



# **POTTSGROVE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

## **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

### **2025 - 2026**

1351 North Hanover Street  
Pottstown, PA 19464

Phone: 610-326-8243  
Website: [www.pgmsd.org](http://www.pgmsd.org)  
Fax: 610-340-2111

## **FOREWORD**

The Handbook is published as a guide to students, parents/guardians and teachers. The thought behind this publication is to furnish a source of information as an aid to students so they may profit from the experience made available by the school, to parents/guardians to better understand the underlying philosophy and practices of the school, and to teachers.

## **ALMA MATER**

*Words by Kenneth Gambone – Faculty Member, 1957*

*Tune – American Hymn*

Hail Alma Mater!  
Your praises we sing.  
Welcome Alumni, so loyal and true,  
Thunders of cheers fill the oldest hallowed halls.  
Toast to the Falcons, who wear the Maroon and White.  
Hail Pottsgrove High School, your praises we sing.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>FOREWORD.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ALMA MATER.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>DIRECTORY OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>WELCOME.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>EXPECTATIONS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>POTTSGROVE TOGETHER - WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>COMMUNITY RELATIONS POLICY &amp; EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>OPENING EXERCISES/MOMENT OF SILENCE/FLAG DISPLAYS.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PBIS SCHOOL WIDE EXPECTATIONS.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Expectations.....	9
<b>PGMS SCHEDULES.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>DISTRICT BROADCAST SYSTEM.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>ATHLETICS &amp; CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.....</b>	<b>11</b>
Athletic Eligibility.....	11
Non-Athletic Co-Curricular Activities & Events.....	13
Participation in After School Events.....	14
Pioneer Athletic Conference - Code of Conduct.....	14
<b>FIELD TRIPS.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Absence.....	15
Early Dismissal.....	16
Tardiness- Late to School.....	17
Appointments During School.....	17
Truancy.....	18
Homelessness (McKinney Vento eligibility).....	18
Home Education Programs.....	19
Enrollment.....	19
Eligibility of Nonresident Students.....	19
Educational Opportunity for Military Children.....	19
<b>BOOK BAGS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>BUS BEHAVIOR.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>CAFETERIA.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>NUTRITION AND WELLNESS.....</b>	<b>21</b>
My School Bucks.....	21
<b>COURSE CHANGES AND WITHDRAWALS.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT/BULLYING/CYBER BULLYING.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>DISCIPLINE CODE FOR STUDENTS - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.....</b>	<b>23</b>
CODE OF CONDUCT.....	25

Disciplinary Consequences.....	27
<b>DISCIPLINE STRUCTURE.....</b>	<b>28</b>
Administrative Guidelines.....	32
Weapons.....	34
<b>DRESS &amp; GROOMING GUIDELINES.....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>DRUGS &amp; ALCOHOL.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>ELECTRONIC DEVICES.....</b>	<b>37</b>
Chromebooks.....	38
<b>EMERGENCY CLOSING NUMBER – 290.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>EVENT POSTERS AND FLYERS.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>DISSEMINATION OF MATERIALS.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>FIRE DRILLS &amp; EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>GRADING PRACTICES.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>HOMEWORK.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>HONOR ROLL.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.....</b>	<b>41</b>
Academic Integrity – Cheating/Plagiarism.....	41
<b>ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>THREAT ASSESSMENT.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>HALL CONDUCT &amp; EHALLPASS.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>HAZING.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>MAINTAINING APPROPRIATE ADULT/STUDENT BOUNDARIES.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>LABORATORY SAFETY.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>LAVATORY USE.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>LOCKERS.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>NURSE’S OFFICE INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>46</b>
Accidents and Illness.....	46
Procedures for Medication to be Administered During the School Day.....	46
<b>PUBLIC ACCESS DEFIBRILLATION PROGRAM.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>OPIOD ANTAGONIST.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>HEALTH SCREENINGS.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>SAFE2SAY SOMETHING.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>SEARCHES.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>VIDEO SURVEILLANCE.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>SMOKING &amp; VAPING.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORTS.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>SPECIAL EDUCATION.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACHES.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>STUDENT RECORDS.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>CONFIDENTIALITY &amp; FERPA.....</b>	<b>50</b>

**TARDINESS TO CLASS.....50**  
**TELEPHONES..... 50**  
**WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL.....51**

## DIRECTORY OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL

### POTTSGROVE SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. Jay Strunk	President
Mr. Bill Thompson	Vice president
Mrs. Ashley Custer	Secretary
Mrs. Patricia Grimm	Treasurer
Mr. Louis Corominas	Member
Mr. Jim Lopic	Member
Mrs. Stacey Hebert	Member
Ms. Tanya Taylor	Member
Mrs. Annique Ruiz-Brown	Member

### DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

David Finnerty, Ed. D.  
Superintendent

Amy Thompson  
Director of Human Resources

Daniel Vorhis  
Director of Education and Assessment

Ron Linke  
Business Administrator

Ann Marie Lucas, Ed. D.  
Director of Pupil Services

Jeff Buettler  
Director of Technology

Paige Petrillo  
Supervisor of Special Education

Casey Blankenbiller  
Director of Facilities

Erika Hinkle  
Supervisor of Special Education

Chaydeanne Kleinfelter  
Communications Specialist

Steve Anspach  
Director of Athletics

Becky Pappano  
Coordinator of Special Services K-12

### BUILDING ADMINISTRATION

Steven Palladino  
Principal

Tom Frevert  
Assistant Principal

Herbert Beekley  
Dean of Students

Martin Schreiber  
Assistant Director of Athletics

### SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Cristina Kleinfelter A – L

DiAinni Dennis M – Z

### SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

Crystal Stubbs

### IEP Counselor

Stacey Sheppard and Julien Andrews

## WELCOME

Welcome to Pottsgrove Middle School! The information in this handbook has been carefully prepared and presented in an effort to help you, the student and parent/guardian, adjust to, and become an integral part of our school.

In attending to your academic responsibilities, we hope that you will participate in our varied activities during this school year and enjoy your days at the middle school. Remember, your success in this school will be directly proportional to your efforts. Our school welcomes you to its family and we hope that you will always be conscious of its traditions and requirements. Your experience will be whatever you make it! Let us always have the spirit to do the things that make Pottsgrove Middle School outstanding.

## EXPECTATIONS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

*As teenagers approach adulthood, it is important that they assume more personal and academic responsibility. The following are expectations of **all** middle school students.*

### Students will:

- treat all students, staff, faculty, and guests with respect and dignity
- live out the Falcon Four - Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful, and Be Positive
- be a contributing member of our Pottsgrove school community
- celebrate the differences of our Pottsgrove school community
- come prepared with the mindset and supplies to actively engage in learning
- give back to their community by serving and supporting others
- celebrate academic progress and achievements
- be responsible to complete their own work, seeking support when necessary
- be responsible and ask their teachers for make-up work on the day they return after being absent
- notify teachers in advance to receive assignments for a planned absence from school
- approach their teacher directly with questions when they recognize that they are having difficulty with material

## POTTSGROVE TOGETHER - WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER

As a safe and supportive school community, we value each person and believe that our differences make us stronger and more resilient. Our school is a community that accepts each person for who they are and it's our goal to help each other live out our dreams in order to make our world a better place.

We stand against any and all acts of hate, bigotry, prejudice, racism, disrespect and the inequitable treatment of people. Additional information regarding Discrimination can be found in [Board Policy 103](#).

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS POLICY & EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

The Federal and State governments as well as the State Board of Education have enacted laws and issued directives protecting and granting equal opportunity to students and employees within the Commonwealth.

In like manner, the Board of School Directors of the Pottsgrove School District reaffirms its commitment to a policy of providing equal educational and employment opportunities for all pupils and employees commensurate with their needs, abilities, and diverse cultural backgrounds.

The Board endorses the principle of equal educational and employment opportunities and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, handicap, race, color, religious creed, national origin or age. For information about rights or

grievance procedures, contact the Title IX coordinator, Amy Thompson or the Section 504 coordinator, Dr. Ann Marie Lucas, Pottsgrove School District, 1301 Kauffman Road, Pottstown, PA 19464. Phone: 610-327-2277.

## **OPENING EXERCISES/MOMENT OF SILENCE/FLAG DISPLAYS**

The Board has adopted a [policy](#) to ensure that all district schools comply with state and federal laws concerning flag displays and opening exercises and the moment of silence on the anniversary of September 11, while respecting the rights of individuals. A United States flag shall be displayed on or near each school building during school hours, inclement weather and at other times determined by the Board. A United States flag shall be displayed in every classroom. District schools shall provide opening exercises that include a salute to the flag and/or recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance or the National Anthem. Students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance or National Anthem and to salute the flag on the basis of personal belief or religious conviction. Students who choose to refrain from such participation shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do participate. The Board directs the district to annually provide, during instructional hours, a moment of silence for students and staff to observe the anniversary of September 11, 2001.



*The* **FALCON 4**

- . Be Safe
- . Be Positive
- . Be Respectful
- . Be Responsible

*Caring for our school,  
community and each other*

	Hallways and Stairways	Classroom	Cafeteria	Bus	Bathrooms	Digital Environments	Schoolwide Policy
<b>Be Safe.</b>	Walk in all areas. Be aware of others around you as you use your locker. Walk on the right side of the hallway. Use your locker only.	Enter room quietly. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself. Follow directions the first time given. Ask for permission to leave the room.	Touch only your own food. Sit in assigned seat. Request permission to leave the cafeteria. Wait for the cue to be dismissed.	Walk directly to your bus. Remain seated in your assigned seat. Keep your hands and items to yourself inside the bus.	Use the facilities in an appropriate manner. Only enter the bathroom with a signed pass from a staff member. Leaves books and belongings in the classroom.	Keep your passwords secure. Keep personal information (phone number, address, etc.) private.	Enter and exit the auditorium silently. Sit in the auditorium where directed. Remain quiet when expected during assembly performances.
<b>Be Responsible.</b>	Move efficiently. Know your schedule. If you drop something, pick it up.	Come to class prepared with required materials. Find out what you missed within one day of missing class. Be on time.	Pay for the food you take. Dispose of trash in the provided trash cans. Know your lunch code or keep track of your cash.	Keep food and drinks put away. Enter and exit the bus in a timely manner. Be at the bus stop on time.	Dispose of trash in the provided trash cans. Return to class as soon as possible.	Charge your device at home overnight so that you are at 100% for the start of the school day. Remember to bring your device to school and handle it carefully.	Come to school every day on time. When absent, bring your excuse note to school the next day. Pay debts on time. Follow the cell phone policy.
<b>Be Respectful.</b>	Use your inside voice. Comply with personal displays of affection (PDA) guidelines. Pick up trash if you see it.	Speak at appropriate times. Take care of school property and materials. Raise your hand.	When lunch ends, be silent. Use your inside voice. Exit as directed by staff.	Use inside voices. Follow adults' directions. Respect the property and space of others.	Honor the privacy of others. Use your inside voice. Report anything out of the ordinary to your teacher.	Use appropriate language online; make sure communication is appropriate for school. Put device away when instructed to do so by an adult.	Stay in your personal space. Treat others the way you would like to be treated. Use polite language with staff and students.
<b>Be Positive.</b>	Speak politely and quietly to each other. Hold the door for other students/staff. Keep the hallways clean.	Do your best work at all times. Support the accomplishments of your classmates.	Treat the cafeteria workers kindly. Move through the lines quickly. Make healthy food choices.	Be polite to the bus driver. Be polite to passengers in cars. Keep the bus neat and clean.	Wash your hands. Maintain personal hygiene.	Ask to see the technology support staff, if needed. Report any suspicious or concerning information to a teacher or a	Represent Pottsgrove with pride on field trips, at athletic events, and in the community. Stand during the pledge to the flag and the moment of silence.

## Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Expectations

All students and staff are to follow the behavior expectations found on the matrix on the previous page. Students will be instructed on expectations during the first week and throughout the year.

### PGMS PBIS (Falcon 4 Fun Days) Incentive List 25-26 school year

- PGMS will feature one building wide incentive per trimester.
- Incentives will operate using a Falcon 4 Fun Day Schedule.
- Weekly incentives will be awarded using Falcon Tickets.
- All students will have the opportunity to participate in the Falcon 4 Fun Days. Students who misbehave are subject to a trip to our reflection room.
- The reflection room will be managed by grade level + encore teachers attached to the grade level on a rotating basis.

#### -Trimester Incentives-

Falcon 4 Fun Days will be held on Early Dismissal days or will be held on days using the PBIS Schedule. The following activities have been scheduled:

- **End Trimester Incentive #1- November 21st-** Fall Fest (Falcon 4 Fun Day schedule)
- **End Trimester Incentive #2- February 25th-** February Focus (Act 80 schedule)
- **End Trimester Incentive #3- May 29th-** Spring Fest (Falcon 4 Fun Day schedule)

#### -Weekly Incentives-

Falcon Tickets – Every Friday, students will have an opportunity to participate in a school-wide ticket drawing. Students whose tickets have been drawn will receive a prize from the PBIS room. These parents will be contacted by the school to be made aware of this recognition.

