



Pittsburgh Phillips 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.

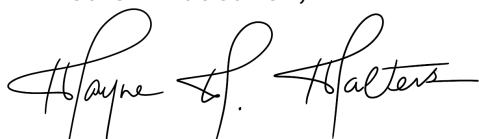
A successful school year is built on strong partnerships between schools, families, and the community. We know that students achieve more when the adults in their lives work together to support their learning and well-being. We invite you to stay engaged by attending school events, participating in Parent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

Welcome to the 2026–2027 School Year!

Dear Phillips Elementary Families,



Welcome to another exciting school year at Phillips Elementary! Whether you are returning to our Falcon Family or joining us for the first time, we are thrilled to partner with you in supporting your child's academic, social, and emotional growth. At Phillips, we believe that every student deserves a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment where they can thrive. Our dedicated staff remains committed to putting students first, fostering meaningful relationships, and providing high-quality learning experiences that challenge, inspire, and empower every child to reach their full potential.

As we begin the 2026–2027 school year, we look forward to building upon the strong traditions that make Phillips such a special place while embracing new opportunities for growth and innovation. Together, we will continue to create a school culture rooted in respect, kindness, collaboration, and a shared commitment to excellence.

This handbook serves as a resource to help families understand our school procedures, expectations, and programs. I encourage you to review it carefully and keep it available throughout the year. Strong communication between home and school is essential to student success, and we value the partnership we share with our families.

Thank you for entrusting us with your children each day. It is an honor to serve as principal of Phillips Elementary, and I look forward to another year of learning, growth, and celebration together.

Here's to a wonderful 2026–2027 school year!

Best,

Mrs. Dana Boesenberg

Principal, Phillips Elementary K-5

SCHOOL INFORMATION



Pittsburgh Phillips K-5

1901 Sarah St, Pittsburgh, PA 15203

Phone: (412) 529-5190

Fax: (412) 488-4200

Office Email: Imcmanus1@pghschools.org

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

Phillips Staff Directory

School Colors

Blue and White

School Mascot

Falcon

School Motto

Level Up

STAFF ROSTER

Principal	Dana Boesenberg (dboesenberg1@pghschools.org)
Project Assistant	Michael Russell (mrussell2@pghschools.org)
School Social Worker	Stephanie Cohen (scohen1@pghschools.org)
Secretary, SDSS	Irene McManus (imcmanus1@pghschools.org), Dannell Russell (drussell1@pghschools.org)
Nurse	Vacancy

VISION AND MISSION

Vision

At Pittsburgh Phillips Elementary K–5, we envision a safe and inclusive learning community where all students soar to their highest potential. Through rigorous academics, Spanish language learning, and meaningful multicultural experiences, students develop into lifelong learners, creative thinkers, and responsible contributors to their communities.

Mission

The student-centered staff at Phillips Elementary K–5 is committed to fostering the academic, social, and emotional growth of every student. We provide a safe, caring, and well-managed learning environment that offers diverse and engaging educational experiences. By nurturing strong character, critical thinking, and academic excellence, we empower students with the skills and confidence needed to succeed in school and in life.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Contacting the School

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

Social Media

The Falcon Familia uses social media to share school news and to provide important reminders. Follow us for photos, updates, and event highlights throughout the school year.

Facebook: Falcon Familia (Phillips Parent Reacher Organization)

Newsletter

Our school newsletter/calendar is sent monthly and includes important dates, school news, classroom highlights, and resources for families. Newsletters will be shared via hard copy and posted on our school website.

Talking Points

Phillips Elementary uses Talking Points to send quick updates, reminders, and messages directly to families in their preferred language. This is one of our primary communication tools, especially for individual and classroom messages.

Blackboard Connect

The school communicates with families via Blackboard Phone Communication System. Please be sure the school has an up-to-date phone number to insure you receive these communications. To update your contact information at any time, please contact the SDSS at 412-529-5190.

Our school's official website is pghschools.org/phillips. Families can access all information, news, calendars, forms, resources, and more. The Falcon Familia operates the Facebook page, which is another great way to keep up to date on what's going on at Phillips.

