



**Peters Township School District
McMurray Elementary Student Handbook
2023~2024**



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From the Superintendent

Dear Parents,

Dear Parents,

Welcome to a new year in the Peters Township School District! This handbook has been developed to provide useful information about our District and your child's school for the coming year.

Our student handbook serves as a valuable resource, outlining the policies, guidelines, and standards that contribute to a safe, respectful, and supportive school community. The handbook is designed to provide clarity and to promote a shared understanding of school expectations among students, staff, and parents. While we have attempted to cover many questions and situations in the handbook, additional information – contact numbers and e-mail, Board meeting information, policies and more – may be found on the District website at www.ptsd.k12.pa.us.

As a School District, and as a community, we are dedicated to excellence in all that we do. We wish you a rewarding and successful academic year filled with growth, accomplishments, and good memories.

Dr. Jeannine French
Superintendent

Board of Education

Thomas W. McMurray ~ *President*
Rebecca A. Bowman ~ *Vice President*
Minna Allison
Lisa Anderson
Rolf Briegel
Ronald Dunleavy
Jennifer Grossman
Dr. Shari Payne
Daniel Taylor

Administration

Dr. Jeannine French
Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Jennifer Murphy.
Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Michael W. Fisher
Assistant Superintendent
Shelly W. Belcher
Communications Coordinator
Tracy Bidoli
Director of Transportation
Robert Conley
Asst. Director of Buildings & Grounds
Brian Geyer
Athletic Director
Rose Walther
Director of Food Service
Patricia A. Kelly
Director of Pupil Services
Justin Pyles
Assistant Athletic Director
April Ragland
Asst. Director of Pupil Services
Brad Rau
Board Secretary/Business Manager
Adam R. Swinchock
Director of Instructional Technology
Andrew Thomas
Assistant Business Manager
Brandon Womer
Director of Buildings & Grounds
Louise Woods-Rzepka
Human Resources Coordinator

The purpose of the Student Handbook is to give School District students and their parents/guardians an understanding of the general rules and guidelines for attending and receiving an education in our schools. In a case of conflict between Board policy and the provisions of this handbook, the Board policy most recently adopted by the Board will govern. Similarly, the schools have supplemental handbooks. In the case of a conflict between a school handbook and this common handbook, the common handbook will govern.

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that this document is reviewed annually since policy adoption and revision is an ongoing process. Any changes that take place following the publication of this handbook will generally supersede the provisions found in the handbook, which will be updated for the next year. The handbook is not a contract between the school and parents/guardians or students. It can be amended at any time at the discretion of the District. If policy changes are enacted during the school year, the administration will communicate those changes to students, staff, and parents/guardians.

The Peters Township School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Compliance Officer for Section 504 services, activities, facilities accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities is Patricia Kelly, Director of Pupil Services; Compliance Officer for Employment, civil rights or grievance, non-discrimination in classroom practices and Title IX complaints is Dr. Jennifer Murphy, Deputy Superintendent. Contact information for Compliance Officers is listed on page 11.

Introduction

This handbook is intended to provide pertinent and useful information about the School District and school building procedures and policies. By working together at all levels, we can ensure that all children learn in a safe, high quality educational environment. School Board policies, curriculum information and current school procedures, programs and activities can be accessed via the District web site at www.ptsd.k12.pa.us.

Our School District

The Peters Township School District serves over 21,000 residents who live in the Washington County community of Peters Township, a 19.8 square mile, rural and suburban area south of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 1800, the first school was constructed in Peters Township: a simple, one-room log cabin. Since that time, we have grown into a school system that meets the educational needs of approximately 3,940 students in grades kindergarten through twelve. The District operates two (2) K-3 elementary schools, one (1) 4-5 elementary school, one (1) 6-8 middle school, and one (1) 9-12 high school. The School District's academic program incorporates the key elements of 21st century learning including critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, innovation, collaboration, technology, and life skills.

The District has consistently been recognized as one of the top performing Districts in the Commonwealth. In 2023, the Pittsburgh Business Times ranked Peters Township third among 105 local public school districts and sixth among all districts across the State. In addition, Peters Township High School was ranked first among all high schools in the Pittsburgh Metro Area by U.S. News & World Report, whose elementary school rankings also listed Bower Hill Elementary as second in Pennsylvania and Pleasant Valley Elementary as third.

Our District Mission

Peters Township School District will promote academic excellence, build leadership, and inspire character as a prominent Pennsylvania School District measured by state and national standards.

Vision Statement

Peters Township School District, as a public school entity, will enable students to realize their potential to learn, live, lead and succeed.

Shared Values

We Believe

- All students have value, the ability to learn, and deserve the opportunity to receive a high quality education.
- Educational excellence is achieved through the collaborative efforts of students, family, school and community.
- Valuing individual diversity encourages respectful and clear communication both locally and globally.
- Technology, the arts, service learning, athletics, and extra-curricular activities empower students to explore their talents and creatively shape their future.
- Variety in teaching and learning strategies will encourage rigor and relevance in an ever-changing world.

Our Responsibilities

The school community is made up of the student body, the teachers, the administrators, the school board, the parents, and all community members of Peters Township. To establish and maintain a school atmosphere in which everyone's personal worth and dignity are respected, the entire school community must work together. As members of the school community, we assume the following responsibilities.

Responsibilities of Students

It is the responsibility of each student to:

- Be honest and ethical: Respect, Responsibility, Honesty.
- Put forth his/her best efforts in the classroom to develop and improve his/her learning.
- Contribute to making the school a better place in which to learn.
- Exercise proper care when using school equipment.
- Assist in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the school community.
- Be aware of the rules and policies of the school and follow them.
- Attend school daily and report to all classes on time.
- Make the necessary arrangements to make up work when absent from school.
- Respect school property.
- Follow the dress code.

Responsibilities of Parents

It is the responsibility of parents to:

- Be honest and ethical.
- Teach their child to respect themselves and take pride in their accomplishments.
- Respect their child's interests, abilities, and limitations.
- Instill in their child a positive attitude toward school.
- Provide a suitable place for their child to do homework and be available for help when it is needed.
- Encourage their child to bring home all notices, forms, or letters from the school; read them; and, if necessary, discuss them with their child.
- Build a good working relationship with their child's teachers, and the school.
- Ensure prompt and regular school attendance.
- Teach their child to respect the law as well as the rights and property of others.
- Be aware of the school's rules for student behavior and encourage their child to follow them.
- Check the District website, PowerSchool and e-mail regularly to stay well informed.

Responsibilities of Teachers and other Employees

It is the responsibility of teachers and other employees to:

- Be honest and ethical.
- Promote mutual respect and dignity.
- Expect the best from each student.
- Encourage each student to develop a positive self-image and recognize the self-worth of others.
- Strive to make each student enthusiastic about learning.
- Be aware of the programs offered by the school and their responsibilities for the success of those programs.
- Build a good working relationship with the students and their parents.
- Teach students, by example, the common courtesies that promote better relationships.
- Handle discipline concerns individually and with confidentiality.
- Build good relationships with fellow teachers, colleagues, administrators and the entire school community.

Responsibilities of the Principal and Assistant Principal

It is the responsibility of the principal and the assistant principal, as the educational leaders of the school to:

- Be honest and ethical.
- Promote mutual respect and dignity.
- Be available to students, teachers, and parents.
- Review the school's programs regularly to make sure they are meaningful.
- Help the teachers to improve their own professional attitudes and practice.
- Work with students and teachers to develop school rules.
- Work closely with parents in establishing a good relationship between home and school.
- Encourage parents and students to talk with other staff members and community agencies in solving problems.
- Make sure the school building is safe.
- Follow School Board Policies.

Responsibilities of other School Personnel

Secretaries, teachers' aides, paraprofessionals, cafeteria employees, custodians, and bus drivers all contribute to the successful operation of the school. It is their responsibility to:

- Be honest and ethical.
- Promote mutual respect and dignity.
- Be aware of the programs offered by the school and their responsibilities for their success.
- Realize that while their individual responsibilities are important, they are a part of the total school program.
- Enforce proper discipline.
- Follow School Board Policies.

Responsibilities of the District's Administrators and School Board

It is the responsibility of the District's Administrators and School Board to:

- Be honest and ethical.
- Promote mutual respect and dignity.
- Establish a positive setting for learning.
- Assist in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the school community.
- Be aware of the programs offered by the school and their responsibilities for the success of those programs.
- Work closely with parents and District personnel in establishing a good relationship between the community and the District.
- Encourage parents, students, and school personnel to talk with other staff members, the School Board, and community agencies to solve problems.
- Be sensitive to the needs and expectations of the different people who make up the school community.
- Be available to parents, students, staff, and community members.
- Respect the feelings, judgments, and concerns of students, parents, school personnel, and community members.

The Peters Township School Board encourages community feedback. Email addresses of Board members are available on the District webpage under the School Board tab. That page also includes a link whereby all Board members can be emailed at one time. In addition, students, residents and taxpayers in the District may address the Board at meetings in accordance with procedures set forth in District Policy 903. All Board and Committee Meetings, unless excepted via the Sunshine Law, are public meetings and the Board encourages attendance by community members. In general, discussion of most items voted on at regular voting meetings takes place at the committee meeting level. If you are unable to attend, all meetings are video-taped and can be viewed on demand online, via a link on the School Board/Meetings and Minutes tab of the District website.

I

SECTION I: District Information

Peters Township School District 2023/2024 School Calendar

Approved

Board Approved: 2/21/23

August 2023				
M	T	W	H	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

17-18 New staff orientation
21-23 Faculty Inservice Days
(8/21-23 - Act 80)
24-25 Clerical Days
28 First Day for Students
Teachers 9- Students 4

February 2024				
M	T	W	H	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19*	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	

16 Faculty Inservice, No School
(Act 80)
19 Presidents' Day, No School
Teachers 20 - Students 19

September 2023				
M	T	W	H	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

4 Labor Day, No School
Teachers 20 - Students 20

March 2024				
M	T	W	H	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

26 End of Third Grade Period
28 Inservice/Cler., No School
29 Spring Break, No School
Teachers 20 - Students 19

October 2023				
M	T	W	H	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

30 End of First Grade Period
Teachers 22 - Students 22

April 2024				
M	T	W	H	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

1-5 Spring Break, No School
11 Report Cards(PowerSchool)
Teachers 17 - Students 17

November 2023				
M	T	W	H	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

2 Parent Conf. K-12, No School
3 Inservice/Cler., No School
6 Report Cards(PowerSchool)
22 Inservice (Act 80), No School
23-27 Thanksgiving Break, No School
Teachers 19 - Students 16

May 2024				
M	T	W	H	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

27 Memorial Day, No School
Teachers 22 - Students 22

December 2023				
M	T	W	H	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

25-29 Winter Break, No School
Teachers 16 - Students 16

June 2024				
M	T	W	H	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

7 Last Day of School for Students
7 Commencement, Class of 2024
10 Inservice Day
11 Clerical Day
12 Report Cards(PowerSchool)
18 Kennywood Day
Teachers 7 - Students 5

Total Teachers 193 - Total Students 180

January 2024				
M	T	W	H	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15*	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

1 Winter Break, No School
15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
No School
18 End of Second Grade Period
22 Clerical, No School
29 Report Cards(PowerSchool)
Teachers 21 - Students 20



No School

No School for Students, Staff Reports

* School Closing Make-Up Days

1/15, 2/19, and 6/10

Local Holidays: 11/24, 12/26, 12/28, 12/29, 3/29

Please see testing calendar on District website for a detailed

list of dates. Student trips will not be approved during these dates.

Administrative Staff Directory

Dr. Jeannine French , Superintendent	724-941-6251, ext. 7206 frenchj@pt-sd.org
Dr. Jennifer Murphy , Deputy Superintendent	724-941-6251, ext. 7208 murphyj@pt-sd.org
Dr. Michael W. Fisher , Assistant Superintendent	724-941-6251, ext. 7298 fisherm@pt-sd.org
Mrs. Shelly W. Belcher , Communications Coordinator	724-941-6251, ext. 7205 belchers@pt-sd.org
Mrs. Tracy Bidoli , Director of Transportation	724-941-8981, ext. 6012 bidolit@pt-sd.org
Ms. Rose Walther , Director of Food Service	724-941-6251, ext. 7226 waltherr@pt-sd.org
Mr. Robert Conley , Assistant Director of Buildings & Grounds	724.941.6250, ext. 5603 conleyr@pt-sd.org
Mr. Brian Geyer , Athletic Director	724-941-6250, ext. 8802 geyerb@pt-sd.org
Mrs. Patricia A. Kelly , Director of Pupil Services	724-941-6251, ext. 7271 kellyp@pt-sd.org
Mr. Justin Pyles , Assistant Athletic Director	724-941-6251, ext. 8801 pylesj@pt-sd.org
Mrs. April Ragland , Assistant Director of Pupil Services	724-941-6251, ext. 7202 raglanda@pt-sd.org
Mr. Brad Rau , Business Manager	724-941-6251, ext. 7203 raub@pt-sd.org
Mr. Adam R. Swinchock , Director of Instructional Technology	724-941-6251, ext. 7222 swinchocka@pt-sd.org
Mr. Andrew Thomas , Assistant Business Manager	724-941-6251, ext. 7209 thomasa@pt-sd.org
Mr. Brandon Womer , Director of Buildings & Grounds	724-941-8981, ext. 6011 womerb@pt-sd.org
Mrs. Louise Woods-Rzepka , Human Resources Coordinator	724-941-6251, ext. 7228 woodsl@pt-sd.org

II

SECTION II: Student Information

Academic Integrity (School Board Policy 145)

As a nationally recognized School District of Character by Character.org which has a mission to “promote academic excellence, build leadership, and inspire character,” the Peters Township School District believes in the intrinsic value of learning and the promotion of ethical student conduct. As such, it is expected that students act with integrity and honesty in all academic work. The Board and the District recognize that academic misconduct degrades the value of education and creates an unfair learning environment. The Board and District are committed as a school community to ensuring that our students become ethical users of resources and ideas in this age of information technology. The Board and the District are further committed to creating a positive school culture in which students are held and hold each other accountable. The Board and the District recognize that parents, teachers, students, and administrators have a role in fostering this philosophy.

The Peters Township School Board and Peters Township School District strive to uphold an education environment that values academic integrity. It is recognized that teachers, students, parents, and administrators each have a responsibility in fostering this environment.

Teacher, Student, Parent, and Administrator Responsibilities

Teacher Responsibilities

- Be specific and clear about collaboration, use of sources, formatting, etc. for each assignment and assessment that is given.
- Review student work regularly for incidences of Academic Misconduct.
- Clarify if assigned work is to be completed individually or collaboratively.
- Keep student work and assessments secure.
- Diligently monitor students during assessments, including securing electronic devices during the entirety of the testing period.
- Let students know when they are permitted to discuss an assessment after it has been given.
- Promptly report observed Academic Misconduct for another teacher’s class to that teacher.
- Be mindful and purposeful of student workload and assignments.
- Foster open communication while maintaining confidentiality.

Additional Peters Township High School Teacher Responsibilities

- Include the PTHS Honor Code statement on all assigned independent work and assessments.
- Promptly report Academic Misconduct in your own class to a school administrator.
- Include Academic Integrity in course expectations on each course syllabus.
- Review the Academic Integrity Policy with all students at the start of each semester including the range of consequences for Academic Misconduct.

Student Responsibilities

- Never electronically copy or transmit any current or former assignments to other students without express permission by the teacher.
- Communicate early with your teachers if you are overwhelmed with work or do not understand material prior to an assessment.
- Do not submit other student’s work as your own.
- Be honest and ethical.
- Be aware of the Academic Integrity Policy and consequences for Academic Misconduct.
- Follow all course-specific expectations, seeking teacher clarification when necessary.

- Protect your computer log-in information and passwords. Do not share this information with other students.
- Do not share your work with other students or collaborate with other students when work is expected to be individually completed.
- Report any Academic Misconduct infractions to your teacher.
- Be present and properly prepared for all assessments (tests and quizzes). Keep your eyes on your own paper during assessments and do not have any course material exposed (under desk, next to you, etc.).
- Never miss school or class to gain an academic advantage.
- Always complete your own work and equally contribute to a group activity. Clarify with your teacher when and if collaboration is permitted on assignments.
- Acknowledge the contributions of other sources on all work submitted. Follow the format provided by your teacher.

Parent Responsibilities

- Read and know the Academic Integrity Policy.
- Stress the importance of ethical academic behavior with the student.
- Support the student's need for quiet time and a place to study and avoid placing undue pressure for high grades.
- Encourage and support the student, but do not complete work for him/her. This includes editing, typing, or in any other way doing the work.
- Support teachers and administrators in administering discipline and upholding the Academic Integrity Policy.

Administrator Responsibilities

- Make available to all students, teachers, and parents the Academic Integrity Policy.
- Support teachers in administering discipline and upholding the Academic Integrity Policy.
- Promote understanding of student stressors.
- Foster communication with parents, students and teachers.
- Facilitate conferences and counsel students who have Academic Misconduct infractions.
- Assist teachers in maintaining a secure digital and physical environment.
- Identify students with at-risk behaviors and refer students to the Student Assistance Program (SAP).

