

# PENNICHUCK MIDDLE SCHOOL



## STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026

207 Manchester Street

Nashua, NH 03064

(603) 966-4140 · Fax (603) 594-4413

## **WELCOME**

It is with great pleasure that we welcome all of our students and families to Pennichuck Middle School. For our incoming new students, we are excited that you are joining us, and anticipate a fun and challenging year. For our returning seventh and eighth graders, you already know the high standards we have set for you and this year will be no different. We know you will find it exciting and rewarding.

We have spent a lot of time this summer preparing for the school year and look forward to working with each and every one of you. As always, our success will depend on how much effort we put forth. It is our hope that you become equally involved in our high quality academics as well as school activities. Further we expect you to take pride in yourselves and your school, treat others how you would like to be treated, and make a difference.

Have an outstanding school year!

*The Pennichuck Staff*

## **PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER**

A Nashua graduate is provided with a rich and diverse educational experience beginning in preschool and elementary and extending through middle and high school. Our curriculum is designed to develop the whole person with an emphasis on academic, social, and emotional growth. Students explore interests and develop skills and talents that will guide them to pursue higher education and career pathways. Our culture is collaborative, respectful, and empathetic, laying the foundation for our students to become responsible citizens and engaged members of their community.

While engaging in Nashua Schools, at Pennichuck Middle School, we show our PRIDE

- Positive: We are positive we have the power to learn and grow
- Respectful: We are respectful of ourselves, others and the school environment
- Inquisitive: We are inquisitive and life-long learners
- Determined: We are determined to reach our fullest potential
- Engaged: We are engaged in our school community

## **PMS MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Pennichuck Middle School is to provide a caring, exciting and challenging learning environment that empowers all students to achieve their greatest potential and to become responsible, respectful and productive members of society.

We believe...students come first.

We believe...learning can be engaging and informative.

We believe...all students can succeed.

We believe...we can achieve more...together.

## ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL GROUNDS

### **Beginning of the Day**

#### **7:35 Doors Open:**

- 6th and 8th Grade Students report to cafeteria
- 7th Grade report to gym

#### **7:55 Advisory Reminder Bell**

- All students report to Advisory

#### **8:00 Advisory**

### **End of Day Times**

- **Typical School Day: 2:43**
- **Early Release Days: 12:43**
- **Last Day of School: 11:30**

## ATTENDANCE

Students are required by law to attend school during all times the school is in session. The process of education requires continuity of instruction and participation in order to maximize the educational benefits for all students. Acceptable reasons for absences are personal illness, family emergencies, religious holidays, or other situations which are cleared through the principal prior to the absence.

When a student is going to be absent from school, parents/ guardians should call the office at 966-4140. Students who are absent without parent / guardian permission will be considered truant. Excessive truantries will be reported to the district truant officer.

Students who are tardy should report to the main office to receive an admit slip. Once the student reaches his or her sixth tardy in a trimester, a letter will be sent home. On the 9<sup>th</sup> tardy and every tardy thereafter during a trimester, a student will receive an after school detention. Consequences will increase if tardiness should continue.

For dismissals, students must bring a note signed by a parent to the main office before advisory. The student will receive a dismissal slip, give it to the appropriate teacher, and will be waiting at the office at the dismissal time. Failure to follow this procedure will result in the office staff having to interrupt classes and not have the child leave on time.

## BIKES, SCOOTERS, AND SKATEBOARDS

Bike racks are provided for the purpose of parking bicycles and scooters. Please use them. Skateboards can be ridden to school and must be dropped off in the office until the end of the day. Bicycles and scooters are recommended to be kept locked while not in use. All alternative transports that are brought to school are done at the student's risk. The school will not assume responsibility for damage.

