



Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5

Student Handbook 2026-2027

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SUPERINTENDENT'S WELCOME

Dear Pittsburgh Public Schools Parents, Students, and Families,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! Whether you are joining Pittsburgh Public Schools for the first time or returning for another exciting year, I am honored to welcome you to a community committed to helping every student learn, grow, and thrive.

At Pittsburgh Public Schools, we believe every student deserves access to a high-quality education in a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment. Our dedicated educators and staff are committed to preparing students for success in college, career, and life by fostering curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, and a lifelong love of learning.

This school handbook is an important resource designed to help you navigate the school year. Inside, you will find valuable information about District policies, school expectations, student supports, attendance, academic programs, extracurricular opportunities, health and safety procedures, and ways to stay connected with your school community. I encourage every family to review this handbook together and refer to it throughout the year.

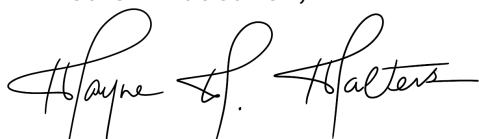
A successful school year is built on strong partnerships between schools, families, and the community. We know that students achieve more when the adults in their lives work together to support their learning and well-being. We invite you to stay engaged by attending school events, participating in Parent School Community Council (PSCC) meetings, communicating regularly with your child's teachers, and taking advantage of the many opportunities to share your voice and partner with us.

As we continue implementing our PPS Future-Ready Plan, we remain focused on creating learning environments where every student feels welcomed, valued, supported, and inspired to reach their full potential. Together, we are building stronger schools and brighter futures for every child.

Thank you for entrusting Pittsburgh Public Schools with your child's education. We look forward to a school year filled with learning, growth, achievement, and meaningful connections.

On behalf of the Board of Public Education and the entire Pittsburgh Public Schools team, welcome to an outstanding school year!

Yours in Education,



Dr. Wayne N. Walters

Superintendent, Pittsburgh Public Schools



PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Arsenal PreK-5 Greetings, Pittsburgh A Community,

Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5 is a neighborhood school with a diverse population. We provide an academic environment that focuses on developing the whole child and supporting students in becoming problem solvers, leaders, and the best version of themselves. We believe that every child can achieve excellence, and it is our goal to provide students with the skills, knowledge, tools, and support they need to excel in life.

We strive to be a caring school that emphasizes effort, creates hope, builds relationships, and collaborates effectively. We are committed to a culture of excellence by producing academic and social growth and achievement where everyone is valued as a learner and leader, contributing to the global society.

As principal of Arsenal Pre K–5, it is my pleasure to welcome everyone back for another wonderful school year. I am excited to have students return to our classrooms and hallways, filling them with energy and enthusiasm for learning. This year's theme is "On Point: Productive, Optimistic, Innovative, Noble, and Tenacious. We are thinkers, readers, writers, and problem solvers! We will work efficiently to establish a learning culture focused on continuous improvement so that students will demonstrate academic growth and achievement.



Our teachers utilize research-based best practices and frequently analyze academic data to determine current skill levels, set goals, and identify specific actions for growth and improvement. We believe that all students should leave Arsenal prepared for the academic and social demands of middle school. I am honored to witness the growth and achievement of your child! This year will be one to remember!

Sincerely,

Dr. Ruthie Rea
Principal, Arsenal PreK-5

SCHOOL INFORMATION



Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5

215 39th St, Pittsburgh, PA 15201

Phone: 412-529-5738

Fax: 412-622-7307

Website: pghschools.org/schools/k-5/arsenal

Staff: [Arsenal Staff](#)

School Colors Yellow and Blue

School Mascot All Stars

VISION AND MISSION

Vision

We are committed to a culture of excellence by producing academic and social growth and achievement, where everyone is valued as a learner and leader, contributing to the global society.

Mission

Arsenal PreK-5 will be a caring and high performing school by creating equitable conditions that engage all students, teachers, parents, and community members in positive learning experiences that are data driven, innovative, differentiated, culturally relevant and rigorous.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Contacting the School

Please see the previously listed phone number, fax number, and office email address to contact our school.

Social Media

Arsenal PreK-5 has a Facebook page and shares information throughout the school year with parents/ guardians. Please join and like our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ArsenalElementary/>

Newsletter

Our school counselor periodically sends newsletters about community partners, attendance guidelines, and student support services. The newsletter is distributed through Talking Points and Class Dojo.