BELL SCHEDULES

Staff Meetings: 8:35 am – 9:00 am

Breakfast: 9:00 am – 9:20 am

Daily Schedule		Half Day	Two-Hour Delay
Homeroom	9:00 -9:20	9:00-9:20	11:00-11:20
Focus Groups	9:20-9:50	9:20-9:50	
Period 1	9:50-10:35	9:50-10:35	11:20-12:05
Period 2	10:35-11:20		
Period 3	11:20-12:05		
Period 4 K-2 lunch	12:05-12:50	10:35-11:20	12:05-12:50
Period 5 3-5 lunch	12:50-1:35	11:20-12:05	12:50-1:35
Period 6	1:35-2:20		1:35-2:20
Period 7	2:20-3:05		2:20 – 3:05
Period 8	3:05-3:50		3:05-3:50
Dismissal	3:55 pm	12:25pm	3:55 pm

Remote learning days will follow the school's regular daily bell schedule. Students are expected to log in and participate in each class according to the same schedule they follow during in-person instruction.

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

Absences

Per the Pittsburgh Public Schools Code of Student Conduct, an absence is excused for the following reasons:

- Illness or injuries which make the student physically unable to attend school
- Health Care—including doctor visits, emergency care, and/or quarantine.
- Bereavement and/or family funeral
- Religious Holidays and Religious Instruction
- Weather Emergency. If school is not canceled, a written explanation must be provided within three days. The principal will review for approval.
- School-Approved Activities—Includes field trips, service learning, assemblies, support groups, mentoring, and tutoring.
- Other Principal Approved Excusals— Principal may excuse attendance for educational vacations, counseling/support groups, social service agency appointments. A request for educational absences should be submitted in writing to the principal in advance of a trip for approval. The request should indicate what educational activities the student will complete. The student and family should also work with the teacher to complete make-up work.

Students are permitted 10 excused absences during a school year.

Unexcused/Excessive Absences

Parents are required to submit a written note to the teacher for all excused absences. The school may request documentation where appropriate.

Please note the following PPS policies and procedures regarding unexcused absences for all students at Pittsburgh Phillips as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct:

- Legal Notices shall be sent to all students of compulsory school attendance after each instance of Unlawful and Unexcused Absence.
- After 3 Unlawful or Unexcused Absences, the parent will be required to schedule an appointment with the Social Worker and create a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP).
- If additional unexcused absences continue a citation may be filed with the local magistrate.

Tardiness

Promptness to school is very important. Students who arrive late miss beginning of the day routines and valuable instructional time. Arriving even 10 minutes late can cause stress on a student and disrupt their learning and the learning of others. Please make every effort to arrive at school on time.

- Students are admitted into the school at 9:00 AM. Students who are not present and accounted for by 9:20 AM will be counted as tardy.
- Parents should walk their child to the main entrance doors when tardy.
- The student will then take their tardy note to be given to their teacher.
- Teachers are required to keep a record of tardiness. If a student is habitually tardy a parent conference will be scheduled, and further interventions may take place to solve the issue.

Leaving School Early/Arriving Late

- Medical appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours. However, students may leave with a parent for these appointments with prior notice to your child's teacher. Please send your child's teacher a note stating when your child will be checked out.
- If arriving late, please escort your student to the office, where they receive a late slip to be admitted to class.
- If your child has an early dismissal, please check your child out through the office before 3:30 p.m. EARLY DISMISSALS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED AFTER 3:30 pm.
- The office staff will meet you at the door and will bring your child to you. All students must be signed out through the main office.
- Only parents/guardians are permitted to pick up students. All other adults must be given written permission through the Emergency Care Form

ACADEMICS

The academic programs at Pittsburgh Phillips ensure that all students have access to rigorous content in all of their classes. The culture of learning at Pittsburgh Phillips motivates all students to develop a growth mindset so every student can achieve excellence.

Below you will find a summary of the academic course offerings and programs that are offered at Pittsburgh Phillips. Staff members will send home information regarding specific course information for your child at the start of every school year.

Course Offerings

The following curricula are used at Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 School: Open Court Literacy, Illustrative Math, and Carolina Science.

- Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 students who are eligible for special education services are supported through the Program for Students with Exceptionalities.
- Speech and Language services are available for eligible students.
- Students in grades 3-5 attend departmentalized classes.
- Spanish, Art, Music, PE, and Library are available for all students.
- Kindergarten students will receive an IPAD. Students in 1st through 5th grade will receive a laptop for instruction.
- Students can sign up for an instrumental music class in 4th and 5th grade.

Academic Expectations

One consistent finding of academic research is that high expectations are the most reliable driver of high student achievement. We have high expectations of academic achievement for all our students. This means that we will expect students to come to school ready to learn and to do their best. We will require staff to differentiate approaches and strategies to meet students' needs. We need families and caregivers to support these goals by ensuring that your student:

1. Attends school daily and arrives on time, ready for the day's learning experience
2. Completes all homework assignments given by teachers

Reads daily to develop a love for reading and to improve literacy skills

The academic programs at Pittsburgh Phillips ensure that all students have access to rigorous content in all of their classes. The culture of learning at Pittsburgh Phillips motivates all students to develop a growth mindset so every student can achieve excellence.

Below you will find a summary of the academic course offerings and programs that are offered at Pittsburgh Phillips. Staff members will send home information regarding specific course information for your child at the start of every school year.

Homework at Phillips

In Pittsburgh Public Schools, there is an expectation that teachers provide students with homework to reinforce skills already taught, prepare them for class discussions, extend learning to new situations, or apply a variety of skills to a specific task. Homework is also a way for parents to review the learning in which their children are engaged. Teachers review homework to understand how their students can perform outside of the classroom. As students move up the grades and especially in high school, homework is often a significant part of student learning. At the elementary level, homework is 10% of each student's grade. Therefore, it is important that students develop the habits necessary for completing homework at the elementary level. Please refer to your child's individual teachers to understand their practices on assigning homework.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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. Consequences for violating the academic integrity policy are outlined in the student code of conduct.

Links to all referenced Pittsburgh Public Schools Board Policies are included in the Appendix of this handbook. Families are encouraged to review the full policies for detailed information and procedures.

ATHLETICS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Phillips Elementary offers various opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular programs throughout the school year. Programs are scheduled either before or after school hours. Extracurricular programs may include but not limited to: Climbing Club, Strong Women Strong Girls (grades 3-5), Little Dribblers (grades K-2), Junior Dribblers (grades 3-5). Interscholastic Programs include; Before School Intramurals Program, 4th and 5th Grade Track and Basketball. Phillips Elementary also hosts programs from outside organizations which may include but are not limited to: Soccer Shots, Out of the Box Science Club and the Annual Marble Tournament. Student sign-up and program specific information will be sent home with students prior to the start of each activity.

Each school year, prior to participation in an athletic activity, every student athlete and their parent/ guardian shall sign and return the acknowledgement of receipt and review of the following:

1. Concussion and Traumatic Brain Injury Information Sheet.
2. Sudden Cardiac Arrest Symptoms and Warning Signs Information Sheet.

DRESS CODE

Phillips Elementary K-5 adheres to the district standard for dress code outlined in the student code of conduct. Students are expected to wear school appropriate clothing. Please click the link above to access our District's Dress Code Policy.

For safety and participation in physical education classes, students must wear closed-toe, rubber-soled sneakers on gym days. Sandals, boots, slip-ons, or shoes with heels are not permitted during physical education classes.

Links to all referenced Pittsburgh Public Schools Board Policies are included in the Appendix of this handbook. Families are encouraged to review the full policies for detailed information and procedures.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

In accordance with Pittsburgh Public Schools Board Policy 216, students are prohibited from possessing or using electronic devices during the school day while on District property. The definition of an electronic device is outlined within Board Policy 216.

To ensure compliance with this policy, all student electronic devices brought to school must be collected and secured for the duration of the instructional day.

Storage Procedure

Upon arrival each morning, students will turn in all electronic devices to their homeroom teacher. Devices will be collected and stored in the classroom throughout the school day. Devices will remain inaccessible to students during school hours and will be returned to students at dismissal.

