



Pittsburgh Clayton Academy

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 Pittsburgh Clayton Academy.

It is an honor to serve as Principal of Clayton Academy. I am excited to join a school community that is deeply committed to helping students overcome challenges, develop confidence, and discover their potential.

Clayton Academy serves a unique and important role within Pittsburgh Public Schools. Every student who walks through our doors deserves to be treated with dignity, respect, and unwavering belief in their ability to succeed. Our work extends beyond academics alone. We strive to build relationships, restore confidence, strengthen character, and create opportunities for every student to experience success both inside and outside the classroom.

At Clayton, we believe that positive relationships are the foundation of meaningful learning. We recognize that each student arrives with a unique story, and we are committed to meeting students where they are while helping them move toward where they can become. Through consistent expectations, restorative practices, high-quality instruction, and collaboration with families and community partners, we will continue to foster a safe, structured, and supportive learning environment.

Families are an essential part of this partnership. We encourage regular communication between home and school and invite you to work alongside us throughout your child's educational journey. Together, we can celebrate successes, navigate challenges, and ensure every student has the support needed to grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

As we begin this school year together, I look forward to getting to know each student and family while working alongside our dedicated faculty and staff. Thank you for placing your trust in Clayton Academy. We are honored to serve your family and remain committed to helping every student achieve success today while preparing for tomorrow.

I look forward to a successful school year together.

Sincerely,

Eric L. Graf

Principal, School Name



SCHOOL INFORMATION

Pittsburgh Clayton Academy

1901 Clayton Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15214

Phone: 412-529-6000

Fax: 412-894-2800

Website: pghschools.org/schools/special-schools-centers/clayton

Clayton Staff Directory Click [Here](#)

School Colors Black & Burgundy

School Mascot Phoenix

VISION AND MISSION

Our Vision

Our vision at Clayton Academy is to foster a safe, positive, and valuable learning environment through building strong, consistent relationships with all students, families, and communities while cultivating character and leadership qualities necessary for success beyond Clayton Academy.

Our Mission

Our mission at Clayton Academy is to work collaboratively with staff, students, families, and communities to provide support and interventions that promote positive attitudes and behaviors necessary for academic and social success beyond Clayton Academy.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Please contact the main office at (412)529-6000 if you have any questions or need any support. Additionally, the school will utilize; robo calls, Talking Points, U.S. Mail, and Microsoft Teams to communicate with our families. If your contact number changes, please inform the school as soon as possible. Ongoing communication will be an integral part of your child's experience while at Clayton Academy.

BELL SCHEDULES

MAC = Morning Assembly/Circle

PMA = PM Assembly

Students eat breakfast during Morning Assembly/Circle

Remote Learning Days will follow the daily schedule.

Daily Schedule		Two-Hour Delay		Half Day			
Period	Time	Period	Time	A	B	C	Time
AM Assembly	7:40 – 7:48	MAC	9:40 – 9:45	MAC	MAC	MAC	7:40 – 7:48
Circle	7:48- 7:55	Circle	9:48- 9:55	P1	P5	P2	7:55 – 8:35
Period 1	7:55 – 8:35	P1	9:55 – 10:20	P2	P6/7	P3	8:38 – 9:19
Period 2	8:38 – 9:18	P2	10:23 – 10:48	P3	P8	P4	9:21 – 10:01
Period 3	9:21 – 10:01	P3	10:51 – 11:16	P4	P1	P6/7	10:03 – 10:44
Period 4	10:04 – 10:44	P4	11:19 – 11:44				
Period 5	10:47 – 11:27	P5	11:47 – 12:12				
Period 6	11:30 – 12:10	P6	12:15 – 12:45				
HS Group	11:30 – 11:45						
HS Lunch	11:48 – 12:18	HS Lunch	12:15 – 12:45				
Period 7	12:21 – 1:01	P7	12:48 – 1:18				
Period 8	12:13 – 12:28	P8	1:21 – 1:46				
MS Group	12:31 – 1:01						
MS Lunch	1:04 – 1:44	MS Lunch	12:48 – 1:18				
PM Assembly	1:47 – 2:00	PMA	1:49 – 2:00				
Dismissal	2:00	2:00		10:44			

