



Penn Hills School District

Grades 9-12

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027

Penn Hills Senior High School

309 Collins Dr.

Pittsburgh, PA 15235

(412) 793-7000

Dr. John P. Mozzocio, Superintendent

Dr. Jah-Chant Robinson, Principal

The 2026-2027 Penn Hills Student Handbook is a quick reference to our building routines, procedures, and practices. The PHSD Student Code of Conduct is also included. Please note that the Penn Hills School District Board of Directors guides our practices. The Penn Hills School District reserves the right to amend policies or procedures in this handbook when necessary or appropriate. Proper notification will be disseminated accordingly.

Mission

The mission of the Penn Hills School District is to foster an equitable learning environment where all students have access to opportunities and resources that construct a pathway for every student to achieve their full potential.

Vision

At the heart of the Penn Hills School District lies a vision that inspires the creation of a vibrant educational space fueled by diversity and inclusion, where each student is acknowledged and celebrated for their distinctive contributions. Through collaborative efforts, we aspire to build a community steeped in mutual respect and understanding, crafting an environment that nurtures learning and social/emotional development. Our dedication to student success and pursuing lifelong learning knows no bounds. We are steadfast in our commitment to equipping individuals with the essential skills, knowledge, and global perspectives to triumph in a constantly evolving world. Together, we illuminate the path to a future where every student can thrive and make a meaningful impact.



The Penn Hills School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, or handicap in employment practices or in administration of any of its educational programs and activities in accordance with applicable federal statutes and regulations. Dominique Ansani, HR Director (Ext:1228), has been identified as the Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/AMD Coordinator, Penn Hills School District, 260 Aster Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15235, (412) 793-7000

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BUILDING INFORMATION

Building Administration

Building PrincipalDr. Jah-Chant Robinson. (x5404)
Associate Principal.....Ms. Jacqueline Dorsett (x5203)
Associate PrincipalMr. Nicholas DiCarolis (x5229)
Associate PrincipalDr. James McCoy (x5204)

Office Staff

Main Office SecretaryMrs. Lydia Bash (x5208)
Main Office SecretaryMrs. Lori Signore (x5209)
Attendance/PPO SecretaryMs. Melanie Kennedy (x5284)
Guidance/Athletic SecretaryMrs. Kathy Mascaro (x5290)

Building Resources

School Counselor (9th grade, 12th grade, letters G-N).....Dr. Thomas Kilcrease (x5288)
School Counselor (11th grade and 12th grade, letters A-F)Mr. Chris Darsie (x5286)
School Counselor (10th grade and 12th grade, letters O-Z)Mr. Charles Morris (x5287)
Social Worker/Home School VisitorMs. Ashley Smith (x5263)
Cyber CoordinatorMs. Amy Kingerski (x5311)
Director of AthleticsMr. James Eckels(x5206).
School NurseMs. Georgia White (x5296)

Administration and District Information

Penn Hills School District

260 Aster St.

Pittsburgh, PA, 15235

(412) 793-7000

School Board

Mrs. Erin Vecchio, President

Mrs. Nicole Richardson, Vice-President

Ms. Jacqueline Blakey-Tate, Member

Mrs. Heather Broman, Member

Ms. Monica Colbert, Member

Dr. Dawn Golden, Member

Dr. Devin Goetze, Member

Dr. Reginald Hickman, Member

Dr. Robert Marra, Member

Superintendent's Office

Superintendent of Schools.....Dr. John Mozzocio (x1282)

Assistant to SuperintendentMrs. Renel Williams (x1251)

Superintendent SecretaryMrs. Colleen Szymansky (x1244)

District Administration

Director of Instruction and Student Achievement Dr. Bernard Taylor, Jr. (ext.1263)

Director of Special EducationMs. Stephanie Biancaniello (x1284)

Human Resources SpecialistMs. Dominique Ansani (x1228)

Director of Technology and InnovationDr. Matthew Dado (x1245)

Director of Plant ServicesMr. Michael Reposky (x1277)

Director of Pupil Services.....Mrs. Kristin Brown(x1223)

Attendance Officer.....,,,,,,,,,Ms. Tamika Duck (x1224)

Chief Financial Officer.....Ms. Rachel McCarthy (x1231)

Secondary Special Education CoordinatorsMrs. Melanie Poziviak (x1211)

	Mrs. Lynn Hanes (x1211)
Director of Food Services	Mr. Robert Sturm (x6182)
Director of Safety and Security.....	Mr. Don Johnson (x5394)
Director of Transportation.....	Mr. Rob Van Ryn (412) 793-7000(x1219)
Qmlativ Support	(x1450)

PENN HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT

2026-2027

ACT 145 and ACT 26- Statement of Awareness

We are aware of the Penn Hills School District Code of Discipline and Responsibilities and ACT 145 of 1996 that prohibits tobacco in schools.

We know that the new law defines possession or use of tobacco products or smokeless tobacco by a student in a school building, a school bus or on school property owned by, leased by or under the control of a school district as a summary offense.

The disciplinary action is a three (3) - (10) day out-of-school suspension and a summary offense citation. The student may be sentenced to pay a fine of not more than \$50.00 for the school district's benefit. If a hearing is held before the District Magistrate, court costs may be added.

We are also aware of the Penn Hills School District Code of Discipline and Responsibilities and ACT 26 of 1995 (Safe Schools Act).

We know that possession/use/transfer of weapon(s), or “look-alike” weapon(s) on school property or at school functions is prohibited and will result in suspension from school, a hearing, and expulsion for a period of not less than one year.

Weapons are defined but not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, look alike gun, and/or any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. A student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student, in the student’s locker, the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is on his/her way to or from school.

Upon entering school, if students feel that they may have items on their persons which are in violation of our weapons policy, they must immediately turn those items into the principal for appropriate action.

Student Name (Printed): _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature (Cursive): _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): _____

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____

Child Find/Outreach

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the district annually conducts awareness and outreach programs and activities designed to reach district residents including parents/guardians of students with disabilities who are enrolled in the district, preschool-aged children, students who attend private schools, homeless children and children who are wards of the state.[\[33\]](#)[\[34\]](#)

The district's public awareness activities shall include annual publication of a written notice in newspapers and other media notifying residents about child identification activities; available special education services and programs and how to request them; and procedures used to ensure confidentiality of student information. Written information shall be published in district handbooks and on the district website. Public awareness activities must include information regarding potential signs of developmental delays and other risk factors that could indicate disabilities.

The Intermediate Unit shall be responsible for conducting child-find activities necessary to provide equitable participation services to students with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents/guardians in private schools.

Confidentiality of Special Education Student Information

Authority

The Board recognizes the need to protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in the education records of students with disabilities.[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)

The district shall maintain a system of safeguards to protect the confidentiality of students' educational records and personally identifiable information when collecting, retaining, disclosing and destroying student special education records, in accordance with Board policy, state requirements, and federal and state law and regulations.[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)

The rights provided by this policy apply to parents/guardians of students who receive special education programming and services from the district or an outside program provided through the district.[\[4\]](#)[\[5\]](#)

Definitions

Destruction shall mean the physical destruction or removal of personal identifiers from information so that the information is no longer personally identifiable.[\[6\]](#)

Disclosure shall mean to permit access to or the release, transfer, or other communication of personally identifiable information contained in education records by any means,

including oral, written, or electronic means, to any party except the party identified as the party that provided or created the record.[\[7\]](#)

Education records, for purposes of this policy, shall include the records and information covered under the definition of education records in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and its implementing regulations.[\[2\]](#)[\[7\]](#)[\[8\]](#)

Personally identifiable information includes, but is not limited to:[\[7\]](#)[\[9\]](#)

1. The name of a student, the student's parents/guardians or other family members.
2. The address of the student or student's family.
3. A personal identifier, such as the student's social security number, student number, or biometric record.
4. Other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name.
5. Other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty.
6. Information requested by a person who the district reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.

Guidelines

Parental Access Rights

The district shall permit parents/guardians to inspect and review any education records relating to their child(ren) that are collected, retained, or used by the district in connection with providing special education services to the student.[\[10\]](#)[\[11\]](#)

The district shall comply with a parental request to inspect and review education records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an Individualized Education Program (IEP); any impartial due process hearing relating to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or the provision of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to a student; a hearing related to the discipline of the student; and a resolution meeting.

The district shall presume a parent/guardian has authority to inspect and review records relating to their child unless it has been provided documentation that the requesting parent/guardian does not have this authority under applicable state law.[\[10\]\[12\]](#)

The district shall comply with a parental request for review within forty-five (45) days following receipt of the request.[\[10\]\[11\]](#)

A parent's/guardian's right to inspect and review education records includes the right to:

1. A response from the district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records;
2. Request that the district provide copies of the records if failure to provide copies would effectively prevent the parent/guardian from exercising the right to inspect and review the records; and
3. Have a representative inspect and review the records.

If an education record includes information on more than one (1) student, the parents/guardians shall have access only to the information relating to their child or shall be informed of the information in the record.[\[13\]\[14\]](#)

The district shall provide parents/guardians, upon request, a list of the types and locations of education records collected, maintained, or used by the district.[\[15\]](#)

Fees

The district may charge a fee for copies of records that are made for parents/guardians so long as the fee does not effectively prevent parents/guardians from exercising their right to inspect and review those records.[\[16\]\[17\]](#)

The district shall not charge a fee to search for or to retrieve information in response to a parental request.

Record of Access

The district shall keep a record of parties obtaining access to education records collected, maintained, or used in providing special education and related services to students with disabilities, except access by parents/guardians and authorized district employees.[\[18\]](#)

The district's record of access shall include the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.

Amendment of Records Upon Parental Request

If a parent/guardian believes that information in the student's education records is inaccurate, misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of the student, the parent/guardian may request that the district amend the information.[\[19\]\[20\]](#)

The district shall decide whether to amend the information within a reasonable period of time from receipt of the request.

If the district declines to amend the information in accordance with a parental request, the district shall inform the parent/guardian of the refusal and advise the parent/guardian of the right to a hearing.

Records Hearing

The district shall, on request, provide parents/guardians with an opportunity for a hearing to challenge information in the student's education records to ensure that the information is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. The district recognizes that parents/guardians who believe that there is a due process violation relating to an alleged violation of confidentiality may also request a special education due process hearing.[\[21\]\[22\]\[23\]](#)

Hearing Procedures

A hearing to challenge information in education records must meet the following requirements:[\[24\]\[25\]](#)

1. The district shall hold the hearing within a reasonable time after receiving the request for a hearing.
2. The district shall give the parent/guardian reasonable advanced written notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing.
3. The hearing may be conducted by any individual, including a district official, who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing.
4. The district shall give the parent/guardian a full and fair opportunity to present relevant evidence. The parent/guardian may, at their own expense, be assisted or represented by one (1) or more individuals of their choice, including an attorney.

5. The district shall inform parents/guardians of its decision in writing within a reasonable period of time after the hearing.
6. The decision must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, and must include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision.

Result of Hearing

If, as a result of the hearing, the district decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights, the district shall amend the information accordingly and inform the parent/guardian in writing.[\[23\]](#)[\[26\]](#)

If, as a result of the hearing, the district decides that the information is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights, the district shall inform the parent/guardian of the parent's/guardian's right to place in the student's records a statement commenting on the information and/or providing any reasons for disagreeing with the district's decision.

Any explanation placed in the student's records shall be:

1. Maintained by the district as part of the student's records as long as the record or contested portion is maintained by the district; and
2. Included with the record or contested portion if the record or contested portion are disclosed to any party.

Storage, Retention and Destruction of Information

The district shall store all education records and personally identifiable information of students receiving special education services in such a way as to protect the confidentiality and integrity of the records and information, prevent unauthorized access to and disclosure of records and information, and ensure compliance with other legal and regulatory requirements regarding records retention.[\[27\]](#)

The district shall maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those district employees who have access to personally identifiable information.[\[27\]](#)

In order to comply with state compliance monitoring requirements, the district shall maintain education records for students receiving special education services for at least six (6) years.[2]

The district shall inform parents/guardians when personally identifiable information collected, maintained, or used is no longer needed to provide educational services to the student. After notice, such information shall be destroyed upon parental request.[28]

No education record shall be destroyed if there is an outstanding request to inspect or review the record or if a litigation hold exists.[11]

The district shall maintain a permanent record of the student's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed.[28]

The district shall ensure the destruction of education records in a manner that protects the confidentiality and privacy rights of the student and the student's family.[27]

Disclosure to Third Parties

The district shall obtain parental consent before disclosing personally identifiable information to parties other than school district officials with a legitimate educational interest or other educational institutions that provide special education services to the student for the purposes of meeting a requirement of law or regulation unless the information is contained in education records and the disclosure is permitted without parental consent under law and regulations.[2][29][30][31][32][33][34]

Parental consent must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released to officials of participating agencies providing or paying for transition services.[32]

If a student is enrolled or is going to enroll in a private school that is not located in the district of the parent's/guardian's residence, parental consent must be obtained before any personally identifiable information about the student is released between officials in the district where the private school is located and officials in the district of the parent's/guardian's residence.[32]

Disclosure to Law Enforcement

When reporting an incident committed by a student with a disability to the appropriate authorities, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy, the district shall provide the information required by state and federal laws and regulations and shall

ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the student are transmitted for consideration by these authorities. The district shall ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act when transmitting copies of the student's special education and disciplinary records.[\[2\]](#)[\[8\]](#)[\[33\]](#)[\[35\]](#)[\[36\]](#)[\[37\]](#)[\[38\]](#)[\[39\]](#)[\[40\]](#)[\[41\]](#)[\[42\]](#)

Delegation of Responsibility

In order to maintain the confidentiality of the educational records and personally identifiable information of students with disabilities, the Board designates the Superintendent, Director of Special Education or designee to coordinate the district's efforts to comply with this policy and applicable laws and regulations.[\[27\]](#)

All district employees collecting or using personally identifiable information shall receive training or instruction regarding Board policy, administrative regulations, and state and federal law and regulations regarding confidentiality of education records and personally identifiable information.[\[27\]](#)

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Legal

1. Pol. 113

2. Pol. 216

3. 34 CFR 300.611-300.627

4. 34 CFR 300.520

5. 34 CFR 300.625

6. 34 CFR 300.611

7. 34 CFR 99.3

8. 20 U.S.C. 1232g

9. 34 CFR 300.32

10. 34 CFR 300.613

11. 34 CFR 99.10

12. 34 CFR 99.4

13. 34 CFR 300.615

[14. 34 CFR 99.12](#)
[15. 34 CFR 300.616](#)
[16. 34 CFR 300.617](#)
[17. 34 CFR 99.11](#)
[18. 34 CFR 300.614](#)
[19. 34 CFR 300.618](#)
[20. 34 CFR 99.20](#)
[21. 34 CFR 300.510-300.516](#)
[22. 34 CFR 300.619](#)
[23. 34 CFR 99.21](#)
[24. 34 CFR 300.621](#)
[25. 34 CFR 99.22](#)
[26. 34 CFR 300.620](#)
[27. 34 CFR 300.623](#)
[28. 34 CFR 300.624](#)
[29. 34 CFR 99.30](#)
[30. 34 CFR 99.31](#)
[31. 34 CFR 300.154](#)
[32. 34 CFR 300.622](#)
33. Pol. 113.1
34. Pol. 113.2
[35. 22 PA Code 10.2](#)
[36. 22 PA Code 10.21](#)
[37. 22 PA Code 10.22](#)
[38. 22 PA Code 10.23](#)
[39. 20 U.S.C. 1415](#)
[40. 34 CFR 300.535](#)

41. 34 CFR Part 99

42. Pol. 805.1

20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq

34 CFR Part 300

**Bureau of Special Education Letter to School Entities on Retention of Records, Dated
November 9, 2009**

**Pennsylvania Department of Education Individuals With Disabilities Education Act Part B
LEA Policies and Procedures under 34 CFR §§300.101 - 300.176 (2018)**

Pol. 113.3

Penn Hills School District Grades 9-12

2026-2027

Student Handbook and Code of Conduct

Acknowledgement Page

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

This handbook has been prepared for the guidance of students, faculty, and parents/guardians of the Penn Hills School District grades 9-12. While it is impossible to cover all situations that may occur, this document provides you with guidelines and expectations that will lead to student success. It is the parents/guardians' responsibility to review this handbook and code of conduct with students so that everyone is familiar with the school's rules and regulations.