Surprise Drawings will also take place throughout the school year consisting of snacks with friends, additional privileges, and Falcons gear!

## PGMS SCHEDULES

\*Click on the following links to view the schedules:

- [25-26 PGMS Bell Schedule](#)
- [25-2 Act 80/Early Dismissal Bell Schedule](#)
- [25-26 Two Hour Delay Bell Schedule](#)
- [25-26 PBIS Falcon 4 Fun Day Schedule](#)

## DISTRICT BROADCAST SYSTEM

Pottsgrove uses a dedicated alert notification system that will provide telephone, email, and text notifications of important announcements such as weather-related school closures, late opening and early dismissals. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to visit Pottsgrove's PowerSchool Parent Web Portal where you can access video and PDF tutorials/instructions on how to create your account. You will also be able to customize how and to which phones and/or email accounts you would like to receive these notifications. You can change your preferences as often as you wish through this self-service portal. Should you have any questions, you may call our district technology department or email [pqsdparentportal@gmail.com](mailto:pqsdparentportal@gmail.com).

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

All walkers and car riders have access to the building at 7:45 am. The lobby will not open until 7:45 am. Bused students will enter through the back of the building on the second floor through the bus entrance. Students have until 8:05 am to be in class.

At dismissal, all walkers and car riders are dismissed at 2:50 pm. Following this announcement, buses will be called in waves. Students are to listen to announcements of bus numbers to ensure they do not miss their bus. Students who take buses are to remain in their WIN period until their number is called. Students who play sports are dismissed from their day for games at the time designated by their coach. This will be communicated to staff from the building athletic manager. For sports practices, students remain in their WIN period until their designated team is dismissed.

If you have any questions in regards to transportation, please contact the busing company, CMD Transportation at 610-323-5020.

## ATHLETICS & CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The following activities may be available to middle school students. All students are encouraged to participate in at least one activity per year.

Football	Lacrosse	Intramural Flag Football
Soccer	Cheerleading	Intramural Wrestling
Boys Basketball	Intramural Soccer	Intramural Volleyball
Track	Intramural Street Hockey	Intramural Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball	Intramural Girls Basketball	Junior National Honor Society
Baseball	Orchestra	Student Government
Cross Country	Band/Stage Band	Yearbook
Field Hockey	Chorus/Show Choir	Reading Olympics
Wrestling	Marching Band	School Store
Softball	Musical/Stage Crew	Clubs

### Athletic Eligibility

Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA), the governing body for all interscholastic sports, requires students to be passing four major subjects or their equivalent. Eligibility is determined every week. Class standing is defined as the grade or mark in a given subject for all work covered from the beginning of the semester or year to date.

Eligibility is reported weekly from Power School by the Director of Athletics and Student Activities.

Teachers are encouraged to maintain up-to-date grades in PowerSchool. The Director of Athletics & Student Activities and/or their Coach will notify any student athletes who are ineligible.

In order for a boy/girl to compete in interscholastic athletics and all programs defined as co-curricular he/she must fulfill all the regulations and requirements set forth by the P.I.A.A. and the Pottsgrove School District. The major requirements are as follows for all athletes, and students who participate in co-curricular programs, including but not limited to clubs, theater, dance, musical and service programs:

- A. Must be amateurs
  - 1. Cannot play under an assumed name.
  - 2. Cannot receive money
  - 3. Cannot sign a contract to play for a professional team.
- B. Must receive a cumulative passing grade in four credits as per Article X, Section I, P.I.A.A. – *How to Ascertain Class Standing*
  - 1. Scholastic eligibility shall be determined by ascertaining the pupil's class standing in each subject, at intervals of one week, during the current marking period. Class standing is defined as the grade or mark in a given subject for all work covered from the beginning of the marking period to the current week in that marking period to date. Weekly marks shall be effective for a period of one week from the date of issue. If the official report as recorded on the pupil's report card shows that a pupil is ineligible, he/she shall remain ineligible until his/her back work has been made up, in conformity with the requirements of this article.
- C. How Academic Ineligibility Affects Participation. A student/athlete must have a minimum of a 65% grade for the current marking period in at least 4.0 credit subjects as per the P.I.A.A. Where required, this curriculum or its equivalent must be approved by and conform to the regulations of the State Board of Education and the Pennsylvania School Code, as well as any local policies established by the local School Board. The student must be passing at least 4.0 credit subjects, or the equivalent, Eligibility is cumulative from the beginning of a grading period, must be reported on a weekly basis, where a student's cumulative work from the beginning of the grading period does not as of any Friday meet the minimum standards, the student is ineligible from the immediately following Sunday through Saturday immediately following the next Friday as of which the students cumulative work from the beginning of the grading period.

In addition:

- 1. High School Students. All students who participate in co-curricular programs may not be failing 2 or more major subjects, while maintaining a minimum of passing 4.0 credits.
- 2. Middle School Students. All students who participate in co-curricular programs may not fail more than a total of 2 subjects, whether they are major or elective classes.
  - a. Should a student become academically ineligible, the following course of action will be taken:
    - 1. Students will be able to attend practices during the first week of ineligibility; however, the student will not be allowed to attend competitions.
    - 2. During a second week of ineligibility (either consecutive or cumulative during the same athletic season) the student will remain eligible to attend practices; however, they will remain unable to participate in competitions.
    - 3. During any third week of ineligibility (either consecutive or cumulative during the same athletic season), the student will be suspended from the team in order to focus on improving their academic standing.
    - 4. Any additional period of ineligibility (either consecutive or cumulative during the same athletic season), will result in dismissal from the athletic team.
- 3. How Academic Ineligibility Affects Participation in Contests:
  - a. A student/athlete who is ineligible will not be able to participate in a contest and:
    - 1. Will not be dismissed early from school to attend a contest of his/her particular team.

2. May attend a home game after the conclusion of the regular school day and any additional academic assistance that may be assigned to them. Students/athletes are not permitted to dress in uniform, however, they may wear their team jersey.
  3. Participants may attend an evening contest provided they have completed the regular school day. If the game is an away contest and the athletes are not dismissed early, the student-athlete may attend via team bus. Students/athletes are not permitted to dress in uniform, however, they may wear their team jersey.
- b. Students that are ineligible are unable to participate in contests from that Sunday through the following Saturday.
- D. How Absence Affects Eligibility and Participation (Article III, Section II)
1. Contests: A pupil who has been absent from school during a semester for a total of twenty or more school days, shall not be eligible to participate in any athletic contest until he/she has been in attendance for a total of forty-five school days following his/her twentieth day of absence. Exceptions are death in immediate family, confining illness or injury; such excused absences may be waived by the P.I.A.A. District One Committee at a hearing.
  2. Practices: A pupil may practice during this ineligible period due to absence
- E. Must attend school the day of the game/practice. Any exception to the rule must have the prior approval of the Director of Athletics and the Principal. In the case of illness, the middle school participant/ athlete must be in school by 8:00 a.m. The middle school participant / athletes must be in school by 8:30 am. If the nurse sends the participant / athlete home, they may not participate that day. Doctor's appointments are legitimate excuses for tardiness, however, appointment cards must be presented to both the attendance desk and the athletic office prior to the event/practice.
- F. Behavior unbecoming a participant / athlete, could result in the Athletic Director/Principal revoking the privilege of a student to participate in an athletic event.
1. Middle School Students: All discipline infractions are subject for review, however the following actions have been agreed upon by the athletic department and building administration:
    - a. If a student is suspended (OSS/ISS) they may not attend athletics on the days assigned.
    - b. If a student receives detention, they are not permitted to attend athletics on the day assigned.
    - c. If a student is sent to the reflection room:
      1. The student may attend athletics for the first 2 offenses during the same season.
      2. After the 3rd offense, and for each subsequent offense, the student will be unable to attend athletics for that day.
      3. If a student is sent to the reflection room multiple times in the same day (2 or more), they are unable to attend athletics for that day.
      4. Absences from athletics, due to school discipline, will be considered unexcused.
      5. If a student is attending GROVE Academy, then they will be unable to participate in school-sponsored co-curricular activities until completion is successfully fulfilled.
- G. If the age of 19 is attained on or after July 1st, the pupil shall be eligible to compete in athletics through that school year.
- H. Athletes must return all equipment for a sport or they cannot participate in the next season. Example: football equipment returned before the start of wrestling.
- I. The P.I.A.A. provides a student the opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics for a period of not more than 8 consecutive semesters beyond the eighth grade and 4 consecutive semesters beyond sixth grade.

### **Non-Athletic Co-Curricular Activities & Events**

In addition to the PIAA guidelines for eligibility, the Pottsgrove Middle School imposes the following requirements on all students. We expect all students to represent themselves, their families, their organization and their school favorably at all times. The following basic rules apply to all students:

- A. Any student suspended from school is ineligible for participation in activities during the time of the suspension.

- B. Coaches, faculty advisors, or club sponsors of any organization may establish additional rules and procedures for members. They may also establish disciplinary action for a breach in rules and procedures.
- C. Students who are absent or tardy unexcused after 8:15 am will be ineligible for that day's activities.
- D. Students with ten or more disciplinary infractions, 10 unexcused absences or 10 unexcused tardies may not be permitted to participate in activities/events such as.
- E. Passing courses in alignment with the PIAA Rules and Regulations (See above guidelines)
- F. School activities are for Pottsgrove students only unless the activity has a procedure for allowing guests.
- G. All school rules are to be followed and consequences will be issued for violations.
- H. **Programs that qualify for Eligibility Reports:**  
Band, Academic Competitions, Stage Band, Bell Choir, Color Guard, Chorus, Reading Olympics, Show Choir, String Orchestra, Theater, Student Government. Robotics, AM Fitness Club, Student Coalition, National Junior Honor Society, Clubs

### [Athletic and Co-Curricular Activities Eligibility Drug/Alcohol/Criminal Activity Addendum](#)

#### **Participation in After School Events**

In order to attend or participate in an activity/athletic event scheduled after the close of any day, it will be necessary for the student to be in attendance the full day, at both the morning and afternoon session of that particular day, unless the office for exceptionally urgent reasons excuses him/her. If a student wishes to stay after to be a spectator at a sporting event, they must secure a permission form from the first floor office and submit it to the first floor office no later than 9:00 AM on the day of the event. Parent/guardian notes or phone calls will not be accepted. A student may return with a parent/guardian to watch an event provided the parent/guardian remains at the school with the student. Students who are staying for an event are not permitted to ride the activity bus and must be picked up from the school by 5:00 PM. While attending an event, students may not leave school grounds.

#### **Pioneer Athletic Conference - Code of Conduct**

In the interest of good relationships in the field of athletics, all spectators are asked to:

1. Show respect for their country by standing attentively when the American Flag passes and during the playing and singing of the National Anthem.
2. Show their respect by standing for the Alma Maters of both schools.
3. Conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen at all times, showing respect for visiting players and injured athletes, by not booing participants on the playing areas and by respecting property.
4. Show respect for the game officials and refrain from booing their decisions or interfering with their control of the contest.
5. Refrain from vulgarity and indecent gestures, which are reflections of immaturity.
6. Cheer under the organized guidance of the cheerleaders. Cheers to interfere with opponents' cheering are prohibited. Foot stomping in stands is to be eliminated.
7. Refrain from using noisemakers and signs in any gymnasium or at indoor contests.
8. Refrain from littering premises, throwing confetti or paper and tossing objects onto the playing areas.
9. Support musical groups for indoor activities. However, such groups must be organized, school-sponsored and supervised to play only before games and during half-time.
10. Do not bring to any indoor contest any type of radio or audio tape player.
11. Follow the Code of Conduct for promoting good sportsmanship, adults and students alike.

Pioneer Athletic Conference schools reserved the right to eject any spectators whose conduct is detrimental to good sportsmanship. Misbehavior at sporting events may lead to prosecution or school disciplinary action.

Any student-athlete who has been ejected from a PIAA sanctioned event for unsportsmanlike behavior or misconduct will be suspended from participating in the next (2) PIAA sanctioned game contests and/or events. If

the ejection occurs at the end of the season, the suspension will carry over to the next season in which the student-athlete participates.

Any Pottsgrove student spectator who is removed from a PIAA sanctioned event by a representative of the school, an opponent's school, and/or a PIAA referee/umpire will be subject to a 90-day suspension from events in which Pottsgrove is a participating school. Consequently, a second ejection will result in a 180-day suspension from said activities.

## FIELD TRIPS

The purpose of field trips are to afford a first-hand educational experience not available in the typical educational setting, forming and/or strengthening bonds between students and the adults that accompany them; as well as the opportunity to become familiar with experiences/concepts in their actual environment(s). The field trip is an instructional opportunity to enrich and extend the educational experiences of School District students through participation in a school-related activity outside of the traditional classroom setting. For the purpose of this policy, a field trip shall be defined as any journey by students away from the school premises, under the supervision of a teacher, coach, advisor, director and/or other approved individual(s), which is accessory to an approved course of study in accordance with the students' respective grade level(s) and/or venue of competition/participation conducted for the purpose of affording a first-hand educational experience not available in the regular classroom and/or playing field and/or arena of performance. Students are expected to travel to and from the field trip with the teacher leading the trip. Students are not permitted to leave the field trip on their own without parental permission. Teachers must never send a student home alone, even for disciplinary reasons without parental permission. Parents/Guardians desiring to take their children home before a field trip ends must submit a note to the teacher about such arrangements in advance of the trip. Additional information can be found in [Board Policy 121](#) regarding field trips.

