



Pittsburgh Liberty K-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.

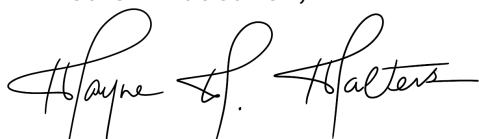
A successful school year is built on strong partnerships between schools, families, and the community. We know that students achieve more when the adults in their lives work together to support their learning and well-being. We invite you to stay engaged by attending school events, participating in Parent 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

Dear Liberty Families,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year!

We are excited to welcome back our students and families for what promises to be an amazing year. I hope you and your loved ones had a restful summer and are feeling recharged, refreshed, and ready for another exciting year of learning and growth.

It is with great enthusiasm that I welcome both our returning families and those who are new to the Liberty community. Whether this is your first year with us or one of many, we are honored to partner with you in your child's educational journey. I am truly grateful to lead such an incredible school community filled with caring, supportive families who are committed to the success of our students.

As principal, I am committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment where every child can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Our dedicated teachers and staff have been working hard throughout the summer to prepare classrooms, strengthen instructional practices, and plan meaningful learning experiences that inspire curiosity, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning.

This year, we look forward to strengthening our partnerships with families and continuing to build a school culture where every student is known, every voice is valued, and every success is celebrated.

Please stay connected with us throughout the year. Regular communication between home and school is essential to student success. Be sure to connect with your child's teachers through TalkingPoints, follow our Facebook page, and watch for newsletters and family updates to stay informed about important announcements, school events, and opportunities to get involved.

The first day of school is always filled with excitement, hope, and new beginnings. As we embark on this new school year together, let us do so with optimism, collaboration, and a shared commitment to helping every student reach their fullest potential.



Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. We are excited for all that this school year will bring and look forward to making the 2026–2027 school year our best yet!

With appreciation and warm regards,

Brandy Farrish (Daye)

Principal, Pittsburgh Liberty K-5

SCHOOL INFORMATION



Pittsburgh Liberty K-5

601 Filbert St, Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Phone: (412) 529-8451

Fax: (412) 665-4959

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

[Liberty Staff Directory 2026-2027](#)

School Colors

Navy and White

School Mascot

Soaring Eagle

School Motto

I promise I will respect myself and others, act in a responsible way at all times, and promote a positive reputation for myself and my school.

VISION AND MISSION

All Pittsburgh Liberty students will demonstrate academic excellence and self-efficacy to impact their school, community, and world.

All students attending Pittsburgh Liberty will have a strong academic foundation of learning built on collaboration, communication, critical thinking, creativity, and strength of character in a safe, supportive environment. We will support students to become active, compassionate, global thinkers through the study of Spanish language and culture.

Instructional Focus: A school-wide effort to have all Pittsburgh Liberty students show measurable growth in written expression as measured by PSSAs, Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT), content-specific writing prompts, PPS Comprehension Performance Assessments.

School-Wide Internal Goal: 85% of our students will demonstrate proficiency in written expression in all components of identified scoring guidelines with 15% showing growth.

Our Collective Commitments

We will...

- Engage in Professional Learning Communities to strengthen our practice.
- Partner with families for the success of students.
- Promote success for all by utilizing a variety of research-based strategies and school data.
- Cultivate a growth mindset while maintaining high expectations.
- Identify individual strengths and learning styles to promote growth.
- Foster a school community of active, compassionate, life-long learners who understand and positively impact the world around them.
- Focus on practice to include various perspectives in today's emergent, technological society.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Contacting the School

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

Social Media

Pittsburgh Liberty K-5 School's Website: pghschools.org/schools/k-5/liberty

- Staff Directory
- Parent School Community Council (P.S.S.C.) meeting dates, agendas, and minutes
- School and District Resources
- School and District Calendars

Pittsburgh Liberty K-5 School's Facebook page: facebook.com/LibertyPPS

- Announcements, event details
- Real-time streaming and photos of school events

L.E.A.F. (Liberty Elementary Academic Fund) Parent Organization: pghleaf.org

- L.E.A.F. Newsletters
- Volunteer opportunities
- L.E.A.F. Meetings
- Kindergarten and Grade 5 Specific Information
- Spirit Wear
- Pittsburgh Liberty's Celebrations
- L.E.D.P. (Liberty Extended Day Program) Childcare Opportunity

Talking Points (Directions to Access)

Talking Points is Liberty's primary means of communication with families along with phone calls home. Talking Points can be received via email or by downloading the app which allow you to receive text message straight to your cellular device.

School Cancellations and Delays

School delays and closures will be announced on local news broadcasts and websites and on the Pittsburgh Public Schools' website - <https://www.pghschools.org/>

Updating Student Information

Student's address, parents' phone numbers and addresses, and emergency contact information may be updated by calling the main office at 412-529-8450.

