



Pittsburgh Whittier 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.

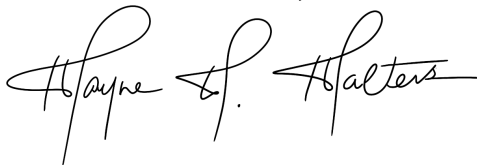
A successful school year is built on strong partnerships between schools, families, and the community. We know that students achieve more when the adults in their lives work together to support their learning and well-being. We invite you to stay engaged by attending school events, participating in Parent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



Superintendent, Pittsburgh Public Schools



PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Welcome to Whittier K-5! It is a privilege to introduce myself as your new principal and to become part of this wonderful school community. After 33 years in education, including 25 years as principal of Pittsburgh Classical Academy, I am excited to begin this new chapter leading an elementary school. What makes this opportunity especially meaningful is that, in many ways, it feels like coming home. My family's roots are deeply connected to Whittier and the Mt. Washington community. My great-great-grandfather, Frances Holliday, and my great-great-uncle, George Holliday, played an important role in creating the public park that later became the site of this school for the Duquesne Heights community. My grandmother attended the original Whittier School, and my mother and aunt were students at the current Whittier. To now serve as principal of a school that has meant so much to my family is truly an honor.



Throughout my career, I have believed that every child deserves to be known, supported, challenged, and celebrated. My hope is to continue to lead a school where students are excited to learn, families feel welcomed and valued, and teachers have the support they need to help every child succeed. Elementary school is where curiosity is nurtured, confidence begins to grow, and a lifelong love of learning takes root. I look forward to working with our dedicated staff and partnering with families to ensure that every child has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential.

Whittier has a proud tradition, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of its next chapter. Together, we will build on the school's strong foundation while creating new opportunities for our students to learn, grow, and thrive. I look forward to meeting each of you and working together to make Whittier K-5 a place where every child feels a sense of belonging and every family is proud to call it their school. Here's to a wonderful year ahead!

With gratitude,

Valerie Merlo

Principal, Whittier K-5

SCHOOL INFORMATION



Pittsburgh Whittier K-5

150 Meridan Street Pittsburgh, PA 15211

Phone: 412-529-8211

Fax: 412-488-4255

Website: pghschools.org/whittier

[Whittier K-5 STAFF Directory - Whittier: Link](#)

School Colors

Blue and White

School Mascot

Mountaineers

Motto

High Expectations,
High Achievement,
High Atop Mt.
Washington

VISION AND MISSION

Vision

All students will embrace learning, maximize their potential and be socially responsible.

Mission

The mission of Pittsburgh Whittier K-5 is to ensure all students receive high quality instruction. Staff will collaborate in order to ensure students are provided with a variety of instructional methods in order to best meet the needs of all of our students. We strive for our children to grow and learn in a positive, nurturing, collaborative, and culturally diverse environment. All members of the school community will work together to enhance the unique learning experience for all of our students. All of our children will benefit from a safe and orderly learning environment in which all staff members share a belief that all children can develop and learn at high levels.

At Whittier, we believe:

- All students can learn at high levels.
- All students are unique individuals who should be provided with a variety of learning experiences in order to maximize their personal and academic potentials.
- A variety of instructional approaches should be utilized to enable students to demonstrate understanding and mastery of basic skills and grade level benchmarks.
- Student progress should be monitored on a regular and continuous basis so that adjustments can be made when appropriate.
- A safe and orderly environment is necessary for student growth, development, and learning.
- All stakeholders; administrators, teachers, parents, and community members share the responsibility in ensuring Pittsburgh Whittier K-5 is living its mission.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Email is Whittier's main source of communication. Talking Points is Whittier's secondary means of communication with families. We also utilize email, Whittier's Facebook page, U.S. Postal Mail, and communicate weekly through our weekly newsletter. Whittier's newsletter is sent via email and posted on our Facebook page weekly.

Talking Points (Directions to Access)

Whittier teachers use Talking Points to communicate with families, so that important announcements and information can be given quickly and efficiently. Talking Points is a great way to always be informed, and to communicate with the school.

