

2023-2024 School Year Information

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Helpful School Contacts

Principal- Angelique Benjamin

Assistant Principal- Theresa Alessio

Secretary- Jill Campisi

Student Data Systems Specialist- Andrea Bennett

Guidance Counselor- Nneka Shelton

Guidance Counselor- Khadija Gray

Social Worker- Holly Blattler Eidinger

Social Worker- John O'Connell

Nurse Practitioner- Wendy Emery

PSE teacher- Angela Stubbs

PSE teacher- Natalie Kratsas

PSE teacher- Brittany McIntosh

Family and Community Engagement Coordinator- Stephanie Theuret

Athletics- Kevin Shevitz

CAS Facilitators- John Antonucci, Patricia Barbas, Shelbie Nocera, Brian Rose, Heidi Simpson, Stephanie Theuret, Britni Hoffman, Julie Kupec and Danielle Whalen

****Please see the Staff Directory at the end of this packet for all staff contact information****

School Address and Phone Number

Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy

Address: 107 Thackeray Street Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Phone: 412-529-7620

Website: www.pittsburghscitech.com

Bell Schedule

The Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy will utilize multiple bell schedules during the school year, both for e-learning and in-person instruction. The "regular" bell schedule will be used on Monday's, Tuesday's, Thursday's and Friday's. First period begins at 7:40 and sixth period ends at 2:40.

On Wednesday's there is a one-hour early dismissal for students, the last period on Wednesday ends at 1:40 pm. The early dismissal every Wednesday allows us to engage in weekly professional learning with our staff members. With so many of the unique things that we do at SciTech, our professional learning program is vital to the success of the school.

All of our schedules include four academic periods, one lunch period and one activity/advisory period. Please refer to the bell schedules available in this mailing or at <https://www.pittsburghscitech.com/bell-schedule> . Please note that the schedule for students in grades 6-9 is slightly different than the schedule for students in grades 10-12.

First Day of School for Grades 6-12- August 28, 2023

Students in grades 6-12 will have their first day of school on August 28. We look forward to your attendance!

Students Leaving the Building

Students are NOT PERMITTED to leave the school campus during the school day. Students who leave the campus without an appropriate early dismissal will be disciplined in accordance with the School Discipline Code.

Closing and School Delays

Sometimes it is necessary to close or delay the opening of school when extreme weather or building emergencies make it impossible to open. If you suspect that school might be delayed or closed due to inclement weather, please do not call the school. Announcements will be made on television and radio stations. In addition, the school district will post all

school closures and delays on the school district website www.pghschools.org. In the event of a 2-hour delay first period will begin at 9:40 AM.

Student Schedules

Student schedules will be made available to families through the eSchoolPlus Home Access Center (HAC) during the **week of August 22**.



Schedule Change Requests:

Please submit any schedule change request to Ms. Shelton by clicking on the link below and submitting your response to each question: tinyurl.com/scitechschedulechange

Transportation

The Pittsburgh Public Schools provides Port Authority bus transportation for high school students who live 2 miles or more from the school and for middle school students who live 1.5 miles or more from the school. Please reference the section on "Building Access" which notes the specific door students will need to enter in the morning. Once students are dropped off at school, they are not permitted to leave school property. This includes walking to Oakland or surrounding areas before entering the building.

Port Authority Transportation

All SciTech students in grades 6-12 will be riding Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT). Students will be asked to follow PRT's health and safety guidelines. Board policy states that all school rules, including school discipline procedures and protections, apply when students are on the bus and at the bus stop. Engaging in or causing disruptive behavior on the bus and at the bus stop which creates a substantial risk of or results in injury may result in disciplinary action. **For the start of school, prior to issuing bus passes, students will state that they are a Pittsburgh Public School student when entering the bus as there is an agreement between PPS and the PRT.**



This process is coordinated through the Pittsburgh Public School Transportation Department and students will receive the pass in school. The transportation department can be reached for any questions by calling (412) 529-8125.

