically takes students on field trips for educational purposes.

A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip.

The district may ask the parent to provide information about a student's medical provider and insurance coverage and may also ask the parent to sign a waiver allowing for emergency medical treatment in the case of a student accident or illness during the field trip.

The district may require a fee for student participation in a field trip that is not required as part of a basic educational program or course to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals; however, a student will not be denied participation because of financial need. See **Fees** on page 59 for more information.

The district is not responsible for refunding fees paid directly to a third-party vendor.

### **Field Trip/Fun Day:**

Junior High will have a field trip/fun day in the spring. Students must comply with the following guidelines in order to be eligible to participate in field trip/fun day:

- DAEP and ISS placements will be at the discretion of campus administrators if a student will be able to attend or not.
- No current Out of School Suspension for the whole spring semester.
- No Official Arrests.
- Students must be in compliance with the Attendance Policy.
- Students must not have any outstanding balances such as cafeteria textbook or Library Fines

Students must comply with the district's dress code guidelines. Failure to do so will result in not going on the field trip or participating in a fun day.

Permission forms must be filled out and returned by deadline in order to participate in fun day or field trips.

### **Searches**

#### **Searches in General**

In the interest of promoting student safety and drug-free schools, district officials may occasionally conduct searches.

District officials may search students, their belongings, and their vehicles in accordance with law and district policy. Searches of students will be conducted without discrimination, based on, for example, reasonable suspicion or voluntary consent or pursuant to district policy providing for suspicionless security procedures, including the use of metal detectors.

In accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, students are responsible for prohibited items found in their possession, including items in their personal belongings or in vehicles parked on district property.

If there is reasonable suspicion to believe that searching a student's person, belongings, or vehicle will reveal evidence of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, a district official may conduct a search in accordance with law and district regulations.

### **District Property**

Desks, lockers, district-provided technology, and similar items are the property of the district and are provided for student use as a matter of convenience. District property is subject to search or inspection at any time without notice. Students have no expectation of privacy in district property.

Students are responsible for any item found in district property provided to the student that is prohibited by law, district policy, or the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Metal Detectors**

To maintain a safe and disciplined learning environment, the district reserves the right to subject students to metal detector searches when entering a district campus and at off-campus, school-sponsored activities.

### **Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices**

Use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district. [See policy CQ for more information.]

Any searches of personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.

[See **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources** on page 57 and policy FNF(LEGAL) for more information.]

### **Trained Dogs**

The district may use trained dogs to screen for concealed, prohibited items, including drugs and alcohol. Screenings conducted by trained dogs will not be announced in advance. The dogs will not be used with students, but students may be asked to leave personal belongings in an area that is going to be screened, such as a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle. If a dog alerts to an item or an area, it may be searched by district officials.

### **Sexual Harassment**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 48.]

### **Special Programs**

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, students who are homeless, students in foster care, bilingual students, migrant students, emergent bilingual students, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact:

*Johnna Owen*

*Special Programs Administrator*

*Jowen@pittsburgisd.net*

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission's [Talking Book Program](https://www.tsl.texas.gov/tbp/index.html) (<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/tbp/index.html>) provides audiobooks free of charge to qualifying Texans, including students with visual, physical, or reading disabilities such as dyslexia.

Decisions regarding grading procedures for a student with a disability who is receiving services under IDEA or Section 504 may be made by the Student Intervention Team (SIT) or the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee (ARDC). The SIT and ARDC will ensure that the annual goals and instructional objectives of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) are met. The classroom teacher will ensure the success of the student through implementation of the specified modifications or accommodations. If the student does not demonstrate success (as documented by an average of 70 or above), it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to initiate an ARDC or SIT meeting. The classroom teacher is responsible for the implementation and documentation of the modifications or accommodations.

### **Gifted and Talented Program**

It is the goal of the Pittsburg Independent School District to provide a quality education and to ensure appropriate learning opportunities that will foster maximum mental, physical, and emotional development of each student. To assist students in this personal development, the Gifted and Talented Program is provided in addition to the regular curriculum.

### **Nomination/Screen Process for the GT Program**

Students in grades K-12 shall be assessed and, if identified, provided gifted/talented services. (TEC 29.122 and 19 TAC 89.1(3)). Students may be nominated for the gifted and talented program by teachers, counselors, parents, or other interested persons.

