

We recognize that the start of this school year has been unlike any previous year. We remain excited to welcome all of our students back into the school building for in-person learning five days a week. It will take families, students and staff working together to ensure that we are able to provide a safe and healthy environment where our students can continue to engage in the rigorous learning opportunities that our teachers provide. Please continue to remind your students about the importance of wearing a mask properly throughout the day. Please review the reminder below regarding our masking policy.

#### Pennsylvania Secretary of Health's Masking Order

PPS follows the Pennsylvania Secretary of Health's Masking Order. Further, the District's Health and Safety Plan for the 2021-22 school year requires indoor masking for all students and staff. Explicit instruction for all students has been provided to ensure that there is a collective understanding of the importance of properly wearing a mask in order to maintain a safe and healthy school environment. **Gators and bandannas are not appropriate masks.** Masking rules are posted throughout the school building to reinforce masking expectations with students daily, and teachers provide verbal reminders. Additional interventions are in place to support the masking order. Please note that the principal is authorized to implement the mask mandate by sending any non-compliant student home (Health & Safety Dismissal) after contacting the parent/guardian. The education of our students is of utmost importance, as is the health and safety of the school environment. Thank you for your attention to these important COVID-19 mitigation practices that are part of the district Health and Safety plan.

#### COVID-19 Mitigation and Lunch Periods

Beginning Monday, September 20 our students in grades 6 – 9 will eat during the first lunch and then report to activity/advisory for the remainder of the school year. Only students in grades 10 – 12 will continue to be served during the second lunch period. The revised schedule can be found at <https://pittsburghscitech.com/bell-schedule>. This change is necessary in order to reduce the number of students who are eating during the second lunch period, and create more room for students to social distance while eating. This will also enable us to continue to allow students to eat outside during lunch and be supervised by staff in multiple areas during the lunch period. Please encourage your student to take advantage of the opportunity to eat outside and to social distance while eating lunch in our designated areas.

#### PSSA and Keystone Testing

Parents play a critical role in helping their children to be successful on all student assessments. Our last day of PSSA testing is Monday, September 20 and then we begin Keystone testing until Monday, September 27. We urge you to help your child prepare for these assessments by encouraging them to get plenty of sleep the night before each test and to eat a healthy breakfast on the mornings of the assessments. It is also important that students arrive to school on time which minimizes some of the distractions that can occur during the mornings of the test. Finally, your child should know that these tests provide an opportunity to demonstrate their learning. Please encourage your student to do their very best on these important assessments!

#### **Bag Check (Reminder)**

Please note that all student bags will be checked when they enter SciTech. Please review the list below regarding items that are not permitted to be brought into the school.

#### **Liquids- Not Permitted**

- Open beverages
- Liquid in unsealed containers - *Water bottles should be unfilled*

**Drugs/ Medications**

- Over-the-counter medications
- Prescription drugs in their original containers NOT approved by the school nurse
- Miscellaneous pills, or drugs not in the original container
- See additional details in the PPS Code of Student Conduct

**Weapons and Dangerous Instruments**

- Any item that could inflict serious bodily harm or injury, including mace/pepper spray and lasers
- Aerosol containers or sprays such as cologne, perfume, spray deodorant, etc.
- Refer to Weapons and Dangerous instruments in PPS Code of Student Conduct

**Tobacco Products and/or accessories**

- Cigarettes/ Chewing tobacco
- Lighter/ Matches

Vaping Pens/Mods/Vaporizers