Additional Peters Township High School Administrator Responsibilities

- Maintain the Academic Misconduct Log in the Student Management database.
- Convene the Academic Integrity Committee as needed.

Additional information pertaining to violations of Academic Integrity Policy and its associated discipline is listed in the Student Code of Conduct.

Assessment and Evaluation of Student Progress (School Board Policy 127 & 213)

The process of evaluating student performance must be based on clearly defined evaluation criteria referenced to the District's curricular objectives. Students may not earn nor lose points for anything unrelated to the demonstration of their understanding of curricular objectives. Evaluations of student performance must be valid, accurate and reliable. Student performance will be benchmarked against local, state, and national standards.

Attendance and School Absences (School Board Policy 204)

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires all students to attend school regularly.

As stated in the Attendance Policy 204:

The following conditions constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:

1. Illness, including if a student is dismissed by designated District staff during school hours for health-related reasons.
2. Obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts in any state, commonwealth or territory.

3. Quarantine.
4. Family emergency.
5. Recovery from accident.
6. Required court attendance.
7. Death in family.
8. Participation in a project sponsored by a statewide or countywide 4-H, FFA or combined 4-H and FFA group, upon prior written request.
9. Participation in a musical performance in conjunction with a national veterans' organization or incorporated unit, as defined in law, for an event or funeral.
 - a. The national veterans' organization or incorporated unit must provide the student with a signed excuse, which shall include the date, location, and time of the event or funeral.
 - b. The student shall furnish the signed excuse to the District prior to being excused from school.
10. Observance of a religious holiday observed by bona fide religious group, upon prior written parental request. (as noted in Policy 204).
11. Nonschool-sponsored educational tours or trips/family educational trip if the following conditions are met:
 - a. The parent/guardian submits the required documentation for excusal prior to the absence per the District's procedures, including use of the appropriate Educational Trip Form (attached to the bottom of Policy 204 as an administrative regulation).
 - b. The student's participation has been approved by the principal. If over five (5) days in duration the approval of the Superintendent or Designee is also required.
 - c. The adult directing and supervising the tour or trip is acceptable to the parents/guardians and the Superintendent.
12. College or postsecondary institution visit, with prior approval.
13. Other urgent reasons that may reasonably cause a student's absence as well as circumstances related to homelessness, foster care, and other forms of educational instability. Urgent reasons shall be strictly construed and do not permit irregular attendance.

Absences shall be treated as unlawful until the District receives a written excuse explaining the absence. Excuses are to be submitted within three (3) days of the absence.

A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification shall be permitted during a school year. These lawful absences include pre-planned educational tours or trips. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days shall require an excuse from a licensed practitioner of healing arts.

Students will be considered truant when they incur three (3) or more unexcused absences. Persons in parental relation, as that term is defined in Policy 204, will be notified after a student has been absent for three (3) days without a lawful excuse. A School Attendance Improvement Conference will be offered. Continued unexcused absences will be addressed in accordance with Policy 204, and could include referral of the student to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program, a local and youth agency, and/or the filing of a citation in the office of the appropriate judge against the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student, except in the case of a student who is age fifteen (15) or older, in which case, the citation may be filed against the individual student, or the person in parental relation to the student, as to be determined by the District.

Attendance Requirement for Participation in Extracurricular Activities

In order to participate in an extracurricular activity or practice on a given day, a student must attend school for at least one half of that given day.

Preplanned Educational Tour or Trip

If parents or guardians plan to take a family vacation and have it classified as an "educational trip," they must inform the principal at least one (1) week in advance of the reason for the absence by completing the District's "Request for Excused Absences from School for a Preplanned Education Tour or Trip" form available in the school office and on the District website. The approval of any preplanned educational tour or trip is within the discretion of the principal and is

not guaranteed. Total pre-approved absences during the school year will not exceed five (5) school days unless approved by the Superintendent or designee. All pre-approved absences will be recorded as excused absences. An application must be filled out for each child seeking excused absence from school. Applications are also required for half-day trips. Vacations will not be approved if any of the following apply:

- If the trip is scheduled during the weeks of PSSA Testing (ELA, Math, or Science), Keystone Testing, or other standardized testing applicable to the child(ren)
- If a child's academic progress is in jeopardy
- If students are considered truant (3 unlawful absences), habitually truant (6 unlawful absences), or have exceeded 10 excused absences.

Students are required to complete all assignments and tests deemed necessary by the teacher(s) within a time period that is equivalent to the number of days of excused absence (e.g., if a student missed three (3) days of school, they will be given three (3) days to make up all missed assignments).

The District may limit the number and duration of non-school sponsored educational tours or trips and college or postsecondary institution visits for which excused absences may be granted to a student during the school year. Preplanned Education Tours or Trips are included in the ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification permitted during a school year.

Booster/Support Groups (School Board Policy 915)

Booster/Support groups refers to any parental or community group that provides support to a District-related program. The Peters Township School District recognizes the value of community groups in promoting the goals of school established activities. Provisions established within Policy 915 coordinate the activities of such groups. It shall be expected that such organizations recognize the administration of the various schools of the Peters Township School District as being responsible for directing all educational programs and activities of the schools. Policies established by the Board of School Directors will govern all school established activities and programs. The policy provides for the annual review of stated goals and objectives of the group, constitution or bylaws, a current list of officers elected by members of the organization, and statements of endorsement by the Director of Athletics and the principal.

Only those booster/support groups that have specifically and directly received recognition by the District shall be eligible to be associated with the respective District activity that it supports. In order to maintain good standing, all booster/support groups must adhere to established guidelines and policies, many of which are contained in School Board Policy 915.

Policy 915 contains rules regarding:

1. District recognition of booster/support groups
2. Fundraising
3. Gifts, donations and spending of booster/support group funds
4. Student Awards
5. Use of District Facilities and Resources
6. Concession Stand Use
7. Complaint Procedures, etc.

All booster/support group board members must read and follow School Board Policy 915, which can be found on the District website under the School Board/District Policies tab.

Building Security/ School Visitors(School Board Policy 907)

Parents of enrolled students or of prospective students, and Peters Township residents generally, are encouraged to visit the schools to become familiar with educational programs, to confer with school personnel, or to obtain desired information.

Upon arrival at the school, visitors must immediately report to the office, show valid government-issued picture identification or school-issued pass, sign in noting the location you will be visiting, obtain a pass that must remain visible at all times when in the building, and sign out before leaving. **After the start of the school day all entrances shall be locked and visitors will use only the main entrance.** Once admitted, visitors must immediately proceed to the location that is the purpose of the visit and shall not roam the building or visit areas not listed in the visitor's ledger.

No visitor shall be allowed to photograph or videotape any person or any part of any building without prior approval of the principal and/or the Superintendent. All visitors should be aware that the District utilizes video surveillance systems on its property, including inside and outside District-operated buildings.

Bullying/ Cyberbullying (School Board Policy 249)

The District is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for students. The District recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Peters Township School District prohibits bullying by all students.

Bullying is defined as intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, creating an environment that a reasonable person in the reporting party's situation would find threatening or causing a substantial disruption of the orderly operation of school. Cyberbullying is included within the definition of bullying and can occur when acts take place during school hours, on a district-issued device and/or through a school platform, even when students are not physically present in a school building.

The District intends to enforce consequences for violating Policy 249 to acts that occur in a non-school setting to the fullest extent permitted by law. Any student who has been bullied or who witnesses a bullying incident is encouraged to promptly report such incident to the principal, school counselor, teacher or other trusted adult District employee. Students are also encouraged to report incidents of bullying using the Safe Schools Tip Form (K-5) or via Safe2Say Something (6-12) found on the District's website. The filing of knowingly false bullying reports will be punishable under the Student Code of Conduct. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reports of bullying.

Bus Procedures (School Board Policy 810)

A high standard of student behavior on school buses and at designated bus stops is expected. Any conduct that is deemed to be unsafe or detrimental to safe bus operation or bus stop safety will result in disciplinary actions such as seat assignment, loss of bus riding privileges, or suspension. The bus driver is in charge of the vehicle and students are to follow the instructions of the bus driver at all times.

Bus Assignments

Students are assigned to buses and bus stops each school year. Notification is done in August prior to the start of school. The personal bus schedule for your child can be found in PowerSchool at the Bus Information Tab. Students are to arrive at the bus stop at least ten minutes before the bus arrives. Change of address must be reported to the student's school so new bus assignments can be made. For more information pertaining to transportation please contact the Director of Transportation.

Bus Drills

Twice during the school year, all students assigned to a bus participate in bus evacuation drills. Typically, these drills are conducted in September and March.

End of the Year Celebrations

The District recognizes that many parents plan bus stop celebrations as the students arrive home on the last day of school. If this occurs, please allow the students to leave the bus and safely get to the side of the road before the celebration begins as traffic will continue to flow. Avoid the use of silly string or other items because they adhere to the paint in the warm temperatures and can cause costly repairs.

Special Transportation Request

The District is not responsible for the transportation of students to locations other than the student's home residence. Students are to ride the bus to which they are assigned. Only in an emergency situation will students be permitted to ride another bus unless otherwise assigned. Permission to ride a different bus must be obtained from the Transportation Department. The student must bring a note from a parent/guardian, and parent/guardian must contact the Transportation Department via phone or e-mail to notify the Department of the request. In order for the Transportation Department to grant the request, there must be space available on the bus to accommodate the request. Upon approval by the Transportation Department, the school will issue a note which the bus driver will accept and allow the student to ride the requested bus. Bus drivers will not accept verbal requests or instructions from the parent/guardian..

Cameras & Audio Recording Devices (School Board Policy 810.2)

Cameras are installed to enhance safety and protect the District and public's investment in school property. Cameras are in use around the perimeter of the buildings, at the stadium, on school buses and at locations within all school buildings. Please note that in accordance with Act 9 of 2014 and Act 56 of 2016, Peters Township School District will use video and audio recording devices on District buses and vehicles for discipline, security and safety purposes.

Recorded data from the cameras is used by the District administration and law enforcement to investigate incidents as necessary. Due to confidentiality laws, privacy rights, safety and welfare issues these recordings will not generally be available for viewing to anyone but authorized District personnel and law enforcement. Recorded data is maintained and destroyed in accordance with applicable retention and destruction guidelines. A recording of a student that is used in a disciplinary proceeding may be available for review by the student's parent/guardian or the student if the recording has been made part of the student's education record.

Care of School District Materials (School Board Policy 224)

It is expected that students will take proper care of school property, laptops, school supplies, equipment, textbooks and materials issued to them by the School District. Students who lose or damage materials and books will be expected to pay for the replacement or repair costs. Other disciplinary consequences may occur, including but not limited to loss of privileges and activities.

Character Counts

The Peters Township School District takes part in a community-based character building initiative known as Peters Township Character Counts (PTCC). For over twenty years, PTCC has been a collaboration of many community groups including the Chamber of Commerce, Municipal Government, Public Library, Rotary, Local Churches, Police and Fire Departments, and PTSAs. This initiative has been the catalyst behind many inspirational and educational programs resulting in philosophical changes in the community. Regular meetings are hosted by the member organizations and are open to anyone who lives or works in Peters Township. In addition, PTCC hosts an awards night each Spring that recognizes individuals whose achievements in the realm of character are recognized and celebrated.

Confidential Communications of Students (School Board Policy 207)

An employee may reveal information received in confidence from a student to the student's parent/guardian or other appropriate authorities when the health, welfare or safety of the student or other persons is in jeopardy. The principal, or administrative designee, may also reveal confidential information to other appropriate authorities, including law enforcement personnel.

Controlled Substance/Paraphernalia, Drugs and Alcohol (School Board Policy 227)

The School District Administration expects that students report for class or extracurricular, co-curricular, school sponsored/sanctioned activities in a condition that will allow them to perform their various activities in a safe and efficient manner. The School District and its agents recognize that in-school as well as out-of-school use of controlled substances has a negative impact on the institution as a whole and is detrimental to the safety of our student body as well as our goal of a drug-free learning environment. Rules, guidelines and procedures have been developed to provide

students information in advance of a problem and to promote the safety of all students, faculty and the public. Violations will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution.

Students are prohibited from using, possessing, distributing, and being under the influence of any controlled substances during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and to and from school-sponsored activities.

Controlled substances include: (1) controlled substances prohibited by federal and state laws; (2) look-alike drugs; (3) alcoholic beverages; (4) anabolic steroids; (5) drug paraphernalia; (6) any volatile solvents or inhalants; (7) substances that when ingested cause a physiological effect that is similar to the effect of a controlled substance as defined by state and federal laws; and (8) prescription or non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications, except those for which permission for use in school has been granted pursuant to Board policy.

Student conduct that occurs off school property or during nonschool hours to the same extent as provided in Board policy on student discipline (See Policy 122 and 218).

Reasonable Suspicion Testing

If based on the student's behavior, medical symptoms, vital signs or other, the building principal has reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence of a controlled substance, the student may be required to submit to a breathalyzer/portable breath test and/or be required to obtain a blood or saliva test or urinalysis.

Corporal Punishment (School Board Policy 218)

Corporal punishment is a form of physical discipline intended to cause pain and fear, in which a student is spanked, paddled or hit on any part of the body with a hand or instrument. Corporal punishment is a prohibited form of disciplining students. Reasonable force may be used by School District employees to quell a disturbance, obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object, for the purpose of self-defense, and for the protection of persons or property.

Disciplinary Procedures (School Board Policy 218)

One of the goals of our District and school discipline policies is to prepare our students for responsible citizenship. Each student must learn to work with and share the rights and responsibilities of good citizenship with other individuals.

It is the shared responsibility of the school, home, and community to provide an atmosphere of purpose and concern for education and the wellbeing of every person in the school environment. This environment should be a positive one, characterized by openness and mutual respect.

Student discipline and the enforcing of school rules shall be done respectfully, promptly, consistently, confidentially, and equitably regardless of the personal characteristics of the individual student. Discipline is motivated by the intent to correct and promote positive behavior and growth, as well as to maintain order.

Any student disciplined by a District employee shall have the right to notice of the infraction.

On and Off-Campus Conduct

Students may be disciplined for behavior that violates the Code of Student Conduct at all times during the time they are under the supervision of the school or at any time while on school property, while present at school-sponsored activities, and while traveling to or from school and school-sponsored activities or at other times while riding in school-provided means of transportation ("on-campus"). Students may also be disciplined for behavior that violated the Code of Student Conduct when the behavior occurs at other times and places ("off-campus") when:

1. The conduct involves, threatens or makes more likely violence, use of force or other serious harm directed at students, staff or the school environment;
2. The conduct materially and substantially disrupts or interferes with the school environment or the educational process, such as school activities, school work, discipline, safety and order on school property or at school

functions;

3. The conduct interferes with or threatens to interfere with the rights of students or school staff or the safe and orderly operation of the schools and their programs;
4. The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property; or
5. The proximity, timing or motive for the conduct in question or other factors pertaining to the conduct otherwise establish a direct connection to attendance at school, to the school community, or to a school-sponsored activity. This would include, for example, but not be limited to, conduct that would violate the Code of Student Conduct if it occurred in school that is committed in furtherance of a plan made or agreed to in school, or acts of vandalism directed at the property of school staff because of their status as school staff.

Loss of Privileges

Students who engage in misconduct may lose their right to participate in any activities associated with the school. Loss of privileges may result from a student's overall misconduct or through one gross event that negatively impacts the overall mission of the District, school, organization, activity, team, or group. Any student who conspires, solicits, or induces another student to violate school board policy, the rules, guidelines and procedures of this handbook, or the law, may also be subjected to the loss of privileges.

Discipline of Student Convicted/Adjudicated of Sexual Assault (School Board Policy 218.3)

The District recognizes the importance of a safe school environment for students who are victims of sexual assault.

A student who is convicted or adjudicated delinquent of sexual assault upon another student enrolled in the District must notify the Superintendent of the conviction no later than seventy-two (72) hours after the conviction. Upon report of a conviction or adjudication of sexual assault upon a District student, the Superintendent will take one of the following actions: (1) Recommend that the Board expel the convicted or adjudicated student, in accordance with law and Board policy; (2) Transfer the student to an alternative education program; or (3) Reassign the student to another school or educational program within the District.

If the convicted or adjudicated student has already been expelled, transferred or reassigned for the same sexual assault, or if the victim does not attend the same school, no additional action regarding expulsion, transfer or reassignment is required, however, the District maintains the authority to make an alternative assignment or provide alternative educational services during or after an expulsion at the discretion of the Superintendent.

The District shall ensure that the convicted or adjudicated student is prohibited from taking part in the following activities at the same time as the victim (1) Being educated in the same school building; (2) Being transported on the same school vehicle; (3) Participating in the same school-sponsored activity.