Parent Involvement

- Opportunities for families to become involved during the school year include:
- Chaperone field trips
- Mentoring and tutoring individual and/or small groups
- Homeroom parent
- Attend school-wide events
- Join L.E.A.F. Parent Organization
- Participate in the decision-making process by participating in the P.S.C.C. (Parent School Community Council)
- Be a Pittsburgh Liberty's P.A.C. (Parent Advisory Committee) representative
- Participate in child study meetings, IEP and GIEP meetings

BELL SCHEDULES

Staff Meetings: 7:55 AM

Breakfast: 9:00-9:20 AM (No breakfast on two-hour delays; students report directly to their homeroom)

Daily Schedule	
Breakfast in Cafeteria	9:00-9:20
Homeroom	9:20-9:30
RTI	9:30-10:00
Period 1	10:00-10:43
Period 2	10:43-11:26
Period 3	11:26-12:09
Period 4 Student Lunch	12:09-12:54
Period 5	12:54-1:39
Period 6	1:39-2:22
Period 7	2:22-3:05
Period 8	3:05-3:48
Homeroom and Dismissal	3:48-4:00

Half Day Schedule	
Breakfast in Cafeteria	9:00-9:20
Homeroom	9:20-9:30
RTI	9:30-10:00
Period 1	10:00-10:43
Period 2	10:43-11:26
Student Lunch	11:26-12:09
Homeroom & Dismissal	12:09-12:20
Student Dismissal	12:20

Two Hour Delay	
Homeroom	11:00-11:26
Period 1	11:26-12:09
Period 4 Student Lunch	12:09-12:54
Period 2	12:54-1:39
Period 3	1:39-2:22
Period 5	2:22-3:05
Period 6	3:05-3:48
Homeroom and Dismissal	3:48-4:00

Remote Learning Schedule

	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	AS K-2	AS 3-5	Cox	Epperly Clemons	Gardner Wilk
Period 1 10:00-10:30	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Art/Music Clemons (Days 2, 4, 6) or Epperly (Days 1, 3, 6)	Spanish Cox	Reading	Spanish with Grade 5 Cox	Grade 5 Spanish	Grade 4 Art/Music	Support Kinder
Period 2 10:30-11:00	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Math	Reading	Reading	Reading	Support Grade 5	Support Grade 1	Support Kinder
Period 3 11:00-11:30	Math	Math	Math	Gym/Lib Gardner (Days 1-3) or Wilk (Days 4-6)	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Support Grade 4	Support Grade 1	Grade 3 Gym/Lib
Period 4 11:30-12:00	Gym/Lib Gardner (Days 1-3) or Wilk (Days 4-6)	Math	Math	Math	Reading	Math	Math	Math	Prep	Prep	Kinder Gym/Lib
Lunch 12:00-1:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Period 5 1:00-1:30	Math	Art/Music Clemons (Days 2, 4, 6) or Epperly (Days 1, 3, 6)	Spanish Cox	Math	Reading	Math	Art/Music with Grade 1 Clemons (Days 2, 4, 6) or Epperly (Days 1, 3, 6)	Math	Grade 2 Spanish	Grade 1 & AS K-2 Art/Music	Prep

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

All Pittsburgh Public School students are required to attend school regularly, in accordance with state laws and regulations. Research indicates that missing just two days of school per month leads to poor academic performance and negative school outcomes. We encourage every family to promote regular school attendance.

Documentation of Absences

When a child is absent from school due to illness or emergency, a parent/guardian must provide a written excuse indicating the dates of the absence(s) and the reason for the absence. Arrangements should be made with the teacher to make up any missed assignments. Excuses for absences must be received within three days upon return to school or the absence will be marked as unexcused.

Missed Assignments as a Result of Absences

Please contact your child's teachers to receive any assignments that your child has missed.

Excused Absence

Excused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Illness, including if a student is dismissed by designated district staff during school hours for health-related reasons
- Obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner
- Quarantine
- Family emergency
- Recovery from accident
- Required court attendance
- Death in family
- Observance of a religious holiday observed by bona fide religious group, upon parental request
- Other urgent reasons which may include circumstances related to homelessness and foster care

Unexcused Absence

Absences which do not meet the criteria indicated above may be considered an unexcused absence.

Parental Notice of Absence

Absences shall be treated as unexcused until the student's homeroom teacher or main office receives a written excuse explaining the absence, to be submitted within three (3) days of the absence.

A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification shall be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days shall require an excuse from a licensed practitioner.

ACADEMICS

Open Court Reading

Open Court Reading uses systematic, explicit instruction with a carefully designed instructional sequence and built-in scaffolding. The program is systematic in that it builds on prior learning, builds from simple to complex, and covers five components of literacy: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension., independent readers who are ready to tackle any new content.