Student Name (Printed): _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature (Cursive): _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): _____

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____

- ☆ No Students/Staff
 △ First/Last Day of School
 ☾ Conference Day/No Students
 ○ Professional Day/Clerical Day/No Students

2026-2027 Penn Hills Academic Calendar

T-14 August 2026 S-9						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	☾	☾	☾	15
16	☾	☾	△	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

T-15 December 2026 S-14						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	☾	☆	☆	☆	☆	26
27	☆	☆	☆	☆		

T-22 April 2027 S-22						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

T-21 September 2026 S-21						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	☆	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

T-19 January 2027 S-18						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					☆	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	○	16
17	☆	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

T-19 May 2027 S-18						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	☾	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	☆	29
30	☆					

T-22 October 2026 S-21						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	☾	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

T-19 February 2027 S-19						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	☆	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

T-4 June 2027 S-3						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	△	○	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

T-17 November 2026 S-16						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	☾	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	☆	☆	☆	28
29	☆					

T-19 March 2027 S-19						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	☆	☆	☆	27
28	☆	30	31			

Notes						
Aug – June = 180 Days						
Aug – June = 191 Days						
10 PD/Clerical Days						
1 Conference Day						

Important Dates

August 19, 2026 – First Student Day; June 3, 2027 – Last Student Day
June 3, 2027 – Commencement

PSSA Assessment Dates

April 26-30, 2027: PSSA ELA, Grades 3-8

May 3-7, 2027: PSSA Math, Science & Make-ups Grades 3-8

Keystone Exams Assessment Dates

(Winter) December 7-18, 2026: Algebra I, Biology, Literature

(Spring) May 17-28, 2027: Algebra I, Biology, Literature

Clerical Days – No School for Students

August 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 2026; October 12, 2026; December 21, 2026

January 15, 2027; May 18, 2027; June 4, 2027

No School for Students and Staff

September 7, 2026 – Labor Day

November 25 -November 30, 2026 – Thanksgiving Recess

December 22, 2026 – January 1, 2027 – Winter Recess

January 18, 2027 – Martin Luther King Day

February 15, 2027 – President's Day

March 24, 2027 – March 29, 2027 – Spring Recess

May 28, 2027 – Kennywood Picnic Day

May 31, 2027 – Memorial Day

Reporting Periods:

September 23, 2026 Progress Reports/Parental Contact/25th Day

October 22, 2026 End of First Nine Weeks, 45th Day

December 3, 2026 Progress Reports/Parental Contact/70th Day

January 14, 2027 End of First Semester, 90th Day

February 23, 2027 Progress Reports/Parental Contact/115th Day

March 23, 2027 End of Third Nine Weeks, 135th Day May 3, 2027 Progress
Reports/Parental Contact/160th Day

June 3, 2027 - End of Second Semester, 180th Day

Conference Day

November 3, 2026 - Election Day/No Students/K-12 Parent Conferences

SNOW DAYS – Will be announced as a Remote Day via website, local News
Station/Radio,

Skyward and Robocall – where students and staff will work remotely.



Penn Hills School District

2026-2027

Mediation Agreement Disclosure

This mediation agreement disclosure is to advise all parents and/or guardians of Penn Hills School District students that your child may be asked to participate in mediation to resolve a conflict or problem he/she may be having. All mediation will be done with a certified mediator (school counselor, home school visitor, school social worker, YET Team, behavior specialist, or principal) during the school day.

Both parties agree that there is no reason why this agreement should not last and be binding for the foreseeable future based on face-to-face discussions, mutual good faith, and the following specific provisions.

Note: Participation in the mediation process is not in lieu of disciplinary actions that may result from the conflict.

Should your child participate in a mediation program, he/she will operate under the PHSD Student Mediation Program guidelines/procedures.

Yours in education,

PHSD Mediation Program – Certified Mediators

MEDIATION SERVICES

PHSD Student Mediation Program Guidelines / Procedures

1. I voluntarily agree to participate in the mediation process and:

- Make a good faith effort to resolve the conflict
- Keep all mediation communications confidential
- Listen to the person speaking without interrupting
- Speak without name calling, using abusive language, or making threats of any kind
- Conduct myself in a way that does not physically harm or threaten to physically harm anyone present at the mediation, or any physical property

2. I understand that the PHSD Student Mediation Program does not provide legal representation or counseling.

3. I understand that mediation, communication and documents are confidential, and under Pennsylvania law are inadmissible in a court of law. I understand that the PHSD Student Mediation Program keeps strict confidentiality. Any telephone discussions with the staff before the mediation and any discussions during the mediation itself or during the follow-up will not be used during subsequent proceedings or reported to others, EXCEPT IN THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS:

- Threats of bodily harm or property damage or conduct that cause direct bodily injury to a person.
- Written mediated agreement, when introduced in a proceeding to enforce the agreement, unless the mediated agreement states that it is not intended to be legally binding.
- To have a mediated agreement reached because of fraudulent communication set aside.

4. I understand that all materials contained in the PHSD Student Mediation Program files are confidential and that only copies of the agreement or correspondence directly addressed to me can be released to me.

5. I release the PHSD Student Mediation Program, the mediators, staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers from any liability concerning this mediation.

I have read or had read to me all the above and I freely and knowingly agree to the terms stated above, to mediate and keep confidential any information disclosed to me during the mediation.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Witnessed by:

Mediator: _____ Date: _____

Mediator: _____ Date: _____

Part I – Introduction

This handbook has been published with the sincere hope that the information given herein will be of help to the students during the coming year. All Penn Hills High School students should make the effort to know the contents of this handbook.

All students must behave consistently with the School Disciplinary Code enacted by the Penn Hills Board of School Directors included in this handbook. This includes behavior while in attendance, on school transportation, and at all school-sponsored events, such as Prom, Kennywood picnic, and all athletic events.

Part II – Student Rights and Responsibilities

The Penn Hills School Board of Education will abide by the Regulations and Responsibilities adopted by the State Board of Education.

I. Free Education and Attendance

- A. All people residing in this Commonwealth between the ages of 6 and 21 years are entitled to a free and full education in the Commonwealth's public schools.
- B. Parents or guardians of all children between the ages of 6 and 18 are required by the compulsory attendance law to ensure that their children attend an approved educational institution, unless legally excused. Students who have not graduated may not be asked to leave school merely because they have reached 18 years of age if they are fulfilling their responsibilities as students. A student may not be excluded from a public school or from extracurricular activities because:
 - 1. The student is married.
 - 2. The student is pregnant.
 - 3. The student has a disability as identified by Chapter 15 (relating to protected handicapped Students).
 - 4. The student is an eligible student identified under Chapter 14 (relating to special education services and programs.)

II. Student Responsibilities

- A. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work and homework, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students are responsible to share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.
- B. No student has the right to interfere with the education of his/her fellow students. It is the

responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.

C. Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.

D. It is the responsibility of the students to conform to the following:

1. Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves in accordance with them. Students should assume that, until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed in writing, it is in effect.
2. Volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety, and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
3. Dress and groom to meet standards of safety and health, and not to cause substantial disruption to the educational process.
4. Assist the school staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled therein.
5. Comply with Commonwealth and local laws.
6. Exercise proper care when using public facilities and equipment.
7. Attend school daily and be on time for all classes and other school functions.
8. Make up work when absent from school.
9. Pursue and attempt to complete satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by local school authorities.
10. Report accurately in student media.
11. Not using obscene language in student media or on school premises.

Part III – General Information: School Rules

- A. The governing board has the authority to make reasonable and necessary rules governing the conduct of students in school. The rulemaking power, however, is not unlimited; it must operate within statutory and constitutional restraints. A governing board has only those powers that are enumerated in the statutes of this Commonwealth, or that may reasonably be implied if necessary for the orderly operation of the school.
- B. Governing boards may not make rules that are arbitrary, capricious, discriminatory, or outside their grant of authority from the General Assembly. A rule is generally considered reasonable if it uses a rational means of accomplishing some legitimate school purpose.

C. Each governing board shall adopt a code of student conduct that shall include policies governing student discipline and listing of students' rights and responsibilities as outlined in this chapter.

This conduct code shall be published and distributed to students and parents/guardians. Copies of the code will also be available in the main office.

IV. Discrimination

Consistent with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (43 P.S. 951-963), no student shall be denied access to a free and full public education, nor shall a student be subject to disciplinary action on account of race, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

V. Corporal Punishment

A. Corporal punishment is defined as physically punishing a student for an infraction of the discipline policy. Use of corporal punishment is prohibited.

B. Teachers and school authorities may use force under the following circumstances:

1. To quell a disturbance.
2. To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects.
3. For self-defense.
4. For the protection of persons or property.

VI. Exclusions from School

A. The governing board shall define and publish the types of offenses that would lead to exclusion from school. Exclusions affecting certain students with disabilities shall be governed by Section 14.143 (relating to disciplinary placements) and 34 CFR 300.519-300.529 (relating to discipline procedures).

B. Exclusion from school may take the form of suspension or expulsion.

1. Suspension is exclusion from school for 1 to 10 consecutive school days.
 - a. Suspensions may be given by a principal or person in charge of the public school.
 - b. A student may not be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when the health, safety, or welfare of the school community is threatened.
 - c. The parents/guardians and the superintendent of the district shall be notified when the

Student(s) are suspended.

- d. When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent/guardian shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements set forth in Section 12.8(c) (relating to informal hearings).
- e. Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond 10 school days.
- f. Students shall have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments within the guidelines established by the governing board.

2. Expulsion is exclusion from school by the governing board for a period exceeding 10 school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing under Section 12.8 (relating to hearings).

C. During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the governing board in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in his/her normal classes except as set forth in subsection (D).

D. If it is determined, after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his/her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of others and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 days. A student may not be excluded from school for longer than 15 school days without a formal hearing unless mutually agreed upon by both parties. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education which may include home study.

E. Students who are under 18 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled and they must be provided with an education.

- 1. The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parent or guardian, through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program approved by the district superintendent.
- 2. Within 30 days of action by the governing board the parents or guardians shall submit to the school district written evidence that the required education is being provided as described in paragraph (1) or that they are unable to do so. If the parents/guardians are unable to provide the required education, the school entity shall, within ten days of receipt of the notification, make provision for

the student's education. A student with a disability must be provided educational services as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Sections 1400-1482).

3. If the approved educational program is not complied with, the school entity may act in accordance with 42 Pa.C.S. Chapter 63 (relating to the Juvenile Act) to ensure that the child will receive a proper education. See Section 12.1(b) (relating to free education and attendance).

VII. Exclusion from Classes / In School Suspension

- A. No student may receive New Directions unless the student has been informed of the reasons for it, and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective.
- B. Communication with the parent/guardian shall follow the suspension action taken by the school.
- C. When the in-school suspension exceeds 10 consecutive school days, an informal hearing with the principal shall be offered to the student and the student's parent/guardian prior to the 11th school day in accordance with the procedures in 12.8 (relating to hearings).
- D. The student's school entity has the responsibility to make provision for the student's education during the period of the in-school suspension.

VIII. Hearings

- A. *General* – Education is a statutory right, and students shall be afforded due process if they are to be excluded from school. In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing.
- B. *Formal hearings* – A formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions. This hearing may be held before the governing board or a duty authorized committee of the board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the board. When a committee of the board or a hearing examiner conducts the hearing, a majority vote of the entire governing board is required to expel a student.

The following due process requirements shall be observed regarding the formal hearing:

1. Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parent/guardian by certified mail.
2. At least three days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. A copy of the expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student, and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice. A student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension.
3. The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.

4. The student may be represented by counsel, at the parents or guardians' expense, and have his/her parent/guardian attend the hearing.
5. The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
6. The student has the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
7. The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his/her own behalf.
8. A written, or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.
9. The proceeding must be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties. However, a hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held with as soon as reasonably possible:
 - a. Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies.
 - b. Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his or her rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Sections 1400-1482).
 - c. In cases in juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury, delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim.
10. Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

C. Informal hearings - The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended.

1. The informal hearing is held to bring forth all relevant information regarding the event for which the student may be suspended and for students, their parent/guardian, and school officials to discuss ways by which future offenses might be avoided.
2. The following due process requirements are to be observed regarding the informal hearing:
 - a. Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parent/guardian and to the student.
 - b. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
 - c. A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
 - d. A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his/her own behalf.
 - e. The school entity shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first five days of the suspension.

IX. Freedom of Expression

A. 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.

B. Students have the right to express themselves unless the expression materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens serious harm to the school or community, encourages unlawful activity, or interferes with another individual's rights.

C. Students may use publications, handbills, announcements, assemblies, group meetings, buttons, armbands, and any other means of common communication, provided that the use of public-school communications facilities shall be in accordance with the regulations of the authority in charge of those facilities.

1. Students have the responsibility to obey law governing libel and obscenity, and to be aware of the full meaning of their expression.
2. Students have the responsibility to be aware of the feelings and opinions of others and to give others a fair opportunity to express their views.
3. Identification of the individual student or at least one responsible person in a student group may be required on any posted or distributed materials.

D. School officials may require students to submit a copy of all materials for prior approval to be displayed, posted, or distributed on school property.

E. Bulletin boards shall conform with the following:

1. School authorities may restrict the use of certain bulletin boards.
2. Bulletin board space should be provided for the use of students and student organizations.
3. School officials may require that notices or other communications be officially dated before posting, and that the materials be removed after a prescribed reasonable time to assure full access to the bulletin boards.

F. School newspapers and publications shall conform to the following:

1. Students have the right and are free as editors of other newspapers to report the news and to editorialize within the provisions in paragraphs (4) and (5).
2. School officials shall supervise student newspapers published with school equipment, remove obscene or libelous material and edit other material that would cause a substantial disruption or interference with school activities.
3. School officials may not censor or restrict material simply because it is critical of the school or

its administration.

4. Prior approval procedures regarding copy for school newspapers must identify the individual to whom the material is to be submitted and establish a limitation on the time required to make a decision, the material shall be considered authorized for distribution.
5. Students not members of the newspaper staff shall have access to the pages. Written criteria for submission of material by non-staff members shall be developed and distributed to all students.

G. Wearing buttons, badges, or armbands shall be permitted as another expression within the restrictions listed in subsection (c).