If you choose, you can download the Talking Points App for Parents and Families. Make sure that you do not download the Talking Points App for Teachers, or the app will not receive messages from the school.

Below are some important facts about Talking Points:

- If you are not interested in using the app, the messages from the school will come to your phone in a text message format.
- If you choose to receive Talking Points messages via text, texts will not allow you to access attachments such as PDFs or flyers, that may be included in Talking Points messages sent from Whittier. To view attachments, you must use the Talking Points app.
- If you are not receiving text messages on your cell phone, that means that Whittier will need to change your phone number in our student information system to the number that you wish to receive messages, as Talking Points is connected to the school's student information system. If we discover that you are not receiving messages, we can easily fix this. To fix this issue, please contact Whittier's SDSS, at 412-529-8260.
- To help everyone get started, we will send a letter home, during the first week of the new school year with directions on how to download the Talking Points App for Parents and Families. To log in or create an account, visit talkingpts.org/families.

BELL SCHEDULES

ESEP Daily Meeting: 7:41-8:20 AM

Breakfast: 8:00-8:20 AM

On half days, students report to the cafeteria between 8:00-8:25 AM

No recess on two-hour delays

Daily Schedule		Half Day		Two-Hour Delay	
Homeroom	8:20-8:30	Arrival	8:00-8:25		
Intervention	8:30 -9:00	Intervention	8:30-9:00		
Period 1	9:00-9:45	Period 1	9:00-9:45		
Period 2	9:45-10:30	Period 2	9:45-10:30	Homeroom	10:25-10:30
Period 3	10:30-11:15	Period 3 Lunch 1 (K-2) Lunch 2 (3-5)	10:30-11:15 10:30-10:53 10:53-11:15	Period 3	10:30-11:15
Period 4	11:15-12:00	Period 4	11:15-11:30	Period 4	11:15-12:00
Period 5 Lunch Recess at 12:23	12:00-12:45			Period 5 Lunch (No Recess)	12:00-12:45
Period 6	12:45-1:30			Period 6	12:45-1:30
Period 7	1:30-2:15			Period 7	1:30-2:15
Period 8	2:15-3:00			Period 8	2:15-3:00
Dismissal	3:00-3:05	11:30 PM		3:00-3:05	

*****ON REMOTE SCHOOL DAYS, WE FOLLOW THE REGULAR DAILY SCHEDULE.
STUDENTS WILL LOG INTO HOMEROOM BY 8:30.**

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

Attendance Requirements

It is impossible to get a high-quality education unless families make every effort for their child to attend school on a regular basis. As there is new material being taught in school every day, it is most important to establish a regular pattern of attendance. Valid reasons for missing school are extreme illness, death in the family, or other legal reasons. When returning to school, all students should bring in a written note, signed by a parent or guardian, explaining the reason and dates of absence. No absence can be considered an excused absence without this note.

Regular attendance at school is a Pennsylvania state requirement and is mandatory. Each student is permitted three (3) unexcused absences per year. Students may turn in a note to their homeroom teacher up to 3 days after returning to school from absence. Notes will not be accepted after 3 days. Students are permitted to receive ten parent notes per school year. After 10 parent notes, only medical, court, or death notices will be accepted. If there are any additional unexcused absences, a Student Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) invitation will be sent to the parent/guardian. Failure to respond to the SAIC initiation may result in further action, including citation from the magistrate.

Parents should do the following when their child is absent:

- Send a written excuse for the absence within three days of returning to school, regardless of whether or not you have emailed or contacted the main office or teacher via phone.
- Communicate with your child's teacher and arrange to make-up any missed assignments.

Tardiness

Punctuality is an important habit to develop. Students may enter the building beginning at 8:00 AM. Breakfast will be served between 8:00 and 8:25 AM, and homeroom begins at 8:25 AM. **Students are expected to be in class and prepared to learn by 8:30 AM.** Students are considered tardy if they enter the building after 8:25 AM.