Cell Phones, Headphones, Airpods and Other Electronic Devices

The revised SciTech Cell Phone Policy will be distributed via the Pittsburgh Public Schools Central Office in a separate mailing prior to the start of school.

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. The Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy has a unique dress code exclusive to the school. It is our hope that the dress code helps foster a positive learning environment. Please review the comprehensive expectations for daily dress in the included dress code document or at <https://www.pittsburghscitech.com/forms-and-policies>.

Code of Student Conduct

A copy of the updated Code of Student Conduct will be included either in a Welcome Back mailing from the Pittsburgh Public Schools central office or a packet of materials distributed to students at a later time. A copy of the Code of Student Conduct can also be found on the district website. It is very important that students and families familiarize themselves with this document.

Building Access

Please read the procedures below regarding the arrival to school. The building will open at 7:15 AM for student entry. For the safety and security of our students, metal detectors will be used at all entrances.

Entrance Procedures for grades 9-12

Students in grades 9-12 will enter the building through the Bouquet Street entrance and move into the cafeteria where breakfast will be available.

Entrance Procedures for grade 6-8

Students in grades 6-8 will enter the building through the Thackeray Street entrance. Students will then transition to the cafeteria where breakfast will be available.

Arriving Late to School

If any student comes to school after 7:35 AM, they must enter through the Thackeray Street entrance. Students that arrive to school after 7:40 AM will check in at the tardy desk.

Visitors

All visitors must enter through the doors on Thackeray Street. If you require an ADA accessible entrance, please call the main office before you arrive and a staff member will meet you at the Bouquet Street entrance or a ground level entrance in the main parking lot facing 5th Avenue. An elevator is available.

The Compact of Understanding

All students, families and staff must sign the Compact of Understanding. This compact outlines the agreement students, families and staff members make regarding their commitment to success at the Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy. Students, staff and families will see constant reminders of this compact in classrooms and in various areas throughout the school building. **This document is located in this mailing and should be turned in to the student's advisor.**

Attendance Reminders

We realize that it will be necessary for students to be absent on occasion when a student is prevented from attendance for certain reasons (illness, health care, bereavement, religious holidays, school activities). It has been proven, however, that students who attend school regularly achieve more than those who do not. Class attendance and participation are imperative for academic achievement and necessary for the accomplishment of curricular objectives, especially at SciTech where we implement a block schedule. Therefore, it is the policy of the School District that all students be in attendance unless absent for an approved reason.



Students must bring an excuse to school the day after an absence and turn it into the main office. While students are participating in E-learning, families are asked to email the school social worker or student data system specialists in order to submit an absent note. Only ten parent excuses are allowed per year. If a student does not bring in an absent note from a parent or guardian after three days following the absence, the absence is then considered unexcused. Unexcused absences violate the Pennsylvania school compulsory attendance laws and can lead to a citation being filed with the local magistrate. Parents may write up to ten excuses per year for student tardies to school and early dismissals due to illness. Parents/guardians shall submit written explanations for tardies to school due to illness within three (3) calendar days of the tardy. It is important to note that the Pittsburgh Promise uses attendance as one of several criteria when determining eligibility for scholarships. Suspensions and unexcused absences shall count against a student when determining eligibility for the Promise. All excused absences are not counted against a student in determining eligibility for the Promise.

Multiple Household Contact Numbers

This school year we will regularly use the Blackboard Connect Robocall system as well as the TalkingPoints messaging system to communicate with families. The primary contact number that is indicated on the emergency contact form is the number that is automatically uploaded into those two systems. If you would like an additional number added to receive communications for your student, please contact Mrs. Theuret at stheuret1@pghschools.org.



Field Trips

Given our unique program, and the fact that we are located in the heart of Oakland, our students are often learning outside the classroom walls. We refer to these experiences as “walking field trips” given that our proximity allows us to walk to and from the activity. Teachers may not always send home information regarding walking field trips. Students will also take part in more traditional field trips that will require transportation and may take a longer period of time, in these cases parents will be informed of the trip.