Talking Points

All teachers will communicate with parents using the Talking Points platform for updates regarding homework, early dismissals, and behavior incentives. Talking Points has various languages that our families speak as their first language, and it is an amazing resource that the staff utilize regularly.

Calendars

A monthly student calendar is distributed to each student/family detailing special school events, meetings, field trips, after-school programs, and other items of interest to the students and their families. Calendars are distributed to students on the last Wednesday of every month for the upcoming month.

Parent Communication

Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5 staff share upcoming events and other relevant information that parents need to know through Talking Points, Facebook, Class Dojo, and through the Wednesday communication folders. Students are given a communication folder for homework and school notices. These folders are sent home every Wednesday with correspondence from the school.

Conferences

Conference sign-up letters will be sent home the last week in September for Parent/Teacher conferences that occur every October. Parents are encouraged to arrange conferences at any time during the school year by contacting the teacher or school secretary.

There are opportunities for parents to serve or participate within the school. Please consider joining.

- Parent School Community Council (PSCC)
- School Volunteers

Family Nights

A quarterly family night or concert occurs for the students, parents, and community members. These activities provide the parents with the opportunity to engage with curricular resources, meet other parents, learn in a fun way, and engage in school-related experiences with their children. These events are included in a year-long parent engagement calendar that is sent home and posted to the website and social media in September. The quarterly events for the 2026-2027 school year are below.

Welcome Back Event

August 19, 2026

3:30 – 5:30 pm

Title I Annual Meeting: Literacy & Mathematics Night

November 5, 2026

4:30 – 6:30 pm

Winter Concert

December 21, 2026

9:30 am – 10:45 am

Arsenal 360 International Night

April 1, 2027

4:30 – 6:30 pm

Spring Concert

May 21, 2027

9:30 am – 10:45 am

BELL SCHEDULES

Daily Schedule		Half Day	Two-Hour Delay
Homeroom	8:40-8:46 AM	8:40-8:46 AM	10:30-10:40 AM
Period 1	8:46-9:29 AM	8:46-9:29 AM	10:40-10:55 AM
Period 2	9:29-10:12 AM		
Period 3	10:12-10:55 AM		
Period 4 (Lunch 1)	10:55-11:40 AM	9:29-10:12 AM	10:55-11:40 AM
Period 5 (Lunch 2)	11:40-12:25 PM	10:12-10:55 AM	11:40-12:25 PM
Period 6	12:25-1:10 PM		12:25-1:10 PM
Period 7	1:10-1:53 PM		
Period 8	1:53-2:36 PM		
Period 9	2:36-3:19 PM		
Dismissal	3:19-3:25 PM	11:55 AM	3:19-3:25 PM

**ARSENAL PreK-5
REMOTE DAY BELL SCHEDULE
2026- 2027**

Period	Start Time	End Time	Total Time
Teacher Planning Time	8:00	9:00 am	60 minutes
Homeroom Meeting Students Log in to MS Teams	9:00	9:29 am	29 minutes
1	9:30	10:15	45 minutes
2	10:15	11:00	45 minutes
4 LUNCH for students & staff	11:00	11:40	45 minutes
5 Break for Students	11:40	12:25	45 minutes
6 Students Log in to MS Teams	12:25	1:10	45 minutes
7	1:10	1:53	43 minutes
8 Student Day Ends	1:53	2:35	42 minutes
9 Teacher Check-in with individual students	2:36	3:25	43 minutes

When students experience remote learning, teachers will be accessible throughout the day. Your child's homeroom teacher can be contacted through Microsoft Teams or ClassDojo. The MS Teams link is embedded in Schoology. Students can connect with the teacher via chat or by speaking in the Teams meeting if assistance is needed.

See the process for students to follow below to access and complete their assignments in Schoology.



Students are required to complete attendance in Schoology and all assigned independent tasks. Students will also be given time to use Dream box, Imagine Learning, or other instructional technology platforms. Each teacher will have specific assignments that students must complete during these days, so please look for additional information from your child's teacher on ClassDojo and/or Talking Points.

Please note that students should take a midday break for lunch and a break from their devices.

Please use the time for students to eat and have indoor or outdoor playtime. Students should not be using their devices so their eyes can rest, and they can relax before the afternoon learning time.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The 2026-2027 District Calendar can be found [HERE](#).