Students who fail to turn-in an electronic device, possess a device during the school day, or use a device while on school property will be subject to the consequences outlined in Board Policy 216 and the Code of Student Conduct. Families are encouraged to review the policy for detailed information regarding violations and associated disciplinary procedures.

Links to all referenced Pittsburgh Public Schools Board Policies are included in the Appendix of this handbook. Families are encouraged to review the full policies for detailed information and procedures.

GRADING

Methods For Communicating Academic Progress With Families

Phillips Elementary utilizes different methods to keep families informed of their child's progress in all of their classes. Below you will find the different methods the staff will utilize to keep you informed of your child's progress.

Home Access Center (HAC)

Parents can view real-time information through a convenient web portal anywhere and at any time to review the following information regarding their child:

- Schedules
- Attendance
- Student Grades on classroom assignments, quizzes, tests, and homework.

Families are encouraged to check their child's HAC account on a regular basis. If you need information on accessing your child's account, please call our SDSS, Mrs. Russell in the main office.

Report Cards

The report card is the most familiar way of communicating student progress. Report cards are issued four times during the school year at approximately nine-week intervals. The letter grades A, B, C, D and E are used to indicate academic progress. A citizenship mark is also given for the students' behavior in each class. Citizenship marks are represented by the letters O for outstanding; S for satisfactory; and U for needs improvement.

Students will receive quarterly report cards in November, January, April and June.

Interim Progress Reports

Communication between teachers and parents is critical, and keeping parents informed of their child's performance is accomplished in many ways. One of these ways is the use of Interim Progress Reports. At the mid-point of each of the four grading periods, teachers will evaluate student progress. Students will receive quarterly interim (progress) reports in October, December, March and May.

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.

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

Pittsburgh Public Schools believes that homework serves as an important extension of classroom learning. Homework may be assigned to reinforce skills and concepts that have already been taught, prepare students for upcoming instruction, extend learning to new situations, or provide opportunities to apply knowledge and skills independently. Homework also offers families valuable insight into the learning experiences and expectations of the classroom.

Teachers use homework as one of several tools to monitor student understanding and assess how students apply their learning outside of the school setting. As students progress through the grades, particularly into middle and high school, independent work and homework become increasingly important components of academic success.

At the elementary level, homework accounts for 10% of a student's overall grade. Developing strong organizational skills, responsibility, and consistent homework habits during the elementary years helps prepare students for future academic expectations.

Because homework practices may vary by grade level and classroom, families are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher regarding specific homework expectations, procedures, and grading practices.

HEALTH SERVICES

Each school year, you are required to provide the school with updated medical information regarding your child via the emergency care form. You will receive the emergency contact form in the opening year packet of information.

The “Emergency Care Form” offers the opportunity for all parents to authorize the school nurse practitioner to administer certain over-the-counter medicines to their children as needed through the current school year. We cannot allow the school nurse to administer over the counter medication without your written permission.

Please contact the school nurse as soon as possible if your child needs to take a specific type of medication throughout the school year. All medications must be turned into the nurse. Students are not permitted to carry medication on them.

Medication Forms

Medication: There is a one-page form used in all Pittsburgh Public Schools, requesting both parent’s and physician’s signatures, for medication to be administered at school. This signed form is valid for the current school year only and will need to be completed before any medication can be administered at the school. This Consent for Administration of Medication and Medical Order can be found on the PPS website under - Supporting Students - Health Services - Student Health Forms – Consent - Administration of Medicine. You may also pick one up at the school.

Allergies

Students with a documented Food Allergy, Allergy to Insect Bite/Sting, or an Allergy to Latex need to have an Anaphylactic Allergy Action Plan, completed, and signed by both the physician and parent. Rescue medication such as Epi-Pens and Benadryl need to be provided by the parent and will be kept throughout the school year in the main office for emergencies. All necessary forms are available at the school and the PPS website. Please return completed forms and prescribed medications to the school.

Students who need accommodations for food allergies or have food restrictions will receive a Medical Plan of Care for School Food Service. This form needs to be completed by a physician and by the parent. Please return the completed form to the school.

Asthma

Students with active Asthma need to provide the school with an inhaler to be used either for treatment or as a rescue medication. Again, consent for administration of medication and a medical order signed by parent and physician is necessary.