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/Excused Absences

Pittsburgh Public School's attendance policies will be followed during the time of enrollment at Clayton Academy. In case of absence, a parent or guardian is responsible for providing written documentation within three school days regarding their child's absence(s). Any absence from school not accounted for through written documentation will be considered unexcused and subject to truancy procedures. Immediately following a student's absence, they will be required to submit their excuse to the school social worker.

Tardiness

All students are expected to be present and on time every day. If a student arrives after the start of morning assembly (7:28am), they will be deemed tardy. When tardy, the student should be prepared to present some form of documentation as to the reason for his or her tardiness.

Inclement Weather

In the case of inclement weather, reference the district website as well as the local news channels to obtain information about cancellations or delayed schedules. When schools are operating on a two-hour delay, students should report to their bus stops two hours after their designated pick-up time. If there are any questions or concerns about inclement weather, please do not hesitate to contact the school at (412)529-6000.

ACADEMICS

While your child attends Clayton Academy, all teachers are expected to follow the District provided curriculum. More information about your child's academics can be located on the District's website, pghschools.org.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

While your child attends Clayton Academy they will be expected to behave with academic integrity. For example, the school will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating during and examination or on lab, homework and other assignments; plagiarism, etc. Please refer to district PPS Policy 226 if you have any questions regarding academic integrity. Students found in violation of academic integrity may receive consequences as outlined in the student code of conduct.

DRESS CODE

The purpose of a dress code is to create an atmosphere where students can focus on academic achievement instead of their wardrobe. By engaging in the dress code, we hope to promote the importance of uniformity and a respectable appearance which is a life skill that can directly support the success of all students.

Due to the climate in our region, we are aware that the temperature does fluctuate in the different seasons and accommodations have been made to address these issues. All students will be expected to adhere to the dress code daily. The dress code at Clayton Academy is as follows:

1. All students must wear a black collar shirt. This may be a short-sleeved shirt, long sleeved shirt, or black button-down dress shirt. In case of cold weather, a plain black pullover sweatshirt or sweater may be worn over a collared shirt but be aware that a collar must be always showing, or the student will be considered out of dress code. No hoods or sweatshirts with zippers are permitted. A long-sleeved t-shirt of any color may also be worn under short sleeved collared shirts.
2. All students must wear khaki dress pants or shorts. Pants must be dress-style pants (Dockers, Dickies, etc.). No khaki-colored jeans will be permitted. Shorts must be “Cargo” or “Bermuda” styles. Shorts must be knee length or no more than one (1) inch above the knee.
3. Tennis shoes, dress shoes or boots are required. Sandals and slides are not permitted. Crocs and Ugg slides are not permitted.
4. No jackets, hats or the cold weather knit type earmuff or headbands will be permitted.
5. No jewelry of any kind. This includes piercings. All students will remove all earrings from piercings after entering the building before placing earrings and other personal items in designated property bins. Band Aids and other forms of coverings for piercings will not be permitted. **NO EXCEPTION.**

Prohibited Items

- Jewelry of any kind (earrings, necklaces, watches, bracelets, piercings including eyebrow, nose, lip, etc.)
- Cell phones or other electronic devices
- Headphones
- Wallets or purses
- Outside food, drinks, candy
- Any item considered to be gang affiliated

If at any time a student is found in possession of a prohibited item(s) after entering the school and clearing the search process, the item will be confiscated. Upon confiscation of the item, parental contact will be made to arrange to return it.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

All cell phones and electronic devices will be collected and secured at morning entry, except district laptops, and will be returned to students at dismissal. Due to a history of ongoing social media issues between students and neighborhoods, this has been determined to be the best course of action to protect the safety and emotional well-being of students during school hours.