Event	Date
#PittsburghForPPS Back to School Event	8/17/2026
First Day of School: All Grades Except Kindergarten	8/24/2026
First Day of School: Kindergarten	8/27/2026
No School: Labor Day	9/7/2026
4th Annual Take a Child to School Day	9/17/2026
Half Day	9/18/2026
No School: Yom Kippur	9/21/2026
Q1 Interim Progress Report	10/6/2026
Parent-Teacher Conferences (6-12, 9-12, Special, South Hills, EHS)	10/12/2026
Parent-Teacher Conferences (Early Childhood, PreK-5, PreK-8, 6-8)	10/16/2026
Half Day	10/23/2026
No School: Election Day	11/3/2026
No School: Veterans Day	11/11/2026
Q1 Report Cards Distributed	
Half Day	11/20/2026
Thanksgiving Break 11/26/2026-11/27/2026	
Q2 Interim Progress Report	12/15/2026
Half Day	12/18/2026
Winter Break 12/24/2026-1/1/2027	
No School: MLK Day	1/18/2027
No School	1/19/2027
No School	1/20/2027
Q2 Report Cards Distributed	2/1/2027
Half Day	2/12/2027
Black Men Read	2/25/2027
Half Day	2/26/2027
Q3 Interim Progress Report	3/2/2027
Parent University	3/6/2027
No School: Eid al-Fitr	3/10/2027
Half Day	3/12/2027
Spring Break 3/22/2027-3/26/2027	
Women Who Lead	3/31/2027
Q3 Report Cards Distributed	4/15/2027
Q4 Interim Progress Report	5/12/2027
29th Annual Take a Father to School Day	5/14/2027
No School: Election Day	5/18/2027
No School: Memorial Day	5/31/2027
Breakfast of Champions	6/7/2027
Last Day of School	6/8/2027
Q4 Report Cards Distributed	6/17/2027

Testing Dates	
Keystone Exams Winter	1/4/2027-1/15/2027
PSSAs English Language Arts	4/26/2027-4/30/2027
PSSAs Math, Science, Make-ups	5/3/2027-5/7/2027
Keystone Exams Spring	5/17/2027-5/28/2028

School Board Meetings		
Agenda Review	Public Hearing	Legislative Meeting
8/19/2026	8/24/2026	8/26/2026
9/16/2026	9/22/2026	9/23/2026
10/21/2026	10/26/2026	10/28/2026
11/18/2026	11/23/2026	11/24/2026
12/16/2026	12/21/2026	12/23/2026
1/20/2027	1/25/2027	1/27/2027
2/18/2027	2/22/2027	2/24/2027
3/17/2027	3/29/2027	3/31/2027
4/20/2027	4/26/2027	4/28/2027
5/19/2027	5/24/2027	5/26/2027
6/23/2027	6/28/2027	6/30/2027
7/21/2027	7/26/2027	7/28/2027

ATTENDANCE

Please adhere to the procedures before for students that attend Arsenal PreK-5:

- Attendance is a priority, and we ask that parents/guardians are diligent about sending their child to school every day. We want Arsenal All-Star students to attend 95% or more of the total school days within a school year.
- Please try to limit absences, which include tardies and early dismissals, from school unless it is necessary (personal illness or serious family emergency). Absences include illness, bereavement/ death in family, weather emergency (impassable roads or quarantine), religious holidays, hospitalization, and principal-approved reasons for absence from school or class.
- Help your child maintain daily routines such as finishing homework and getting proper rest and keep communication lines open with the school.
- Send a written excuse completed to school with your child upon his/her return. If absence notes are not received within three days, these absences will remain unexcused.
- Make every effort to see that your child is at the bus stop or in school on time. A student is late after 8:46 AM.
- Written requests are required for early dismissals. Early dismissals cannot occur after 3:00 AM.
- If you drive your child to school, please do not drop them off any earlier than 8:25 AM. Supervision will not be provided prior to this time.
- All excuses based on parents' travel or work obligations must be submitted to the office for approval from the principal prior to the trip. This will allow the staff to organize all the missing work.
- If you have any questions or concerns, contact your child's teacher or the school counselor at 412-529-5796.

ACADEMICS

The instructional program leverages the District's comprehensive curriculum, aligned with Pennsylvania's learning standards in reading, math, writing, science, social studies, art, music, and physical education. Our school is a regional English as a Second Language site and one-third of our population consists of students learning the English language.