1. School officials may set forth the time and place of distribution of materials so that distribution would not materially or substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school.
2. A proper time and place set for distribution is one that would give the students the opportunity to reach fellow students.
3. The place of such activity may be restricted to permit the normal flow of traffic within the school and at exterior doors.

X. Flag Salute and the Pledge of Allegiance

It is the responsibility of every citizen to show proper respect for his country and its flag.

- A. Students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and may refrain from saluting the flag because of personal beliefs or religious convictions.
- B. Students who choose to refrain from such participation shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate.

XI. Hair and Dress

- A. The governing board may establish dress codes or require that students wear school uniforms. Policies may apply to individual school buildings or to all school buildings.
- B. Students have the right to govern the length or style of their hair, including facial hair. Any limitation of this right shall include evidence that length or style of hair cause disruption of the educational process or constitutes a health or safety hazard. Where length or style of the hair presents a health or safety hazard; some types of covering should be considered. Students may be

required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, shops, extracurricular activities, or other situations when special attire may be required to ensure the health or safety of the student.

- C. Students have the responsibility to keep themselves, their clothes, and their hair clean. School officials may impose limitations on student participation in the regular instructional program where there is evidence that the lack of cleanliness constitutes a health hazard.

XII. Confidential Communications

A. Use of a student's confidential communications to school personnel in legal proceedings is governed by statutes and regulations appropriate to the proceeding. See, for example, 42 Pa.C.S. 5945 relating to confidential communications to school personnel).

B. Information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parent/guardian, the principal, or other appropriate authority when the health, welfare, or safety of the student or other appropriate authority when the health, welfare, or safety of the student or other persons is clearly in jeopardy.

XIII. Searches

- A. The governing board of every school entity shall adopt reasonable policies and procedures regarding student searches. The local education agency shall notify students and their parent/guardian of the policies and procedures regarding student searches.
- B. Illegal or prohibited materials seized during a student search may be used as evidence against the student in a disciplinary proceeding.
- C. Prior to a locker search, students shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. When school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare, or safety of students in the school, student lockers may be searched without warning.

Attendance and Absences

Regular attendance positively contributes to academic success. When a student is absent from school, it disrupts the learning process. While we recognize that an occasional absence may be unavoidable, we stress the importance of attending school daily and being on time.

The Board considers the following conditions to constitute reasonable cause for absence from school.

1. Illness
2. Death in the family
3. Religious holidays
4. Required court attendance
5. Recovery from an accident
6. Educational trips
7. Quarantine

Missing the bus, oversleeping, childcare, traffic, and work schedules are not legal reasons for absences or tardies.

All students under eighteen must be in school except for illness or serious family emergencies. School is considered a full-time commitment on the part of all students. The official school day for each full-time student shall consist of at least six hours of scheduled classes and other guided learning experiences. Truancy will be treated in a serious way and may result in court action.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop procedures for the attendance of students which will identify the habitual truant, investigate the causes of truant behavior, and coordinate a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) meeting to address habitual truant behavior. Students will then be admitted through the following conditions:

1. Parent / Guardian must accompany the student

**A note from a parent/guardian without presence is not acceptable.*

**A student that was ill will be accepted as an excused absence for up to a maximum of 10 days. After ten (10) days, the absence will no longer be excused without proper documentation.
days will no longer be excused without proper documentation.*

2. The student must have a doctor's note.
3. The student must have written documentation.

Excuse Requirements

Written/ emailed excuses should include the following information:

1. Student's first and last name
2. Grade
3. Date of absence(s)
4. Reason for the absence(s)

5. Signature of parent/guardian or signature from a medical provider and return to school date as recommended (when applicable)

A student must be in his/her homeroom on time to be marked present for the school day. Teachers will ensure that students who are legally absent can make up work. A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification may be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days require an official excuse from a doctor, court, religious institution, or other approved institution. Otherwise, the absence will be marked unlawful. A parent/guardian excuse will no longer be sufficient to be considered excused after ten (10) days. Students must bring in their excuse within 3 days of his/her return. Otherwise, this absence will be permanently marked unexcused and unlawful.

A student must be in school for at least four periods to be considered present for the school day. If a student is absent from school, he/she will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities (sports/band/dance, etc.) that day.

The district will issue written notice to any parent/guardian who fails to comply with the compulsory attendance statute, following any proceeding brought under the statute. Such office shall inform the parent/guardian of his/her liability under law for the absence of the student, and that further violation during the school term will be prosecuted without notice.

Repeated infractions of Board policy requiring the attendance of enrolled students may constitute misconduct and disobedience to warrant the student's suspension or expulsion from the regular school program.

The Superintendent or designee will develop and implement procedures to determine attendance requirements: To issue credit for 9th through 12th grade courses for promotion of elementary and middle school students

The Penn Hills School District uses an automated notification system via our Qmlativ Student Information System. When a student is absent or tardy, parents/guardians who are registered within the Qmlativ system will receive notification informing them of their child's absence or tardy with a reminder about bringing in an excuse or a request to contact the school the following day. This procedure is designed to improve student attendance and to keep parents/guardians informed. **Additionally, parents/guardians are encouraged to request access codes for Qmlativ. Our Qmlativ software allows approved individuals with valid access codes to monitor student performance, both attendance and grades.**

Student Arrival

Students are expected to report to school on time. Students are expected to enter through their assigned entrance. Students may be assigned to a drop-off location based on their grade level. Students assigned to the SOAR program are expected to travel to school on their assigned transportation and enter at their assigned entrance. All car riders, drivers, walkers, and tardy students will enter door three (3) in the front of the school.

School IDs

To enhance school safety, all high school students must present their school identification (ID) to enter the building. Students will show the staff members their ID to gain access to the building before entering the metal detector line. If a student forgot or lost their ID, they will remain with the staff member until there is confirmation that he/she is a Penn Hills High School student. A request will be made for a replacement ID costing \$5.00 to the student. The \$5.00 will be reflected on the student's account as a hold card. Beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, students will be expected to show their IDs when entering the cafeteria at lunch time to ensure they are entering their assigned lunch period.

At all times, high school students should have their school ID on their person. If requested by a staff member, the student must produce the identification. Students must also have their school ID to purchase a dance or event ticket. The PHHS school issued ID may also be used for entry into the SAT/ACT exams along with workers' permits. Please note that a driver's license will not be an acceptable replacement for a school issued ID, as it does not identify the student as enrolled in the Penn Hills School District.

Tardies

The school day begins at 7:33 am. Students who arrive after the start of the school day must enter the building through the main entrance. Students must present their school ID. Students *must* obtain a late slip from the attendance office. Entering school without checking in is not permitted and may result in consequences.

Early Dismissals

No student is permitted to leave the school building for any reason without the knowledge and permission of the appropriate school officials. To arrange to have a student leave school early, an approved parent/guardian must send a note with the student or call the attendance office. Students must bring their note to the attendance secretary. All early dismissals must be procured from the attendance office. *If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking the student up, it must be stated in the note or explained when calling. A valid photo ID is required by the parent/guardian or their designee for any student with an early dismissal.*

Any student returning to school from an early dismissal must report to the attendance office to sign in. The attendance secretary will issue the student a pass to return to class.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education does not approve any early dismissals unless emergency conditions exist. Early dismissals will only be permitted if one of these conditions is met:

1. The student presents a doctor's or dentist's appointment on official medical stationery.
2. The parent/guardian appears in person at the appropriate school attendance office to pick up the student.
3. The student has submitted a written request from the parent/guardian to the attendance secretary.
4. If the student becomes ill during the school day, he/she must be properly excused by the nurse, health office, or administration.

In compliance with the Pennsylvania School Code, early dismissals for any type of employment will not be considered. An approved early dismissal does not automatically permit a student to park on school grounds. Students must attend at least four (4) class periods (not ISS/New Directions) during the school day to qualify for participation in after-school and/or evening activities. Those assigned to ISS/New Directions do not qualify.

Student Parking

Penn Hills High School students will be issued a parking permit that is valid for the current school year, once the parking application has been approved. Students must provide a valid owners card, proof of insurance, and driver's license. The fee associated with your parking application is as follows:

1. Full Year - \$50.00
2. $\frac{3}{4}$ of Full Year - \$40.00
3. $\frac{1}{2}$ of Full Year – \$30.00
4. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Full Year - \$20.00

Failure to obtain a Parking Permit will result in a fine for each day that the student's vehicle is parked on the school grounds.

In addition, no students are permitted to drive and park at Forbes Vocational Tech School without the permission of Forbes personnel. Students who receive permission from Forbes to park there may not drive other students in their personal vehicles.

After School

Although Penn Hills High School has many events, activities, and practices which take place after school, at no time are students permitted to stay after school in unauthorized areas which include but are not limited to the cafeteria, gymnasium, auditorium, or hallways, without an adult, coach, or sponsor. Students are not permitted to loiter in the school building until an event, activity, or practice begins. Students must be supervised at all times.

Parents, Visitors & Guests

All parents, visitors, and guests must produce valid photo identification to enter Penn Hills High School during the school day. Upon arrival, everyone will be subject to a search of their belongings. All parents, visitors, and guests must sign in at the security desk and receive a pass. Staff members shall be expected to require that all visitors have registered at the school office and received authorization to be present for the purpose of conducting business. No visitors nor guests may confer with a student in school without the approval of a principal. Should an emergency require that a student be called to the office to meet a visitor, a principal or designee shall be present during the meeting.

Bell Schedule

Below is the daily high school bell schedule. A student's first period class is 7 their homeroom. There will be days when alternative bell schedules will be followed due to testing, two-hour delays, assemblies, pep rallies, and inclement weather.

2026 – 2027

Regular Bell Schedule

First Bell 7:00

First Warning 7:20

Second Warning 7:29

First Period 7:33 - 8:31

Second Period 8:35 - 9:23

Third Period 9:27– 10:15

Period 4A 10:19 – 11:07

Period 4B 10:53 – 11:41

Fifth Period 11:45– 12:33

Sixth Period 12:37 – 1:25

Seventh Period 1:29 – 2:21

Please note that a student's lunch time is determined by his/her fourth period class. Students who are scheduled for period 4B will eat first lunch. Students who are scheduled for period 4A will eat second lunch. Students are only permitted to have one lunch period per day. Beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, students will be expected to show their IDs when entering the cafeteria at lunch time to ensure they are entering their assigned lunch period. Students must report to lunch on time. Students are not permitted to eat lunch outside of the cafeteria unless they have made prior arrangements with a teacher. Any student who attempts to leave the cafeteria must have a valid pass from a teacher.

Open Gym

On days when staffing is sufficient and the gymnasium is available; Penn Hills High School will operate an Open Gym during lunch periods. Open Gym is a privilege. Students may only attend Open Gym during their scheduled lunch. They may not attend Open Gym during their study hall or at any other time in which they are scheduled for classes. No food or drink is permitted in the gymnasium. If any student abuses this privilege, he/she will no longer be permitted to attend Open Gym. The principal or designee reserves the right to close Open Gym for the day, the week, or as necessary.

Vacation Forms

If a student or family is planning a non-school sponsored or educational trip, vacation forms are available from the attendance secretary. The Excusal Request form is to be completed by the parent/guardian requesting to have their child excused from school for five (5) or more days during the school year. All forms must be submitted to the building principal *at least two (2) weeks* before the requested beginning leave date. The approval or non-approval for the student to be excused from school will be determined based on the student's:

1. Attendance record

2. Academic standing
3. Educational merit of the trip or exceptionality of the request
4. Current year's discipline record

The request's approval must first be submitted to the building principal for preapproval and then to the Assistant to the Superintendent for final approval. If the request is denied, an appeal can be made in writing to the Superintendent for review. If the form is not submitted within the ten (10) day timeline, it could result in an illegal absence and negatively affect grades. A decision will be made within three (3) days of receipt of the form from the building principal.

If the request is approved, it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian and the student to contact teachers to obtain the student's assignments for the duration of the absence. The parent/guardian will be responsible for the student completing the assignments and having their child submit the completed work to the teachers the first day upon returning to school. Upon returning to school, the student will be allotted five (5) school days to make up any tests that could negatively impact their grades. Any work not completed in the appropriate time frame could negatively impact the students' grades. Not completing make-up work will also be considered as a factor in further requests for excusal from school. All absences will become part of the student's permanent records. Approval of the request does not waive the student from any requirements/restrictions established by a coach or of any district sponsored extracurricular activities. Any absences that are taken as a vacation or educational trip are part of the ten (10) allotment of excused absences. The Penn Hills School District strongly encourages parents to schedule family vacations with the school district calendar in mind to ensure that students attend school a maximum number of days.

College Visits

Students are permitted to visit universities and colleges throughout the course of the school year for their future educational endeavors. The absences will be considered excused provided that the proper procedures are taken. *College visitation days are not included in the ten (10) day parent/guardian absences.*

Change of Address / Phone Number

If you have a change of address and/or phone number within the Penn Hills School District, you should report it immediately to the Attendance/PPO secretary at x5284 so that it can be updated. If your family is moving to another district, you should also report that information to the Office of Pupil Personnel and the school counselor so that a transcript and records can be sent to the new school district.

Families living outside the district who attempt to fraudulently maintain enrollment within the district, will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law and will be charged a per diem tuition rate for all the days children were illegally enrolled.

Work Permits

Working permits for minors (persons under 18 who have not graduated from high school) are issued at Penn Hills High School between 7:00am and 2:30pm. A parent/guardian can complete the online application which is on the district website. A parent/guardian may also come to the high school office to

complete the application in person. The parent/guardian must have a current, valid photo ID and the birth certificate of their child.

Lockers

Homeroom teachers will assign all lockers. There will be one student assigned to each locker. Each locker contains a built-in combination lock. You are responsible for the contents in your locker. Sharing lockers is prohibited. Keep your locker locked at all times. Please refrain from bringing valuable items to school. The district will not be responsible for lost or stolen property.

School lockers are the property of the school district, and administration reserves the right to search lockers or to open them in case of an emergency or reasonable suspicion. Also, students shall not expect privacy regarding items placed in school lockers. Lockers are subject to search at any time by school officials. School officials will conduct random, periodic, or sweeping searches, including canine drug searches of all lockers.

Valuables

Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money, electronics, cameras, jewelry, or valuables to school. If any valuables must be brought to school, they should be taken to the office. Students are responsible for their personal property. The school cannot be held responsible for losses when these recommendations are not followed.

All lost articles should be taken to the Main Office. Reclamation of all lost instructional materials and payment for lost or damaged textbooks may be done in the Main Office.

Hallways & Hall Passes

The Penn Hills Administration strongly suggests that the following regulations be followed for the efficient operation of student traffic in the high school.

- 1. All students are expected to use the Minga app for any time they leave the classroom. Whether you need to go to the restroom, nurse, or another location, you must request a digital hall pass. Once approved by your teacher, this ensures a safe and accountable process for everyone. Always follow your teacher's instructions and return promptly.**
2. The time allotted for the change of classes does not include time for loitering. Loitering or idly standing around without apparent purpose is not permitted in any area of Penn Hills High School. Students are to keep moving through the halls to their scheduled destination and arrive to class prior to the ringing of the late bell. Reporting to class tardy will result in a disciplinary consequence.
3. Students who are tardy to class or out-of-area, may be subject to discipline or being caught in a hall sweep. A hall sweep is a procedure that may be used periodically, throughout the school day, by school administration to help operate student traffic. Hall sweeps will result in disciplinary action because students are tardy or out-of-area.
4. Penn Hills High School will operate on closed periods during periods 1, 4, and 7. During those periods, no hall passes are to be issued. If a student has an emergency, his/her teacher should arrange for an escort. If a student has a medical issue, arrangements will need to be made in the health office with the school nurse.