## **COUNSELING OFFICE**

The school counseling program at Pennichuck offers a variety of services. The counselors work with students individually and in small groups supporting social, emotional and academic needs. Our counselors manage classroom educational programs around healthy decision making skills and career exploration. Also, school counselors are always available as a resource for parents. It is the goal of this department to work with the faculty, parents and students to make each child's experience the best it can be during their years at Pennichuck Middle School. If you wish to contact Guidance directly, please call

Grade 6: Casey Woodward (603) 966-4152

Grade 7: Kristin Laws (603) 966-4151

Grade 8: Kristen Marino (603) 966-4153

Family Outreach: Alison Bennett (603) 966-4154

## **GRADING**

### **Progress Reports:**

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to monitor their student's academic progress through X2. Teachers are expected to update students' grades in X2 at a minimum of every two (2) weeks. If you have questions or concerns regarding your child's progress, we encourage you to communicate with your child's teacher and team.

### **Report Cards:**

Report Cards will be posted to X2 three times a year at the conclusion of the trimester. If you need a paper copy, please contact your child's Guidance Counselor.

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69
A 93-96	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62 F 0-59

### **Honor Roll:**

To qualify for trimester honor roll, students must receive a grade of B- or better in each subject area; grades are not averaged. "Year" honor roll includes work completed during the first two trimesters. Trimester grades are not averaged for honor roll purposes.

## **AFTER SCHOOL HELP**

Make-up sessions begin at 2:45 and end at 3:25 PM.

Every teacher will conduct at least one afternoon session each week. Student attendance at these sessions shall be on a voluntary basis, but teachers may request a student to attend. Each teacher or team will develop their own make-up schedule. Students and parents will be informed of this schedule at the start of the school year. Due to extenuating circumstances, teachers may change their make-up afternoons at any time.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Pennichuck Middle School offers a wide variety of extra-curricular activities for all students.

**Sports:** Available athletic programs include boys' and girls' soccer, volleyball, cross country, field hockey, boys' and girls' basketball, cheerleading, baseball, softball, wrestling, and track. An up-to-date physical examination is required before trying out for any sport.

**Clubs and Organizations:** Students can participate in a range of clubs, including Drama Club, Select Chorus, Student Council, Yearbook, Jazz Band, and Ski Club. Additional clubs may be offered throughout the year based on student interest.

### **Participation Requirements:**

- Be in good academic standing (See Next Section)
- Be present for at least 75% of the school day (a minimum of 4 hours)
- Students who leave due to sickness may not participate that day.

## **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

**Beginning of each school year:** All middle school students will be considered academically eligible to participate in co-curricular activities at the start of each new school year.

**During a season:** All middle school students participating in a co-curricular activity will have their grades monitored at least once during the activity.

For student-athletes, grades will be checked each season at the following times:

- Fall season – last Friday school day in September.
- Winter season – last Friday school day in December.
- Spring season – first Friday school day in May.

Any student who has more than one F at this time will become temporarily ineligible. During this time of ineligibility, the student may not participate in any team or activity events (no practices, rehearsals, games, performances, etc).

- If the student recovers the grade(s) within 10 school days, they may return to the team or co-curricular activity.
- If the grade(s) is/are not recovered within that 10 school day time period, the student will be removed from the team/activity for the remainder of the season or activity.
- Any student who recovers and returns to their team/activity will have weekly grade monitoring for the remainder of the season or length of the activity.

### **End of each trimester grading period:**

A middle school student who earns more than one **F** on their report card at the end of a trimester will be ineligible to participate in co-curricular activities.

- A student will be ineligible to begin any new activity which begins after this report card and before the next report card is issued.
- A student currently involved in an athletic season or activity will be removed from the team/activity immediately.

The effective date of eligibility is the date grade reports are to be published as determined by the Nashua School District Superintendent's Office.

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

It is expected that all students at Pennichuck Middle School will be appropriately dressed while in school. Pennichuck Middle School respects students' rights to express themselves in the way they dress. All students who attend Pennichuck Middle School are also expected to respect the school community by dressing appropriately for our shared educational environment. Student attire should facilitate participation in learning as well as the health and safety of students and the adults that supervise them. These expectations are intended to provide guidance for students, staff, and parents.