English Language Arts

Literacy represents the lifelong, intellectual process of gaining meaning from a critical interpretation of the written or printed text. The key to literacy is reading development, a progression of skills that begins with the ability to understand spoken words and decode written words and culminates in the deep understanding of text. Instruction follows the Science of Reading research and the Structured Literacy approach to the 5 areas of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Pittsburgh Public Schools is committed to preparing all students to be college and career ready as recommended by the Common Core State Standards. The District has a curriculum that provides each student with equitable, high caliber, rigorous learning experiences. We believe that every student can achieve at high levels when provided with the opportunity to engage in well-designed instruction.

Mathematics

Students build understanding and develop skills from their own experience. Mathematics is more meaningful when it is rooted in real life contexts and situations. Children begin school with more mathematical knowledge and intuition than previously believed. Our program builds on this, and gradually moves children from concrete to representational, and abstract understanding of mathematics.

Mastery of mathematics concepts and skills comes over time, with repeated exposure and practice. This enables students to make new connections and build on the mathematical content they already know while gradually learning more difficult and challenging content. A well-articulated and aligned PreK-12 curriculum focuses on mathematics content and processes that are important and worth the time and attention of students to prepare them for college, the workforce and citizenship.

Science

The goal of secondary science education in Pennsylvania is to produce scientifically literate citizens through an inquiry-based approach that builds understanding of fundamental scientific processes and principles of biology, chemistry, physics, Earth science, and Ecology. However, scientific literacy is not limited to understanding

fundamental scientific principles. It also involves proficiency in scientific reasoning and the ability to critically analyze the interplay between science, technology, and society. The PPS science curriculum provides opportunities for students to practice and apply this type of thinking, thereby cultivating scientific literacy while strengthening overall critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills.

This program supports the following goals for students:

- Use such cognitive skills as critical thinking, problem solving, and analyzing ethical issues.
- Demonstrate mastery of the processes of scientific inquiry using the Eight Science and Engineering Practices
- Understand scientific concepts.
- Understand that science is a way of knowing.
- Understand the personal, social, and ethical implications of science.
- Use educational technologies as tools for learning

* The information above was taken from the Academic Programs section of the Pittsburgh Public Schools website.

Instructional Practices

The Arsenal PreK-5 Staff leverage effective instructional practices with the students.

Strategies used are below:

- Differentiated Instruction
- Targeted Small Group Instruction
- Student Discussion
- MTSS (Multi-tiered System of Supports)
- Writing in all areas of content
- 25 Book Reading Initiative
- Technology Integration

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Arsenal PreK-5 teachers and staff promote academic integrity and will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating during examinations or on lab, homework, and other assignments; plagiarism; pre-exam access to test forms; and unauthorized use of aids during examinations and assignments.

A student shall not engage in, participate in, nor knowingly provide another student with the opportunity to engage in academic dishonesty related to examinations, as well as laboratory, homework and other projects and assignments, whether done during or outside of school hours.

If students are found engaging in academic dishonesty, their parents will be contacted by the principal or the classroom teacher to discuss the investigation and any consequences connected to the issue.

ATHLETICS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Athletics

Intramural sports for 3rd-5th grade students will be offered throughout the 2025-2026 school year. Intramurals will occur on-site from 3:30-4:30 PM. Each season, there will be one sport of focus.

Chorus

The chorus is available to students in fourth and fifth grade. Students convene once per week to work with our music teacher. The chorus performs in our school concerts and in special programs within the community.

Instrumental Music

Instrumental music is available to fourth and fifth grade students. Students are pulled from their regular classes one period every six days to attend class. Students will perform twice per year during school concerts or programs.

African Drumming

Drumming is available to students in second through fifth grade. Students work with the general music teacher to learn the art of African drumming.

Student Envoys

Students in 3rd-5th grade are selected by their teachers and peers to serve as envoys. Student envoys are leaders within their classes and in the school that provide feedback to the principal, lead school-wide student initiatives, and participate in leadership development activities throughout the school year. Activities they engage in include leading daily announcements, speaking at community time, providing ideas for field trips, and visiting classrooms to teach efficacy principles and school expectations.

Extended Day Program

An extended instructional day program is offered for two hours Monday through Friday. The program runs from September through June. Students in kindergarten through 5th grade will be issued invitations to join the program based on academic needs. Organized and operated by Neighborhood Learning Alliance.

Scout Reach Program (Cub Scouts)

Scouting addresses many of the social concerns of parents and youth in our community, by emphasizing ethics and moral values. Scouting prepares youth to become leaders, accept responsibility, and care about principles and causes beyond their self-interest. This program is for students in 1st-5th grade.