5. High school students are encouraged to use the restroom before leaving home in the morning. Students can use the restroom in the mornings before the first warning bell. Students are also encouraged to use the restroom during lunch.

6. The high school will follow the 10/10 rule for hall passes. During the periods in which teachers can issue hall passes, these passes will not be issued during the first ten nor the last ten minutes of class. Students must walk in the hallways. Act in a mature and safe manner to reduce accidents.

Restroom Policy

The restrooms in Penn Hills High School are provided for the benefit of all students. They are to be used only for their intended purpose. To ensure appropriate restroom use, the following policy is in effect:

1. No student is permitted to use the restroom without a pass or escort.
2. Students are not permitted to loiter nor hang out in the restroom. The facilities are to be used quickly, and students should return to class promptly.
3. Restrooms are to be kept clean. All trash should be thrown in the proper receptacles. Students should not eat in the restrooms. Students should report any restroom damage or maintenance issues to the office immediately.
4. Students need to be respectful of everyone who is using the restroom. Students should respect everyone's right to privacy. Only one student is permitted in a restroom stall.
5. The restrooms will be monitored by administration, security, teachers, and other staff. If any students are caught engaging in any activities that are contrary to school district policies and/or the code of conduct, consequences will result. Such consequences may result in restricting restroom privileges or extreme situations, such as citations, suspensions, and expulsions.

Outside Food and Beverages

No students are permitted to bring in open beverage containers, including water bottles. Students can bring empty plastic water bottles which can be filled with fountains at school. Students are not permitted to bring any metal water bottles, (such as Stanleys, Owola) or glass bottles into school.

No restaurant/fast food lunches or Door Dash orders are permitted to be ordered, delivered, or brought into school during the school day, this includes drinks from Starbucks, Dunkin, etc. If this occurs, this will be confiscated and will not be returned. Reimbursement will also not occur in these situations.

Health Office / Nurse's Office

The care and treatment of any injured or ill pupil is primarily a parental responsibility, and every effort will be made to contact the parent or guardian as necessary. The school nurse does not diagnose conditions or treat unless there is a written order from a physician. All injuries/accidents should be reported to the nurse by the observing staff member immediately regardless of how severe it may seem. The school health office will not treat injuries that occur in the home and/or after class hours. All students must have a properly signed pass to enter the Health Office unless of an emergency.

Health Office / Nurse's Office Restroom

The restroom in the Health Office is not for general public use. Health Office restrooms are to be used by students who are acutely ill or have a chronic disease substantiated by their physician in writing or administrative request.

Medical Pass

This is an index size card issued to the student. The card is issued for students taking medications in the Health Office, monitoring blood sugars, blood pressures and needing to eat a snack or to use the bathroom. The med pass is issued when there is a doctor's note stipulating medical need for treatment. It is the responsibility of the student to carry this pass at all times and to show staff when there is a need to leave the classroom.

Emergency Care Information

Each student must have updated Emergency Care Information on file in the Qmlativ at the start of each school year. Updated phone number contacts to be used in an emergency must be provided. Parents must arrange necessary transportation when the student needs to go home, to the family doctor, or to a hospital. The school does not provide or arrange transportation other than to call an ambulance in case of a serious emergency. If your child needs to be sent home, we are required to contact the parent first. Then, if directed or needing to do so, other contacts listed in Qmlativ can be contacted. It is important and mandatory to update the system and/or pupil services with any change of address, home, or work phone numbers.

In Qmlativ there is an area to list any medical conditions of the student. Please list all current conditions for your son or daughter. This information is utilized to update the medical health record of your child as well as reference each visit to the Health Office. If your child is seen by a physician or Emergency Room and develops a new medical condition, you need to notify the school nurse in writing by the physician. The nurse will help the student return to school or adjust to side effects of medication or symptoms of their new condition.

Medication Procedures

All medicines must be kept in the Health Office. Students are not permitted to carry over-the-counter medications or prescriptions (including aspirin, allergy pills, caffeine pills, and other stimulants). It is not the responsibility of the Penn Hills School District to administer medications that can effectively be given outside of school hours.

The following regulations have been adopted by the Penn Hills School Board concerning medication:

1. All medicine must be prescribed by a physician.
2. A parent/guardian must complete a school medicine permission form for each medication and have the physician complete, and hand sign the designated section of the form.
3. Medicine must be brought to school in a properly labeled container - original container is preferred.
4. Medications to be administered must be QID (4 times a day) with meals, or prn (as needed) in order to be given by the school nurse.
5. Medications not complying with these regulations will not be allowed to be taken in school.
6. Medication orders must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.
7. All medications must be kept in the nurse's office unless alternative arrangements are made.
8. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to pick up any leftover medication by the last day of school. Medication orders must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.

Any questions pertaining to medications should be directed to the school nurse.

Medical Restrictions

To restrict students from school activities, including physical education, you must obtain a note from the family physician describing the conditions and advice regarding any possible restrictions. **The school nurse cannot excuse a student from any activity or gym class.**

Health Services and Examinations

The school is required to perform mandated student screenings in compliance with School Code SC 1402-3. This ensures that your child's learning potential is not lessened by a remedial physical disability. If you do not wish the school to do the examinations, you must provide the information in writing to the school nurse. The school is not responsible for any cost incurred for the examinations.

Each child of school age will be given:

1. A near and far vision test annually
2. A hearing test (utilizing audiometer) – Grade 11
3. A measurement of height and weight annually
4. A physical examination by a physician – Grade 11

Regulations for the Control of Communicable Diseases

The Penn Hills School District utilizes the Guide to Infectious Diseases for School and Day Care Centers published by the Allegheny County Health Department. Please contact the school nurse if you notice evidence of any communicable diseases with yourself or your child.

Safe to Say Something

Safe2Say Something is an anonymous tip reporting prevention program run by the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General that teaches youth how to recognize warning signs and signals. Anonymous tips may be submitted by contacting 1-844-723-2729, www.safe2saypa.org, or the mobile app.

Student Assistance Program (S.A.P.)

The Penn Hills Student Assistance Program is designed for early identification of students at-risk due to drug/alcohol, mental health, or other personal problems. Our program provides for intervention with students and/or parents, referral to appropriate services, and support for the students. These services help to foster a positive school climate and promote personal wellness in our students. S.A.P. is an intervention program that coordinates a process of information gathering, intervention, and referral through a core team.

For information or assistance, notify your school counselor or social worker.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Fire exit drills are required by the State Fire and Panic Act to safeguard students in time of fire or danger. Several regular fire drills are held during the year in accordance with Pennsylvania State Law. A school fire drill is to be considered an educational experience, and the speed of the drill is second only to its orderliness. The following rules are for your protection and should be observed during all drills:

1. In the case of a fire alarm, rise immediately, leave books and other personal belongings behind, and follow staff directives for exiting the classroom and building.
2. Leave the building in an orderly fashion; do not run or become excited.

3. Go directly with your teacher to your classroom's assigned safe area and stay there with your teacher. DO NOT LEAVE THE SAFE AREA UNTIL INSTRUCTED BY A STAFF MEMBER.
4. The elevator is non-functional during a drill.
5. Re-enter the building when prompted by administration.

Other Drills

Additional safety-related drills will be conducted throughout the year. Staff will be prompted by PA announcement and/or an established code system. When prompted by administration, staff may lock classroom doors and prohibit student movement in the halls. Local law enforcement and EMS units may be invited to participate in such drills. During drills, visitors to the school and late-arriving students will be detained at a designated location until the drill has been completed.

Homelessness

In 1987, the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act became law. This is the first comprehensive federal law dealing with the problems of homelessness in America. In 2001, the Act was included in No Child Left Behind and is now titled "The McKinney Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001."

In 1988, the Pennsylvania Department of Education established the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program. The key mandate of these laws is to ensure that homeless children and youth have access to free and appropriate public education on an equal basis with other children.

Who is qualified?

"Children and youth experiencing homelessness" means children who have no fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. They may be found in the following situation:

- Public or private shelters.
- Public or private places not designated for/or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodation such as vehicles, parks, motels, campgrounds, etc.
- Living with a parent in a domestic violence shelter.
- Individuals and/or families living with relatives or friends due to a lack of housing.
- Living in transitional housing programs.
- Children of migrant families lack adequate housing.
- Children abandoned in hospitals or awaiting foster care.
- Unaccompanied youth (under age 18) and children who have been abandoned or forced out of the home by parents or other caretakers. They may be in temporary shelters awaiting assistance from social service agencies or may live on the street or move from place to place among family members, friends, or acquaintances. This also includes such youth from 18-21 years of age who may still be eligible for educational services in regular or special education.

THE RIGHTS OF STUDENTS WHO ARE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

If a student becomes homeless during the academic year or between academic years, they may continue in their "school of origin" for the rest of that year if this is in the best interest of the student.

- Eligibility for Title I support services.
- Transportation services provided by Penn Hills School District.
- Home/School Visitor (School Social Worker) to support and provide resources for the family.

WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP?

If you and your family are experiencing homelessness, please contact the homeless liaison, principal, or guidance counselor to receive appropriate services.

- Ms. Ronay Austin Penn Hills School District Homeless Liaison- 412-793 7000 x 7133
- Nicole Anderson- Allegheny Intermediate Unit- 412-394-5700
- The PA Dept. of Education Homeless Children and Youth Program- 717-783-6466

Part IV – Academics

Grades

The evaluation of student progress and achievement is the responsibility of each member of the professional staff of Penn Hills High School. Grades will reflect a student's progress, quality of performance, and educational growth.

Grading will be based on percentage points and based on points earned for course requirements like tests, projects, presentations, homework, and class participation. Grades are reported as percentages. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor grades weekly using the Qmlativ system. Report cards are available on the Qmlativ system as well.

Grading Scale

90%-100% - A

89% - 80 % - B

79% - 70 % - C

69% - 60 % - D

59% and below – E

Interim Progress Reports

Parents/guardians will be notified via email of the availability of interim progress reports at the midpoint of each nine weeks. Interim progress reports can be viewed online via the Qmlativ parent portal.

Parents/guardians can also access current, daily performance information via the Qmlativ parent portal.

Graduation

The requirements for graduation shall be the successful completion of all coursework that demonstrates expected levels of proficiency consistent with curricular objectives in grades nine through twelve. The Board requires that each candidate earn a *minimum of 24 credits* in order to graduate. Penn Hills School District graduation requirements comply with all applicable laws as enumerated in 22 PA Code §4.24. These credits must include:

English 4.0 credits

Social Studies 3.5 credits

Science	3.0 credits
Math	3.0 credits
Health / Physical Education	1.5 credits
Technology	1.0 credit
Family and Consumer Science	1.0 credit
Electives	7.0 credits

Total	24 credits
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All students in grades 9-11 must schedule a minimum of thirty-five (35) instructional periods per week. The school day for grades 9-12 will consist of seven (7) periods per day, not including lunch. No students are permitted to participate in Commencement exercises unless they have met all of the graduation requirements.

Any senior who does qualify for graduation at the end of the school year will not automatically qualify to return to school until the following year. Interested non-graduates must be interviewed by the building principal at which time all records (behavior, academics, and attendance) will be reviewed. Re-admission will be denied for those students who are viewed as chronically disruptive.

Summer School

Summer school courses are offered through the AIU, and students can register on the Penn Hills School District website. Summer school is offered online only and not every course that is offered in the school building will be available in summer school. The maximum number of courses in which a student can enroll is two. Summer school must be paid for by the student or parent/guardian. The school district will not cover the cost of summer school.

Part V – Activities, Athletics and Extracurricular

The Board believes that the district's goals and objectives are best achieved by a diversity of learning experiences, some of which are more appropriately conducted outside the regular curricular program of the schools.

All learning experiences offered by the schools, curricular and extracurricular, shall be planned and integrated toward the attainment of the district's educational objectives and academic standards.

The Board shall establish that participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right; therefore, continued participation shall be subject to all Board policies regarding student conduct and extracurricular activities. Additionally, the Board reserves the right to revoke a student's privilege of participating in extracurricular activities by placing that student on social probation. *Social probation* is a restriction placed upon a student who fails to demonstrate responsible behavior and who has chosen to violate the district's/school's Code of Discipline and Responsibilities, Board policy, or the law. The Board may use social probation with other disciplinary actions.

For purposes of this policy, extracurricular activities shall be those programs that are sponsored or approved by the Board and are conducted wholly or partly outside the regular school day; are marked by student participation in the processes of initiation, planning, organizing, and execution; *and are equally available to all students who voluntarily elect to participate.*

The Board shall make school facilities, supplies, and equipment available, and shall assign staff members for the support of extracurricular activities for students. Such availability and assignment shall be in accordance with the Equal Access Act.

Any extracurricular activity shall be considered under the sponsorship of this Board when it has been approved by the Superintendent and reported to the Board for its review.

The Board shall maintain in the program of extracurricular activities at no cost to participating students, except that:

1. The Board's responsibility for the provision of supplies shall carry out the same exemptions as listed in the Board's policy on regular school supplies.
2. Students may assume all or part of the costs for travel and attendance at extracurricular events and trips.

Where eligibility requirements are necessary or desirable, the Board shall be informed and must approve the establishment of eligibility standards before they are operable.

Eligibility Standards

Academic Eligibility

For a student to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities, a **minimum of 2.00 overall Quality Point Average (QPA)** must be **achieved and maintained** with all courses considered. A student must pass at least four classes to remain eligible.

The eligibility for students involved in fall activities will be determined by the final grade from the previous school year. If the student fails to meet eligibility requirements, he/she will lose eligibility for fifteen (15) school days of the next grading period and may be assigned to a tutoring program.

Summer school grades (from a district-approved institution) may supersede a final grade less than a "C" or "C" equivalent. No more than two (2) courses may be attended during the approved summer school session. Summer school grades will be reflected by the actual value assigned as a grade for that course. QPA will be recalculated prior to the beginning of the new school year when the summer school certificate is received.

Eligibility shall also be determined weekly during each sport or activity season by an electronic Qmlativ pull. Those students who have a quarterly QPA below 2.0 as reported on the student report card shall be ineligible for the first fifteen (15) days of attendance of the next grading period. Coaches and sponsors will be notified by the Athletic Director and/or Superintendent's designee each Monday of students who are ineligible.

In School Conduct

If a student is suspended from school (in or out of school suspension) for any reason, the student shall be subject to all social probation during periods of suspension in line with the Discipline Code and all other related activity, club, or team guidelines.