The “Emergency Care Form” offers the opportunity for all parents to authorize the school nurse practitioner to administer certain over-the-counter medicines to their children as needed through the current school year. We cannot allow the school nurse to administer over the counter medication without your written permission.

If you have any questions regarding the information above, please contact Nurse Schultz.

Immunization Requirements

Effective July 2008, but enacted on September 30, 2009, the Allegheny County Health Department mandated that all public, private, parochial, cyber and home-school students in Allegheny County will not be permitted to attend school without proof of receiving the required immunizations.

Immunizations required for students in all grades K-12:

- 4 doses of tetanus vaccine (1 dose must have been given on or after the 4th birthday) Note: If series is started after 7 years of age, only 3 doses are required.
- 4 doses of diphtheria vaccine (1 dose must have been given on or after the 4th birthday) Note: If series is started after 7 years of age, only 3 doses are required.
- 4 doses of polio vaccine (Dose 4 is not necessary if dose 3 was administered at age 4 or older and at least 6 months after the previous dose)
- 2 doses of measles, mumps, rubella vaccine (Usually given as MMR)
- 3 doses of hepatitis B vaccine (Dose 2 must be given at least 1 month after the dose 1. Dose 3 must be given at least 2 months after dose 2 and at least 4 – 6 months after dose 1.
- 2 doses of varicella vaccine, or written statement from physician/designee indicating month and year of disease or serologic proof of immunity

It is very important that students receive all required immunizations. Students that do not have the doses listed above must receive the required dose within the first five days of school or risk exclusion. If the next dose is not the final dose of a series, parents must provide a medical plan within the first five days of school. Children failing to show official documentation or a medical plan within the first five days of school will be unable to attend school.

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](#).

We are pleased to offer our students at Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) a safe, stable, relevant and productive technical experience with the use of all district technologies. Students and their families must follow the guidelines established for appropriate care and use of all district technologies. Misuse of PPS equipment may result in the withdrawal of this privilege at the school's discretion. Intentional or neglectful disregard for equipment resulting in damage or loss will be the responsibility of the student and their family. Inappropriate use may result in cancellation of permission to use district equipment which could have academic repercussions. We ask that each student and family take the use of district equipment seriously as the benefits of a contemporary learning environment have a wide range of benefits for the learner, as well as the learner's family and school community. Students are asked to bring their charged device to school each day.

Every student in PPS will have access to the district computer network resources, electronic mail and the Internet. To use these resources, all students must sign and return this form to acknowledge the PPS Acceptable Use Policy. Please review the PPS Information Technology/Acceptable Use Policy by clicking on the link above.

Guidelines: General Use

- **DO NOT** Change the local configuration of the desktop, laptop or tablet
- **DO NOT** deface or change the physical appearance of any district device
- **DO NOT** use any logon and password other than your User Account
- Users are not allowed to do the following unless given permission by an administrator:
 - Store and/or install files on the laptop including Freeware, shareware, public domain, or any other software
 - Install and / or play personal music, videos, or games
 - Use unauthorized programs installed on the laptop
- Report any damage – accidental or not, immediately
- **DO NOT** attempt to bypass PPS security or content filtering at any time.
- Food and drink may not be consumed next to or near a PPS device at any time

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

SAP is a systemic process using techniques to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. The core of the program is a professionally trained team, including school staff and liaisons from community alcohol and drug and mental health agencies. SAP team members are trained to identify problems, determine whether or not the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school and to make recommendations to assist the student and the parent. When the problem lies beyond the scope of the school, the SAP team will assist the parent and student so they may access services within the community. The student assistance team members do not diagnose, treat or refer to treatment; but they may refer for a screening or an assessment for treatment. Phillips Elementary's SAP team meets weekly. For more information regarding the SAP Program, please contact Ms. Cohen, Social Worker.

Bullying

A Shared Responsibility Model in Bullying Prevention

All parents want their children healthy and safe in our schools. In Pittsburgh Public Schools community, we share the vision and responsibility of ensuring that our schools are orderly, that peer to peer interactions are healthy, that problem behaviors are reported and addressed promptly using our policies and procedures, and that our teaching and learning environments are positive and nurturing.