Illustrative Mathematics

Illustrative Mathematics is a problem-based K–12 curriculum designed to energize math classrooms and equip students with critical skills, understandings, and practices that can benefit them for a lifetime.

Carolina Science

The Carolina Science curriculum is composed of four strands: Living Things, Materials, Energy and Forces, and Environmental Awareness. These strands, which are subdivided into strand units, outline the concepts and ideas to be explored by children as they work scientifically. Students will actively investigate real-world phenomena and work collaboratively to build 21st century skills.

Spanish

The Spanish program involves students in creative and authentic uses of the Spanish language. Language activities encourage students to communicate in Spanish and explore the culture of Spanish speaking countries.

Visit the Family Support Hub for Illustrative Math: [Imagine Learning Family Support Hub](#)

As a focus on Restorative Practices with regards to promoting positive character traits, Pittsburgh Liberty operates within a school wide management system called P.R.I.D.E., which is a Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) Initiative. PRIDE stands for (Perseverance, Responsible, Integrity, Demonstrate compassion, and Explorer). We also incorporate the district's curriculum Wayfinder for lessons to work with students.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Pittsburgh Public Schools strive to create a system of academic integrity which precludes any form of academic dishonesty and seeks to foster positive parental involvement in promoting evaluation based upon the student's efforts and accomplishments.

ATHLETICS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

All students enrolled in grades kindergarten through twelve must meet certain academic standards to be eligible for participation in any athletic, extracurricular or co-curricular activity. The Board directs that the academic standards set forth below shall apply in grades kindergarten through twelve.

Beginning with the Second Semester of the 2024-2025 school year, students with a 0--1.99 grade point average, at the end of the previous report period, shall be considered ineligible under this policy; and shall be required to wait for the issuance of the next interim report card or end of quarter report card (whichever comes first) to determine if said student has satisfied the grade point average to participate in the activity.

When determining eligibility for programs beginning at or before the start of the school year, eligibility will be based on whether the student has passed four (4) full credit subjects, and achieved a cumulative 2.0 GPA, during the previous school year.

Single report period grades are to be used as last previous grades only in determining academic eligibility for activities that are in progress once the school year begins.

If a student is found to be ineligible under this policy or under other applicable requirements due to having grades below those set forth above, or otherwise failing to meet other applicable eligibility requirements, the student shall not be permitted to participate in any interscholastic athletics or extra and co-curricular activities until they meet the eligibility requirements.

Intramurals

Dependent on interest, we will offer an after school intramural sports program. Students must have a signed parent permission form to participate, and transportation arrangements must be made by the parents. The program typically offers activities such as track, cheerleading and basketball.

Additional Clubs and Activities

(Dependent on student interest, funding, and staff sponsorship)

- Flag Football
- Strong Women, Strong Girls
- Student Envoys
- Kids of Steel Running Club
- Chess Club
- Kickball
- Soccer
- Jump Rope

DRESS CODE

Everyday Uniform: Pants, shorts, skirts, and jumpers must be black, navy blue or khaki. Shirts and blouses must have a collar and be a plain solid color. All Liberty Spirit Wear is considered part of the uniform. Clothing with a hood is strictly prohibited.

Physical Education Classes: Students are expected to follow the Everyday Uniform guidelines on days that the students have physical education classes. Students must also wear rubber soled tennis shoes to participate in gym class. Students may choose to leave a pair of tennis shoes in their locker for physical education class.

Sweaters and Sweatshirts: Sweaters and sweatshirts are permitted if they are a plain, solid color or are Liberty Spirit Wear. Clothing with a hood is strictly prohibited.

Shoes: Tennis shoes are preferred. Open-toed shoes are not recommended for your child's safety. Unsafe shoes, for example shoes with wheels, are not permitted.

Exceptions (Special Occasions): The monthly school calendar will announce days when special attire is permitted. Examples may include Liberty Spirit Day (any shirt with Liberty logo or emblem; jeans are permissible), Black and Gold Day (any Pittsburgh sports shirt; jeans are permissible). The guidelines for the Everyday Uniform must be followed if the student does not wish to participate in the special attire days. Students attending Greenway are required to follow the Everyday Uniform guidelines.

Violations: Pittsburgh Liberty staff members will attempt to address the cause of the uniform violation. Referrals to the social worker are appropriate if there is a family hardship preventing compliance with the Dress Code. Students that are willfully ignoring the Dress Code will be given a school uniform, if available, and receive a phone call from the homeroom teacher.

School District Policy: In addition to the above school dress code, the district has set standards for dress related to inappropriate clothing. The policy states students are not permitted to wear apparel or jewelry that advocates sexual activity or violence, or the use of alcohol or drugs, or demeans or degrades any one person or groups of people. Clothing must not be of any style, length or fit that is provocative. Please see the PPS Code of Conduct for more details.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The Pittsburgh Public School District recognizes that the use of electronic devices within the classroom can serve legitimate instructional purposes. At times, electronic devices can serve as a distraction from the educational process. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, devices that can take photographs; record or store audio or video data; store, transmit or receive messages, images or data; or provide a wireless, unfiltered connection to the Internet. Although the Pittsburgh Public Schools are not liable for the loss, damage, or misuse of any personal electronic device, students are discouraged from being them to school.