Additional Eligibility Standards

In addition to the foregoing academic and conduct eligibility standards, all students must conform to the following:

1. No student is eligible for that school year if he/she is nineteen (19) years old on or before July 1st.
2. A student enrolled in a middle school wherein interscholastic athletic competition is limited to grades seven and eight shall be ineligible to compete in an inter-school practice, scrimmage, or contest upon attaining the age of fifteen (15) before July 1st. If the age is attained on or after July 1st, the student shall be eligible to compete through the next school year.
3. If the age of sixteen (16) is attained on or before July 1, the student shall be eligible age-wise, to compete with students in the ninth grade.
4. A student enrolled in a middle school comprised of 7th, 8th, and 9th grades shall be ineligible to compete in an inter-school practice, scrimmage, or contest upon attaining the age of sixteen (16) years; except, if the age sixteen (16) is attained on or after July 1, the student shall be eligible, age-wise, to compete through the school year.
5. Students should follow PIAA guidelines for Name, Image, or Likeness (NIL). Please see the Athletic Director for more information.
6. A student may not participate in any activity, practice, or rehearsal on a day they were absent from school or not present for at least four periods.
7. If absent from school during a semester for a total of twenty (20) or more school days, students lose their eligibility until they have been in attendance for a total of forty-five (45) school days following their 20th day of absence.
8. Students transferring from another school during grades 9 through 12 should see the Athletic Director to discuss and determine eligibility.
9. Athletic eligibility will be lost if a student has attended more than eight semesters beyond the eighth grade. Repeating a grade after eighth grade will make the athlete ineligible as a senior.
10. Eligibility will be lost in a sport for the remainder of the season if, while a member of the high school team, the athlete participates in an athletic contest as an individual or a member of another team in the same sport during the same season, unless the school principal waives this rule by sending an appropriate letter to the P.I.A.A. Executive Director.

Interscholastic Sports Program

Interscholastic athletics in the Penn Hills School District will be played according to the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (P.I.A.A.) Rules. The W.P.I.A.L., of which Penn Hills High School

is a member, mandates standards of academic eligibility for all athletes in its member schools. The inter-scholastic programs include:

Swimming/Diving	Football
Boys Basketball	Girls Basketball
Girls Flag Football	Cheerleading
Boys Rugby	Girls Rugby
Bowling	Cross Country
Indoor Track	Track & Field
Boys Soccer	Girls Soccer
Baseball	Softball
Boys Volleyball	Girls Volleyball
Wrestling	Golf
Boys Fitness	Girls Fitness
Girls Tennis	

Extracurricular Clubs and Activities

Black Student Union	National Honor Society
Games Club	Page Turners
Musical & Theater	Student Council
Stage Crew	Band & Orchestra
Class Officers	Office Assistants
S.A.D.D.	Foreign Language Club
Science Lab Assistants	Penn Hills Pals
Color guards & Rhythmettes	Choir

Off Campus Activities

This policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property and would otherwise violate the Code of Student Discipline and Responsibilities if any of the following circumstances exist:

1. The conduct occurs during the time the student is traveling to and from school or traveling to and from school-sponsored activities, whether via school district furnished transportation or not.
2. The student is a member of an extracurricular activity or group and has been notified that off-campus conduct could result in exclusion from such activities.

3. Student expression or conduct materially and substantially disrupts the operations of the school, or the administration reasonably anticipates that the expression or conduct is likely to disrupt the operations of the school materially and substantially.
4. The conduct has a direct nexus to attendance at school or a school-sponsored activity. For example, a transaction conducted outside of school pursuant to an agreement made in school would violate the Code of Student Discipline and Responsibilities if conducted in school.
5. The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property.
6. There is otherwise a nexus between the proximity or timing of the conduct in relation to the student's attendance at school or school-sponsored activities.

Expected Behavior of Spectators

The Board also recognizes that the safe participation of students in extracurricular activities and the conducting of events in as safe a manner as possible for students, coaches, sponsors, staff, and spectators alike requires the cooperation of all individuals involved in the program including parents/guardians and friends of the students. It shall be the policy of the Board, therefore, to exclude from any such program or event any student, coach, sponsor, staff member, parent/guardian, or spectator who behaves or acts in any manner as to cause, or whose participation directly or indirectly causes the disruption of any program or event or places any person participating in or attending any such program or event in a dangerous situation.

Athletic Awards

Awards will be presented to athletes in the following manner:

1. Only one varsity letter will be given to each student earning an award.
2. Certificates, plaques, and designating metal insignia will be awarded if other letters in the same or different sports are earned.

First Year	Varsity Letter
Second Year	Certificate
Third Year	Varsity Award Plaque
Fourth Year	Senior Recognition Plaque

NCAA Division 1 Initial – Eligibility Requirements

Requirement to graduate with your high school class

You must complete the 16 core-course requirements in eight semesters, which begins when you initially started high school with your ninth-grade class. If you graduate from high school in eight semesters with your class, you may use one core-course unit completed within one year after graduation (summer or academic year) to meet NCAA Division 1 initial eligibility requirements. You may complete the core

course at a location other than the high school from which you graduated and may initially enroll full-time at a college or university at any time after completion of the core course.

NCAA Note on Credit Recovery Courses

Many high schools offer credit recovery or credit retrieval programs for students to receive credit for a course they previously failed. The credit recovery courses offered by the Penn Hills School District do not meet NCAA eligibility guidelines but do meet graduation requirements.

Part VI – Discipline Philosophy and Code of Conduct

Philosophy

The philosophy of the Penn Hills School District is based upon the fundamental belief that as educators we are responsible for providing everyone with opportunities to mature intellectually, creatively, emotionally, socially, ethically, and physically. Individuals can grow within this spectrum only if they are encouraged to identify and develop their unique abilities and interests. Significant progress toward educational goals can only occur in a positive learning environment wherein mutual respect, self-discipline and restraint, security, equality, and faith are active ingredients in the dynamics of human relationships. Individual rights and freedoms are inherent in a democratic society, but individuals can be free only to the extent that they accept responsibility for their actions and recognize that their actions must not violate the freedoms and opportunities of others.

Purpose

Teachers, administrators, and school officials are charged by the Penn Hills Board of School Directors to maintain good order and discipline in the schools. Students who choose to evade their responsibility for good school citizenship and behavior will be disciplined consistently with the policies in place. Discipline in a school means that teaching-learning activities are conducted in an orderly manner so that the goals of education can be realized with maximum efficiency. Proper conduct makes it possible for interaction with people, particularly as it relates to the best use of educational processes. The Student Code of Conduct is applicable to all conduct, including, but not limited to, written and verbal communication and physical activity that may be viewed as disruptive, offensive, and/or unsafe. Behavior that disrupts teaching and learning is harmful not only to the people involved in the disturbance, but also to others, and ultimately to society in general.

Goals:

1. Guarantee the rights of individuals through fair and reasonable treatment.
2. Teach self-discipline by clearly communicating to students their rights and responsibilities.
3. Respect the rights and personal dignity of all students and staff by providing a safe and desirable school environment.
4. Comply with federal, state, and local laws.
5. Protect and maintain school property.

6. Ensure all students have the “right to learn”.
7. Reduce the occurrence of discipline problems.
8. Consistently apply the disciplinary options that are identified equally to all students.

A task force of School Board Directors, school administrators, teachers, parents/guardians, and students compiled the following code to ensure a reasonable and consistent administration of discipline procedures.

Section 1317 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code states:

“Every teacher, vice-principal, and principal in the public schools shall have the right to exercise the same authority over the pupils attending this school, during the time they are in attendance, including the time required in going to and from their homes, as the parents, guardians, or persons in parental relation to such pupils may exercise over them.” (In loco parentis)

Student Conduct Information

Penn Hills School District believes that it is essential for our schools to provide a safe atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Students must be able to work together and accept and share responsibilities. Although discipline begins in the home, the school provides reinforcement and continued opportunity for students to learn self-regulation and behaviors appropriate for becoming responsible citizens and living productive lives in our society.

Discipline should encourage a student to make appropriate decisions and choose what is right. Maintaining appropriate standards of discipline in the Penn Hills School District is essential to the establishment of a proper educational environment. The Discipline Code of Conduct will be interpreted by the principals and their designees in a manner which they deem just, given the circumstances of the individual case. Additionally, students must understand that administrators shall have the authority to enforce other reasonable disciplinary actions which they find warranted by situations not covered specifically (including limiting student participation/attendance in extracurricular school-based events/special assemblies/programs aimed at rewarding positive student effort and performance).

Poor decision making occurs for a variety of reasons and in varying degrees of frequency and severity. The general sequence presented here is not intended to be rigidly followed. The actual sequence of disciplinary action may vary depending on the individual case, and the process may be initiated at any step deemed appropriate. In general, these steps are followed:

1. Teacher and student discuss the problem
2. Teacher and parent discuss the problem
3. Teacher, counselor, parent/guardian, and/or student meet to discuss the problem
4. Principal, parent/guardian, student, and other school personnel are involved
5. School officials, parent/guardian, student, and social service agencies are involved
6. An administrative review occurs with the principal

7. A superintendent's review occurs with the administrative staff and the superintendent

8. School Board hearing

Student Discipline and Responsibilities

It is our intention that the issuance of any type of disciplinary action assigned to a student is based on factual evidence after a complete and thorough investigation of the situation at hand by the administrative team/individual. The administrative team believes that through the use of restorative practices, students will have ample opportunities to learn from their mistakes and refrain from behaviors that can be disruptive to the learning environment. Our plan to address and teach students about making good choices involves a three-pronged approach: a school-wide Positive Behavior Model (PBIS), New Directions, and Y.E.T. staff.

Dress Code

The Penn Hills School District reserves the right to establish dress and grooming guidelines. Discretion and good judgment should be exercised in all phases of planning your school wardrobe. The adoption of rules for student attire will be designed to respect all students' freedom to express their individuality. Our dress code will prioritize health, safety, appropriateness, and comfort. While a vast majority of students consistently reflect good taste in the selection of apparel, extremes in dress by any individual will not be accepted. The dress code will accommodate cultural or religious attire considerations without imposing gender-specific standards.

Pursuant to the Penn Hills Board of Education Policy 221, Penn Hills School District students are prohibited from wearing clothing or attire which, in the judgment of school authorities, is contrary to acceptable health and safety standards or may disrupt the educational process or learning environment. For health or safety reasons, a specific dress may be required for some courses or activities.

The adoption of rules for student attire must recognize that while what one wears is a personal decision, some attire is not appropriate for a school setting. Students' dress and personal appearance must be of such character so as not to disrupt or detract from the educational environment of the school. Any form of dress or appearance determined to diminish instructional effectiveness or may constitute a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of students will not be permitted. To this end, the administration and staff of Penn Hills High School respectfully ask that students adhere to the following rules of comportment so that the learning environment is laser-focused on learning, achievement, and positive relationships based on mutual respect and care.

Dress code Expectations: Students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects respect for themselves and the learning environment. Please adhere to the following guidelines:

Prohibited Content: Clothing that promotes violence, alcohol or drug use, or sexual activity is not allowed.

Respectful Messaging: Apparel that demeans or degrades others based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, or any other personal characteristic is strictly prohibited.

Coverage Standards: Undergarments and private areas must not be visible or outlined. This includes avoiding sheer fabrics, excessively tight clothing, or revealing cuts.

Appropriateness: Attire should not be overly suggestive, provocative, or inappropriate for a professional or school setting. Midsections, chests, and backsides must remain fully covered when standing, sitting, or bending.

We encourage clothing that is polished, confident, expressive, and respectful—not distracting or inappropriate. If a student is dressed inappropriately, they may be asked to contact a parent or guardian to bring a change of clothes or return home to change. Failure to comply will be considered willful defiance and may result in more serious discipline code.

Teachers or other staff who detect these violations of the dress code should contact the office immediately. Violations of the dress code will require students to remove the offending attire. Students violating these guidelines will not be permitted to attend classes until the inappropriate dress is corrected. This may require the student to ask someone to bring a change of clothes to the school; they may choose to go home and return when dressed appropriately, be placed in New Directions for the day, and return to school with a parent/guardian. Students may also face sanctions that limit their participation in school activities such as dances, field trips, extracurricular activities, prom, and graduation.

Gambling

Gambling is strictly prohibited. This includes poker cards, dice, and any other item/device that can be used for gambling at any time or anywhere on school property, including study hall, restrooms, and the cafeteria. Violators should expect consequences appropriate for infractions, and all items will be confiscated and not returned.

Approved Essential Items

Students should limit what they bring to school to the following essential learning and personal items:

- Writing tools (pens, pencils, erasers, highlighters)
- Notebooks and journals
- Required textbooks and workbooks
- Folders and binders for organizing materials
- Student ID and class schedule
- Lunch or snacks in a small, organized lunch bag
- Travel-size personal hygiene items (e.g., tissues, hand sanitizer)
- School-issued devices (e.g., laptops or tablets)

Items to Avoid Bringing to School

To support safety and streamline inspections, students should not bring:

- Oversize, heavy, or unnecessary bags filled with non-school-related items
- Valuables or electronics not required for learning
- Excessive personal items such as makeup kits, curling irons, toys, or accessories
- Food or drink in bulk or glass containers
- Items prohibited by school policy (e.g., sharp objects, unapproved medications, disruptive items)

Prohibited Items

The following items are not permitted on school property. If found, they will be confiscated and may only be returned to a parent or guardian. Repeated violations may result in disciplinary action.

✕ Metal Cups and Tumblers (e.g., Stanley Cups or Similar)

- These items pose a safety concern and have been used as weapons.
- Students may bring plastic water bottles, but they must be empty when entering the building.

✕ Personal Electronic Devices

- Devices such as cell phones, electronic watches, earbuds, personal iPads, and headphones are prohibited. iPads in school-issued cases may be carried throughout the day.
- The school will not be responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices.

- ✕ Vaping Devices

- Possession or use of vaping devices is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary consequences.

✕ Weapons of Any Kind

- This includes, but is not limited to, firearms, knives, or any object capable of causing bodily injury.
- Possession of any weapon will result in immediate disciplinary action.

Ongoing Review

We are committed to a safe, distraction-free learning environment. The school's policies, including those related to electronic devices, are reviewed regularly with students, staff, and parents. Revisions will be based on ongoing data, including reductions in classroom disruptions and incidents involving unauthorized items.

Selling Goods

Pursuant to the Penn Hills Board of Education Policy 229, no students are permitted to sell anything for their own personal benefit in school buildings, on school property or any school sponsored activity or event. This includes candy, drinks, snacks, clothing, and other items. Collection of money by approved school organizations may be permitted by the building principal. Collection by students on behalf of organizations outside the school may be permitted only by the superintendent.

Technology Code of Conduct

The Penn Hills School District recognizes the importance of technology in the education of our students and provides computers, software, and related resources such as the Internet to support the comprehensive educational program.

All users of technology, which are defined as students, staff, community members, and others given access to district technological resources, are required to exercise ethical, appropriate, and responsible

behavior as outlined in the Technology Code of Conduct policy. The ethical, appropriate, and responsible behaviors described will hence be referred to as acceptable use.

The Penn Hills School District reserves the right to limit, restrict, or extend technology use privileges and access to its resources. The use of technology is a privilege that may be revoked for abusive conduct. Tampering with, vandalism, unauthorized use of or inappropriate use of Penn Hills School District technologies is prohibited. Prohibited actions may occur on or off school property due to technological configurations. Violators, including those who assist another in the violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, restitution and/or prosecution (18 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 3953).

Cell Phone Policy

Pursuant to the Penn Hills Board of Education Policy 237, Penn Hills School District students are prohibited from using cell phones and other electronic devices during regular school hours. Cell phones should not be carried with a student or within their belongings throughout the school day, unless medically necessary.