## ATTENDANCE

The board requires that school-aged students enrolled in Pottsgrove School District schools attend regularly, in accordance with state laws and [Board Policy 204](#). The educational program offered by this District is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation in order for students to achieve academic standards and consistent educational progress.

### Absence

1. A handwritten note signed by the parent/guardian, email communication sent to [MSAbsent@pgsd.org](mailto:MSAbsent@pgsd.org), or note from an attending physician is required within five school days of the student's return to school. Failure to submit a written excuse may be recorded as an unlawful absence.
2. Phone messages left on the attendance line still require follow up written or electronic communication to excuse the absence.
3. It is essential that the reason for absence be clear and well defined. Lawful excuses may be granted for the following reasons: religious holiday, illness, quarantine or recovery from an injury as assigned per a physician's order, death in the immediate family, required court attendance of the student, educational trips (when requests have been approved), and formal college visits.
4. After a student is absent for 10 cumulative days (excluding approved educational trips, formal college visits, absences accompanied by a physician's order and required court appearance of the student) students may be required to provide a physician's note for all future absences for the balance of the school year.

5. After an accumulation of more than two unexcused absences in a week or more than ten cumulative days, a student may be referred to the school based social worker and/or MTSS referral.
6. Make-up tests for excused absences will be administered after school or at the teacher's convenience and discretion. (See "Making Up Work" in the handbook for further guidelines.)

## Absence for Educational Trips

Upon receipt of a written parental/guardian request, students may be excused from school to participate in an educational tour or trip with the approval of the Middle School Administrators and the District Superintendent. The following procedures should be followed:

1. A request form must be on file from the parent/guardian one week before the trip. Click [HERE](#) for the form.
2. The responsibility to obtain makeup work and to satisfy academic requirements lies directly with the student and parent/guardian.
3. There is a (5) day limit on educational trips during any school year. Requests to be absent during the first and/or last week of the school year will not be granted.
4. Additional information can be found in [Board Policy 204.1](#) regarding Non School Sponsored Educational Trips and Tours.

## Early Dismissal

1. If at any time a student's parent/guardian or guardian finds it necessary to have the student leave school before the end of the day for a reason other than personal illness or death in the family, the student must bring a request written and signed by the parent or guardian, stating the time the student is to leave and the reason for leaving.
2. All students being excused early for a doctor's appointment must take their note to the front desk by first period. School officials reserve the right to verify the appointment with parents/guardians and/or the medical practitioner.
3. Under normal circumstances students will not be excused to leave school for non-medical appointments or other commitments that can be scheduled on weekends or after the school day.
4. Only in emergencies will students be permitted to leave the school premises without the note and then only by personal application of the parent or guardian to the proper school official.
5. A student who becomes ill during the school day may not be excused from school unless permission is obtained from the school nurse.
6. At the designated time for the student to leave school he/she must report to the front desk to sign-out. Upon the student's return to school he/she again reports to the front desk and signs in on the same sheet and then reports to his/her class.
7. If the dismissal was due to a medical appointment, the pupil will be excused for the appointment and travel time only and is expected to return to school with a verification card or note from the doctor. If deemed necessary by the doctor or dentist that the student remain absent for the remainder of the school day, the verification card from the doctor must be returned to school the following day. Failure to return the verification card within five (5) school days of the appointment will result in an unexcused absence.

8. Proper identification must be shown by the parent/guardian in order for the student to be released from the school. No student is permitted to leave school at any time without the permission of the school nurse or an administrator.

## Tardiness- Late to School

Tardiness is lateness to school. Tardiness negatively impacts learning due to loss of instructional time. Tardiness is not excused for missing the bus, oversleeping, car problems, weather conditions, etc. In order to promote punctuality, the following rules apply:

1. A student coming to school late must receive a late pass from an office staff member and will be marked Tardy.
2. A student who is tardy but excused must see their teachers to make up all class work. If a test, quiz, or other graded activity was missed, a student must complete that work the next school day.
3. A student tardy (unexcused) from school during a day of an after school activity may be prohibited from attending.
4. A student tardy to school (unexcused) will be referred to administration after a cumulative period of five days tardy to school.

## Appointments During School

Students will be granted permission for medical appointments, religious events, funerals, etc. if they present a written request to the secretary in the 1st floor office by 8:30 AM on the day of the appointment. These appointments should not require missing a full day of school. **Verification from the doctor's office, time of the appointment, duration of the visit, and the reason for the visit** will be required upon the students' return to school.

Students leaving for or arriving from appointments should report to the main office before being picked up or upon checking in. **It is necessary that parents/guardians "sign-out" their child from school as well as sign them in. Identification will be required by the adult picking up the student.** Students will not be permitted to leave the building unless escorted by an adult.

Students will not be permitted to attend virtual counseling appointments with organizations outside of the school community, during school hours. Similarly, outside agencies serving our students may not pull a student from the academic day to hold such meetings on school grounds. All outside service providers are expected to coordinate and collaborate with either the guidance counselor or the student's IEP team case manager. See [Board Policy #916](#)

### **Students who must leave school during school hours will follow this procedure:**

1. Bring a written and signed note including a parent's/guardian's daytime telephone number.
2. Submit the note to the 1st floor office and pick up an early dismissal slip.
3. Meet your parent/guardian in the main office. Your parent/guardian will sign-out there.
4. Report to the office upon your return to school to be signed in and to obtain a re-entry pass.

## Truancy

Pennsylvania Department of Education defines truancy as accruing 3 or more unlawful absences in a given school year and compels school districts to implement plans and procedures for students that meet the definition of truant. In accordance with state attendance laws Pottsgrove may implement the following truancy procedures (this information is more detailed in [Board Policy 204](#)):

- Students with 3 unlawful absences will be sent a First Legal Notice to inform parents/guardians of the absences.
- Students with 6 unlawful absences will be sent a Second Legal Notice to inform parents/guardians of the absences and invite the family to participate in a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) with the Home and School Visitor and other school team members.
- Students with 10 or more unlawful absences may be referred to the Montgomery County Office of Children and Youth Truancy Diversion Units, as well as referred to a Magisterial District Judge for intervention.

## Homelessness (McKinney Vento eligibility)

### About Homeless Act-McKinney Vento Act

The McKinney–Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act guarantees a free and appropriate public education for all homeless children and youth. [B.E.C. 42 U.S.C. 11431](#) outlines procedures for deciding school placement, enrolling students, and determining responsibility. Federal and state laws make our responsibility clear. With the huge number of homeless children currently attending Philadelphia public schools, we must provide proper educational support and services.

### McKinney-Vento Act Basics At-a-Glance:

#### What is the definition of a “homeless youth” under McKinney-Vento?

“Homeless” is defined as “anyone lacking a fixed, adequate, regular nighttime residence.”

#### What situations fit this definition?

- Staying in the home of other people due to unavailable housing, financial hardship, or similar circumstances
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks (in some instances – examples: leaking roof, no heat, etc.), public places, or campgrounds due to unavailable suitable housing options
- Living in an emergency shelter or transitional housing
- Unaccompanied (not living in direct care of legal parent or guardian) or runaway youth
- Refugee and migrant youth

#### How does McKinney-Vento help these students?

The law makes sure that these students receive a free and suitable public education by removing barriers to school enrollment and full, basic, daily participation in school activities. This includes:

- Immediate enrollment
- Free and Reduced School Lunch
- Help from school with any necessary enrollment documents
- Help from school setting up transportation service (if the student qualifies)
- Help from school with getting basic uniform clothing
- Help from school with basic school supplies
- Help from school with any basic clothing needs
- Help from school with basic high school graduation needs and expenses

#### Where can I find more information for Pennsylvania?

You can visit the [PA Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#) site.

Each school district is required to designate a liaison to ensure that students experiencing housing instability are

properly identified, enrolled, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in school. Students who lack a fixed, regular and adequate residence or are not in the care of their guardian are eligible for McKinney Vento support. Examples of this may look like: families facing eviction, runaway youth, victims of domestic violence, fire, loss of employment or hospitalization/incarceration. If you feel your student is experiencing any difficulties accessing their education because of concerns relating to housing stability, please reach out to our homeless liaisons:

Amy Brennan (Pottsgrove Middle and High School) [amy.brennan@pgsd.org](mailto:amy.brennan@pgsd.org)

Tiffany Wagner (Elementary Division) [twagner@pgsd.org](mailto:twagner@pgsd.org)

## **Enrollment/ESSA Foster Care Enrollment**

The Board requires that a school age student shall be entitled to attend the schools of the District of residence. If residency is a concern there are specific guidelines the district follows.

## **Home Education Programs**

Parents/Guardians who intend to keep their children home for home education should review the following updated policy. In addition, if you would like your child to participate in co-curricular activities and academic programs please view the following policy: [Participation in Co-Curricular Activities and Academic Programs by Home Education Students Policy 137.2](#)

## **Enrollment**

The Board requires that a school age student shall be entitled to attend the schools of the District of residence. If residency is a concern there are specific guidelines the district follows. Please see [Board Policy 201](#) for information regarding age requirements for the admission of beginning students.

## **Eligibility of Nonresident Students**

The Board shall operate District schools for the benefit of students who reside in this District who are eligible for attendance. For additional information, click [HERE](#) to view Board Policy 202.

## **Educational Opportunity for Military Children**

The Board recognizes the challenges encountered by children of military families due to the frequent moves and deployment of their parents/guardians. The Board is committed to eliminating barriers to student attendance, education and graduation; and to providing additional support to children of military families in compliance with federal and state laws, regulations and [Board Policy 254](#).

## **BOOK BAGS**

Students are **NOT** permitted to carry book bags during the school day. They should be kept in their lockers.

## **BUS BEHAVIOR**

### **General Rules**

1. The school and/or bus driver may change a student's assigned seat throughout the year due to inappropriate behavior.
2. The bus driver is in charge of all students assigned to his/her bus.
3. Parents/guardians shall be held responsible for any damage done to buses by students.
4. Students will not be permitted to transfer from one bus to another without prior written permission from the PGMS office. Students found riding a bus other than the one assigned to them will be subject to disciplinary action, including possible suspension of bus privileges.
5. No student may eat, drink, vape or smoke on any school district owned or contracted vehicle. Cell phones, district issued electronic devices, and MP3 players are permitted on the bus. (Upon exiting the bus, students must immediately put these items away).
6. Foul language or disrespect to bus drivers will not be tolerated. Such behavior will result in suspension from school or suspension of bus-riding privileges.
7. Students shall not put any part of their body outside the windows or throw objects in or out of the bus.
8. While a child is suspended from the bus, parents/guardians are responsible to provide transportation until the suspension has ended.
9. Students who violated the bus rules/procedures will be disciplined by the school and may be cited by the police department.

### **Consequences for Misbehavior**

As per the Pottsgrove School District Discipline Code, misconduct; included but not limited to: disruptive and/or distracting behavior, eating or drinking, disrespect to the bus driver, not remaining in your seat while the bus is in motion is prohibited and considered unsafe. Such offenses will result in disciplinary referral to a building administrator. Offenses of this nature will result in disciplinary action that aligns with the PGSD Disciplinary Code and may include the following:

***1<sup>st</sup> Offense-ranges from warning to after school detention***

***2<sup>nd</sup> Offense- ranges from after school detention to In School Suspension***

***3<sup>rd</sup> Offense-1 to 2-day removal from the bus + appropriate school discipline***

***\*Parent/guardian meeting with building administration***

***4<sup>th</sup> Offense- 3+ day removal from the bus + appropriate school discipline***

***5<sup>th</sup> Offense- 5+-day removal from the bus + appropriate school discipline***

***6<sup>th</sup> Offense- Removal of bus privilege for school year + appropriate school discipline***

*Discipline will be progressive. It is vital to practice safe, respectful, and responsible bus behavior. It is our hope that this behavior will be corrected moving forward. Please remember that your son/daughter will need to be dropped off and picked up at the appropriate times. The PGMS handbook lists the start and end time for our daily schedule. Truancy will be continued to be monitored and all PDE guidelines will be adhered.*

## **CAFETERIA**

The lunch period should be an enjoyable experience for all. Students are expected to regard the cafeteria as their dining room and behave accordingly. The following procedures should be followed:

1. Lunch is an assigned period. All students are required to report to the cafeteria as scheduled and on time.
2. No food or drink is to be taken out of the cafeteria.

