



CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT



2021-2022
SCHOOL YEAR

Expect great things.

“REIMAGINING” THE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Over the past year, Pittsburgh Public Schools has reimagined education for our students. We have reimagined teaching – with our educators pivoting on a dime to teach students remotely during the pandemic. We have had to move quickly, exercise adaptability, and employ creativity in each decision. Our strategy for student supports and behavioral interventions has likewise shifted. In our new, reimagined Code of Student Conduct, you will find a greater focus on restorative practices, positive behavioral interventions, mental health resources, and other supports necessary to successful learning.

We are excited to present the 2021-2022 PPS Code of Student Conduct. As a school community, we pledge to keep the emotional and academic needs of PPS students at the forefront of our work.

I wish all of you a safe and productive year of learning,



Dr. Anthony Hamlet



Language Assistance

For copies in languages other than English, please contact the English as a Second Language (ESL) Department at 412-529-3620. If a non-English speaking family has questions or would like an interpreter, they can call 412-529-6463 and request the documents in the language that they prefer.

Spanish

Para obtener copias en idiomas distintos del inglés, por favor, póngase en contacto con el Departamento de Inglés como Segundo Idioma (ESL) al 412-529-3620. Si una familia que no habla Inglés tiene preguntas o le gustaría un intérprete, pueden llamar a 412-529-6463 y solicitar los documentos en el idioma que prefieran.

French

Pour obtenir des copies dans des langues autres que l'anglais, veuillez contacter le Département de l'anglais comme langue secondaire au 412-529-3620. Si les familles, ne parlant pas l'Anglais, ont des questions ou souhaitent un interprète, elles peuvent appeler 412-529-6463 et demander des documents dans la langue qu'ils préfèrent.

Russian

Для получения копий документов на других языках, кроме английского, пожалуйста, свяжитесь с Отделом английского как второго языка (ESL) по телефону 412-529-3620. Если у родителей, не говорящих по-английски, возникли вопросы или им требуется переводчик, они могут позвонить по телефону 412-529-6463 и запросить документы на языке, который они предпочитают.

Arabic

للحصول على نسخ بلغات أخرى غير الإنجليزية، يرجى الاتصال بإدارة اللغة الإنجليزية كـ لغة ثانية على أسئلة أو في حاجة إلى مترجم، يمكنكهم الاتصال بـ 412-529-6463 وطلب وثائق باللغة التي يفضلونها. إذا كان لدى الأسر الـغير متكلمة باللغة الإنجليزية

Chinese

为了得到用不同于英语的其它语言书写的文件，请通过电话 412-529-3620 联系“英语作为第二语言”系（ESL系）。如果一个不说英语的家庭有问题，或者需要翻译，请拨打电话 412-529-6364, 并且使用他们喜欢的语言索要文件

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Terms to Know - Quick Reference

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| PPS: Pittsburgh Public Schools | IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act |
| RP: Restorative Practices | NOREP: Notice of Recommended Educational Placement |
| PBIS: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports | PWN: Prior Written Notice |
| SAIC: School Attendance Improvement Conference | FBA: Functional Behavioral Assessment |
| SAIP: School Attendance Improvement Plan | DOH: Department of Health |
| CYF: Office of Children, Youth, and Families | PDE: Pennsylvania Department of Education |
| AEDY: Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth | IEP: Individualized Educational Program |
| | ATOD: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Intervention Program |

SAFE2SAY™

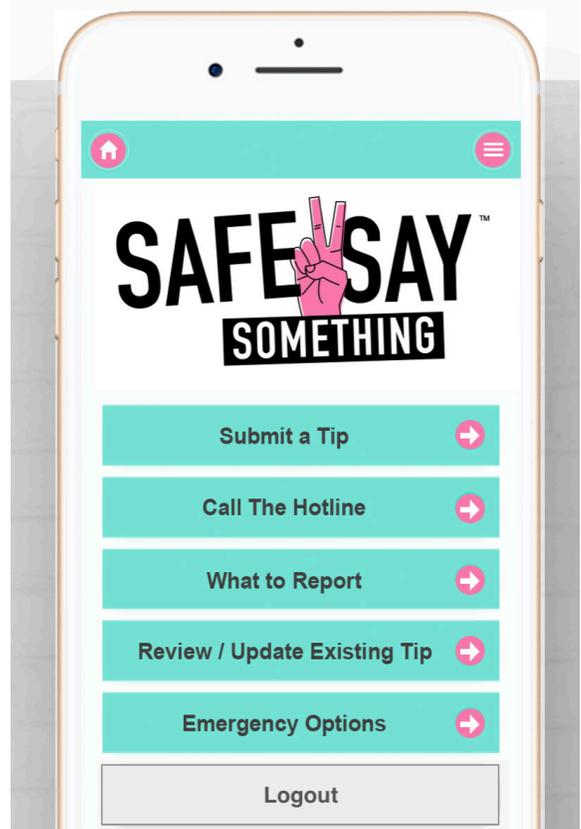


SOMETHING

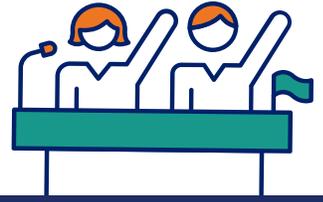
One tool for maintaining safe and supportive schools is the Safe2Say Something Program. Safe2Say is an anonymous reporting system operated by the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General. The program teaches how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, of someone who may be a threat to themselves or others. When a warning sign is present, say something to a trusted adult or use the anonymous Safe2Say reporting system. Safe2Say offers a 24/7 Crisis Center (1-844-SAF2SAY), mobile app, and website where anonymous tips can be made. District students and staff are educated on how to utilize and report concerns through Safe2Say. For more information or to make an online tip, visit www.safe2saypa.org.

Giving Students a Voice

PROMOTING SCHOOL SAFETY



Student's Rights



All persons between the ages of 6 and 21 years are entitled to a free and full education in the public schools. A student has the right to remain enrolled through the end of the school term in which the student turns 21. A student under the age of 21 can enroll in school even if they already have a Graduation Equivalency Diploma (“GED”). Students who have not graduated may not be excluded from their education merely because they have reached 18 years of age if they are fulfilling their responsibilities as students. A student may not be excluded from public schools or from extracurricular activities because of being married, cohabitating, pregnant, or parenting.

Rights of Immigrant Students

A student’s citizenship or immigration status cannot be requested, and perceived citizenship or immigration status cannot be used to deny access to public education. The school may not inquire as to the immigration status of a student or the student’s parent/guardian.