During homeroom, students are **required** to give their cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices to their homeroom teacher. The homeroom teacher will be responsible for storing students' personal devices in a locked area. All devices will be returned to students at the end of the day.

If you need to reach your child in case of an emergency during the school day, please call the main office.

The building administrator may grant approval for a student to possess and use an electronic device for the following reasons:

- Health, safety or emergency reasons
- As required by a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan
- Approved classroom or instructional-related activities
- Other reasons determined appropriate by the building principal

Many families purchase cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices for their child to communicate with them going to/from school. For this reason, students are permitted to bring cell phones to school.

Once students enter the building, cell phones, smart watches, or other electronic devices must be stored in their bookbags and/or lockers with the audible alerts silenced. If you need to reach your child in case of an emergency during the school day, please call the main office. Students are not permitted to record videos or voice memos, take pictures, text, send messages through any apps, play any games, access the internet, or use their cell phone, smart watch or electronic device in any way until they are off school grounds. If a student uses their electronic device, he/she/they will first receive a warning. If students

use their electronic device again after the warning, the device will be taken to the main office for the parent to pick up.

Appropriate Uses for Pittsburgh Public Schools' Electronic Devices

Digital Learning Platforms

PPS Clever is a one-stop platform for students to get all their digital learning resources. Once students log into PPS Clever, students will have access to Microsoft Teams and Schoology. *Be sure to use the PPS Clever app.

Microsoft Teams is a digital hub for collaboration that connects teachers, parents, and students. Students will use Microsoft Teams to connect with teachers and classmates during remote learning days.

Schoology allows students to view and complete learning materials. Teachers and students can contact one another, post, and receive reminders, and updates and view assignments.

Student Login

Students may access their login information in HAC (Home Access Center) or ask their homeroom teacher for this information. The username and password are unique to each student. Please keep this information private.

Example Student Name: Jamar Thomas

- Student Username Example: stjthomas1@students.pghschools.org
- “st” is the abbreviation for student.
- “j” is the first letter of the student’s first name, “Jamar”.
- “Thomas” is the student’s last name.
- The last name is followed by an assigned number.
- All logins are followed by @students.pghschools.org

Student Password: Students will be assigned a unique password.

GRADING

Report Cards (Quarterly)

Report cards are distributed quarterly, or four times per school year, at the end of every nine weeks. Quarter one, quarter two, and quarter three report cards are sent home with students. Quarter four report cards, the final report card of the year, are sent via the U.S. Postal Mail.

Interim Report Card (Quarterly)

Interim Report Cards are a mid-way checkpoint, half-way through each grading period so that we ensure that parents and guardians understand how their child is progressing at the midway point of the grading period. These checkpoints are not the student's final grade. If you receive an interim report card grade that is of concern, please reach out to your child's teacher so that they can provide clarity and form a partnership to support your child at home. Interim report cards are sent home four times per year and are always distributed to students at school.

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

High Honor Roll & Honor Roll

To receive high honor roll students must earn a GPA of 3.5., and for students to receive honor roll they must earn a GPA of 3.0.

Home Access Center (HAC)

The purpose of the PPS Home Access Center is to give families online access to students' academic grades and attendance in real time.

PPS Elementary Level Promotion & Retention Guidelines

- Promotion from first to second grade requires students to pass both reading and math.
- Promotion from second to third grade requires students to pass both reading and math.
- Promotion from third to fourth grade requires students to pass both reading and math.
- Promotion from fourth to fifth grade requires students to pass both reading and math, and two of the following subjects: English, Spelling, Science, Social Studies.

Please contact your child's teacher if you have questions regarding their academic progress during the school year.

Please contact the school's Main Office if there are any issues. Families can also reach out to the Parent Hotline by phone 412.529.HELP (4357), or by email parenthotline@pghschools.org.

HOMEWORK PROCEDURES

Homework builds upon classroom work and encourages the development of self-discipline and associated good work habits in students. The Pittsburgh Public Schools reaffirms the importance of assignment and completion of homework as an integral part of the school experience.

The purpose of homework is to:

- Reinforce learning through practice, application, integration and /or extension of knowledge and skills
- Develop study skills, work habits, and a sense of personal responsibility so that the student may become an independent learner
- Foster students' personal development in areas such as time management, responsibility, perseverance, and self-confidence
- Stimulate imagination, originality, and creativity
- Enhance home / school communications and provide for increased curriculum understanding.
- Encourage a follow up of worthwhile school activities into permanent leisure interests
- Involve families in the learning process of their child

Consistent with PPS District Policy, homework assignments are at the professional discretion of each Pittsburgh Liberty classroom teacher. Parents are encouraged to communicate directly with their child's teacher about any homework related questions such as length, frequency, difficulty, and grading.