The District may return the student who is expelled, transferred or reassigned, to the student's originally assigned school only when the victim is no longer enrolled in the District or the conviction or adjudication has been reversed and is not pending appeal.

Upon report of a conviction or adjudication of sexual assault upon a District student that occurred in the school setting, the Superintendent shall notify the Title IX Coordinator to determine whether the incident has been addressed in accordance with applicable Board policy.

Education Committee: Parent Feedback (School Board Policy 906)

The Education Committee of the School Board values parent involvement in our educational programming. The Committee has created a designated e-mail account to facilitate communication with our families regarding educational

matters. If you have comments, suggestions, or concerns that you would like to share regarding our educational programming, please send your comments to the Committee at EducationCommittee@pt-sd.org. The Committee Chairs will check this account monthly. Comments and feedback sent to the Committee may be used to shape future Education Committee agendas. Please note that any information included in your comments to the Committee may be discussed at a public meeting of the Board. If you have specific questions about your child's course or classwork, please contact the teacher or school administrator directly.

Enrollment (School Board Policy 200)

To be eligible for enrollment, children must fully reside with a parent/guardian in boundaries of the Peters Township School District. The parent/guardian must submit proof of the student's age and immunizations and a completed Parental Registration Statement and home language survey. For additional information pertaining to enrollment and admission including eligibility of nonresident students, please refer to School Board Policies 200 (Enrollment of Students), 201 (Admission of Students) and 202 (Eligibility of Nonresident Students).

Policies also govern the District's responsibilities to educate homeless and foster students as more fully set forth in Policy 251 – Students Experiencing Homelessness, Foster Care and Other Education Instability.

Proof of Residence (School Board Policy 200.1)

Parents/guardians of all students registering in the School District must present three (3) acceptable proofs of residence to the school as part of the registration process before a student is permitted to attend school. Please see below for a list of documents:

One of the Following:

o Current deed, lease, or mortgage statement (statement must be no more than 6 weeks old at time of enrollment) **AND Two of the Below:**

- o Valid driver's license or PA Department of Transportation identification card
- o Current utility bill
- o Property tax statement or bill
- o Check stubs from wages, public assistance, or Social Security

Eligibility of Nonresident Students (School Board Policy 202)

The children of families who are moving out of the District and will no longer be residents of the District and will no longer be residents of the District, and are currently enrolled in the Peters Township Schools, may continue to attend the District Schools at the discretion of the Superintendent until the end of the current school year if requested by the parent/guardian. Parent must notify the District prior to moving out of the District in order to be eligible for continued enrollment. Tuition will be waived for the period of attendance from April 1 of the year of the current school year. If relocation occurs before April 1, tuition will be paid from the time of the relocation until April 1 for families who wish to continue to attend until the end of the school year. Continued attendance for former residents is for in-person instruction only.

Students who have attended the high school for a minimum of two (2) semesters and move out of the District at the end of their junior year or during their senior year, but wish to continue and graduate will pay tuition for the remaining year of high school, or portion thereof with approval by the Superintendent or designee. Attendance must be continuous without enrollment in another school District. Continued attendance for former residents is for in-person instruction only.

Visit the New Student Enrollment page on the District website to assist with this process.

Exemption from Instruction (School Board Policy 105.2)

Parents and guardians have the right to have their children excused from specific instruction that conflicts with their religious beliefs. The request must be made in writing and must detail the specific instruction from which the student is to be excused. The written request must contain a statement that the specific instruction described conflicts with the

religious beliefs of the student or of the parents/guardians. The parent/guardian and/or student may request suggested replacement educational activities. All students excused from specific instruction shall be required to achieve the academic standards established by the District as necessary for graduation. For more information, please review Policy 105.2.

Student Expression/Dissemination of Materials (School Board Policy 220)

The right of public school students to freedom of speech is guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth. The School District respects the right of students to express themselves in word or symbol and to disseminate non-school materials to others as a part of that expression. The School District also recognizes that exercise of that right must be limited by the District's responsibility to maintain an orderly school environment and to protect the rights of all members of the school community.

Policy 220 applies to student expression in general as well as dissemination of expressive materials that are not part of the District-sponsored activities (non-school materials). Materials sought to be disseminated as part of the curricular or extracurricular programs of the District are regulated by the District's educational program.

Dissemination of Nonschool Materials

Students who wish to disseminate non-school materials on school property must first receive permission from the principal by submitting them for approval at least 6 days in advance of dissemination. Students wishing to disseminate non-school materials should consult School Board Policy 220 for further guidance.

Limitations of Student Expression

Students have the right to express themselves unless such expression is likely or does materially and substantially disrupt or interfere with the educational process, including school activities, school work, discipline, safety and order on school property or at school functions; threatens serious harm to the school and community; encourages unlawful activity; or interferes with another's rights. Student expression is prohibited to the extent that it:

1. Violates federal, state, or local laws, Board policy or District rules or procedures;
2. Is libelous, defamatory, obscene, lewd, vulgar or profane;
3. Advocates the use of or advertises the availability of any substance or material that may reasonably be believed to constitute a direct and serious danger to the health or welfare of students, such as tobacco/vaping products, alcohol or illegal drugs;
4. Incites violence; advocates use of force; or threatens serious harm to the school or community;
5. Materially and substantially disrupts or interferes with the educational process, such as school activities, school work, or discipline, safety and order on school property or at school functions;
6. Interferes with, or advocates interference with, the rights of any individual or the safe and orderly operation of the schools and their programs; or
7. Violates written School District procedures on time, place and manner for dissemination of otherwise protected expression.

Spontaneous student expression which is otherwise protected speech is not prohibited by this section.

Student Expression in Media and Publications

School principals are required to supervise student media and publications published with school equipment or by school organizations to remove obscene or libelous material as well as edit material that would cause a substantial disruption or material interference with school activities.

Facility Usage (School Board Policy 707)

The District recognizes that although the primary purpose of the school buildings, facilities and property is to provide students with an appropriate learning environment, the Board may make school facilities available to individuals and community groups without discrimination and in accordance with policy, provided the use does not interfere with the educational programs or the needs of the District. Information for making application for the use of facilities can be

obtained by contacting the Athletic Office. Specific parameters regarding the use of school facilities can be found in Policy 707, which is posted on the District website under the School Board/District Policies tab.

False Alarms/Calls/Threats or Tampering with Safety Equipment or Devices (School Board Policy 218.2)

The safety of our staff and students is of utmost importance. Ensuring this safety is the responsibility of the entire Peters Township School District community, staff, school board, administration, parents and the student body. Students are not permitted to tamper with school safety equipment or materials or communicate terroristic threats directed at any student, employee, Board member, community member or property owned, leased or used by the District. In addition, any student who furnishes false information to any adult concerning the placement or setting of a bomb or other explosives, or falsely sets off an alarm, will be recommended for expulsion and referred to the police for related violations when deemed necessary by the administration.

Students shall immediately inform the principal regarding any information or knowledge relevant to possible or actual terroristic threats.

Flag Salute and Pledge of Allegiance (School Board Policy 807)

It is the responsibility of every citizen to show proper respect for his/her country and its flag. Students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and may refrain from saluting the Flag on the basis of personal belief or religious convictions. Students who choose to refrain from such participation shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate. Students who choose to refrain from such participation may stand or sit and shall remain respectfully silent throughout the Flag Salute and the Pledge of Allegiance. Students whose manners or actions are disruptive during the Pledge of Allegiance or the Flag Salute shall face disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the administration. These same rules, guidelines and procedures apply to the playing of the National Anthem.

All District schools and school organizations must comply with state and federal laws concerning flag displays.

Forms

District forms (educational trips, medication, photo refusal, and notes to school) are available in each school office or on the District website.

Gifts, Grants, and Donations to the District (School Board Policy 702)

The School District has the authority to accept such gifts and donations as may be made to the District or to any school in the District by resolution duly passed at a public meeting. It is the policy of the Peters Township School Board that all gifts of equipment, supplies, etc., made to the School District, shall become the property of the school and their security and maintenance shall become the responsibility of the school, unless otherwise stipulated.

Individuals and organizations in the community who wish to contribute money, supplies or equipment to enhance or extend the instruction or extra-curricular activity programs of the School District should consult with the principal, Business Manager, or Superintendent for authorization before appropriating funds. The Board of School Directors reserves the right to refuse to accept any gift, grant or donation which does not contribute toward the achievement of the goals of this District or the ownership of which would tend to adversely affect the District. Only equipment and supplies to which no restrictions are attached will be accepted, unless the Board of School Directors awards an exclusivity agreement.

Gifts to Board Members and District Staff Including Coaches (School Board Policy 319, 322, 827, 915)

The Board recognizes that sometimes there are occasions when the intent of gift giving is to show support or appreciation. The Board encourages those who want to thank a staff member or Board member to write letters and notes of appreciation. If giving a gift, please consider the fact that staff members and Board members are only permitted to accept gifts of nominal value or those that have a *de minimis* economic impact (that is, an economic consequence

which has an insignificant effect) and cannot accept any gift that would create a conflict of interest or create undue influence. Any perceived conflict of interest suspected of a staff member should be reported to the Superintendent (or Board President if the Superintendent is the subject of the conflict). Any perceived conflict of interest suspected of a Board member should be reported to the Board President (or Superintendent if the Board President is the subject of the conflict).

Harassment and Sexual Harassment (School Board Policy 103 & 103.1)

Federal and state laws prohibit harassment or sex related harassment. The Peters Township School District fully endorses and enforces this prohibition. The Board of School Directors advises all students that harassment or sexual harassment, including sexual violence, in any form is prohibited. Such conduct shall result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension and/or expulsion, as appropriate.

The term harassment consists of unwelcome conduct such as graphic, written, electronic, verbal or nonverbal acts including offensive jokes, slurs, epithets and name-calling, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, or other conduct that may be harmful or humiliating or interfere with a person's school or school-related performance and which relates to an individual's or group's race, color, age, creed, religion, sex/gender (including identity, expression, and orientation), ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or disability when such conduct is:

1. Sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive; and
2. A reasonable person in the reporting party's position would find that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment such that it deprives or adversely interferes with or limits an individual or group of the ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or opportunities offered by a school.

Under Title IX, sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A District employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or district service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, commonly referred to as quid pro quo sexual harassment
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to a district education program or activity.
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking.
 - a. Dating violence means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim and where the existence of such a relationship is determined by the following factors:
 - i. Length of relationship.
 - ii. Type of relationship.
 - iii. Frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
 - b. Domestic violence includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving federal funding, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.
 - c. Sexual assault means a sexual offense under state or federal law that is classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
 - d. Stalking, under Title IX means stalking on the basis of sex, for example when the stalker desires to date a victim. Stalking means to engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to either:

- i. Fear for their safety or the safety of others.
- ii. Suffer substantial emotional distress.

Such conduct must have taken place during a district education program or activity and against a person in the United States to qualify as sexual harassment under Title IX. An education program or activity includes the locations, events or circumstances over which the district exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the harassment occurs. Title IX applies to all of the District's education programs or activities, whether such programs or activities occur on-campus or off-campus.

Federal law declares sexual violence a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence means physical or sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent. An individual may be unable to give consent due to an intellectual or other disability. Sexual violence includes but is not limited to rape, sexual assault, sexual battery and sexual coercion.

All complaints of harassment and sexual harassment will be investigated promptly. Reporting parties are encouraged to use the report form available from the principal or on the District's website attached to Policy 103 & 103.1; however, oral complaints can also be made. The confidentiality of all parties will be maintained, consistent with the District's legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith charges of harassment.

The Compliance Officer for Unlawful Harassment is:

Dr. Jennifer Murphy, Deputy Superintendent/Title IX Coordinator
631 E. McMurray Road
McMurray, PA 15317
Phone: 724-941-6251, ext. 7208
Email: murphyj@pt-sd.org

Complaint Procedure

Step 1 – Reporting

A student or third party who believes s/he has been subject to conduct by any student, employee or third party that constitutes a violation of this policy is encouraged to report the incident immediately to the principal or school employee. Any person with knowledge of conduct that may violate this policy, is encouraged to report the matter immediately to the principal or school employee.

A school employee who suspects or is notified that a student has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy shall immediately report the incident to the principal, as well as properly making any mandatory police or child protective services reports required by law.

If the principal is the subject of a complaint, the student, third party or employee shall report the incident directly to the Compliance Officer.

The reporting party or reporting employee may be encouraged to make the complaint in writing or to use the District's report form available from the principal, Compliance Officer, and the District website; however, oral complaints shall be accepted, documented and the procedures of this policy implemented. The person accepting the written or verbal complaint may provide the complainant with factual information about the investigative process, the impact of choosing to seek confidentiality and the right to file criminal charges. In all other respects, the person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the complainant or those accused of a violation of this policy.

Step 2 – Investigation

The Compliance Officer shall ensure that the individual assigned to investigate the complaint has an appropriate understanding of the relevant laws pertaining to discrimination issues and this policy and how to conduct investigations.

The investigator shall work with the Compliance Officer to assess the anticipated scope of the investigation, who needs to be interviewed and what records may be relevant to the investigation.

The investigator shall conduct an adequate, reliable and impartial investigation. The reporting party and the responding party may suggest additional witnesses and provide other evidence during the course of the investigation. When the initial complaint involves allegations relating to conduct which took place away from school property, school-sponsored activities or school conveyances, the investigation may include inquiries related to these allegations to determine whether they resulted in continuing effects such as harassment in school settings.

The investigation may consist of individual interviews with the reporting party, the responding party, and others with knowledge relative to the allegations. The investigator may also evaluate any other information and materials relevant to the investigation. The person making the report, parties, parents/guardians and witnesses shall be informed of the prohibition against retaliation for anyone's participation in the process and that conduct believed to be retaliatory should be reported. All individuals providing statements or other information or participating in the investigation shall be instructed to keep the matter confidential and to report any concerns about confidentiality to the investigator.

If the investigation reveals that the conduct being investigated may involve a violation of criminal law, the investigator shall promptly notify the Compliance Officer, who shall promptly inform law enforcement authorities about the allegations.

The obligation to conduct this investigation shall not be negated by the fact that a criminal or child protective services investigation of the incident is pending or has been concluded. The investigator should coordinate with any other ongoing investigations of the allegations, including agreeing to requests for a short delay in fulfilling the District's investigative responsibilities during the fact-finding portion of a criminal or child protective services investigation. Such delays shall not extend beyond the time necessary to prevent interference with or disruption of the criminal or child protective services investigation.

Step 3 – Investigative Report

The investigator shall prepare and submit a written report to the Compliance Officer within twenty (20) days of the initial report of alleged discrimination, unless the nature of the allegations, anticipated extent of the investigation or the availability of witnesses requires the investigator and the Compliance Officer to establish a different due date. The parties shall be notified of the anticipated date the investigative report will be completed and of any changes to the anticipated due date during the course of the investigation.

The report shall include a summary of the investigation, a determination of whether the complaint has been substantiated as factual, the information and evaluation that formed the basis for this determination, whether the conduct violated this policy and of any other violations of law or Board policy which may warrant further District action, and a recommended disposition of the complaint. An investigation into discriminatory harassment or sexual harassment shall consider the record as a whole and the totality of circumstances in determining whether a violation of this policy has occurred, recognizing that persistent and pervasive conduct, when taken together, may be a violation even when the separate incidents are not severe.

The reporting party and the responding party shall be informed of the outcome of the investigation, for example, whether the investigator believes the allegations to be founded or unfounded, within a reasonable time of the submission of the written report to the extent authorized by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other applicable laws. The responding party shall not be notified of the individual remedies offered or provided to the reporting party.

Step 4 – District Action

If the investigation results in a finding that some or all of the allegations of the complaint are established and constitute a violation of this policy, the District shall take prompt, corrective action designed to ensure that such conduct ceases and that no retaliation occurs. The District shall promptly take appropriate steps to prevent the recurrence of the prohibited conduct and to address the discriminatory effect the prohibited conduct had on the complainant and the school or school program environment. District staff shall document the corrective action taken and, where not

prohibited by law, inform the complainant. The Compliance Officer shall follow up by assessing the effectiveness of the corrective action at reasonable intervals.

If an investigation results in a finding that a different policy was violated separately from or in addition to violations of this policy, or that there are circumstances warranting further action, such matters shall be addressed at the conclusion of this investigation or through disciplinary or other appropriate referrals where further evaluation or investigation is necessary.

Disciplinary actions shall be consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, Board policies and administrative regulations, District procedures, applicable collective bargaining agreements, and state and federal laws.

Appeal Procedure

1. If the reporting party or the responding party is not satisfied with a finding made pursuant to the policy or with recommended corrective action, s/he may submit a written appeal to the Compliance Officer within fifteen (15) days of the date of the disposition notice. If the Compliance Officer investigated the complaint, such appeal shall be made to the Superintendent.
2. The individual receiving the appeal shall review the investigation and the investigative report and may also conduct or designate another person to conduct a reasonable supplemental investigation to assess the sufficiency and propriety of the prior investigation.
3. The person handling the appeal shall prepare a written response to the appeal within twenty (20) days of receipt of the written appeal. Copies of the response shall be provided to the reporting party, the responding party and the investigator who conducted the initial investigation.