Right to Free Speech and Freedom of Expression

Students have the constitutional right to express themselves unless such expression materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens immediate harm to the welfare of the school or community, encourages unlawful activity, or interferes with another individual’s rights. Students have the right to discuss issues that impact their education with school board members, district administration, and school administration.

Students may use publications, such as handbills, announcements, and other means of common communication, so long as the use of school facilities is approved by the authority in charge of those facilities, and they obey laws governing libel and obscenity. The school principal may require students to submit for prior approval a copy of all materials to be displayed, posted, or distributed on school property.

[Policy 219 – Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials](#)

Students and student organizations have the right to use designated bulletin boards; however, the school principal may restrict the use of certain bulletin boards. The school principal may require that notices or other communications be officially dated before posting, and that such materials be removed after a prescribed reasonable time to assure full access to the bulletin boards.

Students have the right to express themselves in an official school newspaper. Students have a right and are as free as editors of other newspapers to report the news and to editorialize, however school officials shall supervise student newspapers published with school equipment, remove obscene or libelous material, and edit other material that would cause a substantial disruption or interference with school activities. School officials may not censor or restrict material simply because it is critical of the school or its administration. Prior approval procedures regarding copy for school newspapers shall identify the individual to whom the material is to be submitted and shall establish a limitation on the time required to decide. If the prescribed time for approval elapses without a decision, the material shall be considered authorized for distribution. Students who are not members of the newspaper staff shall have access to its pages. Written criteria for submission of material by non-staff members shall be developed and distributed to all students. Students have the right to circulate petitions, conduct polls, set up information tables, organize clubs, and sponsor speakers and activities.

Students are asked to show proper respect to their country and its flag; however, students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and may refrain from saluting the flag based on personal belief or religious convictions but shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate.

A confidential communication made by a student to certain school personnel will not be revealed in legal proceedings under the law. However, information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parents, the principal or other appropriate authority where the health, welfare or safety of the student or other persons is clearly in jeopardy. Confidential communications may also be revealed in the scope of a mandated report of suspected child abuse made in accordance with State law and District policy: BoardDocs® Pro.

Right to Freedom of Unreasonable Search and Seizure

The school shall not conduct unreasonable searches and seizures of students. No student may conceal on their person or in a purse, handbag, book bag etc., any weapon, narcotic, dangerous drug, drug paraphernalia, alcohol or any other substance or object that is in violation of this Code, local statutes, ordinances, or school rules. If the school administrator has reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of an item that constitutes a violation of law, Board policy, school rules, or which poses a threat to the health, safety or welfare of the school population, the administrator may add of the student's person.

The search must be conducted by a District employee of the same gender as the student and in the presence of at least one other District employee. Search of Student's All searches and pat downs that do take place at school should happen (unless emergency situations make it impossible) outside the view of other youth and school staff. Strip searches are NOT permitted. A strip search is defined as being conducted by removing part or all of a student's clothing to inspect private areas and undergarments.

Right to Freedom of Unreasonable Use of Force

Corporal punishment of any sort is absolutely prohibited. Reasonable force may only be used by administrators and staff: to stop a disturbance, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects, for the purpose of self-defense, or the protection of persons or property. The use of excessive force is strictly prohibited. The District complies with all policies, procedures, laws and regulations regarding restraint and seclusion of students with disabilities, and commits to only use such procedures as a last resort, when a student is acting in a manner that presents a clear and present danger and other, less restrictive measures, have not stopped the behavior.

[Policy 232 – Searches and Policy 212.1 Discipline of Students with Disabilities](#)



School Community Member Responsibilities And Commitments To Support A Positive School Climate

STAFF

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

STUDENTS

PARENTS & GUARDIANS

BOARD MEMBERS, SUPERINTENDENT & CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS

- Be familiar with interventions and supports available for staff to use in classrooms and school.
- Engage in respectful, culturally competent interactions with students and parents/guardians.
- Maintain inclusive and positive school and classroom environments conducive to learning.
- Utilize de-escalation and restorative strategies when engaging with students to avoid verbal or physical confrontation.
- Address conduct with multiple strategies and interventions to ensure that removal from learning is the last resort.
- Support students in reaching their educational goals

- Be familiar with interventions and supports available for staff to use in classrooms and school.
- Address multiple strategies and interventions to ensure that removal from learning is the last resort.
- Provide a copy of any written school rules and procedures to all students, staff and parents/guardians.
- Make school rules and procedures available in the student's and parent's/guardian's preferred mode of communication.
- Monitor implementation of the school safety plan.
- Ensure efficient utilization of resources
- Ensure due process for students prior to exclusion from school.
- Support all students in reaching their educational goals.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.

- Attend school and classes.
- Remain engaged in learning throughout the entire day.
- Make up work when absent.
- Make effort toward reaching educational goals.
- Help maintain a positive school climate.
- Follow school rules and procedures.
- Respect the health & safety of all students and staff in the school setting

- Be familiar with the Student Support and Intervention Guide.
- Be familiar with written school rules and procedures issued by your child's school.
- Reinforce the need for students to respect others' rights and follow school rules.
- Keep an open line of communication with your child's school.
- Make sure to share your current contact information with the school.
- Support your child in reaching their educational goals.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.

- Set Board level policy to support positive educational environments and outcomes.
- Ensure the equitable provision of resources and positive behavior supports across all schools in the District.

Time for Change



Shifting Culture, Climate, and Practices

PPS continues its commitment to student growth and learning. We strive to continue moving away from reactionary and exclusionary practices toward proactive approaches and interventions. Student and staff competencies continue to be built up so that we can create the conditions necessary for each classroom to be a positive and affirmative place for growth and learning.



analysis and decision making to effectively address academic and behavioral needs for instruction and intervention. Instruction and intervention are represented through multiple tiers that increase in intensity based on student need. Tiered interventions are provided to students in both academics and self-regulation, which support their overall academic success.

The 2021-22 Code of Student Conduct

Is designed to reflect our commitment to student equity and a continued effort to reducing disparate outcomes for students. All students are entitled to interventions and supports that will allow them to successfully participate in their education. Exclusion from school must be a last resort, reserved for only the most serious of offenses and should generally apply only after other interventions and supports have been provided to the student. The supports and interventions described in this section must be implemented in ways that recognize and value culturally, ethnically, and racially diverse backgrounds. These interventions will be regularly evaluated, including community feedback, to ensure they are not being implemented in ways that are inconsistent with critical, culturally affirming approaches to creating a positive school climate.

