



MARITIME|253

SKILLS CENTER

Student Handbook

Safety • Belonging • Readiness • Purpose

WELCOME ABOARD This guide gives students and families the main rules, schedules, supports, and safety details for Maritime|253.

2026–27 SCHOOL YEAR

[Maritime|253 Skills Center](#) | [Tacoma Public Schools](#)

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1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

Maritime|253 is a skills center for area students run by Tacoma Public Schools with the Port of Tacoma. Students stay enrolled at their home high school. They spend half of each school day learning at Maritime|253.

Land Acknowledgement

Maritime|253 and Tacoma Public Schools are on the traditional lands of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. We thank and honor the Puyallup Tribe and the land. The Tribe has lived here since time immemorial. We will build respectful partnerships that honor Tribal culture, history, identity, and self-rule.

The Maritime|253 Way

- Learning looks more like a job than a regular class.
- Safety is part of everything we do.
- People must feel they belong before they can do their best work.
- Every student needs a clear next step.
- We share our work with others.

OUR NORTH STAR Every student leaves with job skills, strong work habits, and a clear next step after high school. Each student also leaves with a stronger sense of belonging and purpose.



2. Staff Directory

Staff member	Role	Email	Phone
Main Office	All Administrative Staff	Maritime253@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4567
Brandi Prestegaard	School Operations	bpreste@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4568
Alina Sipes	Registrar	Asipes@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4569
Kristie Wolford	Director	kwolfor@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4582
Haylie Tulupan	Associate Administrator	htulupa@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4583
Doss Bradford	Manufacturing Instructor	dbradfo@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4584
Emma Froembling	Sustainability Instructor	efroemb@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4588
Aaron Gowin	Port Operations Instructor	agowin@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4570
Michelle Laskowski	Technology Instructor	mlaskow@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4586
Ann McPartlon	Student & Family IEP & 504 Plan Liaison	amcpart@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4577
Phillip Schmitt	Student Experience Engineer	pschmit@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4587
Alair Wells	Manufacturing Instructor	awells@tacoma.k12.wa.us	253-571-4573

3. Daily Schedules

Regular Schedule

Session	Days	Time
AM	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	8:30–11:00 a.m.
PM	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	11:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Late Start Wednesday

Session	Day	Time
AM	Wednesday	9:30–11:00 a.m.
PM	Wednesday	11:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

2-Hour Delay Due to Inclement Weather and Early Release

Change	Session	What happens
Two-hour weather delay	AM	Buses to and from Maritime 253 will be canceled for the morning session.
Early release	PM	The afternoon session is canceled.

CHECK BEFORE TRAVEL Check Tacoma Public Schools and Maritime|253 messages before you travel in bad weather.

4. Attendance

TPS rules: [3122: Absences](#) | [3122R: Attendance Rules](#) | [3124: Leaving School Early](#)

Come to every class and arrive on time. Labs, safety lessons, team projects, and work visits can be hard to make up.

What Students Must Do

- Come to every scheduled session.
- Follow attendance rules at Maritime|253 and your home high school.
- Ask your teacher what work you missed.
- Keep family contact details up to date.

Report an Absence

A parent or guardian should report an absence in ParentVUE. Tacoma Public Schools decides if an absence is excused. Reasons may include illness, a health visit, court, a religious event, a family emergency approved by the school, a school event, or a family activity approved in advance. A parent or guardian may also report an absence to Maritime253attendance@Tacoma.K12.WA.us

Leave Early

To leave early, a student must check out through the Maritime|253 office. The student must also follow Tacoma Public Schools rules. A student may not leave campus without approval.

TPS attendance details

[TPS attendance handbook page](#)

3121: Required Attendance

TIME BETWEEN SCHOOLS We know some students have little time between classes at their home school and classes at Maritime|253. We will be flexible and help students move between both schools. If a late bus or another travel delay means a student needs time to finish lunch, the student should talk with the teacher. The teacher and student can make a plan.

5. Parking and Rides

Use rides from your home school or district when it is offered. Students may park only in marked Maritime|253 spaces.

- Park in the back lot unless staff approve an space for people with a disability.
- Do not park next to the building unless staff direct you there.
- Do not park in Port of Tacoma lots.
- Follow signs, speed limits, and staff directions.
- Lock your vehicle and hide items from view.

ARRIVE READY Plan your ride so you arrive before class with the clothes, gear, and supplies you need.

6. Behavior and Safety

TPS rules: 3224: Dress Code | 3240R: Student Behavior | 3241: Student School Discipline | 3207: Bullying and Harmful Behavior

Maritime|253 is a workplace-style school. Act in ways that keep people safe, help others belong, and meet job-site rules.