- Ongoing assessment of Kindergarten students will be conducted through teacher observation and assessment of classroom enrichment performance objectives. These enrichment performance objectives will be directed by both the classroom and through a pull-out program.
- The nomination period for students in grades 1 through 8 will be The first Monday in March through the First Friday in April. Nominations for 1st-8th grade students must be received in the office of the campus in which the student is enrolled by March 1. Testing will be conducted in April and May with services beginning, upon qualification and placement in the program, the next school year.
- Students in grades 9-12 may be nominated at any time during the school year. Testing will be conducted within six weeks of receipt of the nomination packet by the school counselor, with services beginning, upon qualification and placement in the program, as soon as possible.

### **Homeless Students:**

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, Terri Werth, at (903) 856-3628.

**Special Education:**

Pittsburg ISD provides special education and related services for students with disabilities according to individualized plans developed by teachers, parents, counselors, and other professionals. The District determines whether a student needs special education after completing a comprehensive assessment. For further information, parents should contact the Director of Special Education, 903-856-3628, or the campus Principal to receive full information about special education programs.

**Options and Requirements****For Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties****or Who Need or May Need Special Education Services**

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of local education agencies to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of their rights, if they disagree with the district. Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities.

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is:

Contact Person

Director of Special Education - Kelly L. Hobbs

Phone Number

(903) 856-3628

**Accelerated Instruction/Students At-Risk:**

Some students do not qualify for special education programs but still need some additional assistance to be successful in school and to complete the school program. PISD provides tutorial programs and intensive or accelerated instruction in subjects in which students are showing special difficulty. The District also may provide specially-focused intervention and instruction to improve students' language and math skills.

**Students with Disabilities:**

Decisions regarding academic programs for a student with a disability who is receiving services under IDEA or Section 504 may be made by the Student Intervention Team (SIT) or the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee (ARDC). The SIT or ARDC will ensure that the annual goals and instructional objectives of the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) are met.

**Dyslexia:**

Pittsburg ISD provides a program for students identified with the characteristics of Dyslexia. The instructional program includes reading, writing, and spelling as appropriate. The major instructional strategies utilize individualized, intensive, and multi-sensory methods.

**Services for Title I Participants:**

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is Beth Anne Dunavant and may be contacted at 903-856-3628.

**Student Speakers**

The district provides students the opportunity to introduce the following school events:. If a student meets the eligibility criteria and wishes to introduce one of the school events listed above, the student should submit his or her name in accordance with policy FNA(LOCAL).

**Summer School**

*Summer school may be used to meet accelerated instruction requirements or as an option for students to complete coursework.*

**Tardies**

It is very important to arrive at school on time each day. A student who arrives at school after the start time of 8:00 a.m. must report to the principal's office to get a Tardy Slip. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in disciplinary action.

**Consequences for being Tardy or Leaving Early:**

If a student arrives after the first Tardy bell, they will be marked tardy just like every other class. If a student leaves early it will count against their attendance. You may contact the campus principal for more information.

**Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, Technological Equipment, and Other Instructional Materials**

Instructional materials are any resources used in classroom instruction as part of the required curriculum, such as textbooks, workbooks, computer software, or online services.

The district selects instructional materials in accordance with state law and policy EFA.

The district provides approved instructional materials to students free of charge for each subject or class. Students must treat instructional materials with care, as directed by the teacher.

If a student needs a graphing calculator for a course and the district does not provide one, the student may use a calculator application with graphing capabilities on a phone, laptop, tablet, or other computing device.

A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher.

Any student who does not return an item or returns an item in an unacceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage is paid for by the parent. However, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day.

For information on library books and other resources students may access voluntarily, see **Library** on page 91.

### **Acceptable Use Policy**

#### **Educational Purposes**

Pittsburg Independent School District is providing students access to the district's electronic network. This network includes Internet access, computer services, videoconferencing, computer equipment and related equipment for educational purposes. The purpose of this network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work in the 21st Century by providing them with electronic access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with people from throughout the world. This document contains the rules and procedures for acceptable use for students' use of the Pittsburg Independent School District electronic network.

- The Pittsburg Independent School District electronic network has been established for a limited educational purpose. The term "educational purpose" includes classroom activities, career development, and limited high-quality self-discovery activities.
- The Pittsburg Independent School District electronic network has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. Pittsburg Independent School District has the right to place reasonable restrictions on material that is accessed or posted throughout the network.
- Parent/guardian permission is required for all students under the age of 18. Access is a privilege - - not a right.
- It is presumed that students will honor this agreement they and their parent/guardian have signed. Beyond the clarification of standards outlined in this policy, the district is not responsible for the actions of students who violate them.
- The district reserves the right to monitor all activity on this electronic network. Students and Parents will indemnify the district against any damage that is caused by the students' inappropriate use of the network.
- Students are expected to follow the same rules, good manners and common sense guidelines that are used with other daily school activities as well as the law in the use of the Pittsburg Independent School District electronic network.