Further, the Code of Conduct is an extension of the District's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process. MTSS is a framework for providing services that meet the needs of all students using data

Positive School Culture

Pittsburgh Public Schools defines positive school culture as exhibiting an equitable teaching, learning and working environment where students, families, employees and communities feel welcome, respected, supported and engaged socially, emotionally, intellectually, behaviorally and physically. Research on school improvement has consistently found that transforming school cultures is difficult work, but it can be done. In addition to supporting the academic growth of students, schools must also provide students the social-emotional tools they need to become young adults who build upon their success and learn from their failures. This development is what we want for every PPS student. When we reinforce the positive deeds and qualities of our students with enthusiasm and encouragement, students will recognize the value of positive actions.

Restorative Practices

Expanded implementation of Restorative Practices (RP) to all schools and programs is a key strategy to creating a positive and supportive school culture. Through RP, students connect with school staff and other students to build a strong community. Students develop appropriate social-emotional skills, come to understand how their actions affect others, and work to repair any harm done. It is an approach built on respect, communication, and strategies for success. We understand that when everyone is treated with respect, classrooms are safe and healthy environments that support both teaching and learning. RP is designed to help all students understand the impact of their behavior and find ways to “restore” their place in the school community.

Learn more about Restorative Practices here:
<https://www.pghschools.org/domain/1339>

Positive Behavior Intervention Supports

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based three-tiered framework for improving and integrating all the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes. It is a strength-based and positive approach to create the kinds of schools where all students are successful. The school-wide PBIS program includes teaching expectations and positive reinforcement because students will succeed when offered informative corrective feedback and pro-social skills. When students know what is expected of them, they are more likely to behave appropriately. Principals, teachers, and staff at every school in the District work together to set up behavioral expectations and subsequent rewards that are specific to their school. Expectations are reinforced and acknowledged at places like morning meetings, classrooms, and school-wide events.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION SUPPORTS

TIER 1

Focuses on school-wide programs and practices that apply to everyone in the building and serves as the primary level of behavior intervention prevention. This would include classroom management strategies that establish basic expectations for students, public posting of expectations, frequent acknowledgments, and teaching desired behaviors. Approximately 85% of students meet the expectations and are rewarded for their good behavior.

TIER 2

Acknowledges that some students need additional support to keep their behavior on track. Teachers and staff meet with these students in small groups to set more specific behavior objectives. Using Restorative Practices techniques, they work together to help the students understand how their behavior affects others and strive to welcome them back into the classroom and school community. Only 10% of all students fall into this group.

TIER 3

Services provide individualized interventions for students with more intensive needs. If a student does not respond to Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions, they will be given an individualized behavior or academic plan to help them achieve their goals.

Pittsburgh Public Schools is committed to implementing PBIS with culturally responsive practices, recognizing that subjective determinations of behaviors that are acceptable or unacceptable are shaped by cultural values. When implemented effectively, schools are more positive places where students love to learn and staff experience satisfaction in their work.



1 SYSTEMS

The way schools operate are their foundational systems. In PBIS, these systems support accurate, durable implementation of practices and the effective use of data to achieve better outcomes.

2 DATA

Schools generate multiple pieces of data about students every day. Within the PBIS framework, schools use data to select, monitor and evaluate outcomes, practices, and systems across all three tiers.

3 PRACTICES

Key to improving outcomes are the strategies to support students at every level. In PBIS, these interventions and strategies are backed by research to target the outcomes schools want to see.

4 OUTCOMES

The outcomes from PBIS are what schools achieve through the data, systems, and practices they put in place. Families, students, and school personnel set goals and work together to see them through. In PBIS, outcomes might be improved student behavior, or fewer office discipline referrals.

Social Emotional Learning

While it is essential for children to master important academic skills, such as reading and mathematics, it is equally important for students to develop the “soft skills” that we all need to navigate the world successfully. These include things like how to manage their own feelings and emotions, how to respect others and how to build strong, positive relationships. This is called Social-Emotional Learning (SEL).

According to The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, there are five core competencies that will help individuals—both children and adults—navigate the world more successfully. They are:

- **Self-awareness:** Know your own strengths and weaknesses and have a “growth mindset.”
- **Self-management:** Manage your stresses and impulses and be prepared to set and work towards goals.
- **Social awareness:** Be open to the perspectives of others and respect cultural differences.
- **Relationship skills:** Work on your communication skills, your willingness to cooperate with others and accept constructive criticism.
- **Responsible decision-making:** Make good choices based on ethical standards, safety, and social norms.

At Pittsburgh Public Schools, we believe that SEL is the foundation on which academic learning takes place. When students feel confident in their abilities and their value to their class, when they know how to ask for and offer help and understand that resources are available to them, they are better able to achieve their full potential. Importantly, we recognize that SEL must be implemented in ways that are culturally affirming/sustaining, culturally humble, antiracist, anti-oppression, trauma-and healing- informed, and informed by contemporary, critical research.

To better serve our students, we strive to deepen our own SEL. Teachers and school staff participate in lessons and discussions about SEL competencies and seek to understand themselves and their power, privilege, and identity as they do this work. We try to make connections to elements of SEL throughout the day to show students that this is important, that people care about it, and that it is relevant to everyday life. Most importantly, we try to model our behavior in a way that helps students become more aware of their own competencies.

For more information regarding SEL please refer to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) website: <https://casel.org/>

Mental and Behavioral Health Supports

School-based mental and behavioral health supports are available to all PPS students as a resource. Staff will actively educate students on the importance of seeking help, either for self or others, when a concern exists. Students, staff, and parents will receive an annual overview of the District's Student Assistance Program and available mental health partnerships, their purpose and how to access help. In addition, school staff will be educated about warning signs for childhood behavioral health concerns along with the steps to support the student through those concerns.

Resolve Crisis Services

If you or your child is having a crisis and want help, as an Allegheny County resident you can call or visit Resolve's walk-in center. Resolve Crisis Services are free to all residents of Allegheny County.

Call Resolve Crisis Services
24-hour hotline:
1-888-7-YOU-CAN (796-8226).

Email
For non-urgent matters and
basic questions:
resolve@upmc.edu

Walk-In Crisis Center
F335 N Braddock Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15208
(East End of Pittsburgh)

Ways Resolve can help:

- If you have a crisis, large or small.
- To refer someone to our crisis services.
- To access our mobile crisis teams.
- If you are waiting for your child to get into the CACTIS program.
- If you have a family member or friend in crisis.
- If you need help finding other mental or behavioral health support services in the community.
- If you are a law enforcement officer with questions about our crisis services within Allegheny County.
- If you are a health care provider seeking help for yourself or your clients.