3. A student not assigned lunch may not pass through the cafeteria or purchase food to take out of the cafeteria.
4. Students buying food will line up at the desired serving line so as not to block walkways in the cafeteria.
5. Students must remain in their seats. They are not permitted to wander about the cafeteria.
6. Talking and socializing is, of course, permitted. However, yelling and/or loud talking will not be tolerated.
7. Students must seek permission to use the lavatory, and will be issued a pass. All students granted permission will be directed to use only the lavatories located adjacent to the cafeteria.
- 8. No student is permitted to leave the cafeteria during lunch time unless a pass has been issued for the restroom or they have a pre-signed pass by a faculty member.**
9. Students are to keep their areas clean. Food or any item dropped on the floor must be picked up. After eating, students are to carry trays to the dishwashing area. Students are to return to their seats and remain seated in the cafeteria until dismissed by the lunchroom monitors.
10. Remember classes are in session – please be considerate of others and keep the noise down in the hallways when passing to your class from the cafeteria.
11. At dismissal, students are to remain quiet to hear announcements for their dismissal to their next class.
12. Students not abiding by the above regulations or rules will be referred to the Assistant Principal/Dean of Students.
13. Students are not permitted to have food delivered to Pottsgrove Middle School.

## NUTRITION AND WELLNESS

Pottsgrove School District recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical well-being, growth, development and readiness to learn. Pottsgrove School District is committed to providing a school environment that promotes student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education and promotion, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement. Nutrition education will be provided within the sequential, comprehensive health education program in accordance with curriculum regulations and the academic standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences. Nutrition education in the District shall teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by students. Promoting student health and nutrition enhances readiness for learning and increases student achievement. Nutrition education shall provide all students with the knowledge and skills needed to lead healthy lives. Nutrition education lessons and activities shall be age-appropriate. Nutrition curriculum shall teach behavior-focused skills, which may include menu planning, reading nutrition labels and media awareness. Nutrition education may be integrated into other subjects such as math, science, language arts and social sciences to complement but not replace academic standards based on nutrition education. Lifelong lifestyle balance shall be reinforced by linking nutrition education and physical activity. The staff responsible for providing nutrition education shall be properly trained and prepared and shall participate in appropriate professional development. The District shall develop standards for such training and professional development. Nutrition education may extend beyond the school environment by engaging and involving families and the community. For additional information, please see [Board Policy 246](#) regarding school wellness.

### My School Bucks

The Pottsgrove School District has a computerized debit system, My School Bucks. This system will benefit you, your child, and the district in the following ways:

- Assures parents that money given to the student is used for a food purchase.
- Eliminates the need for students to carry cash on a daily basis.

- Increases the speed of the serving lines (once the staff and students complete the learning phase), and gives students more time to eat and enjoy their lunch break.
- To access the system, go to the following site: [My School Bucks](#)

## COURSE CHANGES AND WITHDRAWALS

Adjustments to student schedules must be addressed prior to the start of the academic year. Student schedules may only be changed for reliable academic reasons. Unfortunately, modifications to accommodate lunch/classes with friends or to change teachers will not be honored. **Schedule changes after the first 10 days of school will not be permitted unless approved by the principal.** Due to enrollment and program constraints, some sections are closed to additional students and the flexibility in changing schedules is limited.

## DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT/BULLYING/CYBER BULLYING

PGSD is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for District students and recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence.

Students are encouraged to report bullying. More information on reporting and the policies concerning bullying can be found on the website in the [Bullying Prevention section](#). A copy of the forms are available from the building principal in the main office, in the guidance office, or the District website. Reporting can also be done through oral complaints to staff members. The person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of a violation of this policy. Reports may be made openly or anonymously. Students may also use anonymous reporting sites, such as the Safe2Say Something program to make such reports.

Verbal and written complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective and preventive action be taken when allegations are substantiated. Reports made to staff must be forwarded to the building principal or school counselor to ensure prompt investigation.

Students who are found to be victims of bullying shall have their parents/guardians notified of the situation and the steps taken to resolve the situation. Students who are found to engage in bullying behavior will have their parents/guardians notified and informed of the situation and of any discipline or police involvement that has taken place.

### Discrimination/Discriminatory Harassment

Every report of alleged bullying that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination and discriminatory harassment shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Compliance Officer. If, in the course of a bullying investigation, potential issues of discrimination or discriminatory harassment are identified, the Compliance Officer shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination as well as the incidents of alleged bullying.[2][3]

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with this policy and the District's legal and investigative obligations.

## **Education**

The District may develop, implement and evaluate bullying prevention and intervention programs and activities. Programs and activities shall provide District staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.<sup>[1][6][7][8]</sup>

# **DISCIPLINE CODE FOR STUDENTS - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **Statement of Purpose**

The Board has the authority to adopt fair, reasonable and necessary rules governing student conduct at all times when students are under the supervision of the school or at any time while on school property, while present at school-sponsored activities, and while traveling to or from school and school-sponsored activities or at other times while riding in school-provided means of transportation.

The administration has the authority to implement the adopted rules, including the Code of Student Conduct and Board policies, and to assign consequences for violations of established rules.

Application of rules and assignment of consequences will also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property or off-campus or during nonschool hours to the same extent as outlined in the Board policy on student discipline.

## **Corporal Punishment**

The Board prohibits the use of corporal punishment as a form of discipline for students in the district. In situations where a parent/guardian or the Board prohibits corporal punishment, reasonable force may still be used by teachers and school authorities under any of the following circumstances: to quell a disturbance, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects, for the purpose of self-defense, and for the protection of persons or property.

## **Procedure**

A rule is generally considered reasonable if it uses a rational and neutral means of accomplishing some legitimate school purpose. School rules are assumed to be reasonable. Students who believe a rule is not reasonable still must obey such rule until it is amended, rescinded or waived.

Student and staff awareness of established rules minimizes student conduct problems and helps to provide students with an understanding of the boundaries of acceptable conduct. School rules and the Code of Student Conduct will be published and distributed to students and parents/guardians through the student handbook, district website, and other appropriate methods. Rules may be posted in prominent locations throughout the schools.

District employees will recognize and safeguard a student's rights to due process.

The primary goal of disciplinary and other measures is not to punish misbehavior, but instead is to correct breaches of the rules, achieve compliance and reinforce within the school community that misbehavior will result in consequences. Nonexclusionary disciplinary actions such as in-school or after-school detentions should be considered before disciplinary actions such as suspension, expulsion or other measures that remove a student from school. Restorative or corrective approaches that may be adequate to address a student's breach of the rules

should be considered prior to initiating formal disciplinary action. Special consideration should be given to counseling and student assistance as an alternative to or in conjunction with assigned discipline.

The Board, administration, staff and parents/guardians are interested in the welfare, rights and educational success of district students. Confrontations, individual incidents of misconduct and violations of the established Code of Student Conduct create disruptive and potentially harmful situations. A consistent and cooperative effort by the school community must be exercised to prevent such occurrences. It is vital that all members of the school community realize the importance of sound relationships that are based upon mutual support and respect.

### **Restorative Practices and School-Wide Strategies**

The district will integrate student discipline strategies with the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework to address student conduct and behavior. Restorative practices in schools focus on building and repairing relationships within the school community, emphasizing reflection, dialogue and a collaborative problem-solving approach over punitive discipline. This approach fosters a more positive and inclusive school climate, reducing conflicts and improving student behavior and well-being.

The following types of restorative practices will be integrated with the Code of Student Conduct. Staff will be trained on appropriate consideration and implementation of these practices in the school environment:

1. Activities focused around reflection- understanding one's choices, resetting- making better choices, committing- creating a plan for the future.
2. Conferences with the student, which include creation of supportive measures and approaches that promote restorative practices to the discipline displayed.
3. Reassignment of seating, peer work group, transportation or other school environmental change related to student behavioral concern.
4. Functional behavioral assessments that support the development of proactive positive behavior support plans.
5. Contact and conference with parent/guardian.

### **Building Administration Responsibilities for Student Conduct**

As the educational leaders of the school, building administrators must set the climate for appropriate conduct for the students and staff. The building administrators are expected to:

1. Know all the rules and regulations for student conduct established by the Board and administration, and seek interpretation of items not understood.
2. Promote a school climate of mutual support and respect and assume responsibility for dissemination, explanation and enforcement of the Code of Student Conduct and other established school rules.
3. Ensure that new students enrolling in district schools receive the Code of Student Conduct.
4. Implement the district Emergency Preparedness Plan and school rules related to health and safety, to ensure the health and safety of all members of the school community.
5. Be available to staff, students and parents/guardians to promptly address discipline problems and prevent problems where possible.

6. Comply with pertinent laws, regulations and Board policy governing hearings, suspensions and student rights.
7. Recommend to the district administration and Board appropriate policies or policy revisions and implementation to achieve optimum conditions for a positive learning environment.
8. Provide orientation, assemblies and/or inservice programs to implement and maintain the Code of Student Conduct and established school rules.

The Superintendent may directly handle referrals of disciplinary cases, where appropriate, or may advise the building principal in the proper disposition of the case. If expulsion is indicated, the Superintendent will refer the case to the Board, in accordance with Board policy.

### **Training for School Administrators and Staff**

The Superintendent will ensure that building principals, administrators and school staff receive training regarding applicable standards and procedures for implementation of student discipline in accordance with Board policy, the Code of Student Conduct and applicable laws and regulations.

Special emphasis will be given to understanding the limitations on school officials' authority to regulate off-campus student conduct, as well as the need to articulate in detail the nature and extent of a disruption to or interference with the school environment thought to be caused by on or off-campus student conduct and the specific manner by which the student conduct involved is thought to have caused it.

Staff will be trained on assessing possible miscommunication between staff and students regarding expectations for student conduct, as well as identifying the impact of cultural differences between expected and exhibited behavior.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

**It is the responsibility of the school to provide an atmosphere that supports the educational program and protects the right of its students to receive an education. Part of this charge requires the development and administration of a discipline component. We recognize and accept our responsibility in this area.**

Violations of school rules and regulations may necessitate disciplinary action in the form of privilege suspension, after school detention, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension.

### **General Rules**

1. Eating food anywhere in the building is not permitted, except at lunch. The selling of any food related items are prohibited.
2. Students are encouraged to carry very little money to school. Students are not to exchange money with any fellow peer during the course of the school day.
3. Book bags/other large bags are to be used for carrying materials to and from school. They are not to be carried by students during the school day. This rule is in effect as a safety precaution.
4. Students are not permitted to use a cell phone/electronic device during the school day. Cell phones should be turned off and in their lockers. Oftentimes, these items are targeted for theft. The school encourages students to leave all non-school issued electronic devices at home.
5. Items described above (#5) will be confiscated, if used inappropriately during the school day.
6. **The administration is not responsible for items brought to school. Any item confiscated by a staff member will be returned to the student at the end of the day on the first offense.**
7. Disrespect toward or failure to follow the directions of a guest teacher will result in disciplinary action.

8. Disruption to the Educational Environment – Any student disrupting the learning of other students will be disciplined by the school and may be cited by the Police for Disorderly Conduct.
9. Students riding bikes to school may only do so with written parent/guardian permission. A note must be submitted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor office. Bikes may ONLY be locked and stationed at the bike rack near the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor “bridge”. At dismissal, bike riders will be dismissed by staff members following departure of all buses.
10. The only students permitted to walk home are those students living in the development which connects to the school property near the football field.

### **Detention, Privilege Suspension, and The Reflection Room**

1. During detention, students are required to complete the assigned task.
2. Students in detention may not talk, sleep, leave the room, use a cell phone or cause any type of distraction. Any of these infractions may result in reassignment of the detention(s) or additional consequences. Lavatory visits are to occur prior to detention.
3. After-school detention will be held 2 days a week from 2:50- 3:45 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and/or Thursday.
4. For overall safety and liability concerns, any detained student whose ride does not arrive by 3:50 will be placed on the activity bus to be transported home.
5. Students assigned to detention may not participate in intramural or interscholastic activities after detention, whether a practice or a game.
6. Failure to report for an assigned detention for any reason will be treated as unexcused absence and disciplinary action will occur.
  - i. The student will be assigned a day of ISS for the next day that they are in attendance.
7. The Reflection Room is designed to help students correct disruptive classroom behavior and to preserve the educational atmosphere of the classroom. Students will be sent to a separate room where they will be given time to re-establish their composure. Should a student be sent to the reflection room, the sending teacher will make a phone contact that day to the parent or guardian. If a student is unable to maintain composure in the reflection room, an administrator will be called to make parent/guardian contact.
  - i. If the administrative team observes a pattern of repeated behavior that involves a student and specific teacher and/or staff member, an intervention meeting between the student, parent/legal guardian, teacher/staff member, and an administrator may be scheduled to address the ongoing issues.

### **Suspension**

1. Suspension includes *in-school* and *out-of-school* varieties as well as privilege suspension, including bus transportation.
2. In cases of out-of-school suspensions for 3 days, a student will not be reinstated to class until a parent/guardian -administrator conference occurs. A parent/guardian must participate in this process.
3. For an out-of-school suspension exceeding 3 days, an informal hearing will be held with an administrator before reinstatement can occur. At the informal hearing, the student and administrator has the opportunity to present any additional information. Based on the evidence and the level of infraction, the suspension can be extended up to 10 days.
4. Misbehavior of any kind during the serving of in-school suspension will result in immediate out-of-school suspension.
5. A student who is suspended (in-school or out-of-school) may not participate in any school activities for the duration of the suspension. This also includes evening activities through the last day of the assigned suspension and beginning the day that the suspension is issued.
6. Any student serving an out-of-school suspension is to remain off school district property for the duration of the suspension. Failure to do so will result in a trespass citation.
7. Out-of-school suspension days can only be served when school is in session. Scheduled dates will not include holidays or weekends. Also, if school is canceled for any reason on assigned out-of-school suspension dates, the dates will be reassigned so that the full suspension is served.