HEALTH SERVICES

Every Pittsburgh Liberty student must have a comprehensive health examination upon entry.

Every Pittsburgh Liberty student must have a comprehensive dental examination upon original entry and in third grade.

The school nurse will administer vision tests, hearing tests, scoliosis tests, other tests deemed advisable, and height and weight measurements, at intervals established by the District. Height and weight measurements shall be used to calculate the student's weight-for-height ratio.

Parents/Guardians of students who elect to receive physical and dental examinations through the Pittsburgh Public Schools will be notified in advance and encouraged to be present. If school health officials determine that a student deviates from normal growth and development, or where school examinations reveal conditions requiring health or dental care, the parent/guardian shall be notified of the apparent need for a special examination by the student's private physician or dentist. The parent/ guardian shall report to the school whether a special examination occurred.

When a school employee has reasonable cause to suspect that a student may be the victim of child abuse, the school employee will file a report of suspected child abuse in accordance with law and Board policy.

Health Records

The District will maintain for each student a comprehensive health record which includes a record of immunizations and the results of tests, measurements, regularly scheduled examinations and special examinations.

All health records will be maintained separately from academic records, shall be confidential and shall be disclosed only when necessary for the health of the student or when requested by the parent/ guardian, in accordance with law and Board policy. The District will destroy student health records only after the student has not been enrolled in District schools for at least two (2) years.

The District policy 229 for the administration of medications can be accessed through the following link; [Policy 229-Use of Medications](#).

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ACCEPTABLE USE

All families will be required to sign the [Acceptable Use Policy](#).

Misuse of Computers/Computer Networks/Electronic Device

A student shall not engage in any act that violates the District's Network Usage and Safety Policy whether the student uses a school district device or a personal device, including, but not limited to the following acts that may not necessarily pose a threat to the health, safety, or property of others:

- Utilizing computers, computer networks, or electronic devices during times when such conduct is not permitted.
- Intentionally loading or use of unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media, on District devices.
- Impersonation of another user, anonymity, and pseudonyms, within District systems.
- Creation of links to other networks whose content or purpose would violate the District's Network Usage and Safety Policy.
- Offensive and inflammatory communications that do not pose an apparent risk to safety. Proper virtual etiquette will be taught and reinforced before proceeding to discipline for computer conduct violations.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The Office of Student Support Services

The Office of Student Support Services is the hub that connects schools, students, families, and community with the necessary resources and supports to assure the academic, social, behavioral and emotional well-being and success of all students.

Counseling and Social Worker Services

Pittsburgh Liberty K-5 has a school social worker onsite who is a trained, certified, mental health professional. The focus of a school social worker is to provide services related to a person's social, emotional and life adjustment to school and/or society. School social workers are the link between the home, school and community in providing direct as well as indirect services to students, families and school personnel to promote and support students' academic and social success.

Please reach out to Pittsburgh Liberty's social worker by calling the main office at 412-529-8450 regarding (but not limited to): attendance, foster care, homelessness, mental health support, 504 plans, Student Assistance Program (SAP), the child study process.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS/PROCEDURES

Pittsburgh Public Schools supports the use of positive behavior support programs as a first line of promoting appropriate student conduct. Disciplinary measures set forth in the Code of Student Conduct should only be imposed when positive behavior interventions have been unsuccessful, or a student's behavior warrants immediate referral for disciplinary action.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

Pittsburgh Liberty staff utilize our current multi-tiered Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). One main objective is to incorporate a school wide student acknowledgment program. At Pittsburgh Liberty, we believe in a proactive and positive approach that supports our community of learners and provides an environment ideal for student success. To ensure success and continuous improvement, parents, students, staff, and community members are invited and encouraged to attend PSCC and Liberty's PTO (LEAF) meetings for updates and to provide collaborative feedback throughout the process.

It is essential that Pittsburgh Liberty establishes and maintains a safe and effective learning environment for every student. Rules and clear expectations for every area of the school will be reviewed frequently with all students at the beginning of the school year and revisited, as necessary.

We will emphasize the positive in motivating and supporting students to make good choices and sustain a productive learning environment. We will also follow Pittsburgh Public School District's Code of Conduct and Prohibition of Bullying/Harassment Policy.

While our posted rules vary by area (hallway, bathroom, cafeteria, etc.), the following are the general schoolwide expectations we encourage you to review with your child:

- Respect: Keep your hands, feet, and unkind words to yourself.
- Responsibility: Walk in line order.
- Come to class prepared with all your required materials and homework.
- Personal electronics (e.g., cell phones) cannot be visible and must be turned off.
- Reputation: Build a positive reputation by being respectful and responsible.
- Dress in appropriate attire.