Hazing (School Board Policy 247)

Hazing occurs when a person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting or affiliating a student into or with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to do any of the following:

1. Violate federal or state criminal law.
2. Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug or other substance which subjects the student to a risk of emotional or physical harm.
3. Endure brutality of a physical nature, including whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics or exposure to the elements.
4. Endure brutality of a mental nature, including activity adversely affecting the mental health or dignity of the individual, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment.
5. Endure brutality of a sexual nature.
6. Endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to the student.

Aggravated hazing occurs when a person commits an act of hazing that results in serious bodily injury or death to the student and:

1. The person acts with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the student; or
2. The person causes, coerces or forces the consumption of an alcoholic liquid or drug by the student.

Organizational hazing occurs when an organization intentionally, knowingly or recklessly promotes or facilitates hazing.

Any activity, as described above, shall be deemed a violation of this policy regardless of whether:

1. The consent of the student was sought or obtained, or
2. The conduct was sanctioned or approved by the school or organization.

No student, parent/guardian, coach, sponsor, volunteer or District employee shall engage in, condone, or ignore any form of hazing.

If a student, believes that they or others have been subject to hazing or when a student, parent/guardian, sponsor, volunteer or District Employee, has witnessed hazing, the incident shall be promptly reported, orally or in writing, to the principal or other trusted District employee.

If a student activity or organization authorizes or ignores hazing, it shall be subject to the imposition of fines and other appropriate penalties in accordance with state law. Penalties may include recession of permission for that organization to operate on school property or to otherwise operate under sanction or recognition of the District.

All complaints of hazing will be investigated and appropriate discipline up to and including expulsion will be administered to any individual who violates this policy, including removal from extra-curricular activities and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Additional information concerning hazing is in School Board Policy 247, which can found on the District website on the School Board/District Policies tab.

Homework (School Board Policy 130)

Homework is any work planned or approved by the teacher to be completed by the student outside of regular class time without the immediate and direct supervision of the teacher. Homework is viewed as an integral part of the total education of the student when it provides the opportunity for the student to practice, apply, integrate, or extend school learning; reinforce and develop independent work habits; use home, school and community resources; and develop responsibility. Homework is to be relevant to the curriculum and based on student needs, capabilities and interests. It is to be planned and evaluated with respect to its purpose, appropriateness and completion time. Homework is not to be assigned as a form of punishment. In order for homework to successfully complement in-school instruction, teachers must follow District, building and departmental guidelines when assigning homework, students must complete the assignments according to criteria established by the teacher and parents/guardians must provide the work area, time and conditions necessary for the student to complete the assignments appropriately.

Interscholastic Athletics (School Board Policy 123)

Peters Township offers several high-profile opportunities for our student athletes to participate in throughout the school year. We are extremely proud of our rich traditions in Western Pennsylvania high school athletics. We are members of the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League (WPIAL) and of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA).

The purpose of our athletic program is to encourage and foster opportunities for students to participate in activities other than the academic. This develops learning outcomes in skills, emotional patterns, communication, interpersonal group dynamics, teamwork, leadership, general knowledge, and sportsmanship.

Effective July 1, 2012, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed Act 82 of 2012 which requires schools to disclose Interscholastic Athletic Opportunities for students in grades 7-12. The District is required to post a copy of this form (one for high school athletics and one for middle school athletics) to its website no later than November 1 of each year with information for the immediately preceding school year. This form can be found on the District's website under the Athletics tab and is titled Interscholastic Athletic Opportunities Disclosure Form.

Concussion Management (School Board Policy 123.1)

With the Safety and Youth Sports Act (Senate Bill 200), and the increased awareness of concussion and the effects they have on student-athletes physical and cognitive performance, it is imperative that we follow a protocol that will care for our students in the classroom as well as the field.

Concussion Management Protocol

1. All coaches must take an approved educational course on concussions prior to their competitive season and attend the preseason informational coaches' meeting. Coaches will not be permitted to coach our student-athletes until they have successfully completed the online course.
2. The Peters Township Athletic Department will offer parents and student athletes information on baseline concussion testing, updated knowledge about concussions as a mild traumatic brain injury (TBI), treatment, management, and common signs and symptoms of a concussion. All parents, coaches, and student athletes are strongly encouraged to attend this informational meeting.
 - a. Annually, prior to trying out for a sport, all parents and student athletes will be required to participate in and document having successfully completed one of the following, in order for the athlete to practice or play:
 - i. Reviewed all information pertaining to concussions provided by the School District (Information will be posted on the website; or
 - ii. Took an approved educational course on concussions (either the coaches' test or the informational course).
3. All student athletes and students involved in athletic activities as defined in Policy 123.1, will be given an approved baseline concussion Test prior to their competitive season or activity.
4. Peters Township Athletic Department will provide parents with information about concussions. This information should be reviewed and signed by the parent and student athlete, informing them about the signs and symptoms of a concussion developed by the Department of Health and the Department of Education.
5. When a student athlete sustains a concussion during a competition or practice, the student athlete must be removed by the athletic trainer, if available, if not by the coach and evaluated by a Licensed Physician trained in concussion management, a Licensed Neuropsychologist, or a Licensed or certified health care professional designated by a Licensed Physician (Athletic Trainer) as defined in Policy 123.1.
6. The Athletic Trainer performs a sideline head injury evaluation.
7. If concussion is suspected, parents and the athletic director are to be notified immediately.
 - a. The student should be held out of school for a minimum of two days.
 - b. The same instructions exist for non-athletes.
8. Within 24-48 hours, the student-athlete should schedule a post-concussion test with a Licensed Physician for re-evaluation.
 - a. If deficits are found by the physician, the parent and student-athlete will be responsible for providing the school with either a release from the physician when the athlete is able to return to play or a plan for reintroduction to limited activities and a date for re-evaluation.
 - b. The student-athlete will be removed from athletic competition and will be provided with academic accommodations based upon recommendations from the Licensed Physician. The school administration, counselor, and school nurse will meet with the student-athlete and parent(s)/guardian(s) to design and implement the accommodations.
 - c. The student-athlete is also prohibited from attending any extra-curricular activities, unless provided with a clearance from the Physician.
 - d. When a student-athlete is asymptomatic and post-concussion test results are within normal limits, the athlete will be put through a series of mild and intense exertion testing to monitor progress.
 - i. If symptoms do reappear, the athlete will be removed from competition and school and be re-evaluated by Licensed Physician.
 - ii. If symptoms do not appear, the school's athletic trainer will continue to progress the athlete to full participation.
9. If deficits are not identified and symptoms are not present the student-athlete is permitted to return to school and athletic activities with a release from the Licensed Physician.
10. Penalties for coaches or trainers who do not remove a concussed athlete from play or whom return an athlete to play without the proper clearance:
 - a. 1st violation- suspension for the remainder of the season
 - b. 2nd violation- suspension for the remainder of the season and the following season
 - c. 3rd violation- permanent suspension from coaching any athletic activity in the Peters Township School District

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (School Board Policy 123.2)

With the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act (House Bill 1610), and the increase awareness of sudden cardiac arrest and the effects it can have on student-athletes, it is imperative that we follow a protocol that will care for our students in the classroom as well as the field.

Sudden Cardiac Protocol

1. All coaches must take an approved educational course on sudden cardiac arrest prior to their competitive season and attend the preseason informational coaches' meeting. Coaches will not be permitted to coach our student-athletes until they have successfully completed the online course.
2. The Peters Township Athletic Department will offer parents and student athletes information on sudden cardiac arrest and common signs and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest.
 - a. Annually, prior to trying out for a sport, all parents and student athletes will be required to participate in and document having successfully completed one of the following, in order for the athlete to practice or play:
 - i. Reviewed all information pertaining to sudden cardiac arrest provided by the School District; or
 - ii. Took an approved educational course on sudden cardiac arrest (either the coaches' test or the informational course).
3. Peters Township Athletic Department will provide parents with information about sudden cardiac arrest. This information should be reviewed and signed by the parent and student athlete, informing them about the signs and symptoms of a sudden cardiac arrest developed by the Department of Health and the Department of Education.
4. When a student athlete exhibits signs or symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest while participating in an athletic activity, the student athlete must be removed by the athletic trainer, if available, if not by the coach and evaluated by a Licensed Physician, certified registered nurse practitioner, or cardiologist as defined in Policy 123.2.
5. If sudden cardiac arrest is suspected, parents and the athletic director are to be notified immediately.
6. Penalties for coaches or trainers who do not remove a athlete appearing to be suffering from sudden cardiac arrest from play or whom return an athlete to play without the proper clearance:
 - a. 1st violation- suspension for the remainder of the season
 - b. 2nd violation- suspension for the remainder of the season and the following season
 - c. 3rd violation- permanent suspension from coaching any athletic activity in the Peters Township School District.

Review of Instructional Material (School Board Policy 105.1)

All instructional materials, including teachers' manuals, audiovisuals, and other supplementary instructional material used in the instructional program shall be available for inspection by the parents/guardians of students, in accordance with Board policy. Instructional materials do not include tests or academic assessments. Conditions relating to such requests are included in School Board Policy 105.1 which can be found on the District's website on the School Board/District Policies tab.

Laser Pointers (School Board Policy 237)

Possession or use of laser pointers by students are prohibited on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities and on buses or other vehicles provided by the Peters Township School District. Laser pointers are defined as any device designed for use or used to point, illuminate, identify or locate another object or site. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and confiscation of the device and any harm resulting from the use of a laser pointer could result in criminal and/or civil liability.

Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries (School Board Policy 824)

Adults are required to establish and maintain appropriate personal boundaries with students and shall not engage in any behavior that is prohibited by Policy 824 or that creates the appearance of prohibited behavior.

This Policy is not only meant to address obviously unlawful or improper interactions with students, such as dating, courting, or entering into or attempting to form a romantic or sexual relationship with any student but also addresses precursor grooming and other boundary-blurring behaviors that can lead to more egregious conduct. As a result, the policy addresses conduct and the way in which adults are permitted to interact/communicate with students.

The Policy applies to adult District employees, volunteers, student teachers and independent contractors and their employees who interact with students or who are present on school grounds, but does not include currently-enrolled Peters Township students who have reached the age of majority.

The Policy applies to interactions with any student currently enrolled in the District, regardless of the student's age.

Prohibited Behaviors

Prohibited romantic or sexual interaction involving students includes, but is not limited to:

1. Sexual physical contact.
2. Romantic flirtation, propositions, or sexual remarks.
3. Sexual slurs, leering, epithets, sexual or derogatory comments.
4. Personal comments about a student's body.
5. Sexual jokes, notes, stories, drawings, gestures or pictures.
6. Spreading sexual or romantic rumors.
7. Touching a student's body or clothes in a sexual or intimate way.
8. Accepting massages or offering or giving massages other than in the course of injury care administered by an athletic trainer, coach, or health care provider.
9. Restricting a student's freedom of movement in a sexually intimidating or provocative manner.
10. Displaying or transmitting sexual objects, pictures, or depictions.

Prohibited conduct that violates professional boundaries includes, but is not limited to:

1. Disclosing personal, sexual, family, employment concerns or other private matters to one or more students.
2. Exchanging notes, emails or other communications of a personal nature with a student without parental/guardian notification. Recommendation letters for educational purposes are not included in this policy. Thank you, graduation, condolence, and get well cards are not included in this policy.
3. Giving personal gifts without parental/guardian notification.
4. Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention or friendship beyond the ordinary professional adult-student relationship.
5. Taking a student out of class without a legitimate educational reason.
6. Being alone with a student behind closed doors without a legitimate educational reason.
7. Initiating or extending contact with a student beyond the school day or outside of class times without a legitimate educational reason.
8. Sending or accompanying a student on personal errands.
9. Inviting a student to the adult's home without a legitimate educational reason and parental/guardian notification.
10. Going to a student's home without a legitimate educational reason and parental/guardian notification.
11. Taking a student on outings without prior notification to and approval from both the parent/guardian and the principal.
12. Giving a student a ride alone in a vehicle in a non-emergency situation without prior notification to and approval from both the parent/guardian and the principal.
13. Telling a student personal secrets or sharing personal secrets with a student.
14. For adults who are not guidance/counseling staff, psychologists, social workers or other adults with designated responsibilities to counsel students, encouraging students to confide their personal or family problems and/or relationships. If a student initiates such discussions, the adult should notify the appropriate school personnel such as an administrator, a social worker, or a counselor in a timely manner.
15. Furnishing alcohol, drugs, tobacco or vape products to a student or being present where any student is consuming these substances.
16. Engaging in harassing or discriminatory conduct prohibited by other district policies or by state or federal law and regulations.

When communicating with students, adults are required to maintain professional boundaries. Electronic communication with students shall be for legitimate educational reasons (matters relating to teaching, counseling, athletics, extracurricular activities, treatment of a student's physical injury or other medical needs, school administration or other purposes within the scope of the adult's job duties) only and completed via District provided emails or Canvas.

Adults are prohibited from "following" or accepting requests to "follow" currently enrolled students on personal social networking accounts, without written approval of the principal.

Additional mandates relating to communications by coaches and advisors to individual, team or club members as well as exceptions to the restrictions are included in the policy and outlined in the Administrative Regulation for this policy (attached to Policy 824 on District website).

Reporting Inappropriate or Suspicious Conduct

Any person, including a student, who has concerns about or is uncomfortable with a relationship or interaction between an adult and herself/himself or another student, shall immediately notify the Superintendent, principal, other administrator or trusted adult and the allegations will be promptly investigated.

It is understood that some reports made pursuant to this policy will be based on rumors or misunderstandings. The mere fact that the reported adult is cleared of any wrongdoing shall not result in disciplinary action against the reporter or any witnesses. If as the result of an investigation any individual, including the reported adult, the reporter, or a witness is found to have intentionally provided false information in making the report, during the investigation or hearings related to the report, or if any individual intentionally obstructs the investigation or hearings, that individual may be deemed to have violated this policy and other applicable laws, regulations and district policies and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Naloxone (School Board Policy 820)

Naloxone, commonly marketed as Narcan, is an opioid antagonist that can be used to counter the effects of an opiate overdose. The drug can save an individual from an otherwise fatal overdose and has minimal side effects, even if administered to someone who is later found to not be under the influence of an opioid. Senate Bill 1164 was signed into law as Act 139 in late September of 2014. This legislation allows certain individuals to obtain a prescription for and administer Naloxone to someone who is experiencing an overdose. The District obtained a prescription for Naloxone from the school physician and has authorized certain individuals (District nurses, the District's Security Resource Office/Police Officer and any District employee who has been trained to administer Naloxone and is designated by the Superintendent as a person authorized to administer Naloxone) to administer Naloxone if they suspect that an individual is suffering from an opiate overdose on District property and/or at District events.

Additional information concerning Naloxone, including training, storing, and reporting guidelines, is in School Board Policy 820, which can found on the District website on the School Board/District Policies tab.

Open House

The traditional Open House is a time for students and their families to visit the school and meet the teachers in a more informal setting and learn more about the curriculum. Discussions regarding individual student progress should be reserved for parent-teacher conferences. Dates for each school's Open House may be found on the District calendar.

Promotion and Retention (School Board Policy 215)

A student shall be promoted when s/he has successfully completed the curriculum requirements and has achieved the academic standards established for the present level, based on the professional judgment of the teachers and the results of assessments. A student shall earn the right to advance to the next grade by demonstrating mastery of the required skills and knowledge. The principal has the final responsibility for determining the promotion or retention of each student. More specific guidelines for retention and promotion procedures are included in the Administration Regulation, 215 AR-1, attached to the bottom of Policy 215 on the District website.

In all cases of retention, parents/guardians will be fully involved and informed throughout the process. Academic

achievement, attitude, effort, work habits, behavior, attendance and other factors related to learning shall be evaluated regularly and communicated to students and parents/guardians.

Progress toward high school graduation shall be based on the student's ability to achieve the established academic standards and pass the required subjects and electives necessary to earn the number of credits mandated by the Board for graduation (Refer to School Board Policy 217 for Graduation Requirements).

Public Attendance at School Events (School Board Policy 904)

The buildings and grounds of the School District are public property. However, access and activities may be limited as permitted by law. No one has the right to cause danger, alarm, disorder, damage or a disruption to the educational process that would interfere with, or impede the use of the property by students, visitors, guests, permit holders or employees of the School District. Possessing, using, or distributing alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or weapons on school grounds is prohibited. Use or distribution of tobacco and vaping products including Juuls and other electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) is also prohibited. The restrictions apply to both indoor and outdoor areas and on buses, vans and vehicles owned, leased or controlled by the District. Persons involved shall be advised that they are in violation of the District policy and may be directed by an official of the School District, the Peters Township Police, or contracted security personnel to leave the school premises. If anyone enters District property and/or attends a District event and is observed to be visibly intoxicated, they may be asked to leave the premises.