Special Education

Middle and high school special education delivery is completely aligned with that of the district, focusing on inclusion and support. Our PSE teachers are responsible for the development of student Individual Education Plans (IEP's) and ensure that teachers are implementing the specially designed instruction. Special programs for academic support are available to students in certain grade levels, and not exclusive to students with identified special needs. Additionally, students may use their activity period for additional academic support if needed.

Gifted Education

The Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy will provide gifted education services designed to meet the individual needs of each identified student. Middle school students will not attend the Pittsburgh Gifted Center but will receive gifted services within the school. Specially designed instruction based on each student's interests and strengths will be offered on an ongoing basis. Gifted Individualized Educational Plans (GIEPs) will be written prior to school starting and in the fall by CAS facilitators at the school.

The Pittsburgh Promise

The Pittsburgh Promise is a big idea and a concrete commitment to all students who graduate from Pittsburgh Public Schools and who live in the City of Pittsburgh. If they maintain an average GPA of 2.5 and an attendance record of 90% they will earn up to a \$20,000 scholarship to attend any accredited post-secondary institution in Pennsylvania. At SciTech, we create opportunities and provide support for all students to graduate Promise-Ready.



Final Exams

Semester examinations are to be administered to high school students in all subjects. No student is excused from taking semester examinations. There will be a late room for high school students who are tardy to school on the day of their final exam. Students will only be given the amount of time remaining in the period to take their final. It is imperative that students arrive on time for end of semester finals.

Backpacks

It is the responsibility of all SciTech students to purchase an appropriate backpack for carrying a laptop computer throughout the day. If you are looking to purchase a replacement backpack for the coming school year, be sure that it is rated for a laptop computer. This often means that there is additional padding inside and usually includes a specific pocket or flap for the computer. Students that are new to SciTech will receive a laptop sleeve. Backpacks are checked and verified on a daily basis as students enter the building.

Student Lockers

Each student will be assigned a locker for the storage of books and other belongings. It is the student's responsibility to see that his/her locker is secured at all times. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen property. Students must only use their assigned lockers. Good judgment should be used in what you bring to school. Lockers are school property and may be searched at any time if reasonable cause exists to do so. Students are required to bring a lock from home.



Pictures

All students must have their picture taken as they are used for student ID's. Students and their families will have the opportunity to purchase various picture packages from the photography company. School Picture Day for students in grades 6-11 and senior pictures have not been scheduled but will be announced via the SciTech weekly email.

Early Dismissal Notice

A request for an early dismissal must be submitted in writing to the main office the morning of the day of the dismissal. The request must include a telephone number at which the parent/guardian can be contacted to verify the early dismissal request. Students can then pick up their early dismissal pass after 2nd period. **Please note that it is necessary for students to remain in class at the end of the school day. Early dismissals near the close of 6th period will not be given without the main office having received an early dismissal note in accordance with the school policy.**

Outstanding Obligations

(Textbooks/Calculators/Technology Items)

Students are responsible for all books, calculators and technology items issued to them. If damaged or lost, it is the student's responsibility to replace them. If a returning student has not paid their obligation(s), they are not considered in good standing until the debt is paid. While a student is not in good standing, they are not permitted to participate in extracurricular activities (school dances, prom, etc.).



Parent School Community Council (PSCC) Meetings

The purpose of the Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy PSCC is to provide ongoing communication between the school and parents, guardians and community groups regarding issues that are important to the success of our students. Please see the flyer in this mailing and the one posted on the school website for additional information.

Family Volunteers

We recognize that a great school has great family support and engagement. We are working on developing a strong and active group of family volunteers to help sustain the collaboration among staff members and our families. If you are interested in volunteering, please go to www.pittsburghscitech.com and click on Families then Volunteer. If you have any questions, you can contact Mrs. Theuret at 412-529-7652 or stheuret1@pghschools.org.

Communicating with Teachers

All teachers have their own phone extensions, voicemail and email. Teachers will provide all of their contact information to their students at the beginning of the school year. Teacher email addresses are included on our website and in this packet as well. In addition, teachers use the TalkingPoints messaging app for two-way communication with families.