Daily Behavior Management

All classrooms at Pittsburgh Liberty will use a system to monitor student conduct throughout each school day. Each classroom teacher will enforce school-wide rules and

expectations along with any unique rules for their classroom or content area. Each teacher will share more specific details and procedures with students and families. When students fail to meet expectations there is a consistent set of actions in which teachers will respond. If students are making good choices and meeting or exceeding expectations, then they may receive a privilege or other positive recognition. If a student is making poor choices and/or not responding to redirection, then the teacher might intervene by re-teaching the procedure/expectation, using a restorative approach. Pittsburgh Liberty staff will constantly strive to provide effective interventions that uplift the dignity of each student, restore relationships, and promote a safe and respectful learning environment.

School-Wide Acknowledgement System

Soaring Eagles' Club: Students who meet or exceed Pittsburgh Liberty's Expectations may earn a Soaring Eagle Ticket. When a student receives a Soaring Eagle Ticket, the student's name is posted outside of the main office and a postcard is mailed home to families. Students also have an opportunity to win a bigger prize based on a raffle.

Wayfinder Program—Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Pittsburgh Liberty K-5 is implementing the Wayfinder Program to build confidence, adaptability, and purpose. Wayfinder's six research-based Core Skills connect classroom learning to the future-ready skills needed to succeed in the real world. Our goal is to create a powerful and positive school climate.

Field Trips

Pittsburgh Liberty staff believe that learning experiences outside the classroom through field trips are an essential element of our instructional program. When students participate in field trips, Pittsburgh Liberty will plan engaging trips to reinforce skills and concepts being taught in the classrooms.

To participate in a field trip, students must have a signed permission slip from their parent or guardian and meet the eligibility requirements. On the day of the field trip permission over the phone will not be accepted.

The staff has the discretion to determine if your child needs a parental chaperone to attend. If this is the case, the parental chaperone is responsible for his/her/their child during the entire field trip. We welcome parent volunteers to assist during field trips, and teachers will send out requests prior to the field trip. Volunteers must have clearances on file in the main office prior to the field trip.

VISITORS

Scheduling of Appointments: For the safety and health of our students and staff, visitors are not permitted in the building without a previously scheduled appointment.

Reporting to the Office School

- Visitors must enter the building using the main entrance located on Elmer Street.
- Visitors must report directly to the main office and inform the school secretary of the purpose of their visit.
- Visitors are required to sign in the visitors' log and wear a visitor's badge.
- Visitors must go directly to the predetermined area of the school.
- Upon completion of the visit, visitors are expected to sign out and return the badge to the main office.

Types of School Visitations/Observations

1. Participate in a meeting to discuss school/student issues
2. Parent/guardian classroom observation Observations must have an educational purpose
 - Observations are limited to one class period unless otherwise previously arranged
 - No more than two (2) parents/guardians at one time are permitted to observe in a classroom
 - Parents/guardians must refrain from reprimanding or commenting on another child
 - Videos and photographs are strictly prohibited
3. Tutoring and volunteering
 - Tutoring and volunteering must be arranged beforehand with the teachers
 - Volunteers must have Act 34 (state police) and 151 (child abuse) clearances

Audio, Video Recording or Photographs

Visitors are not permitted to photograph, record audio, or videotape any person or any part of the building or to record any conversation or non-public meeting (i.e. parent teacher conferences, IEP meetings, etc.) or event without the express consent of the school principal and each individual meeting/conversation participant. Visitors may be allowed to record or videotape school performances for personal use only.

For the safety of students and staff, all visitors are required to report to the main office to sign in. To learn more about the Raptor Visitor Management System, visit the [Raptor Visitor Management System website](#).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Emergency Plan

Each school in the district has adopted specific plans and procedures to ensure the safety of your child for a wide range of potential emergencies or crises. A key component of our plans includes communication with the families of our students. Automated phone messages will be sent in the event of an evacuation and/or the need for an early dismissal. It is critical that we have accurate phone numbers listed in our computer system to make these important automated calls.

Our alternative site is the Shadyside Boys and Girls Club located a few blocks away. In an emergency, you can pick up your child by reporting to a Sign-In table by grade level in a designated area. You will be instructed to complete a Reunification Form and present photo identification. A staff member will safely escort your child to your location.

School Safety

To ensure the safety of all students, staff and visitors, Pittsburgh Liberty follows the district's visitor procedures outlined below and has a comprehensive school safety plan. The safety plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of staff in the event of a school-based or external issue/emergency. In addition, throughout the year, students participate in various safety drills to ensure students and staff are prepared in the event of an emergency. Safety drills may include, but is not limited to, fire, lockdown, bus, and severe weather.