Individuals with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by their service animals while on District property for events that are open to the general public in accordance with Board Policy 718 and federal laws and regulations.

Safety Drills (School Board Policy 705 & 805)

To ensure the safety of all students, fire drills are conducted on a regular basis to provide practice in the event of an emergency situation. These are conducted in accordance with the procedures established by the School District and the Peters Township Fire Department.

When the fire alarm rings, students must remain silent and listen to the teacher's directions and leave the room. The last person out should shut the classroom door. Students must leave the building in an orderly manner and remain quiet in order to hear any additional directions. Failure to follow these rules will result in disciplinary action. At times, in accordance with state regulations, students also participate in other drills such as severe weather safety drills, or lockdown drills. Bus evacuation drills are conducted twice a year. Each school has procedures to follow in case of various emergencies.

Peters Township School District has a comprehensive safety plan and has adopted the ALICE system to address and train our staff and students for a response to incidents in our schools. ALICE stands for: **Alert** - using clear and concise language, alert as many people as possible to the danger in the building; **Lockdown** - secure your location by locking and barricading the entrances; **Inform** - communication continues throughout the incident to allow staff to make decisions; **Counter** - apply skills to distract, confuse and possibly detain the intruder. (Please note, this is an option only when lockdown and evacuation are not viable); and **Evacuate** - removing the number of potential targets by moving as far from the intruder as possible.

Throughout the school year, ALICE drills are conducted in our schools to practice these steps. Parents are notified after a drill via our parent email system. In the event of a real emergency, parents would receive an automated phone call and email with information and instructions. On an ongoing basis, our safety plans evolve as we examine past events in other districts and work to improve our procedures. We continually review and test our safety plan and processes to ensure that we are enacting the most up-to-date safety and security efforts.

More details about ALICE and a training video may be viewed on the School Safety page of the District website.

Safe to Say Something & Safe Schools Tip Form

Safety in our schools is everyone's responsibility. If you are aware of a threat or a dangerous situation for our students or staff, it is important to **share that information with a trusted adult, by calling 911 or by using an anonymous tip line.**

In 2018, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed Act 44 mandating the establishment and use of the “**Safe2Say Something**” (S2SS) anonymous reporting system by every Pennsylvania school. Developed in partnership with Sandy Hook Promise, the app will help facilitate the reporting of important safety related information that could help save lives in our schools.

S2SS allows individuals to submit secure and anonymous safety concerns to help identify and intervene when unsafe and/or harmful behaviors take place within K-12 schools statewide.

Through S2SS, **High School and Middle School Students** and community members may **ANONYMOUSLY** share safety information through the:

- S2SS app (Safe2SaySomething PA)
- website at <https://www.safe2saypa.org/> or
- 24/7 Crisis Center Hotline at **1-844-SAF2SAY (1-844-723-2729)**.

The tip is then triaged by the Crisis Center to gather enough information and is delivered to the impacted school and, as needed, local law enforcement via 911 County Dispatch. Anonymity is strictly protected unless the person submitting the information wishes to share their identity. If an individual abuses the system or breaks a state or federal law, the District can request a court order to uncover anonymity.

Elementary Students and community members may **ANONYMOUSLY** share safety for their schools using the Safety Schools Tip Forms linked below:

School	Safe Schools Tip Form
Bower Hill Elementary School	http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/SafeSchoolsTipForm_BH.aspx
Pleasant Valley Elementary School	http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/SafeSchoolsTipForm_PV.aspx
McMurray Elementary School	http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/SafeSchoolsTipForm_McM.aspx

School Closings and Delays

In case of inclement weather or other emergencies, Flexible Instruction Days (FID), delayed openings, school cancellations or early closings will be announced in a variety of ways. The District utilizes the parent notification calling system to alert families to changes in our schedule, as well as local television and radio news stations, the District website and email blasts. Please be sure to review any updates to your family's contact information in the school database by reviewing the School Messenger tab in your parent PowerSchool Account on the computer.

At times, parents may disagree with the decisions made by the District with regards to delays and closings. Please note that parents have the authority to bring their child in late or keep them home for the day due to inclement weather. A student tardy or absence will be excused by the District for inclement weather. Please note that while the absence is excused, it will still count among the total 10 permitted for each student.

School Lunch Program (School Board Policy 808)

All students that attend Peters Township School District are provided the opportunity to purchase meals at each building cafeteria in accordance with the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Parents/Guardians are solely responsible for providing their children with meals, either through money to purchase meals at school or by packing a meal from home. If for any reason a parent/guardian cannot afford to provide a meal for their child, Free and Reduced Meal benefits may be applied for, in English or Spanish, by accessing the application

at www.ptsd.k12.pa.us under Parents/Food Service Department or calling 724-941-6251 ext. 7226. Additional information pertaining to the School Lunch Program is found in Board Policy 808 and its accompanying Administrative Regulations.

Payment Options

Although students are permitted to pay for school meals with cash on a daily basis, parents/guardians and students are encouraged to deposit money in their cafeteria account so that adequate funds are readily available to purchase school meals. This will eliminate the need for to send money with the child each day, permit the line to move more efficiently and eliminate the possibility of loss.

Parents/guardians can deposit money into their child’s lunch account by:

- 1. Making an online contribution at www.payschoolscentral.com (one time and recurring payments may be made via credit/debit card or electronic check). Please note that a convenience fee is charged for this service and you will need your child’s school ID# which can be found in PowerSchool.
- 2. Sending cash or check (made out to PTFS) to school in an envelope with your child who should give it to the lunch cashier before school.
- 3. Drop off cash or check (made payable to PTFS) to the school administrative offices (building next to former Middle School) during normal working hours.
- 4. Mail a check or money order (made payable to PTFS) to 631 E. McMurray Rd, McMurray PA 15317, ensuring that your child’s name and school ID# are noted on the check or money order.

Benefits of the PaySchools Account

- 1. Can monitor what items are being purchased by your child during lunch.
- 2. Can limit items that can be purchased by your child during lunch.
- 3. Can have funds automatically deposited into the account after a certain balance is reached.
- 4. Can receive alerts when a certain balance is reached.

Restricting What Your Child May Purchase At Lunch

Parents may restrict their child’s ability to charge food items or place a dollar limit on the account by contacting the Food Service Department at (724) 941-6251 ext. 7226 or setting up those limits online at PaySchoolsCentral.com.

Limits can only be placed by calling. A parent can not place a limit through the website.

Lunch Prices

School lunch prices shall be adjusted annually in compliance with state and federal laws. Lunch prices for the 2023 – 2024 school year are as follows:

School	Regular	Premium
Elementary Schools	\$2.70	\$2.80 (Premium price includes all pizza lunches.)
Middle School	\$2.85	\$4.00
High School	\$2.85	\$4.00

Lost/Forgotten Lunch Money or Insufficient Funds in Lunch Account

If a student loses or forgets his/her lunch money and/or has insufficient funds in his/her lunch account, they will be able to buy a meal on credit with certain restrictions.

Students can NEVER be denied a reimbursable meal, even if they have accrued a negative balance from other purchases in the cafeteria; however, these students can be prohibited from charging a la carte or extra items.

Collection of Unpaid Meal Charges

- Communications regarding collection of delinquent meal charges will be directed to parents/guardians.

School staff may communicate a low balance or money owed by a student for school meals to a student in grades 9-12; such communication shall be made to the individual student in a discreet manner.

- Parents can request low balance notifications via PaySchoolsCentral.com.
- Parents/guardians of a child with a negative balance of \$7.00 or higher will receive a weekly phone call and/or e-mail via the School Messenger Service.
- Lunch balance information is also available in PowerSchool.
- All negative balances MUST be satisfied by the end of the school year. If not, unpaid meal charges may be carried over as a delinquent debt and collection efforts may continue into the new school year.
- Graduating Seniors will receive notification regarding any outstanding debts and remaining balance.
- Cafeteria cashiers must ensure that rosters, computer screens etc. at the point of service cannot be viewed by anyone who does not need access to the information, especially other children.

Surplus Funds in Lunch Account

Funds remaining in lunch accounts will transfer with the student to subsequent years. Upon graduation, upon contacting the District's Food Service Director, monies remaining in a student's lunch account can:

1. Be transferred to another student in the District (This can be done online if you have a PaySchools Central account).
2. Refunded to parent/guardian via the Food Service Department website under the Parents Tab. Click on Food Service Refund Request and fill out the form.
3. Be donated to the Peters Township Education Foundation Click on Food Service Refund Request and fill out the form.

Searches (School Board Policy 226)

The School District wants to convey a strong message to the community, faculty, staff and student body concerning the use or possession of illegal substances or weapons.

Authority to Search upon Individualized Suspicion

Students or their belongings, including lockers, automobiles, electronic devices, purses, backpacks, clothing, and other possessions, may be searched without a warrant when in school, on school grounds or when otherwise under school supervision if there is a reasonable suspicion that the place or thing to be searched contains prohibited contraband, material that would pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the school population, or evidence that there has been a violation of the law, Board policy, or school rules.

Random/General Searches with No Individualized Suspicion

Under certain circumstances, random or general searches of students and their belongings, including student lockers or vehicles parked on school property, may be conducted during the school day or upon entry into school buildings or school activities, in the absence of individualized suspicion focused on a particular student or students, for the purpose of finding or preventing entry onto school property or activities of controlled substances, weapons or other dangerous materials and to advance the District's compelling interest in preserving the health, safety, and welfare of the school population, enforcing rules of conduct and maintaining an appropriate atmosphere conducive to learning. Such searches normally will be conducted in a minimally intrusive manner using screening methods such as dogs or other animals trained to detect controlled substances, explosives or other harmful materials by smell, as well as metal detectors and other technology.

When such screening methods provide a reasonable suspicion that particular students, items or places possess or contain contraband materials that would pose a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of the school populations, or evidence that there has been a violation of law, District policy or school rules, physical searches of those particular students, items or places can be made on an individualized basis.

Searches upon Consent

Searches may be conducted at any time, with or without reasonable suspicion, if the student has given knowing and voluntary consent specific to the place or item to be searched regardless of the student's age.

Searches by or at Request of Law Enforcement Officials

The legal standards governing searches initiated by school officials are less strict than the standards applicable to law enforcement authorities in many situations. When searches of students, student belongings, vehicles or lockers are conducted by or at the request of law enforcement officials, with or without the involvement of school staff, the law enforcement officials are solely responsible for ensuring that a warrant has been issued or that the circumstances otherwise permit the search to be lawfully conducted in accordance with the standards applicable to law enforcement actions. School staff will not interfere with or obstruct searches initiated by law enforcement, but may assist when law enforcement officials have requested such assistance and have represented that a warrant has been issued or that they otherwise have proper authority for a lawful search.

Locker Inspections and Searches

Lockers are assigned to or otherwise made available to students as a convenience for the safe storage of books, clothing, school materials and limited personal property, and to facilitate movement between classes and activities and to and from school. Such lockers are and shall remain the property of the District, and to the extent students have any expectation of privacy of lockers at all, it is very limited. A student locker may be opened and inspected for cleanliness, with or without the consent of the student, whenever there are odors, pests or other indications that a locker contains spoiled food, soiled clothing in need of laundering or similarly unhealthy matter.

Prior to an individual locker search or inspection, the student to whom the locker is assigned shall be notified and be given a reasonable opportunity to be present. However, when there is a reasonable suspicion that a locker contains materials which pose a threat to the health, welfare or safety of the school population, student lockers may be searched without prior notice to the student.

Breathalyzer/Portable Breath Test

If the school principal has reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, a student may be required to submit to a Breathalyzer/Portable Breath Tests and/or be required to obtain a blood test or urinalysis before returning to school. Breathalyzers/Portable Breath Tests will be on-site at School Dances.

Handling and Disposal of Items Found in the Course of Searches

Any items or material found during a search or inspection, the student's possession of which is in violation of law, District policies or school rules, or otherwise is evidence of such a violation, may be confiscated, and may be used as evidence in student discipline proceedings or a criminal investigation, even if such items or material were not the original objective of the search or inspection.

The principal shall be responsible to ensure that confiscated items or material are properly inventoried and secured until the conclusion of disciplinary action, if any, and are then properly disposed of if not appropriate to be returned to the student. Items or materials that are evidence of a criminal offense, or that are not lawful for ordinary citizens to possess will be promptly turned over to proper law enforcement authorities for custody or disposal.

Additional information on student searches can be found in School Board Policy 226, which is posted on the District website under the School Board/District Policies tab.

Service Animals (School Board Policy 718)

A student with a disability may request to bring a service animal to school. Before a service animal may be brought to school the policies and procedures outlined in Policy 718 and the attached Administrative Regulation must be followed. This information can be found on the District website under the School Board/District Policies tab. Animals are not permitted in school without prior administrative approval.

Skateboards, Hover boards, Roller blades and Skates

Unless being used as part of an approved classroom or school activity, skateboards, hover boards, roller blades, and skates of any kind are not permitted on school property. Students are to leave them at home.

Standardized Testing

Peters Township School District is required to administer standardized tests and elects to administer others. The following standardized assessments are administered at each grade level during the regular school day:

PSSA Language Arts/Math	Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
PSSA Science	Grades 4, 8
Acadience	Grades K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
PSAT 8/9	Grade 9
PSAT NMSQT	Grades 10 & 11
Keystone Exams	All students completing Algebra, Biology, and English 10.
English Language Proficiency	K-12 ESL (English as Second Language) students only

Chapter 4 of PA Code provides parents with the right to excuse their child from state assessments if, upon inspection of materials, they find the assessment to be in conflict with their religious beliefs. Please contact your child's school principal for more information.

Student Complaint Process (School Board Policy 219)

Students have the right to request remedy of a complaint and shall be afforded the opportunity to be heard personally by the school authority at each level. A student complaint may arise from actions that directly affect the student's participation in an approved educational program. A student shall not be subjected to any reprisals because of filing a complaint. Student complaints should be submitted following School Board Policy 906. In general, the same procedure for public complaints set forth in School Board Policy 906. In general, the complaint should follow the following path:

1. First, it shall be addressed initially to the concerned employee, who shall discuss it with the complainant and attempt to provide a reasonable explanation or take appropriate action within the employee's authority.
2. Thereafter, if the issue cannot be resolved satisfactorily at the first level, it shall be discussed by the complainant with the school principal or the employee's immediate supervisor.
3. If a satisfactory solution is not achieved by discussion with the school principal or immediate supervisor, a conference shall be scheduled with the Superintendent or designee.
4. Should the matter not be resolved by the Superintendent or designee or is beyond his/her authority and requires Board action, the Complainant may bring the issue to the Board by submitting a written report to the Board President.

Student Fundraising (School Board Policy 122, 123, 229)

Students are prohibited from the collection of money for personal benefit in school buildings, on school property or at any school-sponsored activity.

Student fundraising includes solicitation and collection of money by students in exchange for goods or services including goods or services for donation for charitable or non-charitable purposes. Fundraisers by individual students and school organizations require prior approval of administration.

Service Projects/Charitable Fundraisers – Approvals Needed

All monetary or in-kind donation fundraisers *for the benefit of a charitable organization, rather than the student group/organization*, must be processed through the Athletic Director if it involves a high school student/group or the appropriate principal if it involves a student/group related to a building other than the high school. Approval of these projects remains at the building level and School Board approval is not necessary, even if direct student involvement in the activity occurs.

Other Fundraisers – Approvals Needed

All fundraising activities intended to raise money for the benefit of the student group must obtain the same building-level permission as Charitable Fundraisers described above. In addition to this building-level permission, *if the fundraising activity includes direct involvement of students*, the fundraiser must also be approved by the School Board. Since Board approval can only be obtained by a vote at a monthly regular meeting (usually held on the 3rd Monday of each month), requests for such approval must be made via the Athletic Office 30 days prior to the Board meeting.

All students/groups are encouraged to request permission for fundraisers as soon as possible. Fundraisers must be approved before any tickets are handed out, fliers posted, items ordered or sales begin. Students/groups do not have to wait to submit fundraising requests that will be held throughout the year and are encouraged to request permission for all planned fundraisers at the beginning of the year to ensure that approval is obtained prior to the planned event. In the event that prior approval is not obtained, the student/group could face administrative penalties, including but not limited to the denial of future fundraising requests. All fundraising forms are available in the Athletic Office and further questions should be directed to that office.

Due to safety concerns, students cannot be required to conduct door-to-door sales for fundraising activities. Furthermore, no group may require mandatory participation in any fundraising activity as a condition of participation or membership in the organization.

All fundraisers must comply with applicable laws, including but not limited to the PA Solicitation of Funds for Charitable Purposes Act and the Local Option Small Games of Chance Act.

All announcements or advertisement of the fundraiser should clearly indicate that it is sponsored by the student/group and not the school or District. (See Policy 913 for the appropriate disclaimer to be added to print/electronic advertisements.)

All money raised by Board-approved student groups must be handled in accordance with Policy 618.