#### **General Unacceptable Behavior while utilizing any portion of the Pittsburg Independent School District electronic network - Behaviors include, but not limited to the following are prohibited:**

- Students will not post information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or a danger of disruption.
- Students will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- Students will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If a student is told by a person to stop sending messages, they must stop.
- Students will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

- Students will not use criminal speech or speech in the course of committing a crime such as threats to another person, instructions on breaking into computer networks, child pornography, drug dealing, purchase of alcohol, gang activities, threats to an individual, etc.
- Students will not use speech that is inappropriate in an educational setting or violates district rules.
- Students will not abuse network resources such as sending chain letters or "spamming".
- Students will not display, access or send offensive messages or pictures. (As defined in section 1460 of Title 18, United States Code and section 2256 of Title 18, United States Code)
- Students will not use the Pittsburgh Independent School District electronic network for commercial purposes. Students will not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through this network.
- Students will not use the Pittsburgh Independent School District electronic network for political lobbying. Students may use the system to communicate with elected representatives and to express their opinions on political issues.

### **E-Mail**

- E-mail for students in the elementary and middle school grades will only be provided through a teacher or classroom e-mail account.
- High school students may be provided with e-mail, with the approval of the building level administrator, for specific educational projects or activities.
- Students will not establish or access web-based e-mail accounts on commercial services through the district network unless such accounts have been approved for use by the individual school.
- Students will not repost a message that was sent to them privately without the permission of the person who sent them the message.
- Students will not post private information about another person.

### **World Wide Web**

- Elementary School Level - Access to information for students on the web will generally be limited to prescreened sites that are closely supervised by the teacher.
- Middle and High School Level - Access to information for students on the web will generally be provided through prescreened sites and in a manner prescribed by their school.

### **Telnet and FTP**

- Telnet and FTP services will be available to students. However, all aspects of this policy are applicable to material accessed or downloaded.

### **Message Board/Usenet Groups**

- The district will provide access to selected newsgroups that relate to subjects appropriate for educational use. Messages posted locally that are in violation of this policy will be removed. The district reserves the right to immediately terminate an account of a student who misuses the message boards or usenet groups.

### **Real-time, Interactive Communication Areas**

- Students may use chat or instant messaging, but only under the direct supervision of a teacher or in a moderated environment that has been established to support educational activities and has been approved by the district or individual school.

### **Web Sites**

- Elementary and Middle School Level - Group pictures without identification of individual students are permitted. Student work may be posted with either student first name only or other school-developed identifier (such as an alias or number).
- High School Level - Students may be identified by their full name, with parental approval. Group or individual pictures of students with student identification are permitted with parental approval. Parents may elect to have their child assigned to the elementary/middle school level of use.
- All student posted work will contain the student's copyright notice using the student identifier.
- With the approval of the building principal and supervisor of technology, students may establish web pages for specific educational objectives. Material presented on the student web pages must be related to educational activities and/or career preparation activities. Student web pages must include the following notice:  
"This is a student web page. Opinions expressed on this page shall not be attributed to the district."
- Material that fails to meet established educational objectives or that is in violation of this policy or student disciplinary code will be removed. Student material will not be removed on the basis of a disagreement with the views expressed by the student.
- Student web pages will be removed at the end of the school year unless special arrangements are made.
- Material placed on student web pages are expected to meet academic standards of proper spelling, grammar and accuracy of information.
- Material (graphics, text, sound, etc.) that is the ownership of someone other than the student may not be used on web sites unless formal permission has been obtained.
- All student web pages should have a link back to the home page of the classroom, school or district, as appropriate.

### **Personal Safety**

- Students will not share personal contact information about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes address, telephone, school address, or work address.
- Elementary and middle school students will not disclose their full name or any other personal contact information for any purpose.
- High school students will not disclose personal contact information, except to education institutes for educational purposes, companies or other entities for career development purposes, or without specific building administrative approval.
- Students will not agree to meet with someone they have met online.
- Students will promptly disclose to a teacher or other school employee any message received that is inappropriate or makes the student feel uncomfortable.