### **Minimum Requirements:**

- Shirts, dresses, and tank tops must cover areas from one armpit across to the other armpit and must have shoulder straps.
- The length of a shirt must come to the top of the navel
- Pants, shorts, and skirts must be worn at hip height and not expose any undergarments, including a secondary pair of shorts.
- Rips or tears in clothing should be lower than the bottom of the pocket line.
- See-through or mesh garments must not be worn without appropriate coverage underneath that meet the minimum requirements of the dress code.
- Shoes with outdoor soles must be worn at all times and should be safe for the school environment.
- To fully participate in Physical Education and all Technical Education classes, appropriate closed-toed shoes must be worn.
- Hats, hoods, caps, and bandanas are not allowed unless permitted for religious, or medical reasons or school sponsored activities.
- Sunglasses may not be worn inside the building.
- Clothing and accessories that may endanger the safety of students or staff may not be worn.
- Apparel or accessories, by virtue of their color, arrangement, trademark or any other attribute, denoting an affiliation in a gang or promoting illegal or disruptive behavior is prohibited.

### **Clothing may not state / depict:**

- Illegal, violent, or lewd conduct, weapons, or the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other controlled substances.
- Pornography, nudity, or sexual acts.
- Vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene language or images.
- Hate speech/imagery targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected classification.

The administration reserves the right to determine what constitutes appropriate dress. Students who do not adhere to these guidelines will not be allowed to attend class. Parents will be called if appropriate clothing is not available or the student refuses appropriate clothing.

## **CELL PHONES and LISTENING DEVICES**

Cell Phones and listening devices are allowed on school grounds. During the hours of 8:00am through 2:43pm all cell phones and listening devices such as AirPods, earbuds, head phones and all other such devices need to be off and away. Other unauthorized devices are also not allowed for use during the school day.

If your child does bring in an electronic device, and it gets lost or stolen, the school will not be held responsible.

## **TELEPHONE REGULATIONS AND ACCESS**

All student communication is handled through the main office. If a parent wants to contact their child, it should be through the main office. Students must use the phone in the office to call home.

## **CHROMEBOOKS AND INSTRUMENTS**

1. Chromebooks and essential instructional materials are loaned to students without charge.
2. Students are held responsible for the loss or damage of the Chromebook beyond normal wear.
3. Musical instruments, which are the property of the school department, are loaned to students on an availability basis. Students to whom these instruments are loaned are liable for their loss or damage.

## **LOCKERS**

Lockers are assigned to all students however locks are not mandatory. Students will be issued a school provided lock upon request. All locks can be requested to be removed, as needed, by school administration. If a student is unwilling to remove a lock, administration maintains the right to remove the lock.

Misplaced or broken locks are \$15.00

## **HALLWAY EXPECTATIONS**

- Running, pushing and other roughhousing is not allowed.
- Students are required to have a pass anytime they leave a room.

## **FOOD AND BEVERAGE EXPECTATIONS**

- Breakfast and lunch is served daily and food is to be consumed in the cafeteria
- Students may carry a water bottle during the school day
- Students are not allowed to have energy drinks, coffee, pre-workout, etc. at any time during the school day. These drinks will be confiscated and disposed of.
- Vending Machine Use - only before school, after school and during lunch.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Throughout the course of the year students will participate in several drills to practice for emergency situations. We will participate in the following drills:

- **Evacuation:** for situations like fire or noxious smells / conditions
- **Clear Hallways:** for situations where class can continue and the halls need to be clear. Typically a medical emergency.
- **Avoid-Deny-Defend:** for situations where an intruder has entered the building

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are educational experiences planned to correlate closely with grade level curricula. Since these lessons occur away from school grounds, permission slips signed by a parent/guardian are a prerequisite for student participation. Students who do not participate are given course-oriented assignments and are supervised by other instructional personnel.

All school rules, dress codes and behavior standards are in effect during field trips. Students are expected to behave accordingly.

## **SCHOOL DANCES**

School dances happen several times each year. Attendance at a school dance is considered a privilege, not a right. All school behavior expectations, dress expectations, and school attendance policies are criteria for attending dances. The administration and teachers reserve the right to deny admittance to any student.

Dances are for Pennichuck Middle School students only. Guests are not allowed.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Any lost or misplaced article will be sent to the cafeteria. All clothing items are stored on a rack and other materials on a table for students to access.