Girls on the Run

Fourth and fifth grade girls meet twice a week in small teams. The girls are taught life skills through dynamic, interactive lessons and running games. The 24-lesson curriculum is taught by certified Girls on the Run coaches and includes three parts: understanding ourselves, valuing relationships and teamwork and understanding how we connect with and shape the world at large.

Strong Women, Strong Girls

Third through fifth grade girls engage in group-based mentoring that uses the study of contemporary women role models, mentoring relationships between college-aged women and girls in grades 3-5, and activities focused on skill-building, to help enhance the lives of at-risk girls. Through building positive self-esteem and skills for life-long success, Strong Women, Strong Girls is working to strengthen the futures of all women and girls involved in the program.

DRESS CODE

On June 22, 2011, the Board of Education approved the Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5 uniform plan. Under the policy, Arsenal's uniform options are light yellow, navy blue, or light blue collared tops, and khaki or navy-blue bottoms.

It is expected that all children will wear uniforms every day. We celebrate and encourage all students to wear the required uniform daily. Please make sure your child wears the required uniform every day.

School Dress Code

- Tops: navy, light blue, light yellow, collared blouses, and/or shirts
- Bottoms: navy blue or khaki dress pants (cords or twill), skirts, slacks, and/or jumpers. Shorts are permitted during the months of September, October, May, and June or when the weather indicates it.
- Shirts and blouses can be either short or long sleeved (sleeveless shirts are not permitted)
- Belts are encouraged.
- Closed toe shoes are recommended.
- Socks should be worn.

The following are **not** permitted:

- Jeans
- Shorts that are not knee length.
- Sandals, rubber thongs, flip-flops, bedroom slippers, or wheelies
- Hats, coats, scarves, or bandannas (outside wear) to be worn inside during the school day.
- Midriff tops
- Exposed underwear
- Loose tank tops, halters, or any revealing tops

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

At Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5, we follow a specific process to implement policy 216 and want our students to focus on learning each day. It is important for students to be free from distractions while learning in class and moving throughout the building for lunch, recess, or other activities. Every day, all students will be required to turn in all electronic devices as they enter the building. This includes all cell phones and any other electronic communication and/or musical devices. The security staff will oversee the secure containment of all electronic devices during the school day. These items will be kept in the closet located in the main office.

Below are the steps that will be followed each day to secure all electronic devices:

- Upon entering the building, all electronic devices will be taken and placed in a secure compartment.
- At the conclusion of the school day, during dismissal, all electronic devices will be returned to the student.
- In the case of a scheduled early dismissal, students will be able to receive their devices from the main office.

Once in the building, any student found in violation of this procedure will be asked to surrender his/her device and must return to school with a parent to have his/her electronic device returned.

We are implementing this procedure to ensure the overall instructional climate and to have a safe learning community. This procedure reduces classroom distractions during instruction and allows all students to be fully engaged in class. We are asking for total cooperation from all families to achieve 100% compliance from the students.

GRADING

Grading Scale

Percentage Earned	Grade	GPA
90-100%	A	4.0
80-89%	B	3.0
70-79%	C	2.0
60-69%	D	1.0
50-59%	E	0.0

HOMEWORK PROCEDURES

Homework is important and will be assigned Monday through Thursday of each week. It is an extension of the learning that takes place during the school day.

Homework provides an opportunity for students to practice skills and strategies being learned at school and can provide opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking.

Homework is most often assigned in math, language arts, language development, science, and social studies.

Parents can help their children by arranging a quiet, comfortable place for students to work and by checking their children's work before they return to school. Recommended nightly study time at home for grades 1, 2, and 3 is 20-30 minutes. Students in grades 4 and 5 study up to one hour nightly. Any questions or concerns about homework should first be addressed to the teacher who created the assignment.

At Arsenal PreK-5, each grade level teacher/team will send a letter home in August that outlines the specific expectations for homework for their grade level. Homework may be assigned as a paper/ pencil assignment, or the use of a specific instructional technology platform may be assigned for your child to practice and/or review skills.

HEALTH SERVICES

Medical/Dental Examinations/Screenings

Medical and dental examinations should be completed by the family physician or dentist and turned into a school nurse. Physical examinations are required for entry into kindergarten, by all new students from out of state, and by students transferring from other Pennsylvania school systems unless an adequate health record is available.