Penn Hills High School recognizes that cell phones are an important communication tool. However, cell phones can be a distraction or be improperly utilized, lost and/or damaged. It is important that teaching and learning be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions and disruptions. As a result, Penn Hills High School has adopted a specific procedure for cell phones.

In accordance with our district's policy, students are required to surrender their cell phones to school personnel at the start of each school day. This measure is intended to minimize distractions and promote a conducive learning environment. Cell phones will be securely stored and returned to students at the conclusion of the school day. This policy ensures that students can fully engage in their educational pursuits without interruptions and be fully engaged, focused, and productive throughout the school day.

At the beginning of each school day, all cell phones must be turned over to a designated staff member. At the end of the school day, cell phones will be returned to students towards the end of the student's seventh period class or the student's final class of the day. Provisions will also be made to collect and return phones to students attending Forbes Vocational Tech School and when any student has an early dismissal.

A cell phone violation occurs when a student refuses to comply with the cell phone policy by refusing to surrender his/her phone when asked or willfully attempting to conceal the cell phone so it cannot be collected. Cell phone violations will result in the following disciplinary actions:

1st Offense – the cell phone is confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day

2nd Offense – the cell phone is confiscated and returned to the parent/guardian at the end of the school day

3rd Offense – the cell phone is confiscated, and a required parent conference will take place where a plan will be developed, and the parent/guardian will be asked to allow the phone to be held for an indefinite period of time.

Any student who refuses to surrender their phones either at the start of the school or when/if found in the student's possession may be dismissed for the school day and asked to return with a

parent/guardian. Insubordination or refusal to turn over an electronic device in a timely fashion may result in additional disciplinary consequences.

Bus Behavior

Student Rights

It is right of every student to have a safe and enjoyable ride to and from school. However, it is not the student's right to be transported to and from school. *It is a privilege to be transported to and from school.*

General Rules

- Always follow the driver's instructions
- Always ride your assigned bus
- Always be courteous to peers

Waiting for the Bus

- Be at your stop 10 minutes early. Sitting in a car is not considered to be at the stop.
- Be considerate of private property.
- Stand and wait for the bus in the designated area, not on private property.
- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop. Never cross the street to a bus stop until the bus has put its red lights on, and the crossing arm is extended. Then wait for the signal from the bus driver to ensure that it is safe to cross.
- If you are late, never run after a moving bus. Be certain to be on time.
- Never chase after a bus to another bus stop in a car. You are not authorized to board the bus anywhere except at your assigned stop.
- Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children to and from the bus stop and while waiting at the bus stop.

Riding the Bus

- Keep your hands and head inside the bus at all times.
- Stay seated. Do not get up and move around.
- Do not throw anything out the windows.
- Share your seat when necessary.
- Fighting is prohibited.
- Smoking / vaping is prohibited.
- No eating or drinking is allowed as some students may have allergies and become ill.
- No shouting, yelling, or loud music is permitted because it can distract the driver and can be unsafe.
- Use acceptable language at all times.
- Refrain from defacing or destroying bus equipment.
- Live animals cannot be transported to and from school on the bus.

Exiting the Bus

- Stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Students may exit the bus only at their assigned bus stop, always exit from front to back.
- Stand a safe distance away from the bus after exiting.
- If crossing the street, always do so in front of the bus beyond the crossing arm where the driver can see you at all times and wait for a signal from the driver to do so.
- Walk directly from the bus to your classroom or directly to your home.

Consequences

Failure to follow school rules and regulations while on a school bus is reported to the administration through Bus Conduct Reports provided by the bus driver and school crossing guards. Administration will initiate a consequence based upon the nature and type of infraction.

The following general guidelines are utilized by building administration for Level I bus offenses, which include, but are not limited to, behaviors such as being out of one's seat, standing, using inappropriate language, yelling and disrespectful speech or actions.

1st Offense – warning and parent/guardian contact

2nd Offense – PHSD building specific consequence with call home

3rd Offense – PHSD building specific consequence with call home

*Continued misconduct may result in the permanent loss of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

The following general guidelines are used by the building administration for Level II bus offenses, including behaviors such as physical aggression/fighting, bullying, throwing objects and defiance of adult authority. Please note that vandalism of bus property is also a Level II offense; however, in addition to bus suspension consequences, the parent/guardian may also be responsible for monetary restitution as billed by the bus company.

Level II misconduct WILL result in suspension of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

When students are issued bus suspensions, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to transport his/her child to and from school on the dates of the bus suspension.

Damage to School Buses and Restitution

Please be advised that if damage to a school bus occurs as a result of a student(s) misconduct, the student's parent/guardian will be responsible for paying any and all restitution to Krise Transportation in order to restore the bus to its original condition. *This restitution includes the costs of all parts and labor.*

Drop Off for Students with Special Needs

Students with special needs will not be left off the bus in the afternoon unless an adult/older sibling is present at the bus stop. Parents may waive this requirement and have their child dropped off without an adult/older sibling present by writing and submitting a letter to the district transportation provider. If there is no one at the stop to receive a child, the bus will continue on its route, dropping off the remaining

students. The bus will return to the stop and if there is still no one there, the child will be returned to their home school.

Pennsylvania's School Bus Stopping Law

- When you meet or overtake a stopped bus with red signal lights flashing and stop arm extended, you MUST STOP.
- When you approach an intersection where a stopped school bus with red signal lights flashing and stop arm extended, you MUST STOP.
- You MUST STOP at least ten (10) feet away from the school bus.
- You MUST WAIT until the red lights have stopped flashing and the stop arm has been withdrawn before moving.
- DO NOT MOVE until all children have reached a place of safety.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

The Penn Hills School District recognizes and affirms the individual value and potential of each member of its school community. It recognizes that chemical abuse and dependency seriously impair the abilities of many individuals to develop their full potential. This policy is based on the belief that chemical dependency is a life-threatening illness that affects individuals in all areas of their lives - spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and socially. Because it is also our conviction that chemical dependency is a treatable illness, the Penn Hills School District has developed the following policy 227: The Penn Hills School District, recognizing that the misuse of chemicals is a serious problem with legal, physical, emotional social implications for the whole school community, adopts the position that students must be chemically free in order that they may develop in the most productive and healthy manner.

Recognizing that chemical use and abuse may be indicative of the disease process of chemical dependency, it is the district's policy to prevent and prohibit the possession and/or use, mimic of use, sale and/or mimic of sale, distribution, and/or intent of distribution of any illegal or controlled mind- altering chemical medication, or abused chemical not approved by the health office on school property, at school sponsored events, on school buses and in route to and from school by any mode of travel. Consideration will be given to the legal rights and responsibilities of the school administration, staff, students, and parents/guardians. These shall include but are not limited to: Section 1317 of the Pennsylvania School Code, which gives the school district the in loco parentis power, and the Civil Immunity Bill, Section 2, Title 42, as amended, which gives civil immunity to school officers and employees relating to drug or alcohol abuse.

Such prevention and/or prohibition shall occur through a four-faceted program including: (1) education, (2) prevention (school climate), (3) intervention, and (4) after care. Treatment as in all other aspects of the educational setting is not the responsibility of the school. Violations of this policy include possession, use, sale, or distribution of chemicals. Early identification and referral of students' evidence of a problem with chemical abuse or dependency will be the primary goal. Every effort will be made to offer the student the help and assistance he or she would receive for any other illness. The consequences of such violations may, however, result in permanent expulsion from school by the Board of School Directors. Disciplinary procedures will be administered with the best interests of the student and the student body in mind. The Penn Hills School District's drug and alcohol policy may require that any student suspected (based on behavior, educational growth, etc.) or identified as possibly using an illegal chemical substance arrange with an approved medical facility to complete an assessment. Furthermore, disclosure of drug testing results will be limited to the student, the student's parent/guardian, and appropriate district administrators for the purpose of providing counseling or taking appropriate

disciplinary action. School administrative personnel shall have the authority to require students or other persons under the jurisdiction to submit to a thorough search of clothing, handbags, wallets, bookbags, parked cars, backpacks, and locker, to take possession of any unauthorized materials suspected of being in their possession. If the building principal has reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of a controlled substance, the student may be required to submit to drug or alcohol testing. The testing may include but is not limited to the analysis of blood, urine, saliva, or the administration of Breathalyzer tests.

Artificial Intelligence Usage

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.

AI 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. 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.

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.	Student 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.	Student 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.	Student must disclose how AI was used.

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.

Disciplinary Structure – Level I

Level I misconduct involves minor misbehavior on the part of the student which impedes orderly classroom procedure or interferes with the orderly operation of the school and/or school sponsored activities.

These behaviors are to be handled by the individual staff member; however, such misbehavior may be indicative of a problem that should be referred to appropriate support staff.

An accurate record of the offense, intervention, and disciplinary action must be maintained by the staff member.

Recurrence of the misbehavior may require a referral to the administration for further intervention and disciplinary action.

Examples of Level I Offenses:

- Classroom Tardiness
- Disrespectful language or gesture (minor)
- Disruptive Behavior (minor)
- Dress Code Violation
- Non-defiant failure to carry out directions
- Cheating*
- Insubordination related to classroom expectations
- Consumption of food or beverages outside the cafeteria

***Note:** The Student should receive a "0" grade, parent should be notified, and administration should be notified in writing.

Listed below are options available to staff members for Level I Discipline:

Verbal Reprimand

Student Conference

Special Assignment

Behavioral Contract

Conference with student/teacher/counselor

Conference with parent/student/teacher

Electronic devices:

- Confiscation of device by staff member and submission to security office.

After the above disciplinary options have been exhausted, the discipline may proceed to Level II.

Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating is any attempt by a student to represent someone else's work as their own or knowingly aid in an attempt by another student to misrepresent personal assignment, projects, or tests. Cheating is identified as a serious offense in the Code of Discipline and Responsibilities. The MLA (Modern Language Association) defines the term plagiarism as "...using someone else's ideas or phrasing and representing those or phrasings as our own, either on purpose or through carelessness..."

The term cheating can be defined as using dishonest means (i.e., copying answers, using "crib sheets," etc.) in order to be successful on an exam or other academic project. In this technological age, students

are always expected to maintain academic integrity and turn in their original work. Additionally, “cheating” may also include altering/replacing reports of academic progress sent to the student’s parents/guardians.

The Penn Hills School District takes both plagiarism and cheating quite seriously since they undermine the integrity and reliability of our education program.

Disciplinary Action for Cheating and Plagiarism

Furthermore, plagiarism and cheating create a learning environment that is unfair and dishonest. With this in mind, the student who either plagiarize or cheat on an exam or other academic project may be subject to any or all of the following disciplinary actions:

First Offense:

- To be handled by immediate staff member
- Records, or documentation, to be kept by staff member
- Zero to be given for assignment, projects or tests cheated on
- Staff member must notify parent/guardian

Second Offense:

- Notification of building principal and parents/guardians by immediate staff member
- Conference shall be held with parent/guardian, teacher, and administrator present
- A minimal grade of zero will be given for the assignment, project or test cheated on, and additional penalties can be applied with approval of the building principal.
- Documentation to be kept by immediate staff members and building principals.

Third Offense:

- Notification of building principal and parents/guardians by immediate staff member.
- Conference shall be held with a parent/guardian, teacher, and administrator present.
- Students will receive a failing grade for the nine-week period in which the offense took place.

***Note:** Subsequent offenses may result in the student receiving a failing grade and being administratively withdrawn from the course. Notification of such offense will involve the parents/guardians, the building principal, Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment, and the Superintendent.*

Disciplinary Structure – Level II

Level II involves behavior whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school or school sponsored activity. These infractions may result from the continuation of Level I behaviors and require the intervention of personnel on the administrative level or other specified persons. Teachers who encounter these behaviors within the classroom setting are required to:

1. Discuss all disciplinary referrals with students.
2. Communicate appropriately with parents prior to submitting referrals.
3. Turn referral in the Main Office and a proper and accurate record of the offense is documented by the staff member, and the student is referred to the administration for appropriate disciplinary action. The administrator meets with the student to review documentation and assign appropriate disciplinary consequences. A brief parent conference is held (in person or by phone). The teacher/parent/student is informed, in writing, of the action. A proper and accurate record of the offense and the disciplinary action is maintained with a copy forwarded to the parent and teacher.

Examples of Level II Behaviors

Forgery (minor)	Inappropriate language not directed at person
Verbal altercation	Presence unauthorized area of building
Safety violations	Racial/ethnic insensitivity
Trespassing during suspension	Continuation of unmodified level I behaviors
Physical altercation (minor)	Bus violations (minor)
Minor destruction of school property (consequence includes restitution)	Inappropriate public display of affection
Unauthorized use of electronics	Possession and/or use of lighters, matches, and/or other tobacco paraphernalia
Lying to faculty, staff, or administration	Possession and/or use of tobacco/nicotine products, including electronic cigarettes and other nicotine delivery devices.

Listed below are possible consequences available to the administration for Level II Discipline:

Lunch Detention – parental contact by letter/telephone	One day out of school suspension – parental contact by letter/telephone
New Directions - parental contact by letter/telephone	Conference with parent/guardian/student/administrator
Required conference with parent/guardian/student/administrator for reinstatement	Other referrals as deemed appropriate by the administration
Confiscation of device by staff member and submission to office	Proceed to Level II disciplinary action
Restorative action/reflection/lesson	Police Citation

**Note:* Initial minor dress code violations will be attempted to be resolved by a conference with the Administration/student. Subsequent violations will result in further disciplinary consequences.

ACT 145 of 1996 (Use of Tobacco in Schools)

We know that the law defines possession or use of tobacco products or smokeless tobacco by a student in a school building, a school bus or on school property owned by, leased by or under the control of a school district as a summary offense.

Definitions

The term tobacco product includes but is not limited to:

- a. Any lighted or unlit cigarette, cigar, little cigar, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, hookah, snuff, and snus.
- b. Any electronic device that delivers nicotine or another substance to a person inhaling from the device such as electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes or e-cigs), or vaping device (disposable or reusable)
- c. Any equipment whose designed purpose is to charge vaping devices or other electronic cigarettes.
- d. Any product containing, made, or derived from either natural or synthetic, tobacco, or nicotine.

The term tobacco product does not include the following:

A. A product that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for sale as a tobacco cessation product or for other therapeutic purposes where the product is marketed and sold solely for such approved purpose, as long as the product is not inhaled (Nicotine Replacement Therapy). NOTE: This exception shall be governed by Board policy relating to Medications.

Prohibitions

B. Penn Hills School District prohibits possession, use, purchase, or sale of tobacco and vaping products as defined above by or to students at any time in a school building, on school busses or other vehicles owned, leased, or operated by the district, on property owned, leased, or controlled by the district, or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property.

Communication

C. This Tobacco and Vaping Policy shall be posted in the school office and published on the Penn Hills School District website and student handbooks. No Smoking and No Vaping signs shall be posted at school entrances, restrooms, and other locations where students, staff, and teachers gather. (These will be provided free of charge by TFAH).

Enforcement

D. Students found in violation of this Tobacco and Vaping Policy shall have the tobacco product or device defined above confiscated and disposed of by the school's Administration. This property shall be considered forfeited and not subject to return. Additionally, the student is subject to the following consequences: New Directions or out of school suspension.