Student Grades

Grading Scale

The following represents the grading scale for grades K-3 in the Peters Township School District:

Letter Grade	Percentage
M = Mastered	90 - 100
P = Proficient	70 - 89
N = Needs Improvement	0 - 69

The following represents the grading scale for grades 4-12 in the Peters Township School District:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	Below 60
*I	Incomplete

* The student has ten (10) days from the last day of the report period to make up work to get the incomplete rectified. An Incomplete becomes an "F" after ten (10) days.

Web Access to Grades and Additional School Information (School Board Policy 212)

Parents can access student's grades at any time via the PowerSchool link on the District web site. PowerSchool offers parents the real-time access to grades, attendance, homework assignments and other class information. PowerSchool also provides specific bus stop locations and times (Bus Information Tab) allows you to email teachers (Teacher Comment tab + clicking on teacher name), ask for automatic updates on your child's progress (Email Notification Tab), view the school bulletin/announcements (School Bulletin Tab) and have daily building announcements sent to your email (Email Notification Tab + click on School Announcements). Visit the PowerSchool page on the District's webpage for more information on accessing your account or updating your contact information.

Grade Reports (School Board Policy 212)

Students and parents/guardians should receive ample warning of a pending grade of failure or one that would adversely affect the student's academic status. Academic achievement, attendance and other factors related to learning shall be evaluated regularly and communicated to students and parents/guardians. If you are concerned about a grade that your child received, you are encouraged to reach out to the classroom teacher.

Teachers are required to enter grades in PowerSchool on a regular and timely basis. If you are concerned that a particular grade has not been entered for your child, please contact the classroom teacher directly and make an inquiry. If the failure to timely record grades occurs on a consistent basis, please contact the principal.

Parents may use the PowerSchool link to access their child's information. When grades become final upon the end of a grading period, parents will be notified via email blast. Paper reports will be provided upon request. However, after the close of a school year, once grades become final, unofficial paper transcripts are sent directly to your home.

Student Photos/Images for Publicity Use (School Board Policy 902)

The Peters Township School District seeks to actively promote the positive accomplishments of our students. In many cases, photos of our students appear in local media and in publications produced by the District. If you DO NOT wish for your child's photo image to be used for inclusion in newspaper publicity, reproduced in school publications such as the school calendar and newsletter via InPeters Township Magazine, or to appear on the District's web site and social media accounts, please complete and return the Photo Refusal Form on the District website to the main office in your child's school. (The form is attached to the bottom of Policy 902 as 902 AR-1 on the School Board/Policy tab of the District website.) These forms must be completed annually.

Student Records (School Board Policy 216)

The educational interests of students require the collection, retention, and use of data and information about individuals and groups of students while ensuring the individual's right to privacy. The District will maintain educational records for students for legitimate educational purposes. The Board recognizes its responsibility for compilation, retention, disposition and security of student records. The Board also recognizes the legal requirement to maintain the confidentiality of student records.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over eighteen (18) years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend a record should submit to the school principal a written request that clearly identifies the record or part of the record they want changed and specify why they feel it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One (1) exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor,

instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist, technology or software company, bus driver, or food service personnel); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; Pennsylvania Department of Education's Office of General Counsel when performing investigations under the Educator Discipline Act, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Criteria for determining whether the official has a legitimate interest include, but are not limited to, whether particular information concerning the student is: (a) presently or potentially relevant to the provision of education, education-related services, or extracurricular activities or experiences, or (b) necessary to protect the health, safety, or welfare of school officials and/or other students with whom the student might have contact. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

5. The District is permitted by law to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without obtaining the prior written consent of the parent or eligible student unless the parent or eligible student has advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the District to include this type of information from a child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:
 - A playbill, showing a student's role in a drama production;
 - The annual yearbook;
 - Honor roll or other recognition lists;
 - Graduation programs; and
 - Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.
6. Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two (2) federal laws require the District to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information on its junior and senior class students – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the District that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want the District to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the District in writing by September 30th of each school year.

The School District has designated the following information as directory information:

- a) The student's name, address, listed telephone number, date, and place of birth.
- b) Student's email address.
- c) Program or major field of study.
- d) Dates of attendance.

- e) Participation in officially recognized school activities and sports.
- f) Weight and height of members of athletic teams.
- g) Placement on the honor roll.
- h) Certificates and awards received.
- i) The most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student.
- j) Grade level.
- k) Enrollment status.
- l) Photograph/School Picture.

Questions regarding this notice or your rights under FERPA should be directed to the principal.

Student Responsibilities (School Board Policy 235)

The School Board has the authority to make reasonable and necessary rules governing the conduct of students in school and has authorized the administration with the responsibility to administer such rules consistent with School Board policy. School rules are assumed to be reasonable until they are rescinded or waived. Students, therefore, shall obey school rules while working through channels to help change those they seek to have changed.

It is the responsibility of students to:

1. Be aware of all policies, rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct him/herself accordingly. Each student shall assume that, until a rule is waived, altered or repealed in writing, it is in effect.
2. Volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
3. Dress and groom to meet standards of safety and health, and not to cause substantial disruption to the educational processes.
4. Assist the school staff in operating a safe school.
5. Comply with federal, state and local laws.
6. Exercise proper care when using District facilities, school supplies and equipment.
7. Attend school daily and be on time to all classes and other school functions.
8. Make up work when absent from school.
9. Pursue and attempt to satisfactorily complete the courses of study prescribed by local school authorities.
10. Report accurately in student media.
11. Not use obscene language in student media or on school property.

Violations may result in disciplinary action.

Student Trips (School Board Policy 121)

Student trips are a privilege. To participate, a signed parental permission form must be submitted. Students must meet all obligations for missed coursework. The teacher, sponsor or coach will enforce school rules, all of which apply during student trips. Students who violate school rules will be subject to disciplinary consequences, parent/guardian notification, and may be sent home at parental/guardian expense. Students represent our District wherever they go, and their behavior should be exemplary.

Field trips are not mandatory and consequently, students who do not participate will not be held academically accountable for information acquired as a result of the field trip. The District will provide supervision for any students not participation in a field trip. Students who do not return a signed permission slip or who otherwise chose not to participate in a field trip will be given a related assignment to complete during the time of the field trip. No student will be denied an opportunity to participate in a field trip for financial reasons if the family is economically disadvantaged or other financial hardship is shown to the Superintendent.

Non-School Sponsored Trips

There are certain instances where staff members organize and solicit District students for a trip that is not school-related, sponsored or endorsed, and that occurs outside of the academic calendar. This occurs most often with foreign-language

led trips to Europe in the summer. It is important to note that these trips are neither authorized nor sponsored by the District. The District does not supervise the staff member, does not investigate the safety of the trip or the travel company used, and does not endorse, support or assume responsibility in any way for any District staff member who takes students on these trips. Staff members who organize such trips are required to notify all participants in every communication that the trip is organized independently of the District. Parents and students are encouraged to independently research the trip to determine whether it is appropriate to participate.

The parent/guardian of each student (or emancipated student) participating in a non-school sponsored trip must sign an acknowledgement recognizing that the District is not involved in and therefore bears no responsibility with respect to the trip (in the form attached to Policy 121 as AR-4). The District staff member organizing the trip shall deliver all forms to the Superintendent prior to the date of the trip.

Suicide Prevention (School Board Policy 819)

The Suicide Prevention Policy provides students with age-appropriate education on the importance of safe and healthy choices, coping strategies, how to recognize risk factors and warning signs, as well as help-seeking strategies for self or others including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help. All District employees receive professional development on risk factors, warning signs, response procedures, referrals, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention. In addition, Guidance Counselors receive additional training on risk assessment and crisis intervention. Please refer to School Board Policy 819, which can be found on the District website on the School Board/District Policies tab, for more information and resources for Suicide Prevention.

No matter what problems students are dealing with, the District wants students to know that help is available. If students are in a crisis, please reach out to a Guidance Counselor or another trusted adult. Help is also available from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Hotline. By calling 1-800-273-TALK (8255) students will be connected to a skilled, trained counselor at a crisis center in the area, anytime 24/7. (Citation - <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>) Additional resources are found on the Administrative Regulation attached to Policy 819.

If a student is identified by the school as being at risk of suicide, parents/guardians will be notified by the school. Parents, guardians and students are encouraged to contact the student's counselor or other trusted adult if any student is subjected to one or more of the risk factors for suicide or exhibits warning signs of suicidal behavior. A coordinated effort could save a life.

Risk factors refer to personal or environmental characteristics that are associated with suicide including, but not limited to:

Behavioral Health Issues/Disorders:

- Depression
- Substance abuse or dependence
- Previous suicide attempts
- Self-injury

Personal Characteristics:

- Hopelessness/Low self-esteem
- Loneliness/Social alienation/isolation/lack of belonging
- Poor problem-solving or coping skills
- Impulsivity/Risk-taking/recklessness

Adverse/Stressful Life Circumstances:

- Interpersonal difficulties or losses
- Disciplinary or legal problems
- Bullying (victim or perpetrator)
- School or work issues

- Physical, sexual or psychological abuse
- Exposure to peer suicide

Family Characteristics:

- Family history of suicide or suicidal behavior
- Family mental health problems
- Divorce/Death of parent/guardian
- Parental-Child relationship

Warning signs are indications that someone may be in danger of suicide, either immediately or in the near future. Warning signs include, but are not limited to:

- Expressions such as hopelessness, rage, anger, seeking revenge, feeling trapped, anxiety, agitation, no reason to live or sense of purpose
- Recklessness or risky behavior
- Increased alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawal from friends, family, or society
- Dramatic mood changes

Surveys of Students (School Board Policy 235.1)

Surveys conducted by outside agencies, organizations, and individuals shall be approved by the Peters Township Board of School Directors, based upon the Superintendent's recommendation, prior to administration to students. All surveys and instruments used to collect information from students shall relate to the District's educational objectives. Parents/guardians shall be informed of the nature and scope of individual surveys and their relationship to the educational program of their child. Parents/guardians have a right to inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party prior to administration or distribution to their student. Such requests shall be in writing and submitted to the principal and Superintendent. The requester will be notified of a time and place for the review of the material within five (5) days of receipt of the request. No student shall be required, as part of any program funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education, to submit to a survey, analysis or evaluation information concerning one or more of the protected areas outlined in Policy 235.1, without prior signed, dated, written parental consent for students under eighteen (18) years of age or written consent of emancipated students or those over eighteen (18) years of age. For surveys that are not required as part of a program administered by the U.S. Department of Education, parents may opt out of survey participation by emailing the principal at least five (5) days prior to the survey.

Please refer to Policy 235.1 for more information pertaining to surveys of students.

Technology Use (School Board Policy 815)

The Peters Township School District provides its employees, students, and guests access to District Technology Resources. The Board supports use of these resources in the District's instructional and operational programs in order to facilitate teaching and learning, to provide access to information, to aid in collaboration, and to carry out the District-related business and daily operation of the District. .

The electronic information available to students on the Internet or through web-based services does not imply endorsement of the content by the School District, with the exception of resources approved and adopted by the Board of Directors. The District does not guarantee the accuracy of information received on the Internet. The District is not and will not be responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged or unavailable when using District Technology Resources or for any information that is retrieved via the Internet. The School District is not and will not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet or other commercial online services. Parents/Guardians are legally and financially responsible for their child's actions.

Before students can use the District's network, they are required to submit the District's Acceptable Use Form and to electronically log in and agree to abide by the District's Technology Acceptable Use Policy. There is a summary of the policy on the computer screen that the student can read each time before clicking on "agree." It is assumed that the

parents of all students will agree to this procedure, otherwise the parent is to notify the school office that his/her child will not be permitted to use District Technology-Resources.

School Board Policy 815 more fully explains the standards of acceptable behavior/use of the District's Technology Resources. All Students, parents and guardians are encouraged to be fully versed on the Acceptable Use of Technology Resources. Student, staff, and guest use of any District Technology Resource is a privilege, not a right and can be denied to the extent that use is not in accordance with Board policy. The District Technology Resources remain the property of the District and the use may be revoked, suspended, inspected at any time to ensure compliance with this and other District policies.

Any user who suspects a violation of the school's computer use policies, or who has knowledge of potential vulnerabilities or security loopholes in a system or network at PTSD should immediately notify a school administrator or the Director of Instructional Technology.

Expectation of Privacy

Users of District Technology Resources shall have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, delete, receive or display on or over the District Technology Resources, including personal files or any use of the District's internet, computers or network resources. The District reserves the right to monitor, track, and log network access to and use of District Technology Resources; inspect, copy, and review any and all usage of District Technology Resources including information transmitted and received via the Internet to ensure compliance with this and other District policies, and state and federal law; monitor file-server space utilization by Users; decrypt and inspect encrypted internet traffic and communications; establish network storage limitations; or deny access to prevent unauthorized, inappropriate or illegal activity.

Accounts shall only be used by the authorized owner and students should never share their password or account with another person. Network users shall respect the privacy of other users on the system. The District reserves the right to purge data stored by all Users and to delete an account when students are no longer enrolled in or in the service of the District.

Threat Assessment (School Board Policy 236.1)

The Board is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its students and the school community and to providing the resources and support to address identified student needs. The Peters Township School District complies with all Threat Assessment Team requirements under Act 55 of 2022. All school buildings within the Peters Township School District have threat assessment teams composed of, but not limited to, the following District employees: principal, school counselor, nurse, School Resource Officer (where applicable), and additional members, as needed. Building level teams report to the District level team, which includes District Central Office administrators and the Communications Coordinator. All team members have received training on the process of identifying, reporting, assessing, responding to and intervening with threats by utilizing the threat assessment process and protocols. The School Safety and Security Coordinator has been identified as the Assistant Superintendent. The Assistant Superintendent and Communications Coordinator oversee training, development, and implementation of Threat Assessment and School Safety programming. Annually, staff is provided with information on how to identify and report a threat or student displaying at-risk behavior, and how to conduct safety and security drills. Student information reviewed and maintained by the Threat Assessment Teams is confidential.

For more information about the Threat Assessment Team, please see School Board Policy 236.1 – Threat Assessment.

Tobacco and Vaping Products (School Board Policy 222)

Tobacco and vaping products including Juuls and other electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), present health and safety hazards that can have serious consequences for both users and nonusers and the safety and environment of the schools. The District prohibits the possession, use, purchase or sale of tobacco and vaping products, including the product marketed by Juul and other e-cigarettes, regardless of whether such products contain tobacco or nicotine, by or to students at any time in a school building; on school buses or other vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the

School District; or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property. Students are prohibited from possessing products marketed and sold as tobacco cessation products or for other therapeutic purposes except as defined by Policy 209. Students are also prohibited from possessing any form of medical marijuana at any time in a school building; on school buses or other vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the School District; or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action (Reference Section III: Student Code of Conduct). If a student is directly involved in an incident involving possession, use, purchase, or sale of tobacco and vaping products including Juuls and other electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) in violation of this policy, his/her parent/guardian will be notified.

Valuables

Students are responsible for their personal property. Students should not bring expensive belongings to school because they could be lost, stolen, or damaged. The school is not responsible for these belongings and will not be responsible for reimbursing a student for personal property that is lost, stolen, or damaged.

Visitor Management

The District utilizes the Raptor Visitor Management system to assist with safety efforts related to visitors to our schools. This system scans state issued identification of all visitors and compares it to a national sex offender database. We also understand that parents and/or guardians may need to place restrictions on individuals who may not have access to their child during the school day. Please note that without prior written approval from a parent, students may not be released to any individual who is not included on the child's emergency card unless the release is required by a current custody order of court.

For parents with specific custody arrangements, please complete the Student Access Restriction form on the School Safety page of the District website (www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/SchoolSafety.aspx), attach a copy of the court documents, and return it to your child's school counselor. Requests may also be made related to a specific individual(s) that may not request access to your child (including lunch visits, appointments with the teacher, attendance at school-day events, etc.), by completing the form. This information will be included in our PowerSchool database and will be used by our visitor management system to alert the staff if the individual would try to enter the school via the main office.

Volunteers (School Board Policy 916)

The District strongly supports the involvement of parent/guardian and community volunteers. State law now requires any volunteer who is responsible for the welfare of a student or has direct volunteer contact with a student to have the necessary clearances on file with the District. Parent volunteers must submit:

1. Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance,
2. Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check,
3. FBI Federal Criminal History Record/Fingerprint (unless a waiver of the fingerprint requirement is applicable),
and
4. An Acknowledgement of Volunteer Obligations.

A waiver of the fingerprint record check is available under certain circumstances to those who:

1. Have lived in PA for ALL of the past ten years or
2. Have not lived in PA for 10 years but have received a favorable Federal Criminal History Record/Fingerprint check since establishing residency.

Acquiring the clearance documents takes time and we recommend that parents planning on volunteering in the schools complete the process as soon as possible. The documents will remain on file with the District and are valid for sixty (60) months from the date of the earliest clearance, at which time new clearances will be necessary. The District has created a Volunteer website to help parents through the process complete with links to complete the clearances and downloads of the necessary forms. Please visit the site at www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/volunteers.aspx

For the safety of students and staff, volunteers are:

1. Subject to the safe and orderly running of the building,
2. Expected to maintain the privacy of confidential student information,
3. Expected to respect the authority of the teacher or supervisor overseeing the volunteers, and
4. Required to sign-in at the appropriate building with a statement of their volunteer purpose.