Respectful Behavior

- Treat people with respect.
- Use respectful words and actions.
- Follow staff directions and lab rules.
- Use school device and personal devices only as directed.

Work Safety

- Use needed safety gear the right way.
- Finish safety training before you use tools, gear, boats, or lab spaces.
- Stop work and report danger right away.
- Do not play around, tamper with gear, or take unsafe shortcuts.
- Your choices can affect the whole crew.

Dress for Safe Work

- Wear closed-toe shoes when needed.
- Wear long pants and close-fitting clothes when needed.
- Tie back long hair. Secure jewelry, strings, and loose items.
- Wear eye, hand, ear, or high-visibility gear when told.
- Follow any extra clothing rules for your pathway.

SAFE PARTICIPATION If a student is not dressed or ready for safe work, the student may not take part until the safety rule is met.

Help With Safety Gear and Supplies

If a student needs help getting required safety gear or supplies, such as work shoes, long pants, protective equipment, or class materials, contact the student's teacher. Maritime|253 will work with the student and family so the student can get the items needed to take part safely.

Cell Phones and Personal Devices

TPS rule: [3240R: Student Behavior](#) | [6973R: School Devices](#)

Phones can distract students and can create safety problems in labs and work areas. During class, phones and personal devices must be stored unless a teacher gives permission to use them.

- During class, phones must be off or on Do Not Disturb and stored in a backpack or in the place named by the teacher.
- Phones stay in the classroom during restroom breaks or short trips out of class.

- Students may use a phone in class only when the teacher gives permission for learning.
- Students may use phones before the session starts and after the session ends.
- Smart watches, earbuds, headphones, tablets, and similar personal devices follow the same rule.

Family and Emergency Contact

Families should call the Maritime|253 office when they need to reach a student during class. Staff will help deliver the message. A student who needs to make an urgent call should ask the teacher or office for help.

Health and Learning Needs

Students may use a device when it is required by an IEP, Section 504 plan, health plan, or other approved school support.

If the Rule Is Not Followed

Staff will remind the student to put the device away. Continued or serious misuse may lead to family contact, an office referral, or the device being held according to Tacoma Public Schools rules. TPS Regulation 3240R states that a phone or other electronic device may not disrupt learning. It also says that devices used in violation of Regulation 6973R may be taken by staff.

7. School Work and Grades

TPS grading rules: [2420: Grading and Progress Reports](#) | [2420R: Grading Rules](#) | [TPS Grades and Report Cards](#)

- Grades show what students know and can do. Grades are based on course standards and evidence of learning.
- Attendance, being late, behavior, and attitude are tracked separately. They are not part of the course grade.
- Grade books use two types of work: summative work, which shows learning at the end of a unit, and formative work, which helps students practice and get feedback.
- For grades 6–12, the usual grade-book balance is at least 80% summative work and no more than 20% formative work.
- Teachers should update the online grade book about every two weeks. Students and families can check grades in StudentVUE or ParentVUE.

Retakes, Revisions, and Late Work

- Students may retake, revise, or correct each assignment or assessment at least once.
- Students should complete a retake, revision, or correction within 10 school days after getting the grade or feedback. The teacher may allow more time.
- A retake or revision completed within the 10-day window can earn the same highest grade as the original work.
- Students may turn in late work within 10 school days without losing points. After 10 school days, the teacher decides whether to extend the deadline and whether the grade may be lower under district rules.
- No single assignment or test may change the course grade by more than one full letter grade.

Grades and Credit

Tacoma Public Schools uses the district secondary grading scale for high school courses. A grade of D or higher earns credit. A grade of E does not earn credit. Some approved courses use Pass/Fail. Check the course plan and Synergy for the grading details for each class.

If a Student May Fail

The school must give the family notice early enough for the student to work on the grade. District rules require at least 15 school days of notice before the end of the term, except in unusual cases during the last 15 days.

8. Student Skills

These six skills are used in every pathway. Students practice them in projects, safety routines, talks, work visits, and daily class work. Students should be able to name each skill and show how they are growing.

Skill	What it means	What students do
Empathy	Learn about others, build trust, and respect other cultures.	Listen to different views, include others, and help people belong.
Grit	Keep going when work is hard. Change your plan when needed.	Come ready, make up missed learning, improve work, and stay safe.
Leadership	Help guide the work and support the team.	Be on time, own your choices, work safely, and make good decisions.
Clear Speech	Share and receive details clearly.	Listen, ask questions, report danger, record work, and share changes.
Teamwork	Work safely with others toward one goal.	Do your crew job, share the work, use feedback, and help the team.
Solution Design	Create, test, and change ideas to solve real problems.	Study the need, test ideas, use facts, and improve the result.