CACTIS Program (*Child and Adolescent Chronic-Disorders Treatment Intervention Services*)

CACTIS runs under the umbrella of resolve Crisis Services but is for children and teens awaiting treatment.

CACTIS is an outside provider in connection with UPMC.

Contact CACTIS for details, or if your child needs an intervention or crisis services.

Phone: 412-864-5065

Email: CACTISreferral@upmc.edu

Fax: 412-864-5012



Transgender and Gender Expansive Student Supports

The District maintains a nondiscrimination policy outlining the rights of transgender and gender expansive students: [Board Policy 102.3 – Nondiscrimination – Transgender and Gender Expansive Students](#). The policy outlines services and supports to fulfil the guarantee of equal access for our transgender and gender expansive students – ranging from topics of confidentiality and transition support to establishing Transgender/Gender Expansive Point Teams as a school resource and using gender-expansive language.



Social Workers and Security/Safety Staff

The Role of a School Social Worker

School Social Workers are the link between the school and the students, families, and the community to promote and support students' academic success and wellbeing. Some of the services that school social workers provide are crisis intervention, attendance support, support for housing instability, connecting students and families to resources, providing direct support to students in school (individual, group, SEL), identify and report suspected child abuse and neglect, screening for suicidal ideation, self-harm, homicidal ideation (and then providing support needed), obtain and coordinate community resources to meet student needs.

Social workers are also trained members of the Student Assistance Program (SAP). The Role of a School Counselor The Counselor is responsible for providing assistance to students by supporting them in making educational, occupational, and life goals/plans. This position also assumes responsibility to educate, assess, and provide intervention, referral, and support to students and/or their families regarding their identified needs. The Counselor also designs a sequential academic program to accomplish these goals /plans, while meeting the objectives and maintaining confidentiality of students and their families to the greatest extent permitted by law and District policy.

Role of School Security & Safety Staff

PPS maintains its own Division of School Safety, including security officers and school police officers. Their role is to provide supports that ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff during school and school related activities. PPS school police officers do not carry firearms. School police officers receive trainings specific to their roles as school police officers, including training in de-escalation and Restorative Practices. The Division of School Safety and the Office of Student Support Services coordinate training programs to ensure school safety staff receive trainings relevant to supporting students in the school setting.

Some events require a referral to the school police. However, referral to school police does not necessarily mean criminal charges will be filed and many events do not require a referral to school police. **Before consulting with school police about an incident, administrators must consider these important factors:**

- 1** the seriousness of the situation
- 2** the school's ability to defuse or resolve the situation
- 3** the student's intent
- 4** the student's age
- 5** whether the student has a disability, the type of disability and its impact on the student's behavior
- 6** any other factors the administrator believes to be relevant



General Requirements

All students ages 6 through 18 must attend school. This is known as the compulsory school attendance requirement. When students do not attend school on a regular basis, they are tardy or truant. Intervention strategies will be utilized with the goal of improving school attendance for truant students, with a special focus on eliminating barriers to school attendance. Below is a summary of important school attendance rules and procedures. PPS Attendance Policy can be found in full on the District's website at: Board Policy 204 - Attendance.

Eligibility for The Pittsburgh Promise®: The Pittsburgh Promise® is a scholarship program for eligible Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) students. The program uses attendance as one of several criteria when determining eligibility for scholarships. The Pittsburgh Promise® attendance criteria is available here: [Eligibility — The Pittsburgh Promise](#). Out-of-school suspensions and unexcused absences shall count against a student when determining eligibility for the Promise. All other absences are not counted against a student in determining eligibility for the Promise.

Key Attendance Terms

Unexcused Absence

When Student is not in attendance at school and a written excuse is not provided within 3 days.

Tardy

Arriving after the posted start time for class or school without a written excuse.

Truant

Student has had 3 or more unexcused absences.

Habitually Truant

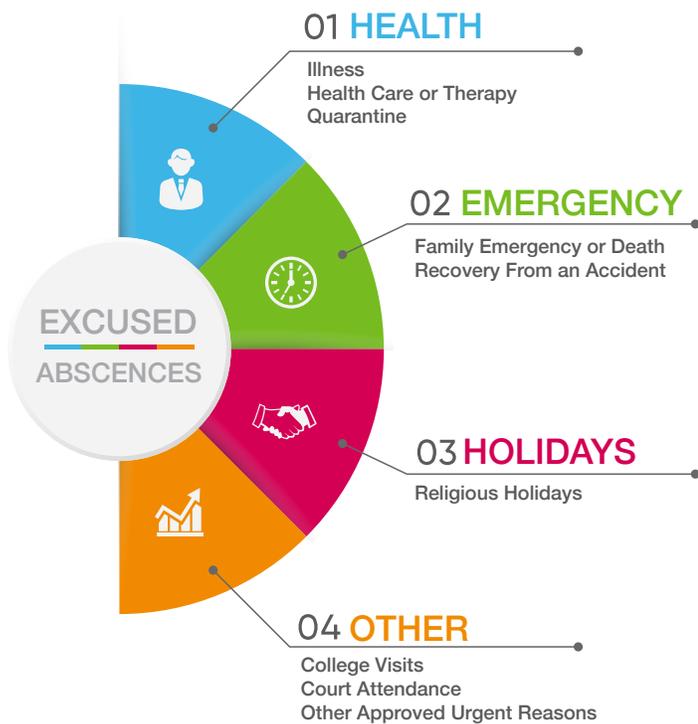
Student has had 6 or more unexcused absences.

SAIC

School Attendance Improvement Conference, where reasons for missing school are reviewed in an effort to improve a student's attendance.

SAIP

School Attendance Improvement Plan, the plan outlining efforts to improve student's attendance.



Tardies to School or Class

Arriving on time to school and class is an important factor to school engagement and success. Repeated unexcused absences or their equivalent, including unexcused tardy minutes, constitute truancy as defined in this guide. Schools will provide interventions and support for class and school tardies before assigning disciplinary consequences.

Parent Support Steps after Absences

When a student is absent, their parent/guardian receives notice from the school in the parent/guardian's preferred language, on the day of the student's absence. Parents/guardians have 3 days from the date the child missed school to turn in a written excuse. Until the excuse is received, the absence is treated as unexcused. Parents/guardians can submit an excuse for up to 10 absences per school year. After that, an excuse from a licensed healthcare provider is required.