If you ever have a question about whether clearances are necessary, please contact the principal for guidance. Clearances are NOT required if you wish to have lunch with your child.

After submitting clearances, you have a legal obligation to notify the District within 72 hours if you are arrested for or convicted of a Disqualifying Offense, or named as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse. Anyone failing to disclose information required under the policy commits a misdemeanor of the third degree and will be reported to law enforcement.

Weapons and Dangerous Instruments (School Board Policy 218.1)

The School District acknowledges that an orderly school environment is necessary for an effective instructional program and productive workplace. In order to provide for an orderly school environment and safe workplace, the possession of weapons and dangerous instruments and/or look-alike weapons by students, while on school grounds, at school sponsored activities, in any student vehicle on school grounds or at any school sponsored activity anywhere, or in any vehicle provided by the Peters Township School District, is strictly prohibited.

The term “weapons” includes but is not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, mace, pepper spray, and similar items, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury and replica of weapon.

Anyone observing or otherwise becoming aware of weapons on school property, at school activities, in student operated vehicles, or in vehicles provided by the District, should report the same to the principal or other trusted, adult District employee immediately.

Prior to the admission of any pupil to the Peters Township School District, the parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of the student shall, upon registration, provide a sworn statement indicating whether the pupil was previously suspended or expelled from any public or private school for an act or offense involving weapons, alcohol or drugs or for any other willful act of violence committed on school property. Said statement shall be included in the student's disciplinary record. A request for a copy of the student's disciplinary record will be forwarded to the student's previous place of schooling for verification.

Whenever a pupil transfers from the Peters Township School District, a certified copy of the student's disciplinary record shall be forwarded, as per Act 26 of 1995, to the school entity to which the pupil has transferred, and within ten (10) days of the school's request. Permission of the parent or other person having control or charge of the student shall not be required for transfer of the student's disciplinary record to another school entity.

Withdrawals

Upon withdrawal from the District, all District-owned supplies and equipment in the possession of the student shall be returned to the principal.

When Transferring to Another School

A release of records form should be completed by the parent/guardian of any student who is withdrawing. Teachers and staff will summarize the student's progress and prepare the student's file, including health records, to forward to his/her next school of enrollment. All records will be forwarded by U.S. mail, email, or fax.

If a student plans to leave the Peters Township School District, the office should be informed as soon as possible in order for school records to be sent to the new school. On the last day the student attends school, they will receive a

“Notice of Withdrawal” to share with their teachers so they can collect books and record grades for their classes. We appreciate a twenty-four (24) hour notification before a student will be withdrawing, so the attendance secretary can prepare the proper forms and paperwork.

Permanent Withdrawal (School Board Policy 208)

No student under the age of eighteen (18) will be permitted to withdraw without the written consent of a parent/guardian and supporting justification. Counseling services will be made available to any student who states an intention to withdraw permanently.

A student is of compulsory school age in Pennsylvania until attaining age eighteen (18). A student under the age of eighteen (18) shall not be permitted to withdraw without notice of intention to enroll in another public or private day school unless otherwise required by law.

III

SECTION III: Student Code of Conduct

Discipline Responses – Level I

Below are examples of inappropriate behavior that may interfere with the orderly operation of the school. They may be handled by individual staff members. However, if the misbehavior continues, the staff member may share the problem with an administrator. Any or a combination of disciplinary actions may be applied.

The charts that follow place disciplinary examples and responses in four categories, ranging from minor forms of misbehavior in Level I to serious acts of violence in Level IV. The examples and responses are not intended to be inclusive:

Examples: Level I Disciplinary Infractions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classroom, study lab, cafeteria, bus, auditorium, hallway, locker room disturbance• Dress Code Violation• Classroom and school tardiness• Abusive language, agitating others• Failure to complete assignments or follow directions• Disrespectful, disruptive behaviors or actions• Failure to serve school detention• Other inappropriate behaviors on school property during after-school activities• Unauthorized Videotaping/Picture Taking, or cell phone violation
Level I Disciplinary Options/Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hallway Restriction• Verbal reprimand• Special duties/activities• Lunch/Recess detention• Withdrawal of privileges• Strict supervised study• After-school detention• Parent conference• Saturday detention – 2 hour or 4 hour• Assigned seat• Removal from cafeteria• In-school suspension• Out of school suspension for extreme/excessive cases except in cases of truancy or excessive absences.

Discipline Responses – Level IIA

These acts of misbehavior distract students from learning. Any or a combination of disciplinary actions may be applied.

Examples of Level IIA Disciplinary Infractions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuation or increased severity of the misbehaviors listed in Level I.• Repeated tardiness to school, truancy or excessive absences, cutting class, cutting school• Insubordination• Hall disruption• Engaging in bullying or harassment or knowingly making false statements or submitting false information during a bullying or harassment investigation or Title IX grievance process• Theft• Possession of inappropriate material• Cheating, plagiarism, lying, forgery• Misconduct during field trips, athletic trips, or other trips involving students• Bus misconduct• Inappropriate verbal or written communication• Safety violation• Unauthorized publication or posting of videotaped materials
Level IIA Disciplinary Options/Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verbal reprimand by principal, assistant principal, or teacher• Withdrawal from extracurricular activities/privileges• Parental conference• In-School Suspension• Out of School Suspension except in cases of truancy or excessive absences.• Saturday detention – 2 hour or 4 hour• Referral to psychological services• Requirement to clean, replace, or repair damages• Removal from the bus• Plagiarism/Cheating will result in (1st offense): loss of credit for the assignment/assessment, referral to office. (2nd offense): loss of credit and referral resulting in 1 day OSS. (3rd Offense): failing grade for the quarter, parent-teacher-administrator meeting.

Discipline Responses – Level IIB

These acts of misbehavior distract students from learning. Any or a combination of disciplinary actions may be applied.

Examples of Level IIB Disciplinary Infractions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuation of the misbehaviors listed in Levels I, IIA• Fighting without serious injury• Vandalism• Engaging in bullying or harassment or knowingly making false statements or submitting false information during a bullying or harassment investigation or Title IX grievance process• Theft• Possession/discharge of any flammable and/or explosive device• Possession/discharge of potentially harmful or disruptive materials• Threats to others
Level IIB Disciplinary Options/Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parental Conference• 4-hour Saturday detention• Withdrawal from extracurricular activities• In-School Suspension or Out of School Suspension except in cases of truancy or excessive absences.• Superintendent's hearing, and/or Expulsion, and/or Criminal Prosecution• Restitution• Referral for psychological services and/or drug & alcohol evaluation• Prosecution for violation of building and fire code regulations or state and local laws

Discipline Responses – Level III

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Peters Township School District and the Peters Township Police Department pertains to offenses that are listed in this category. Any violations determined to be Level III may result in a ten (10) day out-of-school suspension, a hearing before the Peters Township Board of School Directors with a recommendation for expulsion, and notification to the Peters Township Police. The local police and the Peters Township Police may be notified when Level III offenses occur outside of Peters Township at school-related activities, etc.

Examples of Level III Disciplinary Infractions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any behaviors cited in the PA Crimes Code, Title 18 Pa C.S.• Arson-related offenses• Assault/battery which results in serious bodily injury• Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco/Vaping Product violation (according to School Board Policy and PA law)• Illegal tampering with emergency/security systems• Institutional vandalism• Engaging in bullying or harassment or knowingly making false statements or submitting false information during a bullying or harassment investigation or Title IX grievance process• Engaging in bullying or harassment or knowingly making false statements or submitting false information during a bullying or harassment investigation or Title IX grievance process• Possession of weapons or dangerous instruments

- Furnishing/selling/using/possessing illegal drugs/alcohol/tobacco/vaping product
- Robbery as defined in the PA Crimes Code, Title 18 Pa C.S., Subsection 3701
- Terroristic and bomb threats

Level III Disciplinary Options/Responses

- Out-of-school suspension except in cases of truancy or excessive absences.
- Formal Hearing
- Expulsion
- Criminal prosecution
- Other board action which results in appropriate disciplinary action
- Referral for psychological services and/or drug and alcohol evaluation
- Charges filed under PA Crimes Code, Title 18 Pa C.S.

Drug and Alcohol Violations

Drug and Alcohol violations (on campus or at away school events) will result in the following consequences:

First Offense:

1. The principal/assistant principal will be immediately notified of any violations.
2. The School Nurse may evaluate the student.
3. The student may be administered a breathalyzer by an administrator or designee.
4. The principal or designee will promptly notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) concerning this incident.
5. The principal or designee will notify the School Resource Officer and proper legal authorities of violations.
6. The student may be sent home or removed from school to receive medical attention, if required. When parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached, the principal or designee will decide whether or not to obtain medical treatment for the student or temporarily isolate the student.
7. The principal or designee will schedule an informal hearing.
8. At the informal hearing, if the principal or designee determines the offense has been committed by the student, the principal or designee will:
 - a) Suspend the student for up to ten (10) days and have the option of requesting a formal disciplinary hearing to be scheduled before the Board or a committee of the Board, where additional suspension days or permanent expulsion will be recommended.
 - b) Recommend that the student undergo a drug and alcohol assessment by a licensed drug and alcohol facility for up to ten (10) days or prior to returning to school.
 - c) Recommend referral to the District's Student Assistance Program (SAP).

Students suspended from school will not participate in or attend as a spectator any school-related sponsored activity or event. The student will be placed on probation for any after-school/extracurricular activity for at least thirty (30) days and lose their parking pass, if applicable. Additional violations of the Code of Student Conduct may result in a hearing before the Board.

Second Offense:

1. A second violation during the years encompassing grades 6-12 will result in a Board hearing for expulsion except when individual circumstances warrant a different outcome as determined by the Superintendent.
2. All requirements, procedures, due process, and penalties that govern a first offense under these guidelines will apply under the second offense. However, if after the informal hearing, the principal or designee determines the offense has been committed by the student, the principal or designee will request a formal disciplinary hearing to be scheduled before the Board, or a committee of the Board, where permanent expulsion will be recommended.

Students suspended from school will not participate in or attend as a spectator any school-related sponsored activity or event. The student will be placed on probation for any after-school/extracurricular activity for at least a semester and lose their parking pass, if applicable.

An infraction occurs when a student attempts to or succeeds in delivering controlled substances or possesses with the intent to distribute.

Tobacco and Vaping Product violations will result in the following consequences:

1st offense – 1 day out-of-school suspension, magistrate citation and/or referral to an adjudication alternative such as a smoking cessation class

2nd offense – 3 day out-of-school suspension and/or magistrate citation

3rd offense – 5 day out-of-school suspension and referral to Board of School Directors for a hearing

A student shall be subject to prosecution initiated by the District and, if convicted, shall be required to pay a fine for the benefit of the District, plus court costs. In lieu of the imposition of a fine, the court may admit the student to an adjudication alternative.

Academic Misconduct Violations

Level I Academic Misconduct Violations are first offenses on minor assignments, including cheating, sharing or unauthorized collaboration on a homework assignment or classwork.

Level II Academic Misconduct Violations are second occurrences for Level I Academic Misconduct Violations; first offenses of plagiarism, falsification/fabrication or tampering; and cheating, sharing or unauthorized collaboration on major assignments including tests, quizzes, labs, projects, essays, or any other assignment requiring multiple days to complete.

Level III Academic Misconduct Violations are multiple occurrences of Level I or Level II Academic Misconduct Violations.

Consequences for Academic Misconduct

Consequences for Level I Academic Misconduct may include but are not limited to:

- Student conference with teacher
- Parent/guardian notification
- Loss of credit or reduced grade
- Discipline Referral to the Main Office
- Teacher may decline to write or retract a letter of recommendation
- Incident recorded in student's discipline record
- Detention

Consequences for Level II Academic Misconduct may include but are not limited to:

- Discipline Referral to the Main Office
- Student conference with teacher, parent/guardian and administrator
- Loss of credit or reduced grade
- Detention or Suspension
- Teacher may decline to write or retract a letter of recommendation
- Alternative assignment may be required to demonstrate mastery of content
- Referral to the Student Assistance Program (SAP)
- Incident recorded in student's discipline record

Consequences for Level III Academic Misconduct may include but are not limited to:

- Discipline Referral to the Main Office
- Student conference with teacher, parent/guardian and administrator
- Loss of credit
- Suspension
- Referral to the Student Assistance Program (SAP)
- Incident recorded in student's discipline record
- Teacher may decline to write or retract a letter of recommendation
- Suspension or removal from extracurricular activities, athletics, elected or appointed offices and disqualification for National Honor Society, academic awards and senior recognitions.

IV

SECTION IV: Student Services

Language Instruction Educational Program for English Learners (School Board Policy 138)

The District has developed a formal Language Instruction Educational Program and Bilingual Education Program policy to ensure quality educational services to all students. To accomplish this goal, the District's objectives are to provide appropriately planned instructional services for identified students whose dominant language is not English. The ESL teacher works closely with the administrative staff and classroom teachers to assist students in improving their English proficiency. All students are integrated with their peers except when it is necessary to pull them out of class to provide specific services.

Gifted Support (School Board Policy 114)

Specially designed instruction is provided for students who are identified as intellectually gifted in accordance with Chapter 16 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code. These individuals have demonstrated cognitive and academic performance, which has been determined to be significantly beyond age/grade level norms. After a thorough review of each identified gifted learner's educational needs, a team of qualified professionals and the parents develop a Gifted Individualized Educational Plan (GIEP).

More specific information relating to the District's Gifted Education program can be found in Policy 114, located at the School Board/Policy Tab of the District website. In addition, several Administrative Regulations can be found as attachments at the bottom of the policy that relate to Gifted Screening criteria (114 AR-1), Gifted Identification Process decision tree diagram (114 AR-2) and Peters Township Gifts Criteria (114 AR-3). Questions about Gifted Support should be directed to the Director of Pupil Services.

Health Services

School nurses and health paraprofessionals work with school staff and parents to ensure that state and school health and safety regulations are properly implemented. Should students have special medical needs, the District provides information and services.

Health Services is designed to prevent health problems as well as treat minor illnesses and accidents so a student can continue his or her day in school. As soon as possible, any serious illness or accident will be reported to the student's parents.

Accidents, Injuries, and Illness

If a student gets sick or injured during the school day, a pass can be obtained from the teacher and the student should report to the nurse's office. The nurse will contact the parents if necessary. Any dismissals due to health reasons must come through the health office. If a child needs to be sent home, parents will be called by the school and requested to take the child home.

In the event the accident, injury, or illness is too serious for the student to report to the school nurse, or a situation occurs off site during a related activity, the student should seek assistance from a teacher, coach, sponsor, or other adult who is acting in a supervisory role. Students are not permitted to leave the activity site, school grounds or attempt to address the situation without adult assistance.

When possible, the parent/guardian will be asked if they wish the school to summon an ambulance, if they wish to accompany the child in the ambulance or have a member of the staff accompany the child. In an emergency, the District will immediately summon an ambulance to transport the student to a hospital and the parent/guardian will be notified. School personnel accompanying or transporting a student to a hospital will remain with the student until the parent/guardian or other responsible adult arrives. All ambulance and other costs are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Re-admission of any child to school following a contagious illness will be dependent upon the child being free of symptoms, as well as the possible observance of an exclusion period. The school nurse should be consulted if there are any questions or concerns regarding re-admission to school. Parents will be contacted if a child misses three or more days of school. Students who cannot attend school for ten (10) or more consecutive days due to medical reasons may be eligible for homebound instruction. This service is to be arranged through the principal's office at the request of the parent or guardian.

Emergency Contact Information

Each year, parents/guardians will update emergency contact and medical information electronically via an on-line portal. This information will be kept on file in the health office. Please be sure your contact information is updated at all times as these phone numbers are used for the District's emergency notification system.

Diabetes Management (School Board Policy 209.2)

Prior to student self-administering insulin, parents and students must complete the Peters Township School District Medication Form (Policy 210 AR-2). The student, parent(s), and school nurse must sign this form to acknowledge proper training and use. This form must be updated annually. Students, who are unable to self-administer, will be able to store medication in an easily accessible location under the direction of a school nurse or other trained District-trained Diabetes Personnel.

Immunization and Communicable Diseases (School Board Policy 203)

Children in public schools must be immunized for tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B and varicella (chickenpox). Children attending grade 7 are required to have an updated tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap) and a meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV). Children entering grade 12 will also need 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV). Without these required immunizations the student will not be permitted to attend Peters Township School District. Exceptions do apply for medical reasons and religious beliefs. In the event of an incidence of a reportable communicable disease within the student community for which another student is unimmunized, the unimmunized student may be excluded from school, as permitted by law, to lessen the risk of transmission of the disease and safeguard the well-being of the educational community. The school nurse should be contacted with any questions or concerns in this area.