8. While on a period of suspension (in school or out of school), students are responsible for the work demanded from their assigned classes. Students are expected to engage work through online means and physical work may be gathered for parent/guardian pick up; if applicable.

### **Fighting:**

It should be noted that fighting is never considered to be an acceptable way to settle differences. In a vast majority of situations, where a fight occurs, one or both of the parties involved has an opportunity to avoid the physical aspect of the confrontation. Because of this, it is safe to say that in most instances, both participants in a fight are to receive a suspension.

When a situation is escalating toward a physical confrontation the expectation for a student is that they try to de-escalate the situation by: walking away, going to a nearby classroom, getting the attention of an adult nearby, yelling for assistance, or immediately going to the guidance office or Main Office. There is never a time during school hours that a teacher or other adult is not readily available to assist a student. We have consistent expectations that student bystanders are expected to alert adults to a situation that is forming (unfolding). Student bystanders who escalate a situation by encouraging fighting, verbally engaging with a student(s), or recording/sharing an altercation, may also receive consequences from our discipline code. Upper Pottsgrove Police will be contacted when deliberate physical contact is made.

### **Parent/Guardian**

We ask that you follow up at home with an effort to work with your child to address and adjust the behavior that resulted in any disciplinary assignment. Your support is essential in order to bring about the desired change for the students' benefit and community.

## **Disciplinary Consequences**

### **Restorative Practices**

Focuses on building and repairing relationships within the school community, emphasizing reflection, dialogue and a collaborative problem-solving approach over punitive discipline. Upon completion of the restorative practice, students return to their regular schedule.

### **Detention**

Times- 2x/Week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday 2:50 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. Transportation will be provided for the student assigned to detention in the event that a parent or guardian cannot pick that student up by 3:50 p.m. The parent or guardian must physically be present for pick up, or the student will be sent home on the bus.

### **Lunch Detention**

Students will spend the duration of their lunch period in a designated setting. Students will be given the opportunity to complete a reflective processing assignment while consuming their lunch. At the conclusion of the lunch period, the student will follow their regular schedule.

### **Reflection Room**

Students will be directed to a designated setting during the course of the school day, should their demonstration of behaviors create a disruption to the learning environment. Once sent to this setting, the student will engage in a reflective processing assignment, and will remain in this setting for a period of twenty minutes, or until the reflective processing assignment has been completed. During this time, students will not be permitted to use their school issued Chromebook.

### **ISS- In-school-suspension**

Students will be called or escorted to the ISS Room at the beginning of school day (8:00 AM). Students will be able to engage their school work through use of the school issued Chromebook and/or with paper copies of work provided by the teacher. Students in ISS will be permitted to travel home on the regular bus, in most circumstances.

### **OSS- Out of School Suspension**

One to ten days out of school under the supervision of the parent/guardian. It is the student's responsibility to maintain pace with their work while suspended out of school. During the period of suspension, the student is not permitted on school property.

### **Alternative Education Placement**

Alternative education are services that might be delivered in a separate setting as deemed appropriate by the students' school team. This includes the GROVE Academy. Alternative education placement is considered for excessive inappropriate behaviors in which other interventions have not proven successful.

## **DISCIPLINE STRUCTURE**

### **STUDENT MISCONDUCT/RESPONSE GUIDELINES**

#### **LEVEL I**

Minor misbehavior on the part of the student, which impedes orderly classroom procedure or interferes with the orderly operation of the school. These misbehaviors can usually be handled by an individual staff member, but sometimes require the intervention of other support personnel and/or an administrator; especially if the student is unresponsive to teacher redirection/intervention.

#### **EXAMPLES**

- Bus disturbance
- Cheating
- Classroom tardiness
- Disobedience
- Disrespectful language or gestures
- Disruptive behavior
- Failure to complete assignments or carry out directions
- Inappropriate attire
- Inappropriate display of affection
- Obscene language or gestures
- Unwanted teasing
- Vulgarity
- Being sent to the reflection room more than two times in one day
- Violation of our student issued computer policy.

#### **PROCEDURES**

Immediate intervention is required by the staff member who is supervising the student or who observes the misbehavior. Possible written/verbal parental/guardian notification. Repeated misbehavior requires a parent/teacher conference, conference with the counselor and/or administrator. A proper and accurate record of the offenses and disciplinary action is maintained by the staff member.

### **POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY RESPONSES**

- Academic consequences
- Administrative detention
- Administrator/parent conference (person/phone)
- Behavioral contract
- Teacher/parent conference (person/phone)
- Suspension of privileges
- Special assignment
- Reflection Room
- Verbal reprimand
- Temporary removal from class
- Lunch Detention

### **LEVEL II**

Misbehavior whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school. These infractions, which usually result from the continuation of Level I the administrative misbehaviors, require the intervention of personnel on level because the execution of Level I disciplinary options has failed to correct the situation. Also included in this level are misbehaviors which do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others but whose educational consequences are serious enough to require corrective action on the part of the administrative personnel.

### **EXAMPLES**

- Continuation of Level I misbehavior
- Abusive/threatening language
- Bullying
- Cutting Class
- Disrespect
- Disruptive classroom behavior
- Verbal/Physical Altercation (shouting, screaming, pushing, kicking, taunting)
- Minor Altercation
- Failure to serve detention
- Forgery
- Harassment of students
- Hazing
- Insubordination
- Minor Theft- Value under \$10
- Truancy
- Unlawful/unexcused school tardiness (repeat instances)

## PROCEDURES

The student is referred to the administrator for appropriate disciplinary action. The administrator meets with the student and/or teacher and decides the most appropriate response. The teacher is informed of the administrator's action. Parents/Guardians are notified verbally or in writing. A parental/guardian conference may be scheduled. A proper and accurate record of the offense and disciplinary action is maintained by the administrator.

## POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY RESPONSES

- Behavioral contract
- Confiscation and refer to smoking policy
- In-school suspension
- Parent-teacher/parent-administrator conference
- Suspension of privileges
- Referral to outside agency
- Suspension (up to 3 days)
- Administrative detention
- Temporary removal from class
- Lunch detention
- Referral to SRO or local police department.

## LEVEL III

Acts, whether on school or off school property, including but not limited to attendance at school-sponsored events, extracurricular activities, field trips, transportation to and from school, and the like directed against persons or property but whose conduct does not seriously endanger or pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others in the school. These acts may be considered criminal but most frequently can be handled by the disciplinary mechanism in the school. Corrective measures which the school should undertake; however, depend on the extent of the school's resources for remediating the situation in the best interest of all students. Those acts which are criminal (or illegal) will automatically be referred to the appropriate law enforcement office.

## EXAMPLES

- Continuation of Level II misbehavior
- Disorderly Conduct
- Fighting
- Gambling
- Inappropriate behavior/language toward staff
- Leaving school without authority
- Obscene behavior (mooning, shanking, pantsing, wedging)
- Possession / use / transfer of electronic devices i.e. laser pens, beepers, etc...
- Possession / use / transfer of fireworks or other explosive devices legal for sale under state law.
- Racially Inflammatory Conduct
- Reckless driving on school property
- Sexual Harassment
- Telephone pranks

- Theft/shoplifting- Value over \$10
- Threats to others
- Throwing rocks or other harmful objects
- Vandalism
- Possession/use/transfer of tobacco and smoking materials
- Possession/use/transfer of vaping materials

### **PROCEDURES**

The administrator initiates disciplinary action by investigating the infraction and conferring with staff on the extent of the consequences. The administrator meets with the student and confers with the parent/guardian about the student's misconduct and the resulting disciplinary action. School officials may contact law enforcement agencies and assist in prosecuting the offender. A proper and accurate record of the offense and disciplinary action is maintained by the administrator.

### **POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY RESPONSES**

- Charges under PA Criminal Code
- Homebound instruction or alternative program
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension (not to exceed 10 days) under proper adult supervision.
- Parent/guardian conference and/or hearing
- Suspension of privileges
- Refer to drug-alcohol policy and guidelines
- Restitution of property and damages
- Confiscation
- District-wide Policy
- Referral to the building SRO or local police department.

### **LEVEL IV**

Acts, whether on school or off school property, including but not limited to attendance at school-sponsored events, extracurricular activities, field trips, transportation to and from school, and the like which result in violence to another's person or property or which pose a direct threat to the safety of others in the school. The acts are clearly criminal and/or so serious that they always require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and action by the Board of School Directors.

### **EXAMPLES**

- Continuation of Level III misbehavior
- Actions that occur under the influence of drugs, alcohol or other controlled substances
- Assault of student or staff member
- Arson
- Ammunition
- Bomb threat or false alarm
- Striking a staff member

- Extreme disruption to school program
- Extortion
- False imprisonment
- False reporting
- Fighting – using a weapon
- Possession/use/transfer of drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substances
- Possession/use/transfer/sale of weapons, replicas, and/or look-alikes
- Possession/use/transfer/sale of fireworks or other explosive devices legal for sale under State Law.
- Possession/use/transfer/sale of fireworks (those not legal for sale under state law)
- Possession/use/transfer/sale of propellants manufactured for self defense
- Sexual Assault
- Sexual Misconduct
- Theft/possession/sale of stolen property
- Threat(s) to others (life threatening)
- Threat to staff member
- Vandalism
- Violation of D & A Policy – This includes prescription and over the counter drugs.

### PROCEDURES

- The administrator verifies the offense, confers with the staff involved, and meets with the student.
- The student is immediately removed from the school environment.
- Parents/guardians are notified.
- School officials contact law enforcement agencies and assist in prosecuting offenders.
- A complete and accurate report is submitted to the superintendent for Board action.

### POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY RESPONSES

- All verified offenses in Level IV may have a mandatory 10-day full suspension under proper adult supervision with an informal hearing.
- Charges under PA Criminal Code or referral to appropriate law enforcement agencies.
- Other board action which results in appropriate placement.
- Alternative school, parent/guardian hearing, restitution of property and damages
- Refer to drug/alcohol policy and guidelines
- Recommendation for expulsion

### Administrative Guidelines

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Insubordination-** A rebellious attitude which implies open defiance or refusal to submit to authority.

**Class Cuts-** Unexcused absence from a class without authorization or approved reason

**Out of Assigned Area-** the intentional act of being in a building location other than the one that was granted for permission.

**Inappropriate Behavior-** Language, behavior, gestures, or actions which disrupt/produce distractions or disturbances, that interfere with effective functioning of the teacher, another student, a class or any school activity.

**Disrespectful/Obscene Language or Gestures to Students & Staff-** Acts of harassment that do not rise to the level of bullying and are not sexual in nature. Any acts or statements made with the intent to harass, annoy, or alarm another person, which: a) insults, taunts or challenges the other person; or b) is a cause of alarming, or distressing conduct, which serves no legitimate purpose and is done in a manner which the actor knows is likely to provoke a violent or disorderly response or cause a reasonable person to suffer fear, alarm or distress.

**Abusive/Threatening Language/Gestures to Students/Staff-** Student uses or threatens to use written or spoken language, gestures, electronic images, photos or actions, which are offensive, obscene or vulgar.

**Disruptive Behavior in Classroom/Hallway-** Conduct that is unruly or disruptive and interferes with the students learning environment or the day to day operations of the building.

**Inappropriate Display of Affection-** Acts of affection or intimacy, inappropriate to an educational setting.

**Bullying/Cyber Bullying-** See bullying policy above.

**Harassment-** To disturb or irritate someone with annoyances, insults, taunts, threats, or demands in order to gain a desired end or create worry and/or other mental suffering.

**Racially Inflammatory Conduct-** Discrimination against an individual based on a belief that the individual is a member of a certain racial group. Unwelcome conduct that reasonably interferes with the educational environment and harassment of a student.

**Hazing -** See hazing policy; see policy below.

**Gambling-** Placing a wager or betting money on the outcome of a game, contest, or other event.

**Verbal/Physical Altercation-** Any argument involving inappropriate language, threats of physical contact and may include physical contact.

**Minor Altercation-** Physical contact with no physical injury and without a weapon.

**Fighting (Level III/IV) –** A physical conflict between two or more individuals which is minor in nature and where serious bodily injury has not occurred, a conflict easily resolved by an administrator.

**Simple Assault-** A violent attack and/or unlawful attempt or threat to injure another person physically or verbally. There are 3 elements to simple assault: 1) intent 2) reasonable apprehension and 3) harm (can be physical in nature but is not required). Local police intervention will be required for any assault.

**Aggravated Assault-** An unlawful attack of a person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. Local police intervention will be required for any assault.