Dental exams are required for entry into kindergarten, third and seventh grades, by all new students from out of state, and by students transferring from other Pennsylvania school systems unless an adequate health record is available. Parents are invited to be present for any examinations at school. The school nurse completes vision screening on all students every year. Hearing screening using an audiometer is completed on students in kindergarten, second, third, and seventh grades by the school nurse.

Medication

Any student who needs to take medicine during school hours for any reason must follow this procedure:

- Parents must complete the Request for Medication form and submit the completed form to the school nurse.
- Parents must obtain a written prescription from their physician to be directed to the school nurse.
- The prescription must include the student's name, diagnosis, kind of medicine, and the time and amount of medication to be given.
- Medication will be locked in a safe place in the Nurse's office.
- Medication must be brought to school in the original container labeled by the pharmacy.
- Non-prescription (over the counter) medication should not be sent to school without a written prescription from the doctor. Parents may come and personally administer medications that they wish their child to have during the school day.
- Prescriptions are to be updated each school year.
- The nurse will give all the medication.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ACCEPTABLE USE

Every student that attends Arsenal PreK-5 will be assigned and receive an electronic device at the start of the school year. Devices are expected to be cared for and brought back and forth to school every day. A parent/guardian is required to fill out and submit the District's [Acceptable Use Form](#).

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support is a framework that helps educators provide academic and behavioral strategies for students with various needs. In PPS, we provide behavioral and academic interventions and support for all students based on need. MTSS takes an initiative-taking approach to identifying students with academic or behavioral needs. Early assessment and intervention for students can help them catch up with their peers sooner. The key components of MTSS include:

- Universal screening of all students early in the school year
- Tiers of interventions that can be amplified in response to levels of need.
- Ongoing data collection and continual assessment
- Schoolwide approach to expectations and supports.
- Parent involvement

Title I Program

Title I is a federally funded program designed to academically intervene with children struggling in the reading and mathematics program. Additional funds and support are provided to our school and students. Funds are allocated for staff salaries and the family and community engagement coordinator stipend, parent engagement activities, instructional materials, and books.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Program

It is the policy of Pittsburgh Public Schools to provide an appropriate planned instructional program for identified students whose dominant language is not English. The purpose of the program is to increase the English language proficiency of eligible students so that they can attain academic standards and achieve academic success.

- English as a Second Language (ESL) has been a part of the Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) since 1982 and is offered in grades kindergarten through 12. Over 70 countries have been represented by ESL students in Pittsburgh Public Schools. As a result of the PPS program and individual student effort, ESL students are well prepared for college or other post-high school endeavors.
- The ESL program provides total English immersion for students, who receive one to three ESL classes daily, depending on their English proficiency level. ESL students are provided with the support needed to effectively adjust to American culture through an individualized, student-centered learning environment. ESL students are

enabled to fully participate in general education classes as quickly as possible, and in extracurricular activities.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS/PROCEDURES

Positive Behavior Management Plan

As in all Pittsburgh Public Schools, it is especially important to maintain a positive, equitable, and safe learning environment for students, both instructionally and behaviorally. To achieve these important goals, students must have clear expectations and rules. This information has been developed to help parents and students understand their instructional and behavioral expectations during their tenure at Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5. The students and staff began using restorative practices along with our schoolwide PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Support Plan) ten years ago. This year, we will continue implementing our school wide PBIS plan and infuse social emotional learning lessons weekly during intervention periods, on Mindset Mondays and Wellness Wednesdays monthly that are scheduled monthly, and Restorative Practices are utilized daily.

Arsenal All-Star Behavior Management System

It is important to maintain a positive, equitable, and safe learning environment for students. To create a positive learning atmosphere, students are expected to demonstrate positive behavior.

Each day, students can earn 10 points, and those points are entered into a platform for monitoring and tracking points titled, Class Dojo. Students can participate in the weekly and monthly incentive activities within their classroom or school wide. They will be able to redeem the points earned to participate in activities and purchase items in the Star Store.

School Rules & Expectations:

Be Respectful

- Show self-control.
- Follow all directions the first time.
- Use kind words and actions.

Be Responsible

- Wear school uniform daily.
- Use school materials wisely.
- Put things where they belong.