Disciplinary Structure – Level III

Level III misconduct involves behavior on the part of the student which includes acts directed towards person/property, impedes orderly classroom procedure, and/or interferes with the orderly operations of the school and/or school sponsored activities.

These infractions may result from the continuation of Level II behaviors, but more frequently may be construed more serious in nature and require the immediate intervention of personnel on the administrative level. Teachers who encounter these behaviors within the classroom setting are required to:

1. Discuss all disciplinary referrals with students.
2. Communicate appropriately with parents prior to submitting referrals.
3. Turn referral into the Main Office.

Those acts which are criminal in nature may automatically be referred to the appropriate law enforcement office.

Parents or guardians will be informed of the infraction and discipline action taken in all cases.

Level III suspensions are imposed on students whose behaviors threaten the safety and well-being of the students and staff. No person has the right to threaten or harm anyone in our school.

Examples of Level III Behaviors

Physical fighting*	Vandalism (minor) – consequences include restitution
Assault *	Use of profane/ obscene abusive language or gestures directed at a person
Violation of drug and alcohol policy	Open defiance of a member of the staff
Theft (consequences include restitution – circumstances reviewed as minor or major)	Disrespect towards a member of the staff or visitor to the school
Possession or distribution of pornographic materials	Harassment (major or continued)
Continuation of unmodified Level II behavior	Extortion
Ethnic/racial or other intimidation**	Forgery (major)
Truancy*	Threats (minor to staff members)
Behaviors which do or have the potential to endanger the safety and well-being of others	

*Incidents involving these offenses will result in issuance of a citation

**Will result in a restorative practice.

Listed below are possible consequences available to the administration for Level III Discipline:

Multiple lunch Detentions – parental contact by letter/telephone	Multiple days out of school suspension – parental contact by letter/telephone
Multiple New Directions - parental contact by letter/telephone	Conference with parent/guardian/student/administrator
Required conference with parent/guardian/student/administrator for reinstatement	Superintendent Review
IEP team reconvened for “Manifestation Determination” meeting (Special Education)	Proceed to Level IV disciplinary action
Restorative action/reflection/lesson	Police Citation

***Note:** A student who commits a total of three (3) or more Level III violations will be denied the privilege of participating in any extracurricular activity, interscholastic or school sponsored events. This penalty applies to school trips and grade level activities, including dances, class celebrations, and graduation ceremonies.

Although the consequences above are available for discipline, the specific discipline will be determined by an investigation of the incident and consistent with policies and procedures.

Harassment

Harassment shall consist of verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual’s race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion. Sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and other inappropriate verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Step 1 – Reporting

A student or third party who believes he/she has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy is encouraged to immediately report the incident to the building principal or a district employee.

A school employee who suspects or is notified that a student has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy shall immediately report the incident to the building principal.

If the building principal is the subject of a complaint, the student, third party or employee shall report the incident directly to the Compliance Officer.

The complainant or reporting employee is encouraged to use the report form available from the building principal, but oral complaints shall be acceptable.

Step 2 – Investigation

Upon receiving a complaint of unlawful harassment, the building principal shall immediately notify the Compliance Officer. The Complaint Officer shall authorize the building principal to investigate the complaint unless the building principal is the subject of the Complaint or is unable to conduct the investigation. The investigation may consist of individual interviews with the complainant, the accused, and others with knowledge relative to the incident. The investigator may also evaluate any other information and materials relevant to the investigation. The obligation to conduct this investigation shall not be negated by the fact that a criminal investigation of the incident is pending or has been concluded.

Step 3 – Investigative Report

The building principal shall prepare a written report within fifteen (15) days, unless additional time to complete the investigation is required. The report shall include a summary of the investigation, a determination of whether the complaint has been substantiated as factual and whether it is a violation of this policy, and a recommended disposition of the complaint.

Findings of the investigation shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, and the Compliance Officer.

Step 4 – District Action

If the investigation results in a finding that the complaint is factual and constitutes a violation of this policy, the district shall take prompt corrective action to ensure that such conduct ceases and will not recur.

Disciplinary actions shall be consistent with the Code of Discipline and Responsibilities, Board policies and district procedures applicable collective bargaining agreements, and state and federal laws.

If it is concluded that a student has knowingly made a false complaint under this policy, such student shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Appeal Procedure

1. If the complainant is not satisfied with a finding of no violation of the policy or with the corrective action recommended in the investigative report, she/he may submit a written appeal to the Compliance Officer within fifteen (15) days.
2. The Compliance Officer shall review the investigation and the investigative report and may also conduct a reasonable investigation.
3. The Compliance Officer shall prepare a written response to the appeal within fifteen (15) days. Copies of the response shall be provided to the complainant, the accused and the building principal who conducted the initial investigation.

Bullying/ Cyber Bullying

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in and/or outside a school setting that is severe, persistent, or pervasive. Bullying shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following acts:

- Physically harming a student (e.g., hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, and invading one's personal space in an aggressive manner).
- Damaging, extorting, or taking a student's personal property.
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm.
- Placing a student in emotional unrest by spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships or environment, engaging in social exclusion, extortion, intimidation, and ridicule.
- Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.
- Creating verbal statements or written remarks that are taunting, malicious, threatening, or sexual.
- Bullying as defined in this policy shall include cyber bullying.
- Bullying as defined in this policy shall not include a student's ability to lawfully engage in protected free speech or conduct protected under the United States or Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Constitutions

Disciplinary Structure – Level IV

Level IV misconduct involves behavior on the part of the student which includes acts of violence directed towards persons/property which pose a threat to the health, safety, welfare and/or morals of others in the school and/or materially disrupts the educational environment. Included in Level IV violations are unmodified Level I, II and III actions which result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the Board of School Directors. Parents or guardians will be contacted by phone as soon as possible. A letter will also be forwarded with the infraction and disciplinary action taken in all cases.

Examples of Level IV Behaviors

Physical assault on a staff member	Vandalism (major)*
Violation of Weapons Policy	Possession and/or use of explosive devices
Inciting so as to cause a riot	Terroristic threats
Drug and Alcohol Policy violations	Arson, bomb threats
Causing false alarms	Threats to staff members
Sexual assault	

*Incidents involving these offenses will result in issuance of a citation. Any student who refuses the request of a search by an administrator that is proper and reasonable is subject to disciplinary consequences including suspension and possible expulsion hearing with the board of directors. Students found responsible for vandalizing or otherwise damaging school property may be required to reimburse the district for the cost of repairs or replacement.

Listed below are possible consequences available to the administration for Level IV Discipline:

10 days out of school suspension with possible recommendation to the Board of School Directors for expulsion	All violations of the Criminal Code will be referred to appropriate authorities
Alternative Education Program	Homebound Instruction
Expulsion***	

***In accordance with Act 26, the Safe Schools Act, the school district shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates the weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law.

All proven offenses under Level IV will result in a ten (10) day suspension. Refer to Chapter 12 of the Pennsylvania School Code, Section 12.6, for specific procedures.

ACT 30 of 1997 – Expulsions and Weapons Possessions

Section 1317.2 Possession of Weapons Prohibited. This law requires expulsion “for a period of not less than one year for any student who is determined to have brought onto or is in possession of a weapon on any school property, any school-sponsored activity or any public conveyance providing transportation to a school or school- sponsored activity.”

All infractions handled by the building administration will be considered level II, III, OR IV offenses.

INTERPRETATION OF VARIOUS OFFENSES

Arson- Refers to a student attempting to cause damage or destruction to property and/or placing another person in danger of death or bodily injury by igniting an object or causing an explosion.

Assault- Refers to one or more students' unlawful attempt to injure other student/students physically without physical retaliation by the victim. Students shall neither intentionally nor recklessly attempt to cause nor threaten to cause injury to another person or persons. Reasonable self-defense as determined by administrative investigation will not be considered physical retaliation.

Assault- Refers to one or more students' unlawful attempt to injure a staff member or by attempting intentionally and/or recklessly to cause or threaten to cause injury.

Bomb Threats- Refers to the act or involvement in the act of reporting a threat that could cause the evacuation of the building, place of assembly or facility of transportation.

Defiance—Refusal to obey a direct, reasonable request from any staff member including teachers, administrators, secretaries, custodians, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, etc. Reasonable is defined as that which will not threaten the health, safety, or welfare of an individual student.

Display of Affection- Refers to visible and open displays of affection that involve but are not (inappropriate) limited to kissing, caressing, embracing and/or other bodily contact.

Disrespect - Students and staff are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner. However, students must understand that staff members are responsible for providing direction, correcting misbehavior, and giving directives. Although students may not agree with the directives, unless they are a threat to their health, safety or welfare, students must follow them without disrespectful gestures and/or language. A student who engages in disrespectful behaviors as indicated will be subject to Level III disciplinary actions.

Drug and Alcohol Violations- School Policy is summarized in this document. Students involved in Violations of the drug and alcohol policy violations will be disciplined according to the guidelines set forth in this policy.

Extortion—Refers to the act of obtaining money or property from an unwilling person by physical force, intimidation, blackmail, ultimatum, threatened exposure of any secret tending to subject any person to hatred, contempt or ridicule, or wrongful use of actual or threatened force, violence, or fear.

False Alarm- Refers to students who intentionally pull emergency alarms and/or manipulate emergency or security alarms, thus causing possible threat to the safety of those present in the school building.

Fighting—Using physical means to settle a disagreement. Any physical confrontation that results in disciplinary action may include the involvement of local law enforcement and/or a citation with the magistrate.

Forgery—Refers to the alteration or otherwise falsification of any school document or communication. Such communications include but are not limited to hall passes, tardy to school or absent from school

excuses, early dismissal passes, request for temporary absence, field trip requests, scheduling changes, dental or doctor appointments, request for educational trips or tours, permanent records, athletic eligibility, report cards, deficiency reports, discipline referrals, physical examination forms and identification requests by school personnel.

Harassment- Refers to the use of force, touching, noise, coercion, threat intimidation, fear, obscene language, obscene gestures, suggestive sexual actions or verbalizations of any other unwanted contact or interaction with another person as part of an isolated incident or as actions that take place over time. For the student code of conduct, bullying is considered a form of harassment.

Inciting to cause a riot refers to the use of activities that may pose a threat to the health, safety, welfare, and/or morals of others in the school and/or disrupts the educational environment.

Intimidation of any group is defined as: Words and actions directed toward the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin/ethnicity, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity of another individual constitute intimidation when such words and actions have the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's educational performance, or creating an unwelcome, intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Physical Altercation - Refers to the act of engaging in inappropriate physical contact.

Safety Violations -Includes throwing snowballs or objects, refusing to wear safety equipment in technology education lab, blatant disregard for safety procedures, horseplay.

Terroristic Threats - A threat to commit any crime of violence with the purpose to terrorize or to cause evacuation of a building, place of assembly or facility of transportation or otherwise cause serious public inconvenience.

Theft Refers to illegal taking of money or materials belonging to any students, staff member or the Penn Hills School District.

Threats on Staff Language directed to a staff member that demonstrates intent to harm a staff member or their family.

Truancy Student is absent from school without parent/guardian permission and/or knowledge.

Under the Influence A student shall be considered to be "under the influence" of drugs and/or alcohol if he or she has consumed or used either of the above prior to, during, or after school or school related activities and this is discovered while the student is on school property or attending a school related event.

Verbal Altercation Refers to a loud shouting match or argument between/among students.

Weapons provides that 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. Weapons are defined as listed, but not limited to: knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nun-chuck stick, firearm (pellet guns, BB guns, look-alike firearms), shotgun, rifle, explosive device, any tool, Bowie knife, Dirk knife, lock-blade knife, hunting knife, chains, brass knuckles, night sticks, ax handles, metal knuckles, straight razors, poisons, noxious, irritating or poisonous gasses (mace), razor, loaded cane, sword cane, machete, tasers, or shockers or anything used to threaten and/or cause harm. Violators of this policy may be prosecuted. This policy was summarized earlier in this document.



STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Our school has adopted The "I Love U Guys" Foundation's Standard Response Protocol (SRP). Students and staff will be training, practicing, and drilling the protocol.

COMMON LANGUAGE

The Standard Response Protocol (SRP) is based on an all-hazards approach as opposed to individual scenarios. Like the Incident Command System (ICS), SRP utilizes clear common language while allowing for flexibility in protocol.

The premise is simple - there are five specific actions that can be performed during an incident. When communicating these, the action is labeled with a "Term of Art" and is then followed by a "Directive." Execution of the action is performed by active participants, including students, staff, teachers and first responders. The SRP is based on the following actions: Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter.

HOLD

"In Your Classroom or Area"

Students are trained to:

- Clear the hallways and remain in their area or room until the "All Clear" is announced
- Do business as usual

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Close and lock the door
- Account for students and adults
- Do business as usual



SECURE

"Get Inside. Lock outside doors"

Students are trained to:

- Return to inside of building
- Do business as usual

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Bring everyone indoors
- Lock the outside doors
- Increase situational awareness
- Account for students and adults
- Do business as usual



LOCKDOWN

"Locks, Lights, Out of Sight"

Students are trained to:

- Move away from sight
- Maintain silence
- Do not open the door

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Recover students from hallway if possible
- Lock the classroom door
- Turn out the lights
- Move away from sight
- Maintain silence
- Do not open the door
- Prepare to evade or defend



EVACUATE

"To a Location"

Students are trained to:

- Leave stuff behind if required to
- If possible, bring their phone
- Follow instructions

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Bring roll sheet and Go Bag (unless instructed not to bring anything with them, dependent on reason for evacuation.)
- Lead students to Evacuation location
- Account for students and adults
- Report injuries or problems using Red Card/Green Card method.



SHELTER

"State Hazard and Safety Strategy"

Hazards might include:

- Tornado
- Hazmat
- Earthquake
- Tsunami

Safety Strategies might include:

- Evacuate to shelter area
- Seal the room
- Drop, cover and hold
- Get to high ground

Students are trained in:

- Appropriate Hazards and Safety Strategies

Adults and staff are trained in:

- Appropriate Hazards and Safety Strategies
- Accounting for students and adults
- Report injuries or problems using Red Card/Green Card method.



THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM MEMBERS:

Dr. Jah-Chant Robinson

Dr. James McCoy

Nicholas DiCarolis

Jaqueline Dorsett

Lydia Bash

Chris Castelli

Deb Crosman

Rich Faulkner

Dr. Thomas Kilcrease

Ashley Smith

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Policy Manual

Section

800 Operations

Title

Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response

Code

819

Status

Active

Adopted

August 10, 2015

Last Revised

February 22, 2016

Purpose

The Board is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its students and school community. This policy supports federal, state and local efforts to provide education on youth suicide awareness and prevention; establish methods of prevention, intervention, and response to suicide or suicide attempt; and to promote access to suicide awareness and prevention resources.[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)[\[5\]](#) compliance with state law and

regulations, and in support of the district's suicide prevention measures, information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parents/guardians, the building principal or other appropriate authority when the health, welfare or safety of the student or any other person is deemed to be at risk. [\[6\]](#)[\[7\]](#)[\[8\]](#)[\[9\]](#)

Definitions

At-Risk for Suicide shall mean any youth with risk factors or warning signs that increase the likelihood of suicidal behavior.

Crisis Response Team shall include, but may not be limited to, the administrators, guidance counselors, the school nurse, social worker, and school police officer and/or other members of the Student Assistance Program (SAP), as designated, and may include other members as deemed appropriate by the superintendent. Community mental agency resources may be called for assistance to be a part of the team.