**Sexual Assault-** any unwanted sexual behavior committed by a perpetrator who is a stranger to the victim or by a perpetrator who is known by the victim or related to the victim by blood, marriage or civil union. Local police intervention will be required for any assault.

**Minor Theft-** The taking and removing of another's personal property with the intent of depriving the owner (value under \$10.00).

**Robbery-** The action of taking property unlawfully from a person or place by force or threat of force.

**Major Theft-** When a person takes, exercises control over or obtains property of another person intending to permanently deprive that person of it or appropriate it. Value in excess of \$10.00.

**Burglary-** Entry into a building illegally with intent to commit a crime, especially theft.

**Indecent Assault-** Offensive sexual act(s) committed against another person without consent (excluding rape).

**Indecent Exposure-** The act of intentionally showing genitalia in public.

**Open Lewdness-** Explicit sexual conduct in public.

**Obscene and Other Sexual Materials and Performance-** Displaying or disseminating explicit sexual materials.

**Serious Threat to Staff Member/Student-** A verbal, written, or physical threat to commit any act likely to result in death or serious injury.

**Reckless Endangering-** the offense of recklessly engaging in conduct that creates a substantial risk of serious physical injury or death to another person.

**Arson-** Maliciously burning a building or property of another or burning one's own property for some improper purpose.

**Minor Vandalism** - The willful defacing of public or private property which DOES NOT require restitution of property and damages.

**Vandalism-** The willful or malicious destruction of public or private property which requires restitution of property and damages.

**Criminal Trespass-** When a student knowingly or unknowingly is in a school building or on school property without a legitimate purpose.

**Rioting-** A noisy, violent, and uncontrolled behavior by a group of people in a public place, often as a protest.

**Bomb Threat/False Alarm-** A written or verbal threat to detonate an explosive or incendiary device to cause property damage, death, injuries, and/or incite fear, whether or not such device actually exists.

**Disorderly Conduct-** The intent to cause public inconvenience, annoyance, or alarm, or recklessly creating a risk thereof.

**Controlled Substance-** A drug or other substance that is controlled by a governing body because it may be abused or cause addiction.

**Academic Code of Conduct-** Any infraction(s) that violates the school's Academic Integrity guidelines found below.

**Student Code of Conduct-** Any infraction(s) that violate the student discipline code of conduct.

**Expulsion** – the expulsion from school by the Board of Education for a period exceeding ten school days and which may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing in accordance with the procedures outlined under Policy #4201.

**In-School Suspension** – removal of a student from the regular school program while providing him/her with planned and supervised instruction in the basic subjects.

**School Property** – shall include buildings, facilities, and grounds on the school campus, school buses, school parking areas, and any facility being used for a school function or school-sponsored trip.

**Suspension of Privileges** – exclusion of a student for a stipulated period of time from activities which include but are not limited to extracurricular activities, recess, attendance at school functions such as dances or sporting events as a spectator, use of passes during the school day, attendance at assembly programs, and/or lunch in the cafeteria.

**Suspension** – the exclusion from school for a period of time from one to ten consecutive school days during which time the student is not permitted to participate in any extracurricular activities to be held on school property. Prior to a "full suspension," an informal hearing must be offered to the student and his/her parent or guardian in accordance with informal hearing procedures set forth under Policy #4201.

**Transient Threat-** The majority of threats made by students can be categorized as transient. Transient threats are an expression of anger or frustration and do not involve any continued intent to cause harm. These threats always end in an apology or explanation that makes it clear the threat is over or did not exist in the first place.

**Substantive Threat-** Substantive threats that involve the possibility for severe injury or death in the near future. These threats often involve the possible or actual possession of a deadly weapon. These threats trigger the immediate involvement of law enforcement.

**Servious Substantive Threat-** Threats that involve an ongoing intent to harm someone or that can not be resolved as transient. This type of threat requires protective action to be taken to protect a victim.

**Informal Hearing-** A process of connecting with the parent/guardian in order to review available data, review the served period of suspension, and determination of additional potential action. Refer to policy 233.

## Weapons

The Board recognizes the importance of a safe school environment relative to the educational process and thus prohibits students from possessing and bringing weapons and replicas of weapons into any School District buildings, onto school property, a school zone, to any school sponsored activity, and onto any public vehicle providing transportation to school or a school sponsored activity.

A student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student's locker; under the student's control while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.

The School District shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law. The Superintendent may recommend modifications of such expulsion requirements on a case-by-case basis.

Definitions:

**School property** means all buildings, facilities, and grounds on the school campus, school buses and other conveyances providing transportation to or from school or school related functions or activities, school parking areas, and any facility being used for a school function or activity.

**School zone** means in, or on the grounds of a public, parochial or private school, or within a distance of one thousand (1,000) feet from the grounds of a public, parochial or private school.

**Weapons** shall include, but not be limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku stick, metal knuckles, poisons, drugs, ammunition, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool, instrument, substance, or implement capable of or designed to harm, threaten or harass students, staff members, parents/guardians and patrons of the District.

**Firearm** means any instrument which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such instrument, any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or any destructive device.

**Destructive device** means any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, including, but not limited to, any bomb, grenade, rocket, missile, mine, or device similar to any of the aforementioned instruments.

You may reference School Board [Policy #218.1](#). If you are unable to access the website, please ask for a copy in the Pottsgrove Middle School Main Office or at the Pottsgrove School District Administration Building.

## DRESS & GROOMING GUIDELINES

Proper dress and grooming are marks of good citizenship and promote a positive and productive school climate. When attending school or school functions, a good citizen will wear properly fitted clothing that does not attract excessive attention or reflect discredit upon the school.

Pottsgrove School District administration reserves the right to question any mode of dress/jewelry/hair style that is beyond current community/school accepted standards or in any manner jeopardizing the health, welfare or safety of a student or other students.

Any clothing judged to be a disruptive influence in class, or interfering with the educational rights of others, is considered improper dress. Certain types of clothing and hairstyles may be required for physical education classes or for extracurricular activities such as band, athletics, etc.

The following are specifics to the Dress Code for Pottsgrove Middle School. Please see Board [Policy 221](#) for additional information..

### General Guidelines

1. Underwear should not be exposed in any way.
2. All dress and grooming should be appropriate. Students are expected to dress in accordance with good taste and personal pride. Students have the responsibility to keep themselves, their clothes, and their hair clean.
3. Blankets, covers, or other types of bedding are prohibited.
4. Sunglasses, Hats and/or Hoods are not permitted to be worn during the school day unless an accommodation is necessary.
5. Backpacks are not permitted during the school day. Backpacks must be kept in their lockers and may not travel with the student within the building. Similarly, smaller personal bags (clutches, makeup bags, etc) are to be stored in the student's locker and will not be permitted to travel with the student during school hours.

## **Tops**

1. Tops may not be “low cut” or exposing. Bare midriffs and bare backs are not permitted.
2. The following are unacceptable school attire:
  - a. Tank tops/muscle shirts that show the torso, chest, or ribs (i.e. Basketball jersey without a t-shirt)
  - b. See-through/mesh blouses or shirts.
  - c. Tube tops/crop tops/half-shirts.
3. Any top that allows the midriff to be exposed is not permitted. All shirts must meet or extend beyond the waistband.
4. Coats, jackets or garments designed for protection from the outside weather are not to be worn in school.
5. Tops may not have a shoulder strap width of less than two inches.

## **Pants, Shorts, Skirts**

1. Pants, shorts, skirts must be secured and worn no lower than the hip. Low riding/sag style is not permitted.
  - a. excessive tears/rips in pants or jeans may not be permitted
2. Boxer shorts worn as outerwear are not permitted.
3. Shorts, skirts, and/or dresses are to be fitted for both comfort, appearance, and appropriate length. Appropriate length is defined as having an in-seam of at least 3 inches. Shorts with pockets hanging below or longer than the shorts are not permitted.

## **Offensive Dress, Appearance, and Belongings**

1. Clothing, symbols, face masks, stickers, magnets, decals, patches, buttons, pins, jewelry, and other accessories are not permitted if they:
  - a. Promote hate, divisiveness, bigotry, prejudices, and/or racism
  - b. Have sexually suggestive writing/pictures.
  - c. Advocate violence.
  - d. Advertise or promote the use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
  - e. Have double meaning wording or obscene language.
  - f. Include slogans or symbols designed to be provocative or offensive to others.
2. A tattoo (permanent or temporary) must be covered if it:
  - a. Promote hate, divisiveness, bigotry, prejudices, and/or racism
  - b. Have sexually suggestive writing/pictures.
  - c. Advocates violence.
  - d. Advertises or promotes the use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
  - e. Has double meaning wording or obscene language.
  - f. Include slogans or symbols designed to be provocative or offensive to others.

## Footwear

1. Some sort of shoe must be worn at all times.
2. Any shoe that poses a safety hazard is not permitted.
3. Per the guidelines of our Physical Education syllabus, appropriate footwear is required. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in disciplinary action.

## Jewelry

1. Spiked jewelry, chains or any jewelry that could cause injury or constitute a hazard is not permitted.

## Disciplinary Response for Violations

Students violating the Dress Code shall be subject to the following discipline:

- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> offense(s)- Warning and requirement to change to appropriate dress; contact home
- 3<sup>rd</sup> and subsequent offense(s)- Contact home, change to appropriate dress, one day detention
  - Habitual violations may result in additional discipline and may be considered insubordination.

## DRUGS & ALCOHOL

Students possessing, taking or being under the influence of nonprescription drugs, synthetic drugs, prescription drugs, including over-the-counter drugs and alcohol, or drug paraphernalia while under the school's jurisdiction are in violation of school policy as well as state and federal statutes.

Students demonstrating abnormal behavior will be examined by the school nurse and may be searched by school personnel. Parents/guardians will be notified to take their child to a physician for physical examination.

You may reference [School Board Policy #227](#). If you are unable to access the policy via the website, please ask for a copy in the Pottsgrove Middle School main office or at the Pottsgrove School District Administration Building.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

### *Procedures for Cell Phone/Electronic Devices*

The use of any electronic devices should be consistent with the greater use of technology outlined in the district's Board Policies 237, 237.1 and the district's Acceptable Use Policy.

The Pottsgrove secondary schools have recognized the growth of communication technology use (cell phones, smart phones, smart watches, etc.) within the school community. The routine use of these devices by our students and faculty has made them a more prevalent and more accepted fixture within our schools. While the presence of these devices has become more prevalent, the use of these devices during instructional time can create a disruption in the learning environment. Recognizing these facts, we have established clear guidelines for the acceptable use of these devices.

- The cellular phone must be turned off upon entering any school building and remain off until the student is leaving the school building.
- The cellular phone must be properly stored during school hours within the student's assigned locker or other building assigned location (if no locker is assigned).
- The school staff assumes no responsibility for lost and/or damage to personal devices brought to school by students.

During the entire instructional period, cell phones/headphones/earbuds must be out of sight and silenced or on vibrate unless the teacher has expressly permitted the use. **Only wired headphones are permitted at the discretion of the teacher. No wireless headphones may be used during the school day.** This includes the use of these devices in the hallway and during instructional periods. Cell phones are allowed on field trips, at the discretion of faculty and administration. Failure to comply with the request or directive from a teacher/staff member to mute and/or conceal these items is considered insubordination and will be addressed in the manner noted below:

- **First 2 offenses** - Phone/electronic device will be sent to the office for student pick-up at the end of the academic day and teacher will write a discipline referral counted as warning.
- **Third and all subsequent offenses** - Phone will be sent to the office for student pick-up at the end of the academic day and the teacher will write a discipline referral which will result in a detention.
- **Confiscation:** The staff member who confiscated the phone/electronic device, will communicate with home about the incident.

Students are expected to arrive in class each day with a properly charged school issued device. Failure to have a charged device for class can create a disruption to the educational environment and impede the learning of the student. Failure to arrive in class with a charged device may be addressed in the manner noted below:

- First and Second Instance – Teacher Warning and communication home
- Third Instance – Teacher Submits an office referral and communication home

Students, staff, and guests bringing electronic devices onto school property and to school functions should do so at their own risk. **The school district is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged property, nor will the school exude time investigating these lost or stolen items.**

## Chromebooks

[Click HERE to view the PGSD Chromebook Handbook.](#)

## EMERGENCY CLOSING NUMBER – 290

When snow, ice or other adverse weather conditions require Pottsgrove schools to be closed, announcements will be made via WBYN (107.5 FM), and WFMZ (cable channel 15, 69 and 100.7 FM), School Code Number 290.

If schools are closed or dismissed early, all extracurricular activities and evening education activities are canceled. For further information, check the school's website for updates.

## EVENT POSTERS AND FLYERS

Any posters or flyers for school events are to be approved by the administration prior to being hung up. Those approved posters/flyers are only to be hung on the designated bulletin boards throughout the building. Posters/Flyers will be stamped with a date and will be removed after two weeks. Any poster/flier that has not been approved, is not hung on the designated bulletin board, or is left up beyond two weeks will be immediately removed.