Be Safe

- Walk at all times.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to myself.
- Stay in assigned space at all times

VISITORS

The safety and security of the children and staff at Pittsburgh Arsenal PreK-5 is a priority. Please follow the measures below to ensure every child's safety:

- All school doors will be secured each morning and remain secured all day.
- During school hours, you must enter and leave through the main entrance on 39th Street.
- To enter the school, press the button to the side of the entrance door. This is connected to the main office, and you will be asked to identify yourself and the reason for the visit.
- School personnel will greet you at the door and take you to the main office.
- Visitors are required to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. Upon leaving, return the pass to the main office and sign out.
- Volunteers must sign in/out and wear their volunteer badge.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Cancellation of School

Cancellation of school takes place only during circumstances such as extreme weather, equipment failure, or public crisis. Parents must have arrangements made for delays, early dismissals, and school closings. There will be no after-school programming on days when school is delayed or cancelled.

This is just a reminder for families to listen to KDKA for information regarding school closings and delays. If a two-hour delay is announced, students should not arrive at school before 10:40 a.m. Buses will run after a two-hour delay. Breakfast will not be served if there is a school delay, and students will have an abbreviated school schedule.

Arrival Procedures

Students should not arrive before 8:25 a.m. There is no supervision for students who arrive before this time. Students participating in the supervised breakfast program should arrive at 8:25 a.m. All students must use the lower entrance on 39th Street.

Tardy

Students are considered tardy if they enter the building after the bell rings at 8:46 a.m. At that point, all students are to report to the main office and receive an admission slip to give to their teacher. Students will be asked the reason for being tardy.

Early Dismissals

Parents are to write a note for any student that is being dismissed at a time earlier than the dismissal time of 3:25 p.m. All parents are to come to the main entrance, ring the buzzer and inform the office staff of the early dismissal. Parents or guardians will be asked to sign their child out of school when the child is brought to them at the main entrance. Students will not be dismissed early after 2:30 p.m. due to the need for communication with their teacher and because school ends at 3:25 pm.

Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal begins at 3:25 p.m. All students are expected to be picked up by 3:30 p.m. Students will be dismissed from their assigned bus location and the teacher assigned will take attendance and make sure that all the students are present. The students will be escorted to their bus on 39th Street. Walkers will be supervised and released to their parent/guardian waiting directly outside the gates near the courtyard on 39th Street and Butler Street.

Parents are not permitted to take students off the buses once they have been placed on the school bus and are asked to report to the main office to obtain a student from the school buses. Students who walk home or are picked up will be dismissed from the corner of Butler and 39th Street. Any changes in dismissal procedures, except for emergencies, should be made prior to 2:30 p.m. A note should be written and given to your child's homeroom teacher.

Field Trip Guidelines

Permission forms for field trips for the present school year are signed and kept on file at the school. All parents will be notified prior to each trip. The teachers planning the trip will contact the number of volunteers required to serve as chaperones. All chaperones must have clearances to attend student field trips.

Emergencies

At Pittsburgh Arsenal, we have developed a crisis plan to address potential emergencies that could occur which require immediate action from the school personnel. We work to ensure the safety of all students during fires, significant injury or illness, or unpredictable hazards (i.e., boiler explosions, breaks in water pipes, heating malfunction in freezing weather, hazardous material incidents (solids, liquids, or gas), utility emergencies, or natural disasters).

Fires

In the event of an actual fire or a serious emergency, students are evacuated from the building. The procedures are as follows:

Teachers will lead children from the building as practiced in the monthly fire drills. If necessary, children will be led to St. Augustine's Church. Once all the students have been accounted for, we will walk down 39th Street to Butler Street, make a left, and walk 2 blocks to 37th Street. Once at 37th Street, we will make a right and head to 225 37th Street (St. Augustine's Church). Once there, the principal will assess the situation. Children may be kept temporarily in the church until a further decision is made. Children will remain until all danger has passed or until parents pick them up.

Fire Alarm Procedures

- Sound the fire alarm by pulling any alarm signal. Make yourself familiar with their locations. The Pittsburgh Fire Department will automatically be called by our fire alarm system.
- The school secretary, or other office personnel, notifies the superintendent's office- 412.529.3600.
- Custodial staff and teachers are trained in the use of fire extinguishers to fight small fires. However, the staff will not neglect the fire alarm. Fire extinguishers are also located in various locations in the building.

Children should be psychologically prepared for any emergency. They will be taught that fire drills are serious. Fire drills are held once a month. At times, drills are announced in advance during very wintry weather when the students must wear coats. Proper exits and exit paths are shown and posted in classrooms. A drill may very well occur when homeroom children are in places other than their own room, i.e., lunchroom, change of classes, etc.