Students show growth through projects, work samples, job work certificates, talks, feedback, and daily work.

9. Work Standards

Students build job skills and work habits at the same time. Good work means working safely, speaking clearly, helping the team, solving problems, coming ready, and finishing tasks.

Show Up Ready

Be on time, prepared, and ready to work safely.

Solve Real Problems

Build, fix, test, and improve. Learn from your first try.

Work Like a Crew

Talk clearly, help others, and share the work.

Move With Purpose

Know your pathway, why the work matters, and your next step.

10. Trips and Worksite Visits

TPS rules: [2320: Field Trips](#)

Trips, boat outings, job-site visits, and partner events bring learning outside the classroom. Students must be ready, have approval, and act in a safe and respectful way.

- Turn in the approval form by the due date.
- Wear the needed clothes and safety gear.
- Follow all travel, boat, site, and partner rules.
- Stay with your group and follow staff directions.
- Represent Maritime|253 and your home school with respect.
- Do not share private or safety-related worksite details.
- Return gear and leave the space clean.

TAKING PART Students may not take part without the needed approval, safety gear, or being ready. Staff will share the rules for each event.

11. Partners

Tacoma Public Schools and the Port of Tacoma built Maritime|253 together. The school serves students from across the South Sound. Partners help connect class work to jobs and local needs.

- Port of Tacoma and maritime employers
- School districts
- Colleges, training programs, and apprenticeships
- Community and Tribal partners
- Workers, mentors, and guest experts

12. Family Resources

Families help with attendance, safety, talking and sharing, and career plans. For questions about a class or the school day, contact the Maritime|253 office or the student's teacher.

[Maritime|253 website](#)

[TPS district handbook](#)

[Student attendance help](#)

[TPS policy manual](#)

When to Contact Us

- Attendance or leaving early
- Transportation or parking
- Safety gear or work clothes
- Grades or missed work
- Special education or 504 help
- A family issue that affects school
- Career, work certificate, or credit questions

13. District Rules

The online Tacoma Public Schools policy manual has the latest district rules. This guide is a short summary. If this guide and a district rule do not match, follow the district rule and ask school staff for help.

[TPS policy manual](#)

[TPS policy search](#)

[TPS district handbook](#)

[2320: Field Trips, Excursions, and Outdoor Education](#)

[2420: Grading and Progress Reports](#)

[2420R: Grading, Progress Reports, and Transcripts](#)

[3121: Required Attendance](#)

[3122: Excused and Unexcused Absences](#)

[3122R: Attendance and Excused/Unexcused Absences](#)

[3124: Removal / Release of Student During School Hours](#)

[3207: Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying](#)

[3207R: Student Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying](#)

[3224: Student Uniforms and Student Dress Codes](#)

[3240R: Student Conduct and Cell Phones](#)

[3241: Student Discipline](#)

[3241R: Student Discipline Regulation](#)

[6973R: Acceptable Use Regulation for Digital Resources](#)

Safety and Continued Participation

Related TPS rules: [3240R: Student Conduct](#) | [3241R: Student Discipline](#)

Safety comes first in labs, shops, boats, and job sites. Staff will first teach the rule, provide support, and work with the student and family on a safety plan when needed. If a student's behavior creates an immediate and continuing danger, or if unsafe behavior continues after supports have been tried, the school may use actions allowed by Tacoma Public Schools discipline rules. This may include removing the student from an activity or reviewing the student's continued placement at Maritime|253 with the student, family, home school, and other required team members. Any change in placement must follow district rules, due process, and disability protections. It is not automatic.

Maritime|253 is a half-day skills center. Students stay enrolled at their home high school. If continued participation is reviewed, the school will work with the home school to protect the student's access to education.

Equal Access

Tacoma Public Schools does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, color, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, homelessness, disability, neurodivergence, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Civil Rights Coordinator, Gender-Inclusive Schools Coordinator, and Title IX Coordinator: Tiffany Davis-Brantley, 253-571-1057, civilrights@tacoma.k12.wa.us | 504 Coordinator: Laura Tuman, 253-571-1086, 504Coordinator@tacoma.k12.wa.us | Tacoma Public Schools, P.O. Box 1357, Tacoma, WA 98401-1357 | tacomaschools.org

GUIDE STATUS This guide is a short summary. It does not replace district rules, student rights, course plans, safety training, or staff directions. Links were added for 2026–27.