Parents will be notified if a student refuses to turn in their electronic device/s and the student will not be permitted to access the general education classes until the phone is turned in or the parent comes to retrieve the device/s. The policy will be reviewed again with the student and parent.

GRADING

All Clayton Academy students are expected to complete all assignments they are provided and will receive grades based on their work. Please refer to PPS Policy 209 if you have any questions about grading.

Graduation Requirements

All high school students have requirements that must be met to graduate. Please refer to PPS Policy 211 for additional information regarding the graduation requirements.

Grading Scale

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

HOMEWORK PROCEDURES

Homework assignments may come from any of your child's teachers (academic subjects, related arts subjects, etc....) and are used to help reinforce the lessons taught in the classroom. Students are generally assigned homework Monday – Thursday, with some exceptions. If you have questions about your student's homework assignments, please contact that teacher with your questions.

HEALTH SERVICES

In compliance with applicable law and regulations, and Board-approved health and safety plans, the Board shall require that students of the School District submit to health and dental examinations, screenings and health monitoring in order to protect the school community from the spread of communicable disease in compliance with the School Code, or any modified schedule or manner of examinations approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

The School Nurse will have a copy of all student emergency care forms and will update them as needed. During the intake process for all students attending Clayton Academy an emergency care form is completed.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ACCEPTABLE USE

Parents, please review the [Acceptable Use Policy](#) with your child and reinforce the importance of responsible technology use. The signature of a parent/guardian is mandatory before students will be allowed access to any PPS computer or technology-based resource. If you have any questions or need further information, feel free to contact our school office. Together, we can ensure a positive and productive digital learning environment for all our students.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Multiple services are offered to provide Clayton Academy students with services they may need. Some of those services include MTSS, SAP, PBIS, School-based counseling, and 2.5 of group for each student enrolled at Clayton Academy.

Please feel free to contact any of our school's support staff if you have any questions or may need support with your child.

Tia Altman – Counselor (412) 529-6000 ext. 33212

Annette Stinson – Social Worker (412) 529-3364

Christina Murray – Behavior Specialist (412) 529-6000 ext. 33109

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS/PROCEDURES

Along with following the established foundational behavior expectations and norms of the PBIS program at Clayton Academy, and participating in the restorative community of the school, each student is responsible for:

1. Following the district code of conduct as well as the school's procedures, policies, and directions from staff daily.
2. Refraining from any illegal activity.
3. Maintaining safe behavior at all times.

Clayton Academy will use the PPS Code of Student Conduct, and any consequences outlined within, to enforce consequences for serious infractions. While we do maintain our own behavior, expectations and norms, as described, all students are PPS students and always fall under the purview of the **Code of Conduct**.

VISITORS

To create a safe learning environment for all at Clayton Academy, all visitors must enter through the main entrance, go through the metal detector and immediately sign in at the main office. Please refer to PPS Policy 1004 if you have any questions regarding the visitor policy.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

AEDY Timeline and Formal Periodic Reviews

The information below explains the timeline of a student's placement at Clayton and explains the process of how Formal Periodic Reviews are conducted to determine a student's eligibility to return to their sending school.

- Student commits weapon, assault, or chronic disruptive behavior infractions that lead to a suspension and/or application to alternative education.
- District discipline panel or hearing officer makes recommendation/finding for student to be placed in alternative education.
- The student's sending school completes a behavior assessment (BASC-3) about the student to give information to the alternative placement about behavior areas of concern.
- The students and parents/guardians complete an intake meeting at Clayton Academy.
- Within the first five days of enrollment, the student's case manager will work with the student, using the behavior assessment and information from the application, to create one or more behavior goals for them to work on during their enrollment.
- Teachers and staff complete weekly behavior check sheets for the student to track the student's progress toward meeting their behavior goal(s).
- Around the 45-day mark of the student's enrollment, the student's case manager will call a meeting with staff, parents, and the student to discuss the student's progress toward meeting their behavior goal(s). If it is determined that the student met their behavior goal(s) they will return to their sending school. If the student has not met their behavior goal(s) they will remain in alternative education and the review process will occur every 45 days until the student meets their behavior goal(s) and can transition back to their sending school.
- When it is determined that the student can return to their sending school the case manager and student will work together to create a transition plan. This plan will be shared at a transition meeting with the student, parents/guardians, case manager and transition team from the sending school.
- Clayton Academy staff will remain in contact with the sending school to monitor the success of the student's transition. If the transition is unsuccessful within the first two weeks of the transition period, with the implementation of the transition plan and any supports outlined, the student may be returned to the AEDY program.