Parents/guardians can submit absence excuses in paper form or electronically (by sending an email or completing the electronic form: [LIVE LINK TO FORM]).

If a legal excuse is not submitted, the absence will be considered unlawful and noted as unexcused. Three unexcused absences will lead to additional interventions, including providing supports to students and families to overcome attendance barriers. If unresolved, referrals to community and out of school supports will be made and, as a last result, truancy charges can be filed with the local magistrate. PPS will not expel or assign out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment or transfer for attendance concerns.

School Support Steps after Absences

After the first and second unexcused absence for a student, the school will send written notice to the parent/guardian indicating the dates of absence. After the third unexcused absence, a similar notice is sent which also explains that if attendance does not improve the student will be considered habitually truant. All notices must be sent to the parent/guardian in their preferred language and mode of communication. Parents/guardians whose preferred language is identified will be offered an interpreter. When unexcused absences continue, a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) is held. The purpose of the SAIC is to create a support plans to ensure regular attendance.

The parent/guardian (or person acting in that role) and the student, among other individuals outlined in [Policy 204-Attendance](#), must be invited to the conference. The purpose of the conference is to discuss reasons for the absences in an effort to improve attendance, with or without additional services. The discussion and outcomes of the SAIC shall be reflected in writing in a School Attendance Improvement Plan ("SAIP"). PPS will prioritize working together with parent/guardians to eliminate attendance barriers. Before any additional steps are taken, the SAIC must be held, even if the student and/or parent do not attend.

If the unexcused absences continue after the SAIC, a referral will be made to Department of Human Services, or Office of Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) for additional supports. A referral to the local magistrate is never required but may be made as a last resort. Penalties for truancy issued by the local magistrate can involve fines, community service, completion of school attendance improvement programs, suspension of student driving privileges, and/or ineligibility to apply for a driver's license for up to 6 months.

Contacts for School Attendance Support

School Counselor/Social Worker

Find out who your child's counselor/social worker is: Pittsburgh Public Schools / Homepage (pghschools.org)

Focus on Attendance Program

412-350-7118
focus_attendance@alleghenycounty.us

Attendance Works

Contact Us - <https://www.attendanceworks.org/contact-us/>

Students with Disabilities and Attendance

Prior to filing a citation with the local magistrate, an IEP or 504 Team meeting will be held to review each student's individual circumstances and supports. Students with disabilities may not be removed from the rolls based on attendance.

Remote Learning & Attendance



The District will take daily attendance even during periods of remote learning during the 2021-22 school year. Students who maintain good attendance will receive the most from remote learning opportunities provided by the District. Refer to your child's school's website for specific information about remote attendance.

Below Is a List of Additional Attendance Criteria in Effect When Students are Engaging in Remote Learning:

• Synchronous Learning:

All students who have access to the coursework and participate in assigned synchronous lesson(s), or complete alternate standards for attendance determined by the Student's IEP or 504 Plan, will be marked PRESENT.

• Asynchronous Learning:

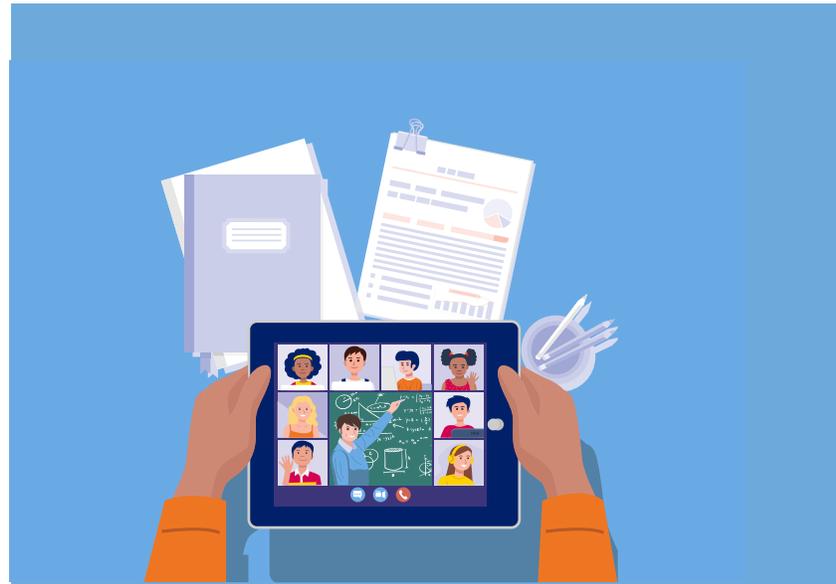
Students will be marked present for asynchronous learning days if they have logged into Learning Management System (currently, Schoology and Microsoft Teams) and attempted to complete assigned work, or complete alternative standards for attendance determined by the Student's IEP or 504 Plan. Students will be marked present if they complete assigned work before 11:59 p.m. on the conclusion of the asynchronous remote learning day, even if it was completed the day before.

• Technology Access and Attendance:

Students who do not have access to the coursework, either because they do not have a working device, do not have access to the internet, or for other reasons, will not be counted as absent. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the District so they can help provide what is needed for the student to access remote learning. Leniency will be extended to students who do not have a District-issued computer or who have internet/connectivity issues. Students who experience verified technology issues will be marked present so long as the student or parent/guardian has maintained contact (i.e., telephone or email) with the assigned staff person.

• Attendance Support:

School staff will work with parents/families to create support plans to ensure regular attendance for every class.



Camera Usage & Attendance During Remote Learning

In order to maximize student engagement, it is important for students to have their cameras on during virtual meetings and online instruction. Camera engagement helps the student receive appropriate face to face instruction. Engagement of both the students and teacher fosters active learning. There will not be punitive consequences for students who do not engage their camera. Teachers use strategies to encourage students to participate in class with the camera on. An engaged camera is not required to participate in class, except for programs in which camera engagement is a curricular requirement.

The District acknowledges parents may have privacy concerns and, to that end, schools shall provide education on how students can blur their background during video conferencing or on the virtual learning platform. Parents/guardians who wish for their child's device camera to be disabled may contact their school principal for next steps. Parents/guardians who have completed the process for cameras to be disabled will work with the school principal and their child's teacher to determine the process for determining that their child is present on all required class meetings and calls.