Expressed Suicidal Thoughts or Intentions shall mean a verbal or nonverbal communication that an individual intends to harm him/herself with the intention to die but has not acted on the behavior.

Prevention refers to efforts that seek to reduce the factors that increase the risk for suicidal thoughts and behaviors and increase the factors that help strengthen, support, and protect individuals from suicide.

Protective Factors shall refer to characteristics (biological, psychological, and social) that reduce risk and the likelihood of the individual developing a mental illness.

Resilience shall refer to an individual's innate ability to persevere in the face of adversity and reduce the risk of unhealthy outcomes.

Risk Factors shall mean the personal or environmental characteristics associated with suicide. People affected by one or more of these risk factors have a greater probability of suicidal behavior.

School Personnel include, but may not be limited to, administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, coaches, bus drivers, custodians, and cafeteria workers.

Suicide shall refer to death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior.

Suicidal Act or Suicide Attempt shall mean a potentially self-injurious behavior for which there is evidence that the person probably intended to kill him/herself; a suicidal act may result in death, injuries, or no injuries.

Warning Signs are evidence-based indicators that someone may be in danger of suicide, either immediately or in the very near future.

Guidelines

The district shall utilize a multifaceted approach to suicide prevention which integrates school and community-based supports.

The district shall notify district employees, students and parents/guardians of this policy and shall post the policy on the district's website.^[1]

SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION EDUCATION^[1]

Protocols for Administration of Student Education

Students shall receive age-appropriate education on the importance of safe and healthy choices, coping strategies, how to recognize risk factors and warning signs, as well as help-seeking strategies for self or others including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help.

Lessons shall contain information on comprehensive health and wellness, including emotional, behavioral and social skills development.

Protocols for Administration of Employee Education

All district employees, including but not limited to secretaries, coaches, bus drivers, custodians and cafeteria workers, shall receive information regarding risk factors, warning signs, response procedures, referrals, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention.

As part of the district's professional development plan, professional educators in school buildings serving students in grades six (6) through twelve (12) shall participate in four (4) hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training every five (5) years.^[1]^[10]

Additional professional development in risk assessment and crisis intervention shall be provided to guidance counselors, district mental health professionals and school nurses.

Resources for Parents/Guardians

The district may provide parents/guardians with resources including, but not limited to, health promotion and suicide risk, including characteristics and warning signs; and information about local behavioral/mental health resources.

METHODS OF PREVENTION^[1]

The methods of prevention utilized by the district include, but are not limited to, early identification and support for students at risk; education for students, staff and parents/guardians; and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts.

Suicide Prevention Coordinators

District-Wide –

A district-wide suicide prevention coordinator shall be designated by the Superintendent. This may be an existing district employee. The district suicide prevention coordinator shall be responsible for planning and coordinating implementation of this policy.

Building Level –

Each building principal shall designate a school suicide prevention coordinator to act as a point of contact in each school for issues relating to suicide prevention and policy implementation. This may be an existing district employee.

Early Identification Procedures

Early identification of individuals with one (1) or more suicidal risk factors or of individuals exhibiting warning signs, is crucial to the district's suicide prevention efforts. To promote awareness, district employees, students and parents/guardians should be educated about suicidal risk factors and warning signs.

Risk factors refer to personal or environmental characteristics that are associated with suicide including, but not limited to:

- Behavioral Health Issues/Disorders
 - Depression.
 - Bipolar disorder or other mood disorder
 - Substance abuse or dependence.
 - Previous suicide attempts.
 - Self-injury.

- Personal Characteristics:
 - Hopelessness/Low self-esteem.
 - Loneliness/Social alienation/isolation/lack of belonging.
 - Poor problem-solving or coping skills.
 - Impulsivity/Risk-taking/recklessness.

- Adverse/Stressful Life Circumstances:
 - Interpersonal difficulties or losses.
 - Disciplinary or legal problems.
 - Bullying (victim or perpetrator).
 - School or work issues.
 - Physical, sexual, or psychological abuse.
 - Exposure to family or peer suicide.
 - Homelessness
 - Gender identity/sexual orientation

- Family Characteristics:
 - Family history of suicide or suicidal behavior.
 - Family mental health problems, including alcoholism.
 - Divorce/Death of parent/guardian.
 - Parental-Child conflict.

Warning signs are indications that someone may be in danger of suicide, either immediately or in the near future. Warning signs include, but are not limited to:

- Expressions such as hopelessness, rage, anger, seeking revenge, feeling trapped, anxiety, agitation, no reason to live or sense of purpose.
- Recklessness or risky behavior.
- Increased alcohol or drug use.
- Withdrawal from friends, family, or society.
- Dramatic mood changes.

Referral Procedures

Any district employee who has identified a student with one (1) or more risk factors or who has an indication that a student may be contemplating suicide, shall refer the student for further assessment and intervention.

Documentation

The district shall document the reasons for referral, including specific warning signs and risk factors identified as indications that the student may be at risk.

METHODS OF INTERVENTION[\[1\]](#)

The methods of intervention utilized by the district include, but are not limited to, responding to suicide threats, suicide attempts in school, suicide attempts outside of school, and completed suicide. Suicide intervention procedures shall address the development of an emotional or mental health safety plan for students identified as being at increased risk of suicide.

Procedures for Students at Risk

A district-approved suicide assessment instrument may be used by trained mental health staff such as counselors, psychologists, and social workers.

Parents/Guardians of a student identified as being at risk of suicide shall be notified by the school. If the school suspects that the student's risk status is the result of abuse or neglect, school staff shall immediately notify Children and Youth Services.[\[5\]](#)

The district shall identify mental health service providers to whom students can be referred for further assessment and assistance.

Mental health service providers – may include, but not be limited to, hospital emergency departments, psychiatric hospitals, community mental health centers, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and primary care providers.

The district shall create an emotional or mental health safety plan to support a student and the student’s family if the student has been identified as being at increased risk of suicide.

Students With Disabilities

For students with disabilities who are identified as being at risk for suicide or who attempt suicide, the appropriate team shall be notified and shall address the student’s needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[2][11][12][13][14]

If a student is identified as being at risk for suicide or attempts suicide and the student may require special education services or accommodations, the Director of Special Education shall be notified and shall take action to address the student’s needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[2][11][12][13][14]

Documentation

The district shall document observations, recommendations and actions conducted throughout the intervention and assessment process, including verbal and written communications with students, parents/guardians, and mental health service providers.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations providing recommended guidelines for responding to a suicide threat.

METHODS OF RESPONSE TO SUICIDE OR SUICIDE ATTEMPT[1]

The methods of response to a suicide or a suicide attempt utilized by the district include, but are not limited to:

1. Identifying and training the school crisis response/crisis intervention team.
2. Determining the roles and responsibilities of each crisis response team member.

3. Notifying students, employees, and parents/guardians.
4. Working with families.
5. Responding appropriately to the media.
6. Collaborating with community providers.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations with recommended guidelines for responding to a suicidal act or attempt on school grounds or during a school-sponsored event.

Re-Entry Procedures

A student's excusal from school attendance after a mental health crisis and the student's return to school shall be consistent with state and federal laws and regulations.[2][11][12][13][15][16]

A district-employed mental health professional, the building principal or suicide prevention coordinator shall meet with the parents/guardians of a student returning to school after a mental health crisis, and, if appropriate, meet with the student to discuss re-entry and applicable next steps to ensure the student's readiness to return to school.

When authorized by the student's parent/guardian, the designated district employee shall coordinate with the appropriate outside mental health care providers.

The designated district employee will periodically check in, as needed, with the student to facilitate the transition back into the school community and address any concerns.

REPORT PROCEDURES[1]

Effective documentation assists in preserving the safety of the student and ensuring communication among school staff, parents/guardians, and mental health service providers.

When a district employee takes notes on any conversations or situations involving or relating to an at-risk student, the notes should contain only factual or directly observed information, not opinions or hearsay.

As stated in this policy, district employees shall be responsible for effective documentation of incidents involving suicide prevention, intervention, and response.

The suicide prevention coordinator shall provide the Superintendent with a copy of all reports and documentation regarding the at-risk student. Information and reports shall be provided, as appropriate, to guidance counselors, district mental health professionals and school nurses.

SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION RESOURCES^[1]

A listing of resources regarding suicide awareness and prevention shall be attached to this policy.

Legal

[1. 24 P.S. 1526](#)

2. Pol. 103.1

3. Pol. 248

4. Pol. 249

5. Pol. 806

[6. 22 PA Code 12.12](#)

7. Pol. 207

8. Pol. 216

9. Pol. 236

10. Pol. 333

11. Pol. 113

12. Pol. 113.2

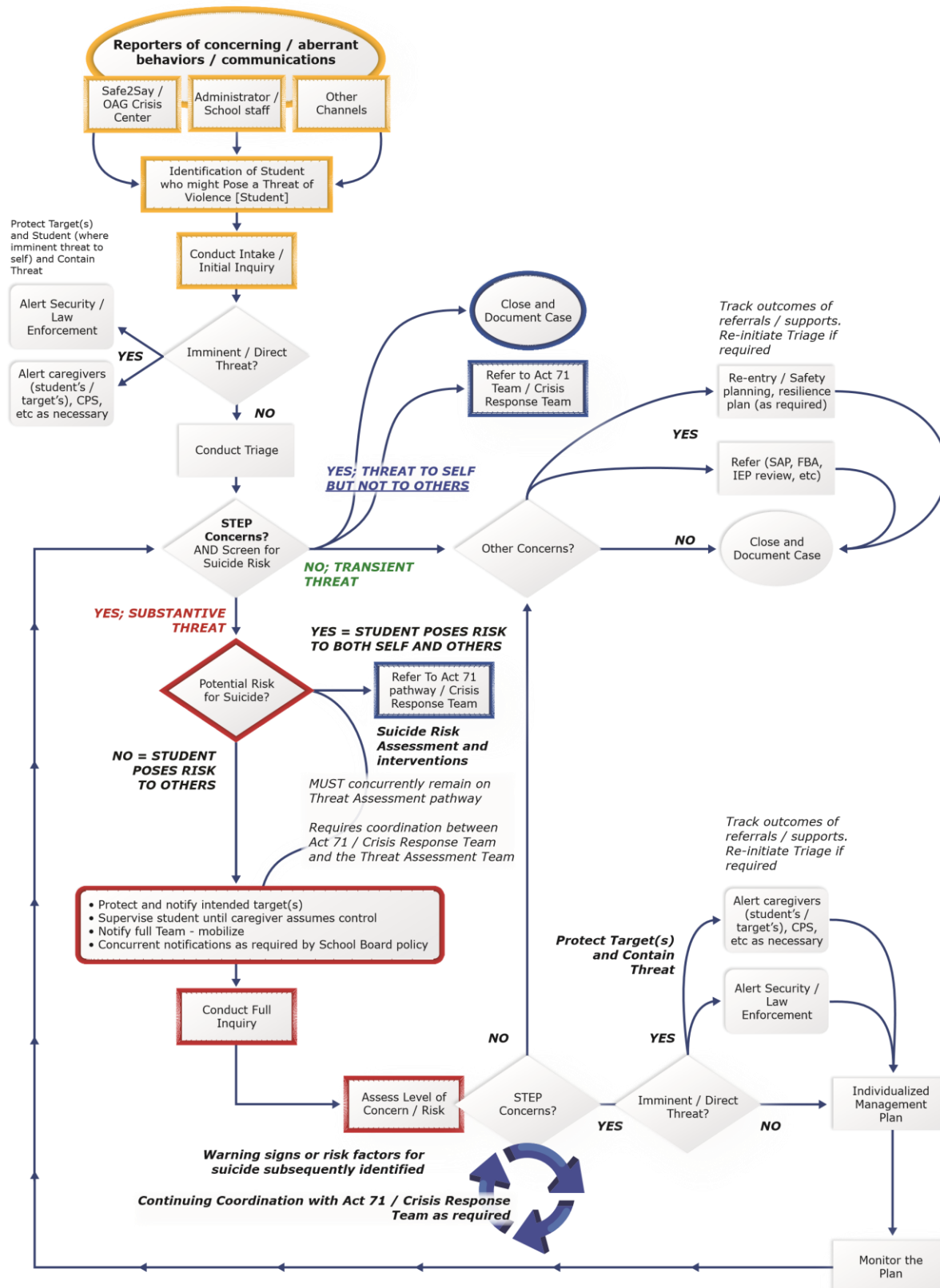
13. Pol. 113.3

14. Pol. 114

15. Pol. 117

16. Pol. 204

S



SRP Parent Resource



PARENT GUIDANCE

In the event of a live incident, parents may have questions about their role.

SECURE

"Get Inside. Lock outside doors"



Secure is called when there is something dangerous outside of the building. Students and staff are brought into the building and the outside doors will be locked. The school might display the Building is Secured poster on entry doors or nearby windows. Inside, it will be business as usual.

SHOULD PARENTS COME TO THE SCHOOL DURING A SECURE EVENT?

Probably not. Every effort is made to conduct classes as normal during a secure event. Additionally, parents may be asked to stay outside during a Secure event.

WHAT IF PARENTS NEED TO PICK UP THEIR STUDENT?

Depending on the situation, it may not be safe to release the student. As the situation evolves, Secure might change to a Monitored Entry and/or Controlled Release.

WILL PARENTS BE NOTIFIED WHEN A SCHOOL GOES INTO SECURE?

When a secure event is brief or the hazard is non-violent, like a wild animal on the playground, there may not be a need to notify parents while the Secure is in place.

With longer or more dangerous events, the school should notify parents that the school has increased their security.

LOCKDOWN

"Locks, Lights, Out of Sight"



A Lockdown is called when there is something dangerous inside of the building. Students and staff are trained to enter or remain in a room that can be locked, and maintain silence.

A Lockdown is only initiated when there is an active threat inside or very close to the building.

SHOULD PARENTS COME TO THE SCHOOL DURING A LOCKDOWN?

The natural inclination for parents is to go to the school during a Lockdown. Understandable, but perhaps problematic. If there is a threat inside the building, law enforcement will be responding. It is unlikely that parents will be granted access to the building or even the campus. If parents are already in the school, they will be instructed to Lockdown as well.

SHOULD PARENTS TEXT THEIR STUDENTS?

The school recognizes the importance of communication between parents and students during a Lockdown event. Parents should be aware though, during the initial period of a Lockdown, it may not be safe for students to text their parents. As the situation resolves, students may be asked to update their parents on a regular basis.

In some cases, students may be evacuated and transported off-site for a student-parent reunification.

WHAT ABOUT UNANNOUNCED DRILLS?

The school may conduct unscheduled drills, however it is highly discouraged to conduct one without announcing that it as a drill. That's called an unannounced drill and can cause undue concern and stress.

Parents should recognize that the school will always inform students that it is a drill during the initial announcement.

It's important to differentiate between a **drill** and an exercise. A drill is used to create the "Muscle Memory" associated with a practiced action. There is no simulation of an event; this is simply performing the action. An exercise simulates an actual event to test the capacity of personnel and equipment.

CAN PARENTS OBSERVE OR PARTICIPATE IN THE DRILLS?

The school welcomes parents who wish to observe or participate in drills.