Athletics

SciTech students who are interested in participating in athletics have the opportunity to do so with our partner schools through a cooperative sponsorship. Mr. Shevitz serves as our Athletics Liaison with these schools and can be contacted at kshevitz1@pghschools.org or 412-529-7658.

Grades 9-12

Our high school students partner with Pittsburgh Obama and University Prep for varsity athletics. Our students may participate in any sport that is offered. Students can only tryout or participate in practice after submitting a completed physical.

Grades 6-8

Our middle school student's partner with University Prep and information regarding the middle school athletic program will be available closer to the start of school. The location of all practices and games will be primarily at University Prep but will be determined on a sport-by-sport basis. Information will be available for students once the school year begins. Please direct any questions regarding the middle school sports program to the SciTech Athletics Liaison, Kevin Shevitz, at kshevitz1@pghschools.org or call 412-529-7658.

Laptops

Every student at our school will receive a personal laptop computer to use at home and school throughout the school year. In addition to specialized technology classes and training for our students, we will offer on-site technology repair and assistance.



Technology Use

A technology Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) will be shared with students once the school year begins. Given that SciTech utilizes technology as a learning tool every day, communication of the AUP is incredibly important so that all students are aware of the policy. In the student handbook there is a section titled "Laptop Program Guidelines and Agreements" that clearly outlines the acceptable use of technology at SciTech. A copy of the District's AUP is available on the Pittsburgh Public Schools website.

Breakfast and Lunch Program

Breakfast will be available for all students in the cafeteria from 7:15 - 7:35 AM. No "snack" items will be sold during breakfast. Each student will have one lunch period in the middle of the day. Students may bring their own lunch to school or receive a free lunch in the cafeteria. Students may not take food out of the cafeteria area and must dispose of all items properly. Students are not permitted to have food delivered to the school.



Policy 102 – Non-Discrimination in School and Classroom Practices

Board Policy 102 states in part: The Board declares it to be 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.

For the full text of Board Policy 102-Non-Discrimination in School and Classroom Practices, please visit:

<https://www.pghschools.org/nondiscrimination-policy>

For information about our Title IX procedures, please visit: <https://www.pghschools.org/titleIX>

Immunization and Health Information

The health and well-being of our students is very important. Please don't hesitate to inform our school nurse practitioner of any medical concerns that you may have about your student's health throughout the school year. Nurse Emery, the school nurse practitioner will be available to answer all health-related questions beginning August 22, 2023. Nurse Emery can be reached by phone at 412-529-7654 and forms can be faxed to 412-224-4650.

Additional information regarding immunization information will be shared with all families. Please keep in mind that students entering 7th grade are required to submit documentation to the school health office of the meningococcal (MCV) and Tdap vaccines. All 12th grade students are required to have written proof of a 2nd dose of the meningococcal vaccination (MCV).



All 6th and 9th grade students are required to have a physical examination. Any physical completed by your student's health care provider dated on or after April 1, 2023, will be accepted. A copy of your student's physical examination is due in the school health office by **October 10, 2023**. All 7th grade students are required to have a dental examination. This examination will be performed at school unless a completed dental form has been submitted.

If your student requires the administration of prescription or over the counter medication during the school day, a completed medication administration form is required on the first day of school. All medication must be in the original prescription labeled container to be administered by the school health office.

2023-2024 Staff Directory

ADMINISTRATION/OFFICE STAFF				
NAME	TITLE	ROOM	PHONE 412-529	Email @pghschools.org
Angelique Benjamin	Principal	Main Office	7620	abenjamin2
Theresa Alessio	Assistant Principal	Main Office	7620	talessio1
Jill Campisi	Secretary	Main Office	7620	jcampisi1
Andrea Bennett	Student Data Systems Specialist	Main Office	7620	abennett1
SUPPORT STAFF				
Nneka Shelton	Guidance Counselor	135	7627	nshelton1
Khadija Gray	Guidance Counselor	56	76672	kgray1
Holly Blattler Eidinger	Social Worker	144C	7626	hblattlereidinger1
John O'Connell	Social Worker	313	7610	joconnell1
Walter Chambers	Project Specialist	122	7692	wchambers1
Maggie Totterdale	Transition Counselor	56	3439	msevilla1
Wendy Emery	Nurse Practitioner	134	7654	wemery1
SECURITY				
Kristy Alker	School Police Officer	Security	7620	kalker1
Tarron Thomas	School Security Aide	Security	7620	tthomas7
CAFETERIA				
Jordan Helterbran	Manager	Cafeteria	7629	jhelterbran1
CUSTODIAN				
Johnny Jays	Head Custodian	37	7662	jjays1