ACADEMICS

Course Offerings

Pittsburgh Whittier 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 in grades K-5.
- Students in grades K-5 attend self-contained classes.
- Science, Art, Music, Gym, and Library are available for all students.
- All students will receive a laptop (grades 1-5) or an iPad (kindergarten).
- Students can sign up for instrumental in grades 3-5.

Curriculum

Whittier utilizes Open Court Reading for English Language Arts classes. Additionally, the Illustrative Mathematic curriculum will be utilized this year in all math classes.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Promoting Academic Integrity

To promote academic integrity, Pittsburgh Whittier will take the steps listed below:

- Teachers and staff will develop a shared definition of academic integrity.
- Teachers and staff will communicate the shared definition of academic integrity to students at the onset of the school year.
- Teachers and staff will communicate school-wide expectations for academic integrity.
- Teachers and staff will model academic integrity by explaining their own ideas and thinking and respecting the ideas of peers and colleagues.
- Teachers and staff will explain the value of academic integrity as it relates to the ability to learn content and develop critical thinking skills.

ATHLETICS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

At Pittsburgh Whittier there are opportunities for students to participate in after-school programs. Pittsburgh Whittier currently offers the following program:

- Intramurals-students in grades 2-5 can participate in intramurals before school.
- Information will be sent home at the beginning of the school year for all extracurricular activities offered at Whittier. We encourage all interested students to participate.

DRESS CODE

Students are not required to wear uniforms at Whittier. We follow the [Pittsburgh Public Schools Dress Code Policy](#).

Pittsburgh Public Schools has an exclusionary dress code. No student shall wear any apparel or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures or any combination thereof appearing on said clothing or jewelry advocates or promotes sexual activity or violence, or the use of alcohol or drugs, or demeans or degrades another because of race, sex, religious persuasion, national origin, handicap or disability.

Students are expected to always wear appropriate clothing while at school. Clothing must not be of any style, length or fit that is of a provocative nature. Revealing attire that permits the exposure of undergarments or private body parts is prohibited. This prohibition shall be in effect during regular school hours and at any school-sponsored event whether on or off school premises.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cellphones

An electronic device restriction policy will be instituted for the 2025-2026 school year at Whittier. Cell phones will be collected by Principal in the Cafeteria at Breakfast and placed in a locked box. At dismissal, cell phones will be given back to students.

The rationale for this decision is to ensure that students are focused on teaching and learning, and that electronic devices in their possession do not distract, therefore, inhibiting students from learning the concepts and skills that are necessary to continue to grow as they progress in their K-12 education.

During Whittier's April 2025 PSCC meeting families were asked to give feedback on Whittier's electronic device policy. Additionally, a survey was given to all Whittier families during Art Night to receive feedback regarding Whittier's Electronic Device Policy.

GRADING

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.

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

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.

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.

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

HOMEWORK PROCEDURES

At Pittsburgh Whittier, homework will be given Mondays through Thursdays, and will reinforce the concepts and skills that your child is learning in the classroom, to positively contribute to your child's academic growth in the core academic subjects and related arts classes. Teachers will communicate homework assignments through the use of Whittier's Homework Folder or email and will notify families of their preferred mode of communication at the beginning of the school year. Please contact your child's teacher for more information regarding homework.

HEALTH SERVICES

Please review the health services information and guidelines below. Please contact our nurse at 412- 529-8266 for clarification or further information. The nurse will be sending information regarding the items listed below at the beginning of the school year, and contacting individual families as needed.

Please click on the link below to view the [PPS Emergency Care Form](#).

Immunization Guidelines

Several immunizations are required for students to attend school in grades Kindergarten through twelve. Please click on the link below that takes you the Pittsburgh Public Schools Health Services page outlining immunization guidelines.

Medication

For medication to be administered in the school, by the school nurse, parents and a physician must sign and complete the form below. Please click on the link below to access the form and return all completed forms to Nurse Willey.

[Consent for medication and administration form:](#)

Allergies & Asthma

Students with food or other allergies must provide the school with the resources necessary to treat the condition. Again, a signed form by a physician must be completed. Please click on the link below to access the form. Please return the completed forms and Epi Pens and inhalers to Nurse Willey.