## DISSEMINATION OF MATERIALS

The right of public school students to freedom of speech is guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and the constitution of the Commonwealth. The Board respects the right of students to express themselves in word or symbol and to distribute and post materials in areas designated for posting as a part of that expression. The Board also recognizes that exercise of that right must be limited by the District's responsibility to maintain an orderly school environment and to protect the rights of all members of the school community.[1]

[Board Policy 220](#) addresses student expression in general and distribution and posting of materials that are not part of District-sponsored activities. Materials sought to be distributed or posted as part of the curricular or extracurricular programs of the District shall be regulated as part of the School District's educational program.

## **FIRE DRILLS & EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS**

Fire drills are held once a month. Students should note the Fire Exit posting in each room. All teachers and students are expected to evacuate the building by the nearest exit and move away from the buildings. Prior to leaving the room students should cautiously check the hallway to determine the safest route for evacuation. The teacher should be the last person to leave the room. All lights should be out and all windows and doors closed. Students must pass quickly and quietly while complying with directions issued by staff members. Students must remain with their class upon arriving outside. Teachers will remain with their students and return to the building when directed by the administration.

In the event of an emergency evacuation, students are expected to follow the directions of all teachers and staff members. Failure to comply with faculty and staff directives will be treated as a disciplinary infraction. Please see the behavior matrix.

## **GRADING PRACTICES**

### Marking System

Please refer to the PGSD grading policy for grade reporting information. Grade level and accelerated course weights vary. Percentages that are used to determine final grades are listed below:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	65-69%
F	64% and below

### Grade Retention/Promotion

Normally, final grades in each subject area are determined by averaging the percentage grades for each quarter. However, since students are considered for pass/fail on an individual basis, teachers have the right to assign a failing grade for the year if they feel the student does not have adequate knowledge to proceed to the next grade level in that particular subject area.

Parents/guardians are kept well informed of their child's progress through mid-quarter progress reports, report cards, mid-year retention notices, and parent/guardian teacher conferences. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to monitor grades online and can contact the school at any time to ascertain their child's progress.

Promotion – Students will be retained to the next grade level if they pass all but one of their courses. Below are the criteria for promotion/retention and for attending summer school.

Failed One Course = Promotion to the next grade level  
Failed Two Courses = Must complete Summer School or be retained  
Failed Three Courses = Must complete Summer School for two courses or be retained  
Failed Four or more Courses = May be retained – The administration will review each student's promotion/retention on a case-by-case basis.

Students that are required to attend Summer School programming will need to provide their own transportation to and from Pottsgrove Middle School, or designated building, on the designated class dates. Transportation is not provided by the district. **There will also be a monetary fee that must be paid by the student and/or family.**

### Report Cards

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to view their child's grades through our web-based grading program. If parents/guardians are not able to access the internet, please contact the middle school office and we will put you on a mailing list to receive report cards. In order to be fiscally responsible, the school no longer sends out report cards or mid-progress reports; parents/guardians may view their child's grade through our online grading system. For help in accessing your child's online grading system, please contact the main office.

## **HOMWORK**

Homework is an important part of the educational process. It permits children to organize their thoughts and materials in preparation for the next day's work. Parental/guardians involvement creates increased student motivation and fosters a positive approach to learning.

Frequently, parents/guardians are not aware of specific homework assignments on a daily basis. The procedure listed below is followed at the middle school to provide an opportunity for parents/guardians to become knowledgeable of their child's academic program.

1. Students are instructed to record all assignments in their school issued electronic device or notebook.
2. If no written homework is assigned, we recommend that a period of 45 minutes to an hour be devoted to reviewing notes, studying for future tests, or reading a library book. Successful students report that establishing the same study time each evening is most beneficial. (Example: 6:00 to 7:00 PM)

Students are encouraged to utilize our Homework Help Center, which is hosted by a teacher after school. Students can be picked up by their parents/guardians or take the transportation provided by the district. Students failing to complete work, whether it is homework or classroom assignments, may be assigned to the Homework Help Center. Parents/guardians can also request that their child attends Homework Help Center.

## **HONOR ROLL**

Honor Roll membership is determined on a letter grade basis. Distinguished Honors is achieved by earning 90% or better for every class and for each marking period. Honor roll is achieved by earning 80% or better for every class and for each marking period. No student is eligible for the Honor Roll who receives a C, D, F, I (Incomplete) or NG (No Grade) in any class.

Students that are being graded on a pass/fail system also have a defined criteria to meet in order to earn honor roll status. This criteria consists of maintaining an 85% average in their graded work and 85% average in their work completion, in all of their classes.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

### Academic Integrity – Cheating/Plagiarism

#### Definitions:

- *Plagiarism* is the act of copying someone else’s work and passing it off as one’s own, or the work or ideas of another taken and passed off as one’s own. This includes any work copied or dictated by others. Copying electronically generated information without proper citation will also be considered plagiarism.
- *Cheating* is using any other method but your own ability and materials to complete an assignment/assessment.

#### Demonstrating Knowledge

- *First Account* –The student will receive 70% of the earned grade upon resubmission of the plagiarized/cheating assessment.
  - o Teacher will contact the parent/guardian.
  - o Students must redo the assignment.
  - o Office Referral
- *Second and each additional Account* – The student will receive a zero for the plagiarized/ cheating assessment.
  - o Teacher will contact the parent/guardian.
  - o Student must redo the assignment to meet course requirements.
  - o Office Referral

#### Building Knowledge

- Any Building Knowledge Activity that a student is caught plagiarizing on will result in a zero (i.e. copying homework, assignments in class).
- All students involved in the act of copying will receive a zero for the Building Knowledge Activity.

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

### Purpose

The board’s purpose of implementing a policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI) is to ensure the ethical and responsible use of AI technologies to enhance teaching, learning, and administrative processes while safeguarding student privacy and data security. By establishing clear guidelines and procedures, this policy aims to promote transparency and accountability, while fostering a safe learning and working environment.

### Definitions

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems and algorithms that mimic human cognitive functions, such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making. AI encompasses a broad spectrum of techniques and methodologies, including machine learning, natural language processing, computer vision, and robotics, aimed at creating intelligent systems capable of performing tasks autonomously or with minimal human intervention.

### Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent shall develop procedures to implement this policy, and may delegate to his/her designee(s) the right to enforce this policy.

### Guidelines

#### Instruction on AI Tools

The board directs that students at all grade levels receive age-appropriate instruction on the proper use of AI tools, encompassing fundamental principles such as the necessity of proper human supervision, critical thinking, and skepticism regarding accuracy. Such instruction should aim to empower students with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the increasingly prevalent presence of AI technologies in their academic and personal lives. By fostering a culture of responsible and informed use, students will be better equipped to navigate AI tools effectively while understanding their limitations and ethical implications.

### CIPA Compliance

The Director of Technology shall ensure that the District’s internet content and message filters prevent users from accessing any AI website, tool, or application that is capable of generating obscene or pornographic material on both school district owned devices and on the school provided internet.

### FERPA Compliance

All teachers, administrators, and staff are required to adhere strictly to the regulations outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) when utilizing any AI resources.

The District prohibits the use of the personally identifiable information of students while using AI websites, tools, or applications that have not been pre-approved by the Director of Technology or his/her designee. The Director of Technology shall establish a process by which teachers and administrators can request the approval of new AI resources. The vetting process shall include a review of the tool’s privacy policy, data handling practices, and compliance with FERPA. The Director of Technology or designee shall maintain a list of all such approved resources.

The District shall maintain a system of safeguards to protect the confidentiality of students' educational records and personally identifiable information when collecting, storing, disclosing and destroying student records.<sup>[22][23][24]</sup>

### Academic Honesty

The Board recognizes the capacity of AI to complete many student assignments. In doing so, AI has the potential to upend traditional academic honesty and plagiarism standards.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to prohibit the use of AI tools for assignments or projects; however, should an exception occur and permission is granted, the teacher will specify the appropriate time(s) and to what degree the AI tool(s) may be permitted on a particular assignment or project.

Teachers should use the following scale for guidance in the event such permission is granted:

0	No AI Use	The assignment is completed independently without the assistance of AI	No disclosure required.
1	AI-Assisted Idea Generation	AI is used for brainstorming and generating ideas only.	No disclosure required
2	AI-Assisted Editing	AI is used to edit or refine student work, but not to generate content.	Students must disclose how AI was used.
3	AI for Specified Task Completion	AI is used to complete certain elements of a task or part of a project with human oversight and evaluation of all AI generated content.	Students must disclose how AI was used.

4	Full AI Use with Human Oversight	AI may be used throughout the assignment. The student is responsible for providing human oversight and evaluating the AI generated content.	Students must disclose how AI was used.
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Having received such notice from a teacher, any student who violates these standards is subject to discipline including detention, suspension, or expulsion depending on the nature of the violation.

Acceptable Use

All Students and employees shall comply with the District’s Policy on the Acceptable Use of District Technology when using AI tools on school district technology. Violations of the District’s Acceptable Use Policy may result in disciplinary action against the student or employee.

Student use of AI tools while using District technology or engaged in District activities is also governed by the Student Code of Conduct, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

Grading Student Work

Approved AI websites and applications may be used to assist with the grading of student work products, but final decisions on assignment grades shall be determined by teachers and not solely by AI technology. Teachers shall ensure that personally identifiable student records are kept secure when using such grading technology. Students should fact-check AI results. Similar to search engines, AI tools of varying sources, may provide varying results which should, therefore, be verified.

**SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES**

Counselors have special skills and expertise to work with students individually or in groups. Students are urged to take advantage of these special services regarding career plans, college admissions, decision-making, and problem solving. Students are to obtain permission from scheduled classroom teachers to visit the guidance office. Guidance will work in conjunction with students, families, and teachers to support the academic, social, and emotional growth of each child

**THREAT ASSESSMENT**

The Board directs the Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the School Safety and Security Coordinator, to establish a threat assessment team and develop procedures for assessing and intervening with students whose behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community and others. The threat assessment team shall include the School Safety and Security Coordinator and individuals with expertise in school health; counseling, school psychology or social work; special education and school administration. The threat assessment team shall document, assess and respond to reports received regarding students whose behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others. The threat assessment team shall assist in assessing and responding to reports that are received through the Safe2Say Something Program identifying students who may be a threat to themselves or others. The threat assessment team shall assist in assessing and responding to reports of students exhibiting self-harm or suicide risk factors or warning signs, as identified in accordance with applicable law and Board policy. Full Board policy regarding threat assessments can be accessed at [Board Policy 236.1](#).

## HALL CONDUCT & EHALLPASS

Students are reminded that because of the size of our student body, poor hall conduct affects safety. Students should move through the halls in an orderly fashion, staying to the right. Students may not loiter in the halls. Sitting in the halls is a safety hazard and is not permitted. Unbecoming behavior such as obvious displays of affection should not occur.

Any time a student wishes to leave a classroom, no matter the destination, an eHallpass (electronic pass) will be issued. Students are not permitted in the halls during class time without a pass. This practice helps to create a safe and secure learning environment.

All students will be limited to a certain amount of passes to be used during the school day. If there is an emergency, teachers have the discretion to allow students to move throughout the building. Additionally, those students not complying with the required EHallPass system will receive progressive disciplinary action.

- Warning
- Lunch Detention
- Detention
- Parent/guardian conference and further limitations of passes.
- ISS (In-School Suspension)
- OSS (Out of School Suspension)

## LIBRARY

Reservations to come to the library during WIN Time must be made with a pass by the librarian. Students will not be able to go to the library without a pass. To come to the library any other time during the day you MUST have a pass – no exceptions.

## HAZING

Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the Pottsgrove School District, will not be tolerated, and are prohibited at all times.

Hazing is defined as any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a person or which willfully destroys or removes public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition of continued membership in, any organization. The term shall include but not be limited to:

1. Any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding;
2. Intentionally forced calisthenics;
3. Intentionally exposing students to the elements;
4. Forced consumption of any food;
5. Liquor, drug or other substance;
6. Any other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health and safety of the individual, and shall include any activity which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which is intended to or could result in humiliation, extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual; or
7. Any willful destruction or removal of public or private property.

Hazing in connection with any student activity or organization regardless of whether the conduct occurs on or off school property or outside school hours is strictly prohibited.

No student, parent/guardian, coach, sponsor, volunteer or District employee shall engage in, condone, or ignore any form of hazing.

Students who have been subjected to hazing are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to the building principal either orally or in writing. The District will investigate all complaints of hazing and will administer appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this policy.

If the report of hazing is substantiated, disciplinary action for those that perpetrated the act may include suspension up to expulsion, imposition of fines, and criminal prosecution when appropriate.

You may reference School Board [Policy #247](#). If you are unable to access the website, please ask for a copy in the Pottsgrove Middle School Main Office or at the Pottsgrove School District Administration Building.

## **MAINTAINING APPROPRIATE ADULT/STUDENT BOUNDARIES**

### **Authority**

This policy applies to District employees, volunteers, student teachers, and independent contractors and their employees who interact with students or are present on school grounds. For purposes of this policy, such individuals are referred to collectively as adults. The term adults as used in this policy, does not include District students who perform services on a volunteer or compensated basis.