### **System Security**

- Students are responsible for their individual accounts and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use them. Under no conditions should students provide their password to another person.



- Students must immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if they have identified a possible security problem. Students should not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
- Students will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any portion of the Pittsburgh Independent School District electronic network. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's folders, work, or files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing".
- Students will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. These actions are illegal.

### **Software and Files**

- Software is available to students to be used as an educational resource. No student may install, upload or download software without permission from the district technology department.
- A student's account may be limited or terminated if a student intentionally misuses software on any district-owned equipment.
- Files stored on the network are treated in the same manner as other school storage areas, such as lockers. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the Pittsburgh Independent School District electronic network may lead to discovery that a student has violated this policy or the law. Students should not expect that files stored on district servers are private.

### **Technology Hardware**

- Hardware and peripherals are provided as tools for student use for educational purposes. Students are not permitted to relocate hardware (except for portable devices), install peripherals or modify settings to equipment without the consent of the district technology department.

### **Vandalism**

- Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data, the network, other network components connected to the network backbone, hardware or software could result in cancellation of network privileges. Disciplinary measures in compliance with the district's discipline code and policies will be enforced.

### **Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement**

- Students will not plagiarize works found on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were the students'.
- District policies on copyright will govern the use of material accessed and used through the district system.
- Copyrighted material will not be placed on any system without the author's permission. Permission may be specified in the document, on the system or must be obtained directly from the author.

### **Videoconference**

- Videoconferencing is a way that students can communicate with other students, speakers, museums, etc. from other parts of the country and the world. With videoconferencing equipment, students can see, hear, and speak with other students, speakers, museum personnel, etc. in real time.
- Videoconference sessions may be videotaped by district personnel or by a participating school involved in the exchange in order to share the experience within ours or their building or district.

- Students' voices, physical presence, and participation in the videoconference are transmitted to participating sites during each session. Rules and procedures relative to acceptable use and behavior by students apply during all videoconference sessions.

### **Student Rights**

- Students' right to free speech applies to communication on the Internet. The Pittsburgh Independent School District electronic network is considered a limited forum, similar to the school newspaper, and therefore the district may restrict a student's speech for valid educational reasons. The district will not restrict a student's speech on the basis of a disagreement with the opinions that are being expressed.
- An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated this policy or the law. The investigation will be reasonable and related to the suspected violation.

### **Due Process**

- The district will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the district network.
- In the event there is an allegation that a student has violated the district acceptable use regulation and policy, the student will be provided with a written notice of the alleged violation. An opportunity will be provided to present an explanation before a neutral administrator (or student will be provided with notice and an opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the disciplinary code).
- Disciplinary actions will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation and to assist the student in gaining the self-discipline necessary to behave appropriately on an electronic network. Violations of the acceptable use regulation and policy may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.
- If the violation also involves a violation of other provisions of other school rules, it will be handled in a manner described in the school rules. Additional restrictions may be placed on a student's use of his/her network account.

### **Limitation of Liability**

- The district makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the district network will be error-free or without defect. The district will not be responsible for any damage suffered, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service.
- The district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the network. The district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the network.

### **Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy**

Violations of this policy may result in loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action. Students' violation of this policy shall be subject to the consequences as indicated within this policy as well as other appropriate discipline which includes, but is not limited to:

- Use of district network only under direct supervision

- Suspension of network privileges

Revocation of network privileges  
Suspension of computer privileges  
Suspension from school  
Expulsion from school and/or  
Legal action and prosecution by the authorities

The particular consequences for violations of this policy shall be determined by the school administrators. The superintendent or designee shall determine when school expulsion and/or legal action or actions by the authorities are the appropriate course of action.

### **Transfers**

The principal is authorized to transfer a student from one classroom to another.

The superintendent is authorized to investigate and approve transfers between schools.

### **Transportation**

#### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use school-provided transportation to and from the event. However, in accordance with campus procedures, a parent may provide written consent for his or her child to ride with or be released after the event to the parent or another adult designated by the parent. [See **School-Sponsored Field Trips** on page 92.]

#### **Buses and Other School Vehicles**

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school and to any students who are experiencing homelessness. This service is provided at no cost to students.

Bus routes and stops will be designated annually. Any subsequent changes will be posted at the school and on the district's website. For the safety of the driver and all passengers, students must board district vehicles only at authorized stops and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops.