In an emergency, School Police or Pittsburgh City Police may recommend Pittsburgh Liberty be placed in a modified lockdown, full lockdown or evacuate to an alternative site. The procedures for these actions are listed below.

Modified Lockdown: A modified lockdown means that normal instructional activities continue as much as possible; however, no outside events, field trips or outside activities occur unless explicitly cleared by School Police. While in modified lockdown, entry and exit to the school will be restricted, and only individuals with a pre-existing appointment can enter the school facility. A modified lockdown may be called when there is a community issue that is external to the school and not directed at the school.

Full Lockdown: In the event of a lockdown, all exterior doors and windows will be locked and no one aside from emergency/ administrative crisis team personnel will be permitted to enter or exit the school facility. During full lockdown, students will be kept safe in individual secured classrooms during the event and are not permitted to go outside or attend outside activities or field trips. School Police or school leadership will place a school on full lockdown to minimize student/staff exposure to a potential threat. For

example, this procedure may be used when City of Pittsburgh Police or School Police warn the school of a fugitive in the neighborhood or when a threat has been received by the school.

Evacuations

Evacuations may occur in the case of a threat, fire or other event making the school building unsafe. Students and staff will be evacuated to a designated evacuation site when leaving the building is the safest alternative. Pittsburgh Liberty evacuation site is Shadyside Boys and Girls Club located at 6 Brownell Place, Pittsburgh PA 15232. In the event of an evacuation, attendance is taken to assure all staff and students are out of the building and arrive at the designation site safely. The following standard reunification plan will be implemented to ensure all students are safely returned to their families. During a reunification, families are directed to:

- Bring a valid form of Identification (ID)
- Follow signage and parking directions of reunification location.
- Complete the provided reunification form.
- Choose the check-in line that corresponds to your student's grade.
- Provide school personnel at the check-in table with a valid photo ID and the completed reunification form.
- Wait patiently as a District staff member retrieves and escorts your student to you.

Only approved adults with valid photo identification will be allowed to pick-up students from the evacuation location.

Communication with Families During an Emergency

If Pittsburgh Liberty is placed on a modified lockdown, full lockdown or is required to evacuate to an alternative site, an attempt will be made by personnel at Pittsburgh Liberty or the District to contact families as quickly as possible through the phone messaging system. This communication will occur when the school emergency occurs and again when the emergency is resolved or information has changed. For this reason, it is important to complete all paperwork at the beginning of each school year and contact the school anytime primary or emergency contact information changes.

- While it is important for us to quickly update parents, it is also important that the information we send is accurate. Please be aware that emergency situations are fluid and always changing, and that information received from non-District sources such as the news media and social media may be inaccurate. Depending on the type of emergency, the district may also utilize its website, Facebook, and twitter accounts to provide timely information to families.

- In addition to a phone call, an additional notice may be sent home with students or emailed to families. The notice may include other information as appropriate such as lunch changes, transportation adjustments and extra-curricular and co-curricular activity modifications.
- When receiving a phone call that Pittsburgh Liberty has been directed to be placed on a modified lockdown, full lockdown or has been evacuated, please remain calm and do not attempt to come to the school. We understand that the first reaction of many families is to come to the school, however, families should wait until they are advised that it is safe to pick up their child. Families arriving unadvised to the school may hinder the emergency response and could jeopardize their safety. In extreme cases, law enforcement can arrest anyone who they determine is compromising their efforts.
- If your child calls or texts you during a school emergency, please encourage him or her to remain calm and follow the directions of the teachers and staff. Also encourage your child not to post information to social media sites as it can lead to misinformation and confusion.

The District has strong partnerships with local law enforcement and will work with City of Pittsburgh Police to respond quickly to potential threats and ensure student and staff safety. Please contact the main office if you have any questions regarding these procedures.

The District reserves the right to deny an individual entry to any school building, when there is reason to believe that the individual's presence would be detrimental to the operation of the school and the learning environment.

Keeping Primary/Emergency Contact Information Up to Date

Please remember to ensure your primary and emergency contact information is always up to date. Having working telephone numbers is important for staff at Pittsburgh Liberty to reach you or your designated family or friends in an emergency with your child or at the school. Please share our visitor procedures and school safety information with all the individuals you designate as an emergency contact. A child's emergency contact is responsible for picking up their child if you or your child's additional guardian is unavailable. As a school, we take the releasing of any child to an unknown adult very seriously. Therefore, it is important to make sure each of your child's emergency contacts know the following when visiting our school.

- Must show proof of identification. A child will not be released to an individual that does not show proper identification or if the identification does not match the information in the district's student information system.

- Must understand the Pittsburgh Public School District's visitor procedures. All visitors must go to the main entrance of the school building. With the current health and safety protocols currently in place, a staff member will meet you at the door with your child. When visitors are permitted to enter the building, all visitors must sign in at the main office. No visitors are permitted to visit classrooms or walk in the hallways or primary areas of the school without signing in.
- Must understand District's Reunification procedures and know child's school reunification location. Each school has an alternative location for pick-up in the event of a school-based emergency. Any individual wishing to pick up a child from an alternative location must be listed as parent/guardian or emergency contact and must show proof of identification.