Restorative Practices at Clayton

Restorative practices are a proactive approach that builds students' capacity to self-regulate, make decisions, and self-govern. Without these 21st-century skills, students will not make the academic strides they need to achieve their aspirations, and in the case of alternative education students, will not learn to self-regulate behaviors that have caused them problems in the comprehensive school setting. The core of restorative practices centers on a restorative culture. We create classrooms that allow students to govern what happens through shared decision making and exercising choice responsibilities. We teach and expect peers to help reinforce the pro-social skills needed to have positive relationships with peers and staff. When faced with conflict, students are guided to advocate for themselves and their peers, take responsibility and make amends. The goal of using restorative practices in the school setting is to develop students with the following restorative characteristics that help them transition back into the restorative communities of their sending schools.

Restorative Characteristics

- I remain calm during conversations.
- I listen without interrupting.
- I recognize and accept responsibility when I have harmed someone in my school community.
- I give, and accept, apologies.
- I seek support from peers or staff when I find myself in an issue.

Program Processes During Enrollment

Because Clayton Academy is an alternative school established to support the behavioral and social/emotional needs of students who experience some difficulty in these areas, there are certain processes within a school day that differ from a traditional school. Some of these processes will be explained to better help parents/students understand the school's daily operations and are listed below.

Assembly

Assembly is a formal group process that occurs at the beginning and end of every day. It utilizes positive peer relationships to improve behavior, set goals for the day, and reflect on the day. It also serves many purposes regarding the development and implementation of our desired school culture. Everyone on campus participates in the daily assembly. Staff supports the assembly process to help promote positive behavior and goal setting for the day. Students take the time in the morning to plan what they want to accomplish that day, and in the afternoon, they reflect on how well their day went. Peers provide appropriate

feedback, intervention, and support to each other as needed. Staff also uses this as a forum to deliver information and expectations pertinent to the day's schedule on campus.

Individual and Group Counseling

Students will participate in various individual and group counseling opportunities each week. These opportunities will consist of three types of counseling experiences:

1. **Morning Circle:** Restorative Circle is a structured form of community dialogue where members can allow for all voices to be heard in an environment that is neutral. This takes place every morning at the start of first period and is done with the students' homeroom groups. Rather than relying on a single leader, the circle acts as a democratic community to help students work through issues and situations that impact their classroom either academically or socially, directly or indirectly. Contributing to a circle allows students to build positive classroom and school culture and feel they have a voice in their community and promote a sense of belonging.
2. **Small Group Sessions:** staff counselors and social workers are offered to all students as a class period daily to support small group sessions. These sessions use the Wayfinder curriculum. Wayfinder employs a daily lesson format that includes instructional video, discussion questions, individual activities and home and school connections—to teach essential prosocial skills to children and adolescents. This approach allows students to take the behavior expectations and norms they are taught every day and practice using them in real-world situations.
3. **Individual Sessions:** with staff counselors and social workers, individual sessions are offered to students weekly and as needed. During these sessions, students work with a staff member to create and monitor individual behavior goals. These sessions are important because creating and reaching individual behavior goals is the basis for students transitioning back to their sending schools. These individual sessions give students the support they need to monitor their progress and work to improve any areas that may be hindering them from reaching their individual goals.

In all three of these environments, students are expected to show positive social skills that make the circle or counseling environment feel safe and productive for everyone involved, with the idea that working on these social skills in groups will attribute to them being used widely in all settings of the school building.