A parent may designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated location must be an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, contact the transportation department.

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses and other district vehicles are clean and safe. When riding in district vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the vehicle in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the vehicle or its equipment.

- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the vehicle.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco or e-cigarettes in any district vehicle.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten their seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the vehicle and before crossing in front of the vehicle.
- Follow any other rules established by the operator of the vehicle.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, including loss of the privilege to ride in a district vehicle.

[See the Student Code of Conduct for provisions regarding transportation to the DAEP.]

#### **Local Bus Guidelines**

The District provides transportation on school buses to and from school for those students who live more than two miles away from the school they attend. Transportation is not provided to transfer students attending a school outside of their attendance zone. Further information may be obtained by calling the Transportation Office, 903-856-6462.

Bus transportation is a privilege – not a requirement. The purpose of student bus transportation is to transport students to and from school safely. Those students riding the bus are considered under the jurisdiction of school authorities from the time they board the bus in the morning until they are discharged from the bus in the afternoon.

The bus driver is charged with the responsibility of maintaining order and proper conduct on the school bus. The driver must take the necessary steps to maintain order on the bus to insure the safety of all. No student will be put off the bus between home and school. If a situation arises that is beyond the control of the driver, the driver will park the bus and notify school authorities. For safety purposes, video/audio equipment may be used to monitor student behavior on buses. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used. The driver has the authority to assign seats or otherwise implement procedures, which will ensure the safety of all riders. Based on the address your child will be traveling to and from school, the child will be assigned the route which serves that address. Due to the school district's responsibility to ensure the safety of students riding the buses, telephone requests to change a student from his/her regular route to an alternative route cannot be accepted. School personnel cannot always validate the legal authority or identity of individuals who make telephone requests.

**ALL BUS ROUTE CHANGES MUST BE MADE IN PERSON AT THE SCHOOL OFFICE BY 12:00 NOON EACH DAY.**

If an **emergency** arises requiring the student to ride an alternate route, the change requests must be made in person by the parent or legal guardian and must be on the approved forms, which shall be available in the campus principal's office. This will provide written authorization

for the child to ride a bus other than his or her regular route. The parents or legal guardians shall provide appropriate identification, which shall be required by the campus office to verify relationship to the students. Written authorization for a change in bus placement shall be necessary in order to validate the identity of the person requesting a change for a student less than 17 years of age. All written records shall be kept on file to document all route changes as authorized by the parent or legal guardian.

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. The teacher, however, may make an exception if the parent makes a written request (prior to the event) that the student be released to the parent.

### **Student Conduct on Buses**

Students are required to comply with rules for conduct on school buses and to comply with the Student Code of Conduct while at authorized school bus stops waiting for the bus. Students who misbehave or violate the Code of Conduct while on the bus will be disciplined according to the Code of Conduct and may be suspended from the bus for a period of time.

### **Bus Safety Violations**

General Violations Such As:

- Failure to remain seated
- Refusing to obey driver/monitor
- Throwing objects in or out of the bus
- Hanging out of the window (including any body part)
- Spitting
- Harassing others
- Loud talking/noises

Consequences:

1st Offense – Warning

2nd Offense – No bus riding privileges for 3 days or alternative consequences to be determined by campus administrators

3rd Offense – Parent meeting required and no bus riding privileges for 5 days or alternative consequences to be determined by campus administrators

4th Offense – Parent meeting required and no bus riding privileges for 7 days or alternative consequences to be determined by campus administrators

5th Offense – Parent meeting required and no bus riding privileges for a minimum of 10 days

**\*\*\*\*NOTE: During preparation for and administration of required student testing, alternative consequences may be assigned for any violation.**

Flagrant Violations and Consequences Such As:

- Fighting: Referral to school police officer and campus administrators, loss of bus riding privileges for a minimum of 10 days, parent conference required

- Profanity: Referral to campus administrators, loss of bus riding privilege for a minimum of ten days, parent conference required
- Belligerent, disrespectful or defiant attitude toward bus drivers, monitors or other school personnel: Referral to school police officer and loss of bus riding privileges for a minimum of 10 days, parent conference required
- Vandalism: Lose all bus riding privileges and make restitution for damages, referral to school police officer, parent conference required
- Illegal acts: Referral to school police officer and campus administrators, no bus riding privileges for a minimum of 10 days, parent conference required.