Parent Community School Council (P.S.C.C.)

Pittsburgh Liberty encourages all parents and families to become partners in their child's education. A way for parents and families to participate at the school level is through our school's Parent School Community Council (P.S.C.C). P.S.C.C. meetings are monthly opportunities to discuss important topics related to our school and provide advice to the leadership of the school. PSCC meetings will be held in-person in the school library and/or

Liberty Elementary Academic Fund (LEAF)

Liberty Elementary Academic Fund (LEAF) is the parent-teacher organization for Pittsburgh Liberty K-5. LEAF is a 501(c)3 organization formed in 2014 by the parents and teachers of Pittsburgh Liberty K-5. LEAF's mission is to support the students, teachers, and families at Liberty K-5 through fundraising, volunteering, and community events. LEAF's fundraising provides necessary classroom supplies, supplemental educational tools, field trips, and extracurricular activities.

Chaperone, Classroom Volunteers

Anyone who supervises or works with students, including chaperoning and volunteering, must submit clearances to the main office. Visitors, chaperones, and volunteers will only be permitted to enter the school if they have pre-scheduled appointments. For more information, please visit pghschools.org/volunteering.

All volunteers and chaperones must submit the following to the main office:

- In-Take Form for volunteers
- PA State Criminal History Report (obtained online; FREE for volunteers)

Nondiscrimination Notices

Pittsburgh Public Schools offers all programs and activities without discrimination based on race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, gender (including gender identity or expression), sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, or disability. School sponsored programs and activities shall be made available on an equal basis to all individuals, consistent with state and federal law. For more information regarding nondiscrimination policies of the district, to report a violation, or file a complainant, contact the District's Title IX Compliance Officer or Designee." (Student Code of Conduct).

Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs, Services for Protected Handicapped Students, and Services for Gifted Students (Mt. Oliver Intermediate Unit)

The School District of Pittsburgh provides the following annual notice regarding child find responsibilities to parents and families residing within the School District in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. School districts, intermediate units (IUs) and charter schools are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) and 22 Pa. Code Chapter 14 as well as those who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and 22 Pa. Code Chapter 15. For additional information related to special education and related services, parents may refer to the IDEA and its implementing regulations, Chapter 14, and the Basic Education Circulars relating to special education. For additional information related to Section 504/Chapter 15 services, the parent may refer to Section 504, Chapter 15, and the Basic Education Circular entitled Implementation of Chapter 15. Also, school districts are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for gifted services via 22 Pa. Code Chapter 16. For additional information regarding gifted services, the parent may refer to 22 Pa. Code Chapter 16. If a student is both gifted and eligible for special education, the procedures in IDEA and Chapter 14 shall take precedence.

This notice shall inform parents throughout the School District of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh-Mt. Oliver Intermediate Unit, and charter schools of the child identification activities and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities and eligible young children. In addition to this public notice, the school district, intermediate unit, and charter schools shall publish written information in the handbook and on the web site (www.pghschools.org). Children ages three through twenty one can be eligible for special education programs and services. If parents believe that the child may be eligible for special education, the parent should contact the appropriate staff member identified at the end of this public notice.

Identification activities are performed to find a child who is suspected of having a disability that would interfere with his or her learning unless special education programs and services are made available. These activities are sometimes called screening activities. The activities include: review of group data, conducting hearing and vision screening, assessment of student's academic functioning, observation of the student displaying difficulty in behavior and determining the student's response to attempted remediation. Input from parents is also an information source for identification. After a child is identified as a suspected child with a disability, he or she is evaluated, but is not evaluated before parents give permission for their child to be evaluated.

The School District of Pittsburgh will be providing ongoing screening services. If you wish to learn more, have questions, or believe your child may need to be identified, please contact your child's school Principal. For further assistance, please contact Pittsburgh Public Schools Program for Students with Exceptionalities at 412-529-3132.

Children age three through the age of admission to first grade are also eligible if they have developmental delays and, as a result, need special education and related services. Developmental delay is defined as a child who is less than the age of beginners and at least 3 years of age and is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (i) The child's score, on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas. (ii) The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional and self-help. For additional information you may contact the Early Intervention Office of the Pittsburgh Public Schools at 412.323.3960.

The Child Find Mandate: What Does It Mean To You?

wrightslaw.com/info/child.find.mandate.html

Is Your Child Having Difficulty in School?: A Guide to Communicating with Staff

The 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. Inquiries may be directed to the Title IX Coordinator or the Section 504/ADA Title II Coordinator at 341 Bellfield Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 or 412.529.HELP (4357).

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 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)