All adults shall be expected to maintain professional, moral and ethical relationships with District students that are conducive to an effective, safe learning environment. This policy addresses a range of behaviors that include not only obviously unlawful or improper interactions with students, but also precursor grooming and other boundary-blurring behaviors that can lead to more egregious misconduct.

The Board directs that all adults shall be informed of conduct that is prohibited and the disciplinary actions that may be applied for violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, rules and procedures.[\[1\]](#)

This policy is not intended to interfere with appropriate pre-existing personal relationships between adults and students and their families that exist independently of the District or to interfere with participation in civic, religious or other outside organizations that include District students.

### **Definition**

For purposes of this policy, legitimate educational reasons include matters or communications related to teaching, counseling, athletics, extracurricular activities, treatment of a student's physical injury or other medical needs, school administration or other purposes within the scope of the adult's job duties. [Board Policy 824](#).

## **LABORATORY SAFETY**

Students are expected to follow all safety instructions/rules and wear all appropriate safety equipment in any laboratory setting. This includes but is not limited to science, engineering, and family and consumer science laboratories. Failure to comply with appropriate safety guidelines and/or to wear appropriate safety equipment will be considered insubordination and addressed by a member of the principal team according to the student discipline code. Click [HERE](#) to view the laboratory rules and expectations.

## LAVATORY USE

Permission to use the lavatory during class periods may be granted by a teacher. These requests are to be kept to a minimum. If permission is granted, students must use only the lavatory assigned to the classroom in which they are leaving. At no time are students to linger or congregate in the lavatory. Lavatories are not to be used during transition times. Inappropriate use of the bathrooms may result in student disciplinary action.

## LOCKERS

1. Hall lockers are assigned to each student at the beginning of the school year. The lockers remain the property of the school, not the student, and as such, the lockers remain under the authority of the school. However, the school is NOT responsible for items stolen from the locker, or for any materials left in the locker overnight.
2. All cell phones, outer garments, including hats, are to be kept in lockers and are not to be worn or carried to class. Book bags must be placed in the locker.
3. The student is responsible for keeping his/her locker combinations private and must not share this information with any other student for any reason.
4. School officials have the right to conduct a search of a student's locker (which remains school property), if there is a case of reasonable suspicion.
5. Lockers are to be locked at all times.
6. Students are not permitted to go to their lockers except for the assigned times determined by the individual grade level.
7. The Pottsgrove School District is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items.

## NURSE'S OFFICE INFORMATION

### Accidents and Illness

Injuries which occur on the way to school or at school shall be treated in the health room. The school cannot assume the responsibility of treating injuries that did not occur at school. Pupils who are ill at home are requested not to come to school because they cannot maintain their usual standard of class work and present the possibility of spreading illness to others. Students with fevers, flu like symptoms, vomiting or diarrhea should stay home to prevent the spread of illness. Those who wish to see the nurse during the school day are to obtain permission from their classroom teacher instead of going to the health room between classes. Students are not to call their parents/guardians to pick them up if they have not been assessed by the school nurse. Students who do not follow these procedures will face disciplinary consequences for failure to follow these procedures because of the safety risks involved.

### Procedures for Medication to be Administered During the School Day

When it is necessary for a student to receive ANY medication at school, the responsibility of parents will be to do the following:

1. Complete the form "Authorization for School Medication Administration" which includes both parent/guardian and physician signatures.
2. A parent/guardian should hand deliver the medication to the school nurse in a labeled prescription bottle and/or original over-the-counter container. If this is not possible, deliver it in a sealed, labeled envelope.
3. Notify the school nurse in writing with a physician's note and your written instructions if the medication is to be changed or discontinued.
4. Provide the school with a written list of all medication currently being taken by the child.
5. Students may **ONLY** carry medications under the following conditions.
  - Medication is needed to treat life threatening illnesses or conditions such as asthma or severe allergic reactions.

- It is deemed necessary by the physician.
- Physician, parent/guardian and nurse concur that the student is responsible to carry medication.

All medication will be secured in the nurse's office and administered to the students there. Students are not to carry any medications including over the counter medications during the school day.

## **PUBLIC ACCESS DEFIBRILLATION PROGRAM**

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is used to treat victims who experience sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). It is only to be applied to victims who are unconscious, without a pulse and not breathing. The AED will analyze the heart rhythm and advise the operator if a shockable rhythm is detected. If a shockable rhythm is detected, the AED will charge to the appropriate energy level and advise the operator to deliver a shock.

An Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) will be maintained on the premises of Pottsgrove School District buildings.

The AED shall be used in emergency situations warranting its use by individuals specifically trained in use of the device. [Board Policy 823](#).

## **Opioid Antagonist**

### **Purpose**

As a means of enhancing the health and safety of its students, staff and visitors, the District may obtain, maintain and administer doses of an opioid antagonist and other facilities for emergency use to assist a student, staff member or other individual believed or suspected to be experiencing an opioid overdose.[1][2]

### **Definitions**

**Drug overdose** - shall mean an acute medical condition, including, but not limited to, severe physical illness, coma, mania, hysteria or death, which is the result of consumption or use of one or more controlled substances causing an adverse reaction. An individual's condition may be deemed to be a drug overdose if a prudent person, possessing an average knowledge of medicine and health, would reasonably believe that the condition is in fact a drug overdose and requires immediate medical attention.

**Opioid** - shall mean illegal drugs such as heroin, as well as prescription medications used to treat pain such as morphine, codeine, methadone, oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, hydromorphone and buprenorphine.

**Opioid antagonist** - a drug or device approved by federal law for emergency reversal of known or suspected opioid overdose, including naloxone hydrochloride or other similarly acting drugs approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of an opioid overdose. [See Board Policy 823](#).

## **Health Screenings**

In compliance with the School Code, the Board shall require that District students submit to health and dental examinations in order to protect the school community from the spread of communicable disease and to ensure that the student's participation in health, safety and physical education courses meets his/her individual needs and that the learning potential of each student is not lessened by a remediable physical disability. [\[1\]\[2\]\[3\]\[4\]](#). See [Full Board Policy 209](#).

## **SAFE2SAY SOMETHING**

Safe2Say Something is a youth violence prevention program run by the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General. The program teaches youth and adults how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, from individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others and to “say something” before it is too late.

Students can report anonymous tips by calling 1-844-SAF2SAY, via the website at [www.safe2saypa.org](http://www.safe2saypa.org), or by downloading the mobile app.

## **Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response**

The Board is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its students and the school community; promoting healthy individual development; and safeguarding against the threat or attempt of suicide. This policy supports the provision of a comprehensive District program of education, training, and resources designed to promote school connectedness and behavioral health and prevent suicide.<sup>[1][2][3][4][5][6][7]</sup> [Board Policy 819](#).

## **SEARCHES**

Students are hereby informed that their hall lockers, gym lockers, band instrument storage cases, book bags, cars located on school property and other “publicly” accessible locations are subject to search by school officials at any time and without additional prior notice. In addition, upon reasonable suspicion a student’s person may be searched by school officials.

## **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

To ensure the safety of our students, staff, and building, the school is equipped with video surveillance. This video surveillance records 24 hours a day.

## **SMOKING & VAPING**

According to the PGSD policy, no one is permitted to vape, smoke, or use tobacco in any school building, on school buses, or other district-owned vehicles or on school property. Smoking is defined as any use of tobacco products (cigars, cigarettes, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff) and includes possession of a lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe or other smoking equipment. Possession of any tobacco product – lit, unlit, or smokeless – is not permitted. This includes electronic cigarettes, personal vaporizers, electronic nicotine delivery systems, hookahs (water pipes) and other equipment related to these systems. Smokers will be issued a fine in addition to other disciplinary consequences which will include suspension from school. Such matters will be reported to the building SRO and/or local law enforcement.

Students who smoke and/or vape are encouraged to join self-help programs which are available by asking the nurse, a guidance counselor, or member of the principal team.

## **MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORTS**

Pennsylvania’s Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a standards-aligned, comprehensive school improvement FRAMEWORK for enhancing academic, behavioral and social-emotional outcomes for ALL students. Response to Intervention (RTI) refers to the methodology that is used to determine how slow is slow (rate of growth) and how low is low (student’s level of performance) and to provide appropriate support to all students to achieve adequate progress.

Cross-disciplinary teams represented at the district, school, grade and individual levels use a problem-solving process to integrate evidence-based academic, behavioral and social-emotional practices matched to student needs and with fidelity of implementation. A continuum of support and services exists at all Tiers and is sustained by high-quality professional learning, cultural responsiveness, partnership and meaningful involvement with families, and dynamic decision-making that rests on the use of reliable and valid data sources. Sustainability (transformational change) is the ultimate implementation goal of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and is very much contingent upon Leadership, Organization and Competency.

## STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The Pottsgrove faculty and staff are trained to support students in both academic and social/emotional situations. To provide this support the middle school has two teams designed to identify and implement these supports. They are the Child Study Team and the Student Needs Assistance Program (SAP) team.

**Child Study Team:** The purpose of the Child Study Team is to identify students that are having academic struggles, work to provide thoughtful interventions for those students, and possibly recommend for evaluation students that are experiencing academic difficulty.

**SAP:** The Student Assistance Program (SAP) Team is designed to identify, refer, and assist students in crisis concerning known and suspected drug and alcohol abuse, depression and suicide identification. Students may be referred by teachers, parents/guardians or other students.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Pottsgrove School District has procedures to locate and identify students who are in need of special education services under the IDEA 2004 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) regulations. Identified procedures are implemented to make available education and programs for eligible students with disabilities for the provision of FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education). Additional information regarding Special Education can be found in [Board Policy \(113, 113.1, 113.2, 113.3 113.4, 114\)](#).

## TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACHES

The Board recognizes the impact that trauma may have on the educational environment of the schools, individual student achievement, and the school community as a whole. The Board desires to address the effects of trauma in order to meet the academic, behavioral and professional needs of students and staff. The purpose of this policy is to direct district staff to develop and implement a plan for trauma-informed approaches to education throughout the district. Additional information regarding Trauma-Informed Approaches can be found in [Board Policy 146.1](#).

## STUDENT RECORDS

School Board policies, guided by federal law and state regulations control the collection, maintenance and dissemination of student records: Within the provision of the policies, parents/guardians and/or students have the right to privacy of information and, by contacting the guidance counselor or principal, may have access to, copies of, challenge the validity of, request corrections to, and determine to whom the information therein may be given. Both natural parents/guardians have the right of access to the child's record even if only one parent/guardian has custody of the child, unless there is a court order limiting access. Federal law allows parents/guardians/eligible students to file complaints regarding local policies with the U.S. Department of Education. To request your students records formally [please complete this form](#) also linked on our website.

## Discipline Records

The School District shall maintain required records concerning adjudicated students and transfer students disciplined for offenses involving weapons, alcohol, drugs and violence on school property.<sup>[1][2][3][4]</sup> Additional information can be found in [Board Policy 2016.1](#).

## CONFIDENTIALITY & FERPA

The District shall maintain a system of safeguards to protect the confidentiality of students' educational records and personally identifiable information when collecting, storing, disclosing and destroying student records.<sup>[22][23][24]</sup>

### Recording of Meetings

Except as specifically provided for within this policy, the District prohibits audio, video, and electronic recording of meetings between parents/guardians and District teachers, instructional assistants, program specialists, consultants or administrators.

The District shall permit audio recording of a meeting when a participant submits, at least five (5) days prior to the meeting, documentation that substantiates:

1. A participant has a disability that significantly limits his/her ability to meaningfully understand or participate in the meeting's intended decision-making and recording is the only feasible means of accommodating the limitation.
2. An individual has a legitimate interest in attending the meeting but for good cause is unable to do so, and recording is the only feasible means by which s/he can meaningfully understand and participate in the decision-making.
3. The District may permit videotaping of a meeting when written consent is given by all participants at the meeting.

When an exception to recording a meeting is granted, the District employee responsible for the meeting shall arrange to record the meeting by similar means. Such recording shall be considered part of the student's educational record and subject to relevant law and regulations.

## TARDINESS TO CLASS

Each student is expected to report to class on time. Tardiness will not be tolerated. Students have enough time between classes to reach any part of the building. Any student who chronically reports to a particular class late without a written note will receive a disciplinary action by the receiving teacher. Continuing problems with lateness will result in a discipline referral to the administrative team.

- First Offense: Warning- Parent/guardian phone call/email
- Second Offense: Warning- Parent/guardian phone call
- Third Offense: Parent/guardian phone call- Office Referral

## TELEPHONES

The telephones throughout the building are to be used by faculty and staff only, unless needed in the case of an emergency.

## WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

Students planning to withdraw from school or moving to another school district should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Arrangements for withdrawal from school should be made with the guidance secretary at least two days in advance of the student's last day of attendance.
2. Students, who withdraw from school and are beyond the age for compulsory school attendance, may return only at the start of the school year if their education has been interrupted for a significant period of time. An accumulation of more than 10 days of absence during the school year is considered a significant period of time.
3. No student of compulsory school age will be permitted to withdraw without the written consent of a parent/guardian and supporting justification. Confirmation of enrollment in a new school **is required** prior to withdrawing a student. The [withdrawal request form](#) should be completed by the guardian.