**A SECOND VIOLATION OF A FLAGRANT OFFENSE WILL RESULT IN NO BUS RIDING PRIVILEGES FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.**

**\*\*\*\*STUDENTS ASSIGNED TO DAEP WILL LOSE ALL BUS RIDING PRIVILEGES FOR THE DURATION OF THE PLACEMENT UNLESS OTHER TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE.**

### **Vandalism**

Littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Video Cameras**

For safety purposes, the district uses video and audio recording equipment to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used.

Recordings shall be reviewed on a routine basis by the Principal, and evidence of student misconduct shall be documented. A student found to be in violation of the District's Student Code of Conduct shall be subject to appropriate discipline. Recordings shall remain in the custody of the campus Principal and shall be maintained as required by law. A parent or student who wishes to view a videotape in response to disciplinary action taken against the student may request such access under the procedures set out by policy FL.

In accordance with state law, a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member (as this term is defined by law), a principal or assistant principal, or the board may make a written request for the district to place video and audio recording equipment in certain self-contained special education classrooms. The district will provide notice before placing a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which a child receives special education services. For more information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment, contact the principal that the district has designated to coordinate the implementation of and compliance with this law.

### **Visitors to the School**

#### **General Visitors**

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must:

- Request entry to the school at the primary entrance unless otherwise directed by a district employee.

- Report to the main office.
- Be prepared to show identification.
- Exit the school at the primary entrance and leave all exterior doors closed, latched, and locked unless actively monitored by a district employee.
- Comply with all applicable district policies and procedures.

If requested by a district employee, a visitor must provide identification such as a driver's license, other picture identification issued by a government entity, or employee or student identification issued by the district. A person who refuses to provide identification and who reasonably appears to have no legitimate reason to be on district property may be ejected from district property.

Individuals may visit classrooms or observe virtual instruction during instructional time only with approval of the principal and teacher. Visitors may not interfere with instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior or violations of student privacy will not be permitted.

#### **Unauthorized Persons**

In accordance with Education Code 37.105, a school administrator, school resource officer (SRO), or district police officer has the authority to refuse entry to or eject a person from district property if the person refuses to leave peaceably on request and:

- The person poses a substantial risk of harm to any person; or
- The person behaves in a manner that is inappropriate for a school setting and persists in the behavior after being given a verbal warning that the behavior is inappropriate and may result in refusal of entry or ejection.

Appeals regarding refusal of entry or ejection from district property may be filed in accordance with policies FNG(LOCAL) or GF(LOCAL).

[See the Student Code of Conduct.]

#### **Visitors Participating in Special Programs for Students**

##### ***Business, Civic, and Youth Groups***

The district may invite representatives from patriotic societies listed in Title 36 of the United States Code to present information to interested students about membership in the society.

#### **Volunteers**

The district invites and appreciates the efforts of volunteers who are willing to serve our district and students.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the campus principal.

Subject to exceptions in accordance with state law and district procedures, the district requires a state criminal history background check for each volunteer, including parents, guardians, or grandparents of a child enrolled in the district. The volunteer must pay all costs for the background check.

**Withdrawing from School**

To withdraw a student under age 18 from school, the parent or guardian must submit a written request to the principal specifying the reasons for withdrawal and the final day the student will be in attendance. Withdrawal forms are available from the principal's office.

Please provide the school at least three days' notice of withdrawal so that records and documents may be prepared.



## Glossary

**Accelerated instruction, including supplemental instruction**, is an intensive educational program designed to help an individual student acquire the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level. It is required when a student does not meet the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment. Accelerated instruction may be provided by assigning a student to a classroom teacher who is certified as a master, exemplary, or recognized teacher or by providing supplemental instruction in addition to regular instruction.

**ACT**, or the American College Test, is one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions examinations. The test may be required for admission to certain colleges or universities.

**ACT-Aspire** is designed as a preparatory and readiness assessment for the ACT. This is usually taken by students in grade 10.

**ARD** stands for admission, review, and dismissal. The ARD committee convenes for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student and his or her parents are members of the committee.

**Attendance review committee** is responsible for reviewing a student's absences when the student's attendance drops below 90 percent, or in some cases 75 percent, of the days the class is offered. Under guidelines adopted by the board, the committee will determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences and whether the student needs to complete certain conditions to master the course and regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences.

**CPS** stands for Child Protective Services.

**DAEP** stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.

**DFPS** stands for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

**DPS** stands for the Texas Department of Public Safety.

**DSHS** stands for the Texas Department of State Health Services.

**ED** stands for the U.S. Department of Education.

**Emergent bilingual student** refers to a student of limited English proficiency. Other related terms include English learner, English language learner, and limited English proficient student.