Unclaimed clothes and materials will be donated the last Friday of each month.

Dates: 9/26, 10/31, 11/21, 12/19, 1/30, 2/20, 3/27, 4/24, 5/29, 1/17

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### **Student Offenses - Class III:**

- Academic dishonesty, cheating
- An inappropriate behavior or improper act
- Truant from class
- Deliberately disrupting or distracting others
- Continuous refusal to bring required materials to class
- Inappropriate use of any electronic device, including a cell phone. The item may be confiscated and will require a parent/guardian to pick it up.
- Deceiving or lying to a staff member
- Leaving class without the teacher's permission
- Failure to follow any staff member's reasonable request to carry out school rules
- Any inappropriate display of affection
- Pushing/shoving or running in hallways
- Littering
- Any other violation which the school Principal considers reasonable to fall within a class III category

### **Student Offenses - Class II:**

- Stealing
- Destroying, pirating (copyright infringement), altering or any other misuse of computer software and/or hardware belonging to students, the school department, or any school employee/volunteer
- Repeatedly tardy to school or class
- Truancy/skipping school
- Use of profanity and/or obscene language or gestures
- Disrespectful behavior towards others
- Possession of any demeaning publication or material including, but not limited to, the following areas: race, color, ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation and disability status
- Forgery
- Conduct which is emotionally injurious to others; see also response to bullying
- Reckless behavior/endangering others
- Harassment of an ethnic, racial, sexual or religious nature, including but not limited to: conduct or comments that threaten physical violence; offensive, unsolicited remarks; unwelcome gestures or physical contact, including unsolicited propositions to engage in sexual acts; and verbal abuse or insults about, or directed at, any faculty, staff, and/or student
- Defacing or vandalizing school property or the personal property of others
- Possession of tobacco products (including e cigarettes) either in school or on school grounds or other campus areas which are under the jurisdiction of the Nashua School District. Tobacco products will be confiscated
- Leaving school grounds without permission; being in an "off limits area"; or being on school
- Persistent disruptive behavior which repeatedly interrupts the educational environment
- Bullying - See Policy JICK
- Gambling
- The threat or perceived threat by word or act to do violence to another where it is reasonably certain that the person has the intention and means to carry out the threat
- Instigating, engaging in or attempting to fight another student. The

investigating professional may take into consideration the actions of the student who was attacked if he/she had no reasonable alternative but to physically defend him/herself.

- Sharing, distributing or having for sale any demeaning publication including, but not limited to, the following areas: race, color, ethnic origin, religion, sex,

sexual orientation and disability status

- Repeated Class III Offenses
- Extorting or maliciously threatening another student in order to gain money or objects belonging to that student
- Any other violation which the school Principal considers reasonable to fall within a class II category due to its severity

### **Student Offenses - Class I:**

- Possession of a toy gun
- Bringing or possessing a firearm, as defined in Section 921 of Title XVIII of the U.S. Code, on school grounds or within the "Safe School Zone" (as defined in RSA 193-D:1) without written authorization from the Superintendent - As required by law
- Possession of a pellet gun, BB gun, BB rifle, or paint gun on school grounds or within the "Safe School Zone" (as defined in RSA 193-D:1)
- Distribution, exchange, or selling of drugs or possession of drugs with the intent to distribute, exchange or sell
- Starting or attempting to start a fire on school property
- Using or threatening to use any dangerous object, weapon, destructive devices, or any instrument which might be capable of inflicting bodily injury; and/or assaulting, attacking or threatening to cause physical injury

with or without any dangerous object to any adult or student

- Possession of alcohol, illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or any substance purported to be an illegal drug
- Causing a false fire alarm or a bomb scare
- Any act of sexual violence
- Possession of any dangerous object, weapon, fireworks, destructive devices or any other instrument which may be capable of inflicting bodily injury
- Unlawful entry
- Inciting others to violence and/or encouraging other students to join in a disturbance
- Repeated Class III or II Offenses
- Any other violations which the school principal considers reasonable to fall within this category due to its severity.