PPS Dress Code



While the School District recognizes the right of students to freedom of expression in speech and the wearing of apparel, a dress code has been established to foster a positive learning environment for all. Students must not 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, gender (including gender identity or expression), religion, national origin or disability.

Dress Code

District policy is administered through school level procedures which must be implemented equally across all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender (including gender identity or expression), or sexual orientation. The dress code will be equally enforced without regard to body shape or size. Students will not be asked to leave their classroom or school for violating dress code and school police will not respond to dress code violations. Schools will work with students whose dress is not in compliance with the dress code in a discreet manner to provide an acceptable solution (e.g., parent/guardian contact, permitting student to change into other available clothing, or have a variety of extra clothing articles available to students when their dress does not meet dress code requirements).

School principals are authorized to establish within their school an additional dress code, or a uniform policy as outlined in Board policy and regulations. Schools that implement a prescribed dress or uniform policy at school or school sponsored events will maintain one list of appropriate attire for all students, instead of including lists by gender. Parents/guardians should access their child's school-specific dress code for further information. Individual school dress code provisions must be consistent with Board policy, administrative guidelines, and this Code of Student Conduct. Access Board Policy 221 – Dress Code here: <https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/pghboe/Board.nsf/Public>.

Bus Rules

All school rules, including school discipline procedures and protections, apply when students are on the bus and at the bus stop. Schools should outline and inform students and parents the expectations for transportation behavior.

Engaging in or causing disruptive behavior on the school bus and at the bus stop which creates a substantial risk of or results in injury may result in disciplinary action. Prohibited activities include but are not limited to: Spitting, throwing objects, standing, fighting, yelling, and placing body parts outside of windows.

To ensure safety, all school buses, and vehicles with passenger capacity of thirty-six (36) and above shall have video cameras installed. Other buses and vehicles may also be equipped with audio-recording equipment. Use of such video and audio recording equipment is authorized for school discipline and security purposes.

Additional Resources

For a list of additional, local resources, parents/guardians should reach out to their child's school.

Rules of Student Conduct, Behavior, Definitions and Infraction Levels

Exclusionary discipline is reserved for the most serious of offenses and is to be used after interventions and supports – as listed in this Guide - have been attempted to alleviate the behavior of concern without success. Students who are excluded from school are still permitted to continue with their education through other means (e.g., virtual asynchronous work, synchronous work, and/or alternative placement). Because all students experienced a disruption to schooling due to the COVID-19 pandemic, during the 2021-2022 school year school administrators are advised to exclude students from school only where it is deemed necessary to sustain a safe school environment.

In an effort to continue to reduce exclusionary discipline, particularly for our youngest learners, the following definitions distinguish non-violent from violent offenses. Graduated responses (i.e., guidance interventions and disciplinary actions) will be provided accordingly. Suspensions for non-violent offenses are strongly discouraged overall, and are specifically prohibited for students in Kindergarten through second grade. District Assistant Superintendents will review data on a periodic basis to ensure the non-violent suspension ban is implemented with fidelity across all PPS elementary schools.

Violent Offenses:

- (a) An infraction or offense that is inclusive of any of the following elements: the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against the person or property of another, or
 - (b) any other offense that is a felony and that, by its nature, involves a substantial risk that physical force against the person or property of another may be used in the course of committing the offense.
- Violent offenses may lead to an out of school suspension.

Non-Violent Offenses:

An infraction or offense that does not necessarily pose a threat to the health, safety or property of others.

Non-violent offenses include all Level 1 infractions and the following non-violent Level 2 infractions:

- Unauthorized presence of students during school hours (school or private property)
- Possession or use of tobacco or electronic smoking devices
- Academic dishonesty
- Misuse of computers/electronic device
- Undesirable group activity
- Profanity & vulgarity/verbal altercation (to student)
- Profanity & vulgarity/verbal altercation (to staff)
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- Repeated Level 1 or 2 non-violent infractions
- Terroristic threats
- Threats/Intimidation

The following Level 2 Infractions are considered violent offenses:

- Damage, destruction or vandalism of property
- Harassment
- Fighting
- Bullying/Cyberbullying
- Hazing
- Physical Aggression/Altercation
- Theft/Robbery
- Inciting a Disturbance or Melee

Level 3 offenses

All infractions classified as **Level 3 offenses** of the Code of Student Conduct, listed below, may lead to out-of-school suspension for students enrolled in Kindergarten through fifth grade:

- Assault on a School Employee, Student or Other Person
- Weapons and Dangerous Instruments
- Drug Offenses
- Arson
- Aggravated Hazing

Elementary Clemency for Weapons Violations

In cases involving Kindergarten through Grade 5, the recommendation of the Hearing Officer will be to grant elementary clemency unless additional exclusion is warranted based on extenuating circumstances. Upon receiving clemency, the student will be immediately returned to the school they attended prior to the exclusion from school.

School Accountability

Each PPS school has established a discipline committee for school culture and climate, which convenes at least once each month to review available discipline data and discuss strengths and weaknesses of the school's disciplinary climate. Schools regularly use behavior data to guide the teaching and support that take place at the individual student level, classroom level, and school level. Schools shall also submit an annual report to the Office of Student Support Services specifying the various intervention strategies and corrective measures available at the school for students with academic or behavioral difficulties and make this report available to parents/guardians, students, and personnel.

Student Conduct Rules and Infraction Levels

- See Separate K-5 Conduct Rules & Infraction Levels Guide
- See Separate 6-12 Conduct Rules & Infraction Levels Guide

Exclusions From School Procedures



In-School & Out-of-School Suspension

In-School Suspension

- In-School Suspension involves exclusion from classes and assignment to a designated learning space. This assignment may be given a name other than “In-School Suspension” specific to each school’s PBIS system.
- Parent/guardian must be notified of all in-school suspensions and may request a conference with the principal.
- A student may not receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the in-school suspension becomes effective.
- The parent of any student who receives an in-school suspension which exceeds 5 consecutive school days shall be offered a conference with the principal. In-school suspensions exceeding 5 days will trigger a team meeting for students with disabilities. In school suspensions exceeding 10 days will trigger the school to offer an informal hearing. The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended.
- The student’s school entity has the responsibility to make provision for the student’s education during the period of the in-school suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension

- Out of school suspensions for 1-10 days may be given by the principal or person in charge of the public school.
- A student may not be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened.
- Parents/guardians and the Superintendent shall be notified immediately in writing when the student is suspended.
- Suspension of a student from their normal in-person school program (i.e., temporary assignment to remote learning) prompts all procedural protections outlined below.
- When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing within the first 3 days of the suspension.
- Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the 10-school day period.
- Students shall have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments.