Through the vision of a shared responsibility model, each and every parent, child, school professional, community partner, and school volunteer has a role to play in making sure that our school environments and activities are respectful and welcoming.

Over the last decade, one behavior that has gripped the attention of school boards, law enforcement officials, parents and so many others across America is bullying.

Bullying is defined as intentional, aggressive behavior[s] that may be verbal, physical, written or electronic, aimed at another student or students, for the purpose of creating fear or intimidation by harming physically, mentally or emotionally. It may be direct or indirect, with face-to-face interactions or by spreading rumors, sharing inappropriate pictures or demeaning a student using social media.

Reporting and Investigation of Bullying / Harassment

Students and others who have been the victim of, or have information about, bullying or harassment are strongly encouraged to make a report to the school. A teacher, counselor, school social worker or school administrator will field complaints and ensure that they are

properly addressed under the District's Bullying & Harassment Policy and administrative procedures.

School Based Mental Health Partnership

Pittsburgh Westwood does have an established school based mental health partnership that can provide services at the school. If you are interested in more information regarding this program, please contact Ms. Cohen, Social Worker.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

MTSS is an early intervention strategy used at Phillips Elementary. It is a comprehensive, multi- tiered, standards aligned strategy to enable early identification and intervention for students at academic or behavioral risk. MTSS may be considered as one alternative to the aptitude- achievement discrepancy model for the identification of students with learning disabilities after the establishment of specific progress measures.

MTSS allows educators to identify and address academic and behavioral difficulties prior to student failure. Monitoring student response to a series of increasingly intense interventions assists in preventing failure and provides data that may guide eligibility decisions for learning disabilities. The goal of MTSS is to improve student achievement using research-based interventions matched to the instructional need and level of the student.

Core Characteristics of MTSS

- **Standards aligned instruction:** All students receive high quality, research-based instruction in the general education standards aligned system.
- **Universal Screening:** All students are screened to determine academic and behavior status against grade-level benchmarks.
- **Shared Ownership:** All staff (general education teachers, special education teachers, Title I, ESL) assume an active role in students' assessment and instruction in the standards aligned system.
- **Data-Based Decision Making:** Student performance data is analyzed to guide school decisions on instructional changes, choices of interventions, and appropriate rates of progress.
- **Progress Monitoring:** Continuous monitoring of student performance and use of data to determine intervention effectiveness and drive instructional adjustments, and to identify/measure student progress toward instructional and grade-level goals.

- **Benchmark and Outcome Assessment:** Student progress is assessed periodically throughout the year, and at the end of the year against grade level benchmarks and standards.
- **Tiered Intervention and Service Delivery System:** Some students receive increasing intense levels of targeted scientifically, research-based interventions. Instruction is differentiated to meet learner needs and consists of:
- **Research-Based Interventions:** Interventions with proven effectiveness are matched to students' level of need.
- **Flexible grouping:** Students move among flexible instructional groups.
- **Fidelity of Implementation:** Teachers deliver curriculum and program content and use instructional strategies in the same way that they were designed to be used and delivered.
- **Parental Engagement:** Parents receive information regarding their child's needs, including:
 - a description of the specific intervention and who is delivering instruction,
 - clearly stated intervention goals and academic progress expected for their child,
 - regular progress or lack of progress reports, and
 - the right to request a special education evaluation at any time.

To read more about Education for Children and youth Experiencing Homelessness please visit pghschools.org/Page/5130.

To read more information regarding PPS student services, please visit pghschools.org/studentservices.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS/PROCEDURES

Student Behavior Management

To learn more about the PPS Code of Conduct, please click on the link above. The PPS Code of Conduct includes some changes and continues to represent a shift in thinking regarding student behavior and discipline. Phillips Elementary is committed to providing appropriate and non-exclusionary responses to student misbehavior and rules violations.

Phillips will continue to use SWPBIS (School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) and Restorative Practices to enforce expectations and teach appropriate behavior.

Response to student misbehavior at Phillips will be restorative, reflective, and instructional. Every effort will be made to keep students in class. Lunch and after-school time may be assigned consequently and to implement appropriate interventions.