TEACHING STAFF			
Name	Department & Additional Roles	Phone	Email
John Antonucci	Humanities, Gifted Facilitator	7681	jantonucci1
Maurice Bajcz	Science	7648	mbajcz1
Patricia Barbas	English, Gifted Facilitator	7561	pbarbas1
Karen Beer	World Languages	7628	kbeer1
Jeffrey Bland	Science, Technology Coordinator	8545	jbland1
Katherine Blandino-Nienhuis	Math- ITL	7464	kblandinonienhuis1
Luke D'Amico	Math	7809	ldamico1
Susan Dalessandri	World Languages- ITL	7641	sdalessandri1
Melissa Diaz	Science	7631	mdiaz1
Jonathan Edwards	English, Humanities- ITL, Testing Coordinator	7655	jedwards1
Vilma Santana Eugui	World Languages	7628	vsantanaeugui1
Matthew Ferrante	Related Arts	8496	mferrante1
James Gouker	Related Arts	7638	jpgouker1
Britni Hoffman	Math- ITL, Gifted Facilitator	7640	bhoffman1
Timothy Howells	Science	8897	thowells1
Brittany Keesecker	Math	2370	bkeesecker1
Dr. Edwina Kinchington	Science- ITL	7647	ekinchington1
Natalie Kratsas	Programs for Students with Exceptionalities (PSE)	7192	nkratsas1
Dr. Julie Kupec	English, Humanities, Gifted Facilitator	7680	jkupec1
Henry Lancet	Science	7642	hlancet1
Julie Lazzaro	Math, AP Coordinator, Interact Club Advisor	7696	jlazzaro1
Robert Lingg	Physical Education, Health	7673	rlingg1
Ilene Marshall	English, Senior Class Advisor	7645	imarshall1
Brittany McIntosh	Programs for Students with Exceptionalities (PSE)	7656	bmcintosh1
Jennifer Miller	Humanities, Mock Trial Advisor	7650	jmiller2
Michael Miller	Science	7649	mmiller3
Wendy Moore	Humanities, Gifted Facilitator	8506	wmoore1
Dana Navaroli	Science	7633	dnavaroli1
Shelbie Nocera	Science, Gifted Facilitator	8584	snocera1
Wendi Obritz	Math, Senior Class Advisor	7518	wobritz1
Cristina Perris	Math, Testing Coordinator	8605	cperris1
Christina Reiser	Math, Yearbook Advisor	8526	creiser1
Casey Reynolds	English, FSU Advisor	7644	creynolds1
Brian Rose	Science- ITL, Gifted Facilitator	7632	brose1
Reese Schoy	English, Humanities	8918	rschoy1
Kevin Shevitz	Physical Education, Health, Athletic Liaison	7658	kshevitz1
Heidi Simpson	English, Gifted Facilitator, GSA Advisor	8396	hsimpson1
Christopher Sparacino	Science, Gifted Facilitator	8898	csparacino1
Angela Stubbs	Programs for Students with Exceptionalities (PSE)	7656	astubbs1
Stephanie Theuret	Post-Sec Prep/Business, Gifted Facilitator, FACE Coordinator	7652	stheuret1
David Thyberg	Physical Education, Health	7673	dthyberg1
Danielle Whalen	Humanities	7689	dwhalen1
James Wygant	Science	8498	jwygant1
Michael Yakubisin	Mathematics	7679	myakubisin1