Expulsion



- Expulsion is any exclusion from school for a period exceeding 10 school days.
- A student facing expulsion has a right to a formal hearing prior to exclusion.
- During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the governing board in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in their normal class, unless it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in their normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days.
- The formal hearing shall be held within (15) school days of the notice of the charges, unless a delay is mutually agreed to by both parties.
- Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education through the District's existing alternative education programs.

Student's Right to an Informal Hearing



- A student is entitled to an informal hearing for; suspensions lasting 3 or more days; prior to being transferred to an alternative education program, or when an in-school suspension exceeds 10 consecutive school days.
- The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with appropriate school officials to explain the circumstances.
- The informal hearing is held to bring forth all relevant information regarding the event for which the student may be suspended and

for students, their parents or guardians and school officials to discuss ways by which future offenses might be avoided.

- Parent or guardians must: be given notice, in writing of the reasons for the suspension; as well as the time and place of the informal hearing.
- A student has the right to: question any witnesses present at the hearing and to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.
- The school hold the informal hearing within the first 3 days of the suspension.

Student's Right to a Formal Hearing



- A student is entitled to a formal hearing prior to being expelled (i.e., excluded from school for more than 10 consecutive days). Parents or guardians must be given notice by certified mail of the charges and at least 3 days' notice of the time and place of the hearing.
- A copy of the expulsion policy and notice that legal counsel may represent the student and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice. A student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension.

- The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing. The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents or guardians, and may have a parent or guardian attend the hearing.
- The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits; the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined and the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf. The student may also choose not to testify and shall not be threatened with

punishment or later punished for refusal to testify.

- A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A digital copy shall be provided at no cost.
- The proceeding shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties.
- The school has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the student violated a school rule. Hearsay is generally admissible but must have corroborating non-hearsay evidence, as well.
- Evidence lawfully obtained by searching students and/or their personal belongings is admissible.
- Under FERPA, PPS is obligated to provide students and parents/guardians access to records related to school discipline.
- Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

Education during Expulsion from School



- Students who are under 18 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled and shall be provided an education.
- Students who have been excluded from school are educated at either the Student Achievement Center or Clayton Academy.
- Students with a disability who are excluded from school shall be provided educational services as required by their IEP and the

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Alternative Education Placements

AEDY

- Students must be seriously, persistently, and currently disruptive to be placed in an Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) setting. A disruptive youth is defined by law as: having disregard for school authority, including persistent violation of policy and rules; drugs on school property or during school-affiliated activities; violent or threatening behavior on school or during school-affiliated activities; possession of a weapon on school property; criminal act on school property or during school-affiliated activities; misconduct that would merit suspension or expulsion under school policy. Only students in grades 6-12 are eligible for placement in an AEDY program, and only after all other options for improving behavior have been exhausted.
- All students recommended for placement in AEDY must be provided with due process prior to placement, including a transfer hearing.
- AEDY referrals and placements cannot discriminate on the basis of disability, race or other prohibited status.

Once placed in AEDY, the Transition Requirements include:

- There is a presumptive exit date of 45 days (or less).
- For students with disabilities (including students with IEPs and 504 plans) the transition team must meet within first 5 days of the AEDY placement to develop transition plan.
- Transition team develops goals for the student's program and clear exit date.

- An Individual student Positive Behavior Support Plan is developed.
- AEDY programs cannot be used as placement for students transitioning back from mental health/residential placement.
- AEDY programs cannot be used as placement for student transitioning back from court-ordered delinquency or dependency placement.
- More information on AEDY can be found at: <https://www.education.pa.gov/Policy-Funding/BECS/Purdons/Pages/Alternative-Education-for-Disruptive-Youth.aspx>
- No student eligible for special education pursuant to the IDEA shall be transferred to an Alternative Education Placement except in accordance with all federal and state law and regulations pertaining to discipline of students who are eligible for special education, which include the requirement that a manifestation determination review be held. Students with disabilities cannot be referred to Alternative Education due to behavior or conduct which is caused by the student's disability, has a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability, or was the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the student's IEP or 504 plan. All students with disabilities will receive a free and appropriate public education while at the Alternative Education Placement and must be appropriately supported in making process toward the goals in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

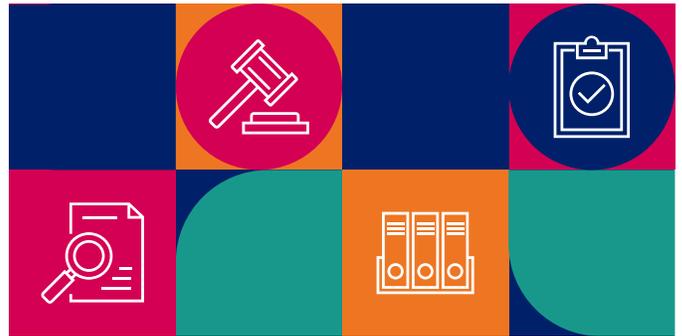
- Progressive Discipline Process: The discipline of students with disabilities (student supported through Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans) is subject to state and federal law in addition to the Code of Conduct. To the extent any conflict exists, state and federal law will prevail. In deciding disciplinary measures, the school cannot

discipline students when the conduct in question was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability or was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the IEP or Section 504 Plan, with the exception of limited, special circumstances.

- Students eligible under the IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act cannot be suspended out of school for more than 10 consecutive school days, 11–15 cumulative school days if the removals constitute a pattern, or 15 cumulative school days in one school. Removals of more than 10 consecutive school days, 11–15 days if a pattern exists or more than 15 cumulative school days are subject to special rules and limitations, including a manifestation determination.
- A student diagnosed with intellectual disabilities may not be suspended from school unless the school administrator has received written approval by the parent/guardian on the appropriate Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) form or hearing officer authorization.
- If the misconduct includes possession of weapons or drugs, or the student inflicts serious bodily injury on another person, then a student, including a student with intellectual disabilities, may be removed for 45 school days regardless of whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability.
- Any record of proposed discipline for disruptive behavior that is determined to be the manifestation of a student's disability should be removed from the student's discipline record.
- Specific questions regarding the discipline of students with disabilities should be directed to the Program for Students with Exceptionalities at 412-529-3132.
- School teams must initiate a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) for students with disabilities immediately once the student

has reached eight (8) days of suspension in one school year. This provision applies to all students who are thought-to-be eligible or have been found eligible for an IEP or 504 Plan. Teams may need to complete an FBA before reaching 8 cumulative days of suspension, dependent upon individual circumstances.