PBIS Incentives

Clayton Academy utilizes a student leadership and incentive system to promote positive pro-social behaviors within the classroom and school setting. In addition, the incentive system serves to continuously provide recognition for positive behavior, which is necessary

for the growth of all students. On a weekly basis, students can exhibit their leadership skills and earn the opportunity for more and new incentives. All students are provided with feedback that allows them to understand how they can earn the next set of incentives.

Tier 1 Incentives

These incentives are awarded to all students based on completion of group goals. Typically, goals are set for Middle School and High School around the RISE behavior expectations. If these goals are met, as a group, for the week, all students in either Middle School or High School will earn the incentive. This typically includes dress down days, free periods, Spirit days/weeks, etc.

Tier 2 Incentives

These incentives are awarded to smaller groups of students and may be based on individual or group successes. These incentives can be earned by meeting RISE behavior expectations and students working towards their individual behavior goals. These incentives include field trips, special lunches, movie days, etc.

Tier 3/Phoenix Student Government Incentives

Students earn a leadership role in the Phoenix Student Government, by showing the consistent ability to grow toward their individual weekly behavior goals and follow the RISE expectations and norms of the school. The purpose of student government is to give support to the student leaders in the school and help them with their own personal growth, encourage responsibility, promote academics, facilitate social interaction among the leaders, and create a positive peer culture. Members of this group are student leaders who promote the school's positive peer culture. These students earn incentives including a relaxed dress code, the ability to bring snacks and food for breakfast and lunch, Student Government lunches, the ability to participate in all incentive field trips, and the ability to have more freedom throughout the building in terms of bathroom breaks, running errands for teachers, etc.

Staff Interventions for Behavior

All staff members will use their best judgment to select the appropriate intervention technique based on the individual circumstances where staff intervention is deemed necessary. In making such determinations, staff are trained and certified yearly in the Safety Care de-escalation and physical management program which prompts staff to redirect student behavior with the least intrusive technique. The least intrusive technique available, however, will vary based on the intervention's circumstances.

Safety Care recognizes three types of redirection/de-escalation. These are called the Help, Wait and Prompt Strategies.

The Help Strategy

This is an initial attempt by a staff member to determine what might be causing the student to display a behavior issue and allows the staff member to suggest alternative options that may help the student re-focus or stop a negative behavior. This is used in the early steps of de-escalation/redirection. This may be asking a student if they want to change seats, get a drink, take a bathroom break, or work on a different piece of classwork, etc.

The Prompt Strategy

If initial help from a staff member is not helping a student de-escalate or maintain appropriate behavior, it may become necessary for the staff member to begin prompting specific alternatives to challenging behavior. This may be a non-verbal or verbal prompt that could include asking the student to sit down, work quietly, step into the hallway to speak with the teacher, etc. At Clayton prompts or redirections will start at the non-verbal level as much as possible and proceed through the levels of redirection that are listed below as needed.

Friendly Non-Verbal

When staff observe a student not following an expected norm, staff will give that student a helpful non-verbal gesture. These gestures are made with eyes, hands, head, or other body parts. These gestures, often given with empathy, are used to change behavior of the student at the immediate time of the problem. If a student does not change his or her behavior, a concern non-verbal technique may be utilized.

Concerned Non-Verbal

A concerned non-verbal is given by staff through stern and forceful facial gestures, hand gestures, or other non-verbal gestures. Concerned non-verbal gestures are used to change behavior or actions of a student at a particular time to a positive alternative. If a student does not respond to this level of intervention, a helpful verbal technique may be utilized.

Helpful Verbal

A helpful verbal is given by staff through verbally communicating a positive alternative behavior, cordially. If a student does not respond to this level of intervention, a concerned verbal technique may be utilized.

Concerned Verbal

A concerned verbal is given by staff if the student is not responding to less intrusive de-escalation or redirections. This may be necessary if a student is continuing to escalate their behavior in a redirection situation. Concerned verbal prompts are made by using a louder voice to act as an alarm to other staff that a student is escalating in a negative behavior. This will allow support staff to become aware of a situation and come to help.