[Allergy Action Plan Form](#) | [Asthma Action Plan](#)

Emergency Care Form 2025-2026 School Year

The PPS 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. The school nurse is not permitted to administer over-the-counter medication without a parent or guardian's written consent. It is the school nurse practitioner's responsibility to determine that all medicines administered to our students conform to parents' and physicians' authorization.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ACCEPTABLE USE

Acceptable Use Policy

For students to take home a district issued device, families must sign the Acceptable Use Policy. A hard copy of the policy will be sent home with all students during the first week of the new school year, and should be signed by the parent or guardian, and returned to your child's homeroom teacher.

Procedures for Student Device Distribution

Student devices will be distributed to all homeroom teachers during the first week of the new school year. Students will also be given a hard copy of the PPS Acceptable Use Policy to take home. The PPS Acceptable Use Policy should be signed by the parent or guardian and be sent back to the homeroom teacher. Only after the policy is signed by a parent or guardian, the student will be permitted to take home their device.

Damaged & Lost Device Procedure

When a student device is damaged, the district will cover parts and repairs up to two (2) times per school year. After a device is damaged a third time, a \$100 service fee will be charged for replacement. The school year is defined as August 1 to July 31. If a student loses a device, the cost for replacement is \$200. A stolen device with a copy of a police report will be fully covered by the District.

Lost Device Chargers

If a student loses a charger, the cost of the replacement charger is not covered by the district. If an additional charger is purchased through the district, lost chargers cost \$47 for Dell laptops, \$28 for iPads and \$79 for MacBook laptops. If your child loses a charger, and you wish to have us order you a replacement charger through the district, please contact Brian Volchko, Whittier's Technology Liaison at bvolchko1@pghschools.org.

Procedures for Remote Instruction

Students should bring their district issued device to and from school every day. This procedure ensures that if we have a remote instruction day due to inclement weather or other emergency situations that all Pittsburgh Whittier students are able to access remote teaching and learning.

Microsoft Teams & Schoology

Teachers will prepare students for remote instruction days during the beginning of the school year. To prepare students, teachers will create a Microsoft Teams link for students to access live synchronous instruction should it be necessary, and the link will be placed on

the teacher's Schoology page for easy access. Students will be taught how to access the Microsoft Teams classroom. Students will also learn how to navigate the Schoology platform to access assignments and online learning tools.

Remote Learning Schedule

Students will follow their regular 6-day cycle schedule during synchronous remote learning days. For example, if a remote learning day falls on day one of the 6-day cycle, students will follow their regular day one schedule remotely. Students will receive instruction all day in their homeroom teacher's Microsoft Team meeting, and related arts teachers will provide instruction, in their content area, in the homeroom teacher's Microsoft Team's classroom.

Communication During Remote Learning

If a remote learning day is necessary, the district will communicate this to families as soon as possible. After the district communicates, Mrs. Davis will follow up, utilizing an email, with reminders regarding Whittier's remote learning systems and procedures.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

The mission of MTSS is to identify the learning needs of all students and provide them with the type of academic, behavioral, and/or social support needed to succeed in school. After needs have been identified, strategies are developed and implemented by the team to assist the student. The team is a collaborative effort and may consist of the parent(s)/guardian(s), principal, literacy coach, guidance counselor, teachers, and support staff. If you have questions regarding the MTSS process, please contact our School Counselor.

Ms. Bryant: 412-529-8269 or nbryant1@pghschools.org.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

The Student Assistance Program is designed to assist school personnel in identifying issues including alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and mental health issues which pose a barrier to a student's success. The primary goal of the Student Assistance Program (SAP) is to help students overcome these barriers in order that they may achieve, remain in school, and advance.

SAP is a systematic process using techniques to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. The SAP team is comprised of school staff and liaisons from community mental health agencies. SAP team members will identify problems, determine whether or not the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school and make recommendations to assist the student and the parent. The student assistance team members do not diagnose, treat, or refer to treatment; but the team may refer for a screening or an assessment for treatment.