Student behavior data is tracked and reviewed regularly. MTSS is also utilized to monitor progress and adjust students' behavior plans. Parents are an important part of this process and are critical to success.

SWPBIS and Restorative Practices

The PPS Prek-5 Code of Conduct describes PBIS and Restorative Practices extensively. Resources describing how each is used at Phillips Elementary are available through the school and will be distributed to families during the school year and at PSCC meetings.

Phillips Elementary K-5 PBIS Matrix

	Hallways	Morning Meeting & Assembly	Breakfast & Lunch	Recess	Bus & Bus Line	Restroom	Classroom
Be Respectful	Voices Off Respect personal space Quiet lockers	Give me 5 Participate	Quiet voices Respect personal space Use kind words Give me 5	Use kind words Take turns and follow directions Be a good sport	Use kind words Listen to the driver Quiet voices	Voices Off Keep bathroom clean	Follow the directions the first time Eyes and ears on the speaker
Be Responsible	Walk under the lights Line order Have a Pass	Stay in your area Put your belongings away	Stay in your area Bring what you need Clean up your area	Be a problem solver Line up when called Quiet, walking feet back to class	Stay in your area while waiting for bus Wait for your bus to be called	F.L.U.S.H. Have a pass	Have materials needed for class Keep personal items in your locker or at home Put supplies/equipment back where it belongs
Be Safe	Hands and feet to yourself Quiet, walking feet	Remain seated Hands and feet to yourself	Remain seated, facing forward Hands and feet to yourself	Keep hands and feet to yourself Use equipment correctly	Keep aisle clear Remain seated Hands and feet to yourself	Report a problem to an adult Respect personal space	Stay in designated space Keep hands, feet, objects, and unkind words to yourself

VISITORS

School Visitors

Phillips Elementary welcomes and encourages visits to school by parents/guardians, adult residents of the community and interested educators. To ensure order and safety in the schools, it is necessary for the Board to establish policy governing school visits. For the health and safety of all students and staff members, we are requesting that parents/guardians make an appointment to meet with a staff member in advance. Prescheduled appointments will ensure staff is available at an agreed-upon time, and ample space is available for a safe in-person meeting. We will continue to utilize virtual meeting platforms such as Teams to hold PSSC meetings and other meetings as needed. Please review the PPS Visitor Policy by clicking on the link above.

Scheduling of Appointments

Persons wishing to visit a school shall make arrangements in advance with the school office in that building. The principal has the prerogative to approve, disapprove, or reschedule the visit for a more appropriate time. Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate “drop in” teacher or principal conferences during the school day. Please schedule such conferences at least 24 hours in advance. Thank you.

Reporting to the Office

School visitors shall be required to register at the school’s main office and state the purpose of their visit. All visitors are required to receive and wear a visitor’s badge through the Raptor system. Upon completion of the visit, visitors are expected to sign-out and return the badge to the main office.

Types of Visitations/Observations

- Meeting to discuss school/student issues
- Parent/Guardian classroom visit
- Tutoring and/or volunteering

Guidelines

Meetings/appointments should be scheduled at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the school principal or designee in the case of an emergency only.

Principal and the main office staff should be advised of any scheduled parent/guardian meeting/appointment.

Volunteering and Clearances

If you plan to volunteer with students, including chaperoning field trips, you must apply for the appropriate clearances. Registration can be completed at our school in the main office or online. More information can be found at pghschools.org/Page/3958.

Volunteering opportunities should be scheduled in advance with your child's teacher. Volunteers must sign-in at the office upon arrival to receive a visitor's badge and a schedule.

Falcon Familia

Please make every effort to support the Phillips Falcon Familia. This organization does an outstanding job of advocating for our school and coordinating programs that strengthen our school community. To get involved, contact the Falcon Familia at info@falconfamilia.org.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES

Arrival

Sarah Street (Main Entrance) Drop Off

- Parking Spaces between cones MUST be left open for busses.
- All automobiles dropping students off must be on the school side of the street (facing 19th street/ playground/East).
- Automobiles will not be allowed to stop in the street to drop off — they MUST pull over (outside the bus lane).
- Students must be present by 9:20 am to be considered on-time.
- The building will be open to students at 9:00 am daily.
- Breakfast will be available beginning at 9:00 am until 9:20 am.
- Please do not drop off prior to 9:00 am. There is no staff supervision available before 9:00 am daily.