Staff Support

Staff support is used to alert a student that his or her actions have reached a high level of concern. Additional staff will enter the situation to offer support to the initial staff member and student. Support staff may offer help and prompt strategies to the student to help them de-escalate with a different staff member. In addition, supporting staff also observe prompting and redirection to ensure that all staff act professionally and to maintain a safe physical environment if the student becomes a threat to himself/herself or others.

Staff Guide/Transport

If the first five redirection techniques fail in de-escalating a student, a staff guide, or transport may be used. The purpose of these intervention options is to communicate to the student that his or her behavior is becoming a major concern, and to remove the student from the agitating situation and environment. It provides the student with a final attempt to gain self-control by changing the environment that is escalating the student's behavior.

The Wait Strategy

In some cases, the best intervention may be to monitor the situation and give the student time to calm down and de-escalate. Many times a student is able to become less angry and get settled once they are removed from an agitating situation and given space. In the Wait Strategy, staff will monitor a student for safety, in a non-stimulating environment. Potentially dangerous objects will be removed from the area and staff will stand quietly and wait for the student to calm down. They will then switch back to the Help or Prompt strategies when they feel that the student is ready to receive feedback.

Physical Management/Manual Holds

If all de-escalation and redirection techniques have failed, and the student becomes an immediate threat to themselves and/or others, staff will place the student in a hold. Staff will use the least amount of physical management possible to de-escalate the situation. When the student is no longer out of control or a threat to themselves or others, the student will be released from the hold and staff will counsel the student to discuss the incident and alternative replacement behaviors with the goal of returning the student to the classroom. The de-escalation and physical management program used at Clayton is Safety Care. All staff are trained and certified yearly in using Safety Care hold techniques.

Restorative Conversations and Circles after Behavior Issues/Physical Management

If a student exhibits a behavior issue that has caused a disruption to the learning environment and culture of the classroom or school, or a crisis occurred that resulted in physical management, a Restorative Conversation will take place between the student and

any staff and/or peers that were involved. This may be done as a Restorative Conversation or a Restorative Circle. These are powerful tools to develop communication, build relationships, and restore culture after a situation has occurred. These conversations allow students and staff to express their feelings and thoughts, as well as give input on the issues that need to be resolved. Staff can help students think through their actions, take responsibility for the harm they have caused others, understand the consequences of their actions, and identify alternative behaviors and responses that may have improved the situation. All staff is trained on the use of these Restorative Practices and will use them to continuously facilitate a positive school culture.

Reasonable Search and Seizure

To ensure the safety of all students and staff members in our school and to promote a healthy productive learning environment all students will be subject to a reasonable and appropriate search process upon entering the school daily. If a student is found to be in possession of an item that is deemed illegal or inappropriate, that item will be confiscated. All other items such as cell phones, keys, wallets, purses, jewelry, candy/gum, hair wraps, bandanas, combs, brushes, etc. will be collected and safely stored until dismissal when they will be returned to the student.

Food

All Clayton students receive breakfast and lunch during normal school days. This may not include early dismissal days. If your child has any type of food allergy, medical documentation will need to be provided to provide an appropriate alternative.

Outside food/snacks are only permitted to be brought into the building by student government members (further information below).

Non-Discriminatory Policy

The Board declares that it is the policy of the District to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs and activities offered in the schools without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, gender (including gender identity or expression), sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or disability.

The District is committed to the maintenance of a safe, positive learning environment for all students that is free from discrimination by providing all students course offerings, counseling, assistance, services, employment, athletics and extracurricular activities without any form of discrimination, including Title IX sexual harassment. Discrimination is inconsistent with the rights of students and the educational and programmatic goals of the District and is prohibited at or, in the course of, District-sponsored programs or activities,

including transportation to or from school or school-sponsored activities. Discrimination is also prohibited in any remote learning program or activity of the District.

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)