Fire Drills

- The fire signal is the pulsing sound and light on each floor.
- Upon hearing the signal, teachers have children stand and proceed, in an orderly fashion, out of the room.
- If possible, without endangering safety, teachers bring their roll books or roll cards.
- The teacher leads the line.
- The last one out of the room closes the door. No one is to be sent back to the room to do this or to close the windows.
- No one stops for his/her coat unless directed to do so by way of the PA.
- The teacher leads the class to the appointed place outside the building.
- There is no talking during a drill.
- At times, danger may not be from the fire, but from smoke, which is lethal. Smoke and/or other gases may suffocate personnel remaining in a burning building.
- Teachers make sure all pupils are accounted for in all drills by calling roll.

Severe Injury or Illness

In case of severe injury or illness, the immediate concern is to help injured or sick students. After identification of injury or illness, the following procedures are used as guidelines:

- Immediately contact the principal, secretary, responsible teacher, or school nurse. In the unlikely event that none of these staff members are available, the assigned teacher on duty in the lunchroom or on the playground immediately attempts to contact the parent or legal guardian. Emergency forms are kept in the school office.
- Based on the determination of the school nurse or principal, the injured student may be taken to the hospital in one of the following ways:
 - Parent – The parent comes to school and transports the injured in his/her car.
 - Ambulance Service – Person in charge at the time notifies the Pittsburgh EMS (ambulance) by calling 9-1-1.
- If the student is being transported to hospital via ambulance and parents are not available to go with the student, the nurse, principal, or responsible teacher accompanies the student and meets the parent at the hospital.
- In cases of severe injury, call the superintendent's office, 412.529.3600, and notify him/her of the type of injury, seriousness, and status of the situation.
- The school nurse fills out an accident report form for all injuries.

APPENDIX

Policy 115 – Homework

This policy establishes expectations for meaningful, purposeful homework aligned to instructional goals. Homework should reinforce learning, be developmentally appropriate, and not be excessive.

Policy 119 – Athletics & Extracurricular Activities

This policy governs student participation in athletics and extracurricular activities, including eligibility, academic expectations, conduct standards, and equitable access to programs.

Policy 204 – Attendance

Students are required to attend school regularly in accordance with Pennsylvania law. The policy outlines excused and unexcused absences, documentation, and procedures to support consistent attendance.

Policy 206 – Health Services

Outlines school health services including screenings, medical support, and procedures that ensure student health, safety, and readiness to learn.

Policy 209 – Grading and Reporting

Defines how student performance is assessed and communicated, including grading practices, report cards, and expectations for fairness and consistency.

Policy 211 – Graduation Requirements

Specifies the credit requirements and criteria students must meet to earn a diploma, aligned with state regulations.

Policy 212 – Student Code of Conduct

Establishes behavioral expectations and outlines disciplinary procedures to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment.

Policy 215 – Anti-Bullying

Prohibits bullying and harassment and outlines reporting, investigation, and intervention procedures to protect students.

Policy 216 – Electronic Devices

Governs student use of electronic devices. Devices may be used for educational purposes but are restricted during the school day to maintain a focused learning environment.

Policy 221 – Dress Code

Ensures student dress supports a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment while allowing appropriate self-expression.

Policy 226 – Academic Integrity

Prohibits cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty, reinforcing ethical academic behavior.

Policy 231 – Homeless Students

Ensures educational stability and access for students experiencing homelessness in alignment with the McKinney-Vento Act. The policy outlines rights related to enrollment, transportation, and support services.

Policy 1004 – School Visitors

This policy outlines procedures for visitors entering school buildings, including sign-in requirements, identification, and approval processes to ensure a safe and secure environment for students and staff.

Annual Child Find Notice

Pittsburgh Public Schools conducts ongoing 'Child Find' activities to identify, locate, and evaluate children who may be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This includes children ages 3–21, including those who are homeless, wards of the state, or attending private schools. Families can request an evaluation if they suspect a disability impacting learning.



Students first
Always, in all ways.



Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs, activities or employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. It is the policy of the Pittsburgh School District to make all services, programs and activities available and to provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities. Please make requests for accommodations at least 72 hours before the scheduled event. For more information regarding accommodations, civil rights grievance procedures, please contact: Rachel Beers, Office of Employee Relations rbeers1@pghschools.org | 341 S. Bellefield Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 | 412-529-HELP (4357)