Dismissal

20th Street (Side Entrance)

- All K-2 students (except bussers) will be dismissed using this exit
- Parents may park on the street to pick up
- Teachers will release students to authorized adult
- Dismissal will be at 3:55 pm daily

Sarah Street (Main Entrance)

- Grades 3-5 Students will exit here
- Once students pass through the front doors, they must have permission for reentry
- Students awaiting a late pick up must wait with their teacher. Please pick-up students by 3:55 pm, as we do not have staff supervision available beyond this time.

Breakfast/Lunch Program

Pittsburgh Phillips will continue to offer Universal Free Breakfast and Lunch for all students. If a student has any food allergies, please alert the nurse's office. Students are also welcomed to bring a packed lunch from home.

PSCC, Falcon Familia, and Events

Phillips welcomes opportunities to connect with students and families outside of the school day. We also encourage families to be active participants in school planning and

extracurricular activities. To reach these goals, we will continue monthly meetings and events:

- PSSC and Falcon Familia meeting dates will be provided in advance and were included in the back-to-school mailing. Additionally, they are posted on the monthly calendar.
- Meeting times will vary each month to incorporate both evening and morning times. Meetings will be held virtually via MS Teams.
- The Falcon Familia hosts events throughout the school year for families to network. Additional details will be communicated about the scheduled events as they become available.

Birthday Celebrations

We enjoy celebrating our students and recognizing their special day at school. To help balance birthday celebrations with instructional time, we ask families to follow the guidelines below.

- Birthday treats must be provided for the entire class.
- Please coordinate with your child's teacher regarding any food allergies or dietary restrictions within the classroom.
- Due to health and safety guidelines, food sharing is not permitted.
- All treats must be individually packaged and commercially prepared.
- Acceptable treats include single-serving items such as pretzels, cookies, chips, fruit snacks, fruit roll-ups, or packaged fruit.

Please do **not** send:

- Cakes, cupcakes, or other homemade baked goods
- Ice cream or other refrigerated items
- Drinks
- Balloons
- Gifts or party favors

Families should bring birthday treats to the main office upon arrival. Office staff will ensure the items are delivered to the classroom, and the teacher will distribute them at an appropriate time during the school day. Thank you for helping us celebrate our students while maintaining a safe and productive learning environment.

Playground Expectations

Safety concerns warrant students not run on the playground or gym unless they are involved in an organized sport (i.e. four square, kickball, basketball). Students are taught a variety of recess games that they can play when they are outside during recess and during

PE class time. We will continue to structure activities and to promote the safest possible environment for our students. It is important students have proper footwear for both recess and PE class.

School Delays/Closings

We usually deal with the issue of school closings, delays, or early dismissals due to inclement weather a few times in the school year. When this happens, tune into your local news. You may also check the PPS website at <http://www.pghschools.org>. When we dismiss early, we will activate the automated phone messenger. Early dismissals for inclement weather are very infrequent because of the possibility of no adult present at home or at the bus stop. School begins at 11:20 on 2-hour delay days. Doors will open for students at 11:00 am on 2-hour delay days.

Transportation Changes

Please be sure to send a note with your child if there is a change to the way they go home for the day. For example, if your child normally rides the bus, but you plan to pick them up by car, they will need a note from home. We prefer that these messages be sent as a note to your child's teacher; however, in emergency situations we will accept a phone call before 3:30 pm. (Please do not make it a routine to call in transportation changes).

Bus Service

Questions regarding bus stops, bus drivers, and schedules should be directed to Pupil Transportation at 412-529-8125 or to your student's assigned bus company directly.

School Bus Safety and Expectations

Using the school bus for transportation to and from school is a privilege. It is important that the environment on the bus is safe always. All students will be held accountable to behavior expectations and the PPS Student Code of Conduct.

Links to all referenced Pittsburgh Public Schools Board Policies are included in the Appendix of this handbook. Families are encouraged to review the full policies for detailed information and procedures.

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)