- The student's IEP or 504 Team will then determine whether, based upon data, the student demonstrates behaviors which impede their learning or the learning of others, and, if so, subsequently develop or revise a Positive Behavior Support Plan for the student. School teams and parents are encouraged to convene the IEP team after a student is assigned a disciplinary exclusion from school.



STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY *Protocol*



Face Coverings

All students must wear a face covering (i.e., mask) that covers their nose and mouth inside the school and while outside when physical distancing is not feasible. Students will be required to always wear face coverings in school, and on buses, except during designated mask breaks to last no longer than 10 minutes while adequate distancing is respected in accordance with Pennsylvania's universal masking order, or as required by any subsequent Department of Health Order. Face coverings may be removed when eating or drinking when adequate distancing exists. Signs reminding students to wear their mask properly will be posted throughout the school building in highly visible locations. Regular announcements will be made throughout the school day on reducing the spread of COVID-19. Communications will be in common languages spoken at school and home and easily understandable to both students and adults.

Student Requirements

Students are required to wear a face mask unless they have a medical or mental health condition or disability, documented by a licensed healthcare provider in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), that prevents the wearing of a face covering in school. Where mask wearing is not feasible, a face shield may be an acceptable alternative pursuant to existing Department of Health safety guidance. For students who have a medical exemption, all relevant school personnel will be notified in advance to support clear and nondiscriminatory enforcement of the face covering policy. In such cases, the student's IEP/504 Team will discuss access to the school environment, and other topics to create a plan that supports equal access while protecting health and safety.



Distancing in School and on the Bus

Students must maintain social distance as recommended by the local Department of Health (DOH) and Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Seats in classrooms will be distanced, facing in the same direction. Floor markings will establish proper distances.

School entrances may be designated for specific uses or groups. While in stairways and hallways students will follow established traffic patterns to maintain social distance as recommended by the local DOH and PDE.

During mealtimes, each school will ensure that distancing is maintained by having some students eat in the cafeteria, some in classrooms, as well as some in other areas of the school as needed, to ensure required distances are maintained.

Bus seating capacity may be limited by the Transportation Department to comply with distancing recommendations and will be communicated to schools and parents/guardians. To ensure proper capacity for essential transportation, arrival and dismissal times may be adjusting to allow for safe loading and unloading. Students are required to wear a mask at all times during transportation to and from school, except where eating or drinking a permitted food or beverage.

Hygiene

Students will be educated on how to maintain proper hygiene in compliance with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations by regularly washing hands at 20 second intervals with warm water and soap. Where handwashing is not available, hand sanitizer of at least 60% alcohol will be provided to students for use. Hand sanitizer stations and personal protective equipment will be at every school entrance, and hand sanitizer stations will be placed throughout all buildings. Students will be taught proper hygiene practices through age-appropriate lessons and will be given adequate time to complete these important tasks. Where water fountains are turned off to comply with health and safety guidelines, bottle fillers will be in use.

When Someone is Sick

Where there is a confirmed infected person, all exposed facilities will be disinfected. The District is required to follow PDE's Recommendations for Pre-K to 12 Schools Following Identification of a Case(s) of COVID-19, Responding to COVID-19 Case(s) at School (pa.gov), or any subsequent guidance issued in its place. The school or areas of the school may be closed, deep-cleaned and reopened based on current health and safety guidelines. Any school vehicle ridden by a confirmed infected person will be immediately deep cleaned.

A process of contact tracing will occur through the District, and any person required to quarantine, or isolate will be notified.

Designated isolation and quarantine locations have been identified in each PPS building for students who demonstrate symptoms during the school day. The parent/guardian will be contacted to pick the child up from school.

Additional FAQs and responses to health & safety questions can be found at: <https://www.pghschools.org/Page/5617>

Nondiscrimination Notices

Pittsburgh Public Schools offers all programs and activities 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. School sponsored programs and activities shall be made available on an equal basis to all individuals, consistent with state and federal law. For more information regarding the nondiscrimination policies of the District, to report a violation, or file a complaint, contact the District's Title IX Compliance Officer or Designee.

Title IX Compliance Officer

Dr. Rodney Necciai,
Assistant Superintendent -
Student Support Services

Student Support Services
341 S. Bellefield Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
412-529-3950
rnecciai1@pghschools.org

Title IX Compliance Officer's Designee

Elena Runco, Director of
Student Support - Social
Worker

341 S. Bellefield Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(412) 529-3918
erunco1@pghschools.org

Title VI Notice

It is the District's policy to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI requires that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or service of the District.

Section 504/ADA Notice

The Pittsburgh Public Schools hereby give notice that it is the district's policy to assure full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Act provides protection against discrimination for individuals with disabilities. Students in school settings fall under the civil rights protection of Section 504. The law and regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability from all school programs and activities in both public and private schools receiving direct or indirect federal funding. Section 504 accommodations could be available to identified students with disabilities, who have been evaluated. Section 504 is designed to provide equal access and fairness in general education to students with disabilities, thereby leveling the playing field for them through what is known as a Section 504 Accommodation Plan. To qualify for accommodations under Section 504, the student must be evaluated and meet the Section 504 identification criteria. A student is entitled to a Section 504 Accommodation Plan if they have been identified and the evaluation shows that the individual has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.


Expect great things.



Para asistencia con este documento en español, por favor llame a la línea nueve al 412-529-6463 y seleccione la opción #1.

यो दस्तावेज सम्बन्धी सहयोगको नमिती कृपया नाइन लाइन नम्बर (४१२)५२९-६४६ मा फोन गरी अंक # १ चुनुनु होला ।

Kwa msaada kwa nyaraka(document) hii katika Swahili , tafadhali piga msitari wa tisa 412-529-6463 kisha chaguwe uchaguzi la #3.

=如需获得本文件的中文帮助，请拨打412-529-6463致电九号线，并选择选项 #4

حصول على المساعدة باللغة العربية ، إضغطوا على #5

Чтобы получить помощь по этому документу на русском языке, пожалуйста позвоните на Девятую Линию 412-529-6463 и нажмите #8.

The Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender (including gender identity or expression), sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or disability in its programs, activities or employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries may be directed to the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Title IX Coordinator or the Section 504/ADA Title II Coordinator at 341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, 412-529-3950, TitleIXCoordinator@pghschools.org or 412-529-HELP (4357).