**EOC (end-of-course) assessments** are state-mandated and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments is required for graduation. These examinations will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History.

**ESSA** is the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

**FERPA** refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as for directory information, unless a student's parent or a student 18 years of age or older directs the school not to release directory information.

**IEP** stands for individualized education program and is the written record prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services.

**IGC** is the individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, to determine a student's eligibility to graduate when the student has failed to demonstrate satisfactory performance on no more than two of the required state assessments.

**ISS** refers to in-school suspension, a disciplinary technique for misconduct found in the Student Code of Conduct. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a DAEP, ISS removes the student from the regular classroom.

**PGP** stands for personal graduation plan, which is required for high school students and for any student in middle school who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

**PSAT** is the preparatory and readiness assessment for the SAT. It also serves as the basis for the awarding of National Merit Scholarships.

**SAT** refers to the Scholastic Aptitude Test, one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions examinations. The test may be required for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

**SHAC** stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to help ensure that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction, as well as assist with other student and employee wellness issues.

**Section 504** is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined to be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), general education with appropriate instructional accommodations will be provided.

**STAAR** is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state's system of standardized academic achievement assessments.

**STAAR Alternate 2** is an alternative state-mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

**STAAR Spanish** is an alternative state-mandated assessment administered to eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

**State-mandated assessments** are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Except under limited circumstances, students must pass the STAAR EOC assessments to graduate. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests, if necessary, for graduation.

**Student Code of Conduct** is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from a classroom, campus, or district vehicle; sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP; and outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

**TAC** stands for the Texas Administrative Code.

**TEA** stands for the Texas Education Agency, which oversees primary and secondary public education in Texas.

**TELPAS** stands for the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System, which assesses the progress that emergent bilingual students make in learning the English language and is administered for those who meet the participation requirements in kindergarten-grade 12.

**TSI** stands for the Texas Success Initiative, an assessment designed to measure the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering college-level freshmen students should have if they are to be successful in undergraduate programs in Texas public colleges and universities.

**TXVSN** stands for the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides online courses for Texas students to supplement the instructional programs of public school districts. Courses are taught by qualified instructors and are equivalent in rigor and scope to a course taught in a traditional classroom setting.

**UIL** refers to the University Interscholastic League, the statewide, voluntary nonprofit organization that oversees educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.

## Appendix: Freedom from Bullying Policy

**Note:** School board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit <https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline/PolicyDetails?key=264&code=FFI#localTabContent>. Below is the text of Pittsburg ISD's policy FFI(LOCAL) as of the date this handbook was finalized for this school year.

### Student Welfare: Freedom from Bullying

Policy FFI(LOCAL) adopted on **insert board adoption date**

#### **Note:**

This policy addresses bullying of District students. For purposes of this policy, the term bullying includes cyber-bullying.

For provisions regarding discrimination and harassment involving District students, see FFH. Note that FFI shall be used in conjunction with FFH for certain prohibited conduct. For reporting requirements related to child abuse and neglect, see FFG.

### Bullying Prohibited

The District prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by state law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited.

#### Examples

Bullying of a student could occur by physical contact or through electronic means and may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

### Retaliation

The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

#### Examples

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

### False Claim

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### Timely Reporting

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

### Reporting Procedures

### Student Report

To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other District employee. The Superintendent shall develop procedures allowing a student to anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying.

### Employee Report

Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.

### Report Format

A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.

## **Notice of Report**

When an allegation of bullying is reported, the principal or designee shall notify a parent of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the incident is reported. The principal or designee shall also notify a parent of the student alleged to have engaged in the conduct within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported.

## **Prohibited Conduct**

The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct.

## **Investigation of Report**

The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

## **Concluding the Investigation**

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or designee.

## **Notice to Parents**

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.

## **District Action**

### **Bullying**

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and

may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The District may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances.

#### *Discipline*

A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action.

The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.

#### *Corrective Action*

Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine whether any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.

#### *Transfers*

The principal or designee shall refer to FDB for transfer provisions.

#### *Counseling*

The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.

#### **Improper Conduct**

If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.

#### **Confidentiality**

To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

#### **Appeal**

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

#### **Records Retention**

Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL).

#### **Access to Policy and Procedures**

This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's website, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.