Parents can reach out to the school staff to complete an SAP referral form.

Speech and Language Services

Speech and language services are available to students who qualify following an individual screening. Therapy sessions are provided individually or in small groups.

Learning Support (K-5)

Students in need of learning support services can receive them at Whittier. Individually designed programs are implemented based upon each student's specific individual education plan. Support services are assigned after interventions are implemented, academic evidence has been collected, and testing and team recommendations have occurred.

Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS)

Pittsburgh Whittier utilizes Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to recognize positive student behavior, and to provide supports and interventions for students, ensuring that all students at Pittsburgh Whittier are provided with clear expectations to promote a positive school-wide culture. The goal of our PBIS Program is to create a learning environment where students can learn, grow, and feel safe. The PBIS behavior matrix is uploaded on the school.

PBIS School-Wide and Universal Expectations

The administration and staff of Pittsburgh Whittier has developed four universal expectations for all students in Grades K-5. These universal expectations are taught, reinforced, and expected to occur in all areas of Pittsburgh Whittier. These areas include the hallway, classroom, bathroom, cafeteria, playground, and bus. Be safe. Be respectful. Be responsible. Just be nice.

Restorative Practice

The goal of Restorative Practices at Linden is meaningful accountability. It is designed to help students understand the impact of their behavior and find ways to “restore” their place in the school community. Although it is not a disciplinary tool, Restorative Practices is accompanied by appropriate consequences. Think of it as one prong in our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). In the event that a student needs additional support to correct behavior, Restorative Practices follows a specific protocol that might include impromptu one-on-one conferences between the student and principal, teacher, or guidance counselor and/or a more formal conference that includes a parent or guardian. During Restorative Practices conferences, there is always a focus on bringing the students back into the school community.

School-Based Mental Health Services (SBMH)

School-Based Mental Health Services is a collaborative between Pittsburgh Whittier and Family Behavioral Resources, providing mental health support in a school setting.

Mental Health Prevention Provider

Pittsburgh Whittier has a partnership with Mercy. Mercy provides opportunities for students to work on social emotional learning skills in a small group setting. Further information will be communicated at the beginning of each school year.

Pittsburgh Public Schools Student Services Department

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.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS/PROCEDURES

Arrival Procedures

- Walkers and bus students enter the school through the main entrance.
- Cell phones will be collected in cafeteria.
- Students will enter school, get breakfast, and report to their Homeroom.
- No students are permitted to enter the school before 8:00 AM.

Dismissal Procedures

The goal at dismissal time is to return all Linden students safely to their homes by bus, walking, or pick-up in private vehicles. The dismissal procedures are designed with the safety of our students foremost in importance.

- Teachers will escort walkers and pick up students through the back doors by the parking lot.
- Students will be escorted to the buses by an assigned staff member.
- If your child will not be taking the bus home or will be picked up by an adult not on their emergency care form, you must send a letter to school with your child or call the Main Office.

Early Dismissals

For safety purposes, the main office is not permitted to accept a verbal request via the phone. All requests must be in writing unless it is an emergency.

VISITORS

We welcome family involvement and appreciate your interest in visiting Pittsburgh Whittier. To help us prepare and ensure a smooth visit, we kindly ask that parents or guardians make arrangements with the office staff or principal at least 24 hours in advance of the requested visit.

If prior arrangements cannot be made, we will do our best to accommodate your visit. However, please understand that same-day visits may not always be possible due to scheduling or other circumstances.

Parental Involvement Opportunities

At Pittsburgh Whittier, we value the partnership between families and the school in supporting student success. There are many ways for parents and guardians to get involved in the school community, including:

- **Parent Teacher Association (PTA):** Our active and diverse PTA includes many dedicated families who contribute to the school's success. The PTA organizes fundraising events, student recognition programs, and field trips throughout the year.
- **Parent School Community Council (PSCC):** The PSCC offers a variety of engagement opportunities such as parenting workshops, computer literacy sessions, curriculum insights, and community outreach activities. Meetings are held monthly. For more information, please contact the school office or refer to the monthly calendar.

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)