Where applicable, those individuals who are identified as symptomatic or asymptomatic carriers of communicable diseases, infected with acute diseases, and/or chronic infectious diseases will be restricted from the school environment until such a time that it is ascertained their presence within the educational setting will not present a risk to themselves or others. Individually afflicted students shall be afforded their due process rights in respect to continued attendance or when appropriate be provided with education in the least restrictive environment. For more information pertaining to School Board Policies related to communicable diseases, please refer to School Board Policy 203, the attachment to Policy 203 that can be found at the bottom of the policy on the District website (203 AR-1 – MRSA) and School Board Policy 203.1- HIV Infection

Medications (School Board Policy 210)

The School District recognizes that to improve student health and regular school attendance, it is often necessary to administer medication or render limited medical care to students during the school day. The Medication Policy defines guidelines for the District's responsibility to administer medication or medical care. To ensure proper administration of medication, any student needing "prescribed medication" (prescriptions or over-the-counter medication which has been prescribed by a doctor in writing) during school hours, per the physician's instructions, must follow these procedures:

1. Obtain and process a medication form, which should outline specific procedures for administering medication.
2. All medications must be registered and stored in a locked area of the school's health office. The medication must be in a proper pharmaceutical container, bearing the student's name, physician's name and treatment instructions, including times the medication is to be administered.

In some cases, a parent may determine the need for his/her child to take "over-the-counter" medication (such as aspirin, cough medicine, etc.). This medication must also be registered at the school nurse's office, following the procedures

previously listed. The School District cannot, however, assume responsibility for maintaining a schedule to administer “over-the-counter” medication, unless a physician prescribes it.

The School District does not assume responsibility for any reaction that may occur following administration of medication sent from home nor can there be any responsibility assumed if the parent/guardian does not send sufficient medication or does not complete the proper medication form. Parents/Guardians are assuming the responsibility for adverse reactions from medication. It is the parent’s/guardian’s responsibility to check with the pharmacy and/or physician regarding contraindication of over-the-counter with other prescriptions or over-the-counter medications.

Planning for the administration of medication during field trips and other school-sponsored activities should start early in the school year and should include collaboration between administrators, teachers, nurses, appropriate parents/guardians and other designated health officials.

A licensed medical professional will not be available for after-school activities to administer medication as these activities are considered voluntary activities and not mandated by the school. Parents/Guardians are responsible to make arrangements for their student’s medication needs after school hours.

More detailed information regarding the District’s medication policy can be found in Policy 210, located at the School Board/Policy tab of the District website. In addition, four attachments can be found at the bottom of the policy that cover Use of Medications (210 AR-1), District Medication Form (210 AR-2) and Overnight Field Trip Medication Form (210 AR-3), and Off-Campus Field Trip Emergency Medication Form (210 AR-4).

Physical and Dental Examinations (School Board Policy 209)

State law requires that physical and dental examinations be provided by the school’s doctor or dentist or by the student’s family physician. These examinations can be provided by the School District, but parents usually choose to have these examinations done by their personal physician. Pennsylvania School Law requires that each child entering grades K, 6, and 11 have a physical exam and each child entering grades K, 3, and 7 have a dental exam. A Scoliosis screening is required in grades 6 and 7. The Medical/Dental forms for a private physical and/or dental exam are located on the Health Services webpage. The District will send the appropriate forms to your home when required. The District encourages parents/guardians to timely obtain the exams and promptly return the applicable forms to the school nurse prior to the start of the following school year.

Other screenings completed by the school nurse during school hours include vision testing, height and weight measurements (which are done yearly), and hearing tests for students in grades K -3, 7 and 11.

Possession/Use of Asthma Inhalers/Epinephrine Auto-Injectors (School Board Policy 210.1)

Students are permitted to possess asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors and to self-administer the prescribed medication. A student may also be permitted to self-administer insulin under the guidance of a school nurse. Before a student may possess or use an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector in the school setting or self-administer insulin, the student must submit:

1. A written request from the parent/guardian that the school complies with the order of the licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant.
2. A written statement from the parent/guardian acknowledging that the school is not responsible for ensuring the medication is taken and relieving the District and its employees of responsibility for the benefits or consequences of the prescribed medication.
3. A written statement from the licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant that states:
 - a. Name of the drug.
 - b. Prescribed dosage.
 - c. Times medication is to be taken.
 - d. Length of time medication is prescribed.
 - e. Diagnosis or reason medication is needed, unless confidential.
 - f. Potential serious reaction or side effects of medication.

- g. Emergency response.
- h. If child is qualified and able to self-administer the medication.

A written request for student use of an asthma inhaler and/or epinephrine auto-injector or to self-administer insulin shall be submitted annually, along with required written statements from the parent/guardian and an updated prescription. Students shall be prohibited from sharing, giving, selling, and using an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector in any manner other than which it is prescribed during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and school-sponsored activities. Violations of this policy shall result in loss of privilege to self-carry the asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector and disciplinary action. Additional guidelines regarding the use of these prescription devices can be found in Policy 210.1, located on the School Board/Policy tab of the District website.

Severe Food Allergies (School Board Policy 209.1)

Parents or guardians who request accommodations for their children(s) who have severe food allergies must provide written documentation to the school nurse on an annual basis from a physician indicating the nature and severity of the food allergy, as well as emergency procedures to be followed in the event of a severe allergenic reaction. The principal will coordinate information on accommodations with the Director of Food Services. Specific guidelines regarding accommodating non-disabling and disabling allergies can be found in Policy 209.1, located at the School Board/Policy tab of the District website. In addition, at the bottom of that policy, additional administrative regulations can be found as attachments that relate to Guidelines for Severe Food Allergies (209.1 AR-1), Emergency Care Plan form for Students with Food Allergies (209.1 AR-2) and Health History for School Nurse (209.1 AR-3).

Wellness of Students (School Board Policy 246)

Peters Township School District recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to student physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. The District is committed to providing an environment that promotes student wellness, proper nutrition education, and regular physical activity as part of the learning experience. Food items sold during the school day, whether through Food Service or fundraising efforts, must meet policy wellness guidelines and federal nutrition standards.

Recognizing the importance of keeping our hands clean to help prevent the spread of communicable diseases such as colds, influenza, H1N1 and COVID-19, we remind our students through posters and reminders throughout the school to wash their hands regularly. The District provides touch-less hand sanitizers in key areas to prevent the spread of germs.

Homeless Students (School Board Policy 251)

Who is considered homeless?

Children or youth and their families living in a shelter, transitional housing, motel, vehicle, campgrounds, on the street, or doubled-up with relatives or friends due to a lack of housing are considered to be homeless.

The law indicates that the local education agency shall, according to the child's interest:

- (i) continue the child's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness (I) in any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; OR
- (ii) for the remainder of the academic year, if the child becomes permanently housed during an academic year: or (II) enroll the child in any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child is actually living are eligible to attend.

Is there any reason to delay enrolling a homeless child?

NO. The school selected shall enroll the child in school, even if the child lacks records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, proof of residency, or other documentation. The term enroll and enrollment are defined to include attending classes and participating fully in school activities. The enrolling school must immediately contact the last school the child attended to obtain relevant academic and other records.

Immunization records can be transferred over the phone from the school nurse of the sending school to the school nurse of the receiving school.

Where can I go for assistance?

The Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program exist to help homeless children with a wide variety of services. We can assist homeless children during this time of change and stress. If you are homeless with school age children or you are a school, agency or shelter employees, please contact one of the persons listed below.

1. Peters Township School District Homeless Liaison:
Patricia Kelly, Director of Pupil Services (724) 941-6251 x 7271
2. Storm Carara, State Coordinator Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street, 5th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
(717) 772-2066

For more information, please visit: [Homeless and Foster Care Assistance](#).

School Counseling Services (School Board Policy 112)

School counselors in partnership with students, parents/guardians, staff, and the community, promote the development of each student's potential. Through a proactive, comprehensive and developmental counseling program, the counselors assist all students in realizing their abilities, needs, interests, and goals as they transition through the educational process to become successful members of society and life-long learners.

Special Education Services (School Board Policy 113)

Through supportive services and individualized education plans, the School District seeks to maximize the educational experience of all students. The District follows all state and federal laws, rules, and regulations in the delivery of its Special Education Services.

In some cases, special education services are provided by agencies other than the School District. These services are contracted on an as-needed basis to address the specific areas of need for individual students. Such services include, but are not limited to: speech and language therapy, hearing support, vision support, occupational and physical therapy.

Special education records are destroyed following the expiration of 6 years after a student attains the age of 21. At that point, all education records pertaining to a student are deemed to be unnecessary for the provision of education services or any other school purpose. If you would like a copy of your child's records, you must request a copy prior to the predetermined date for destruction by contacting the Director of Pupil Services.

For more information regarding Special Education Services, please contact the Director of Pupil Services.

Student Assistance Program (School Board Policy 236)

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is available to help parents and students access school and community services. A SAP team identifies and assists students who experience barriers to learning. SAP team members are trained to identify problems, determine whether or not the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school and to make recommendations to assist the student and the parent. For more information regarding your school's SAP Team, please contact your child's counselor.

V

SECTION V: School District Policies

Overview: School District Policies

School District Policies include policies specific to Local Board Procedures (000 series), Programs (100 series), Pupils (200 series), Employees (300 series), Finances (600 series), Property (700 series), Operations (800 Series) and Community (900 series). You may access all approved District policies on our website at www.ptsd.k12.pa.us under the *School Board* tab and click on *District Policies*. Topics most relevant to students and their families are covered under these policies:

100 SERIES – INSTRUCTION

100	Comprehensive Planning	137.2	Education Students
101	Mission Statement		Participation in Cocurricular
102	Academic Standards		Activities and Academic Courses by
103	Discrimination/Title IX Sexual	137.3	Home Education Students
	Harassment Affecting Students		Participation in Career and Technical
103.1	Nondiscrimination – Qualified		Education Programs by Home
	Students With Disabilities	138	Education Students
104	Discrimination/Title IX Sexual		Language Instruction Educational
	Harassment Affecting Staff	140	Program for English Learners
105	Curriculum	140.1	Charter Schools
105.1	Review of Instructional Materials By		Extracurricular Participation By
	Parents/Guardians And Students	142	Charter/Cyber Charter Students
105.2	Exemption From Instruction	143	Migrant Students
105.3	Educational Program Reports		Standards For Persistently Dangerous
107	Adoption Of Planned Instruction	144	Schools
108	Adoption Of Textbooks		Standards For Victims Of Violent
110	Instructional Supplies	145	Crimes
112	Guidance Counseling	146	Academic Integrity
113	Special Education	150	Student Services
113.1	Discipline Of Students With		Title I – Comparability of Services
	Disabilities		
113.2	Behavior Support	200	200 SERIES - PUPILS
113.3	Screening And Evaluations For	200.1	Enrollment Of Students
	Students With Disabilities	201	Proof Of Residence
113.4	Confidentiality Of Special Education	202	Admission Of Students
	Student Information	203	Eligibility Of Nonresident Students
114	Gifted Education		Immunizations And Communicable
115	Career And Technical Education	203.1	Diseases
117	Homebound Instruction	204	HIV Infection
118	Independent Study	206	Attendance
121	Student Trips	207	Assignment Within District
122	Extracurricular Activities		Confidential Communications Of
123	Interscholastic Athletics	208	Students
123.1	Concussion Management	209	Withdrawal From School
123.2	Sudden Cardiac Arrest	209.1	Health Examinations/Screenings
123.3	Parents As Coaches	209.2	Food Allergy Management
124	Alternative Instruction Courses	210	Diabetes Management
127	Assessment System	210.1	Medications
130	Homework		Possession/Administration Of Asthma
137	Home Education Programs	212	Inhalers/Epinephrine Auto-Injectors
137.1	Extracurricular Participation By Home	213	Reporting Student Progress
			Assessment Of Student Progress

214	GPA Calculation/Graduation Honors	228	Student Government
215	Promotion And Retention	229	Student Fundraising
216	Student Records	231	Social Events And Class Trips
216.1	Supplemental Discipline Records	232	Student Involvement In Decision-Making
217	Graduation Requirements	233	Suspension And Expulsion
218	Student Discipline	234	Pregnant/Parenting/Married Students
218.1	Weapons	235	Student Rights and Responsibilities
218.2	Terroristic Threats	235.1	Surveys
218.3	Discipline of Student	236	Student Assistance Program
	Convicted/Adjudicated of Sexual Assault	236.1	Threat Assessment
219	Student Complaint Process	237	Laser Pointers
220	Student Expression/Dissemination of Materials	239	Foreign Exchange Students
221	Dress And Grooming	246	Student Wellness
222	Tobacco and Vaping Products	247	Hazing
223	Student Driving And Parking	249	Bullying/Cyberbullying
224	Care Of School Property	250	Student Recruitment
226	Searches	251	Students Experiencing Homelessness, Foster Care and Other Educational Disability
227	Controlled Substances/Paraphernalia		



SECTION VI: McMurray Elementary School

Dear Parents/ Guardians:

Throughout the school year, we strive to make McMurray Elementary a warm and caring environment that encourages the social and academic development of our students through the core values of the Peters Township community: Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, and Caring. The faculty and staff are a team dedicated to working in partnership with the families and community of Peters Township to provide our students with opportunities that will challenge them to work to their utmost potential.

During the course of your children's time at McMurray, our faculty and staff will build upon the strong foundation laid during their primary experience and make contributions to their lifelong educational journey by helping to prepare them for the middle school and beyond.

In addition to the valuable information found in the District-wide section of the handbook, we hope that you will find everything you need that is specific to instruction and the school community at McMurray Elementary. The handbook will be a wonderful resource for you throughout your children's time at McMurray. If you have any questions about the information provided in the handbook or need something clarified, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to each and every day with your children and are honored that you entrust their education to our care. On behalf of the faculty and staff, it is our distinct pleasure to welcome you to McMurray Elementary, where...

***“A Good Mind and a Good Heart
Always Make a Great Combination!”***

Sincerely yours,

Mr. Blair Stoeck, Principal

Mr. Michael Brookie, Co-Principal

McMurray Elementary
626 East McMurray Road
McMurray, PA 15317
Phone: 724- 941-5020

Attendance

ABSENCES: All absences are considered to be unlawful or unexcused until the District receives written notice explaining the absence. This notice should be submitted within three (3) days of the absence.

EARLY DISMISSALS: In the event a child needs to be dismissed prior to 3:30 PM, a written note should be presented to the child's homeroom teacher upon arrival. If the requested early dismissal is for a medical appointment, a doctor's excuse should be handed in to the classroom teacher upon return.

All notes must include the date, time, name of child(ren), reason for the early dismissal, the parent/guardian's signature, and the name of the person who will be picking up the student. Parents or guardians picking up their child for an early dismissal must come into the office to sign out their child. Students are not permitted to leave the office without the supervision of a parent/guardian.

Children will be called to the office for early dismissals once the parent/guardian arrives in the office. Parents/Guardians are not permitted to pick up children in the classrooms. No child will be dismissed from school nor released to any other person without the expressed written consent of the parent and/or guardian unless an emergency necessitates the use of emergency contacts. Children are not permitted to leave the building without permission.

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS OR VACATION: Parents/Guardians requesting an education tour/trip absence should submit their request in writing to the building principal using the District Educational Tour/Trip Form. This form can be found online or provided in the school office and should be submitted at least one (1) week prior to the trip. **Trips will not be approved during standardized testing days.**

Absences for an educational trip can be considered a legal absence only if approved by the building principal (5 days or less) or Superintendent Designee (over 5 days).

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Excused absences are those caused by illnesses of the pupil, quarantine, family emergency, recovery from an accident, required court attendance, death in the family, or educational tour/trip (with prior approval). When writing an excuse, please include the following information: date(s) of absence, reason for absence, name of your child, and your signature.

If an excuse is not returned within three (3) days following the absence, the student's absence will be considered unexcused.

EXTENDED ABSENCES: A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification may be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days shall require an excuse from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts.

Please note: Regular attendance in school is an essential component to achieving success in school. The academic records of those students who are absent twenty (20) or more days of school will be reviewed at the end of the school year to determine if promotion to the next grade is appropriate.

SCHOOL HOURS: McMurray Elementary school hours are from 8:55 AM to 3:30 PM. Elementary teachers are available for parent/guardian conferences from 8:00 AM to 8:45 AM, by appointment.

TARDINESS: Students entering the building via means other than District transportation after 8:55 AM are considered tardy. They must present a signed excuse written by the parent/guardian to the office upon arrival. Tardies will be recorded as unexcused if an excuse is not received within three days. *Students are subject to disciplinary action for excessive unexcused tardiness. (6-10 Unexcused tardies- Recess/AM/PM Detention, 10+ Unexcused tardies - Recess/AM/PM Detention/Withdrawal of Privileges)*

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES: When a student does bring in an excuse, but the reason for the absence is not legal, it will be marked as an unexcused or illegal absence. Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, missing school for a trip or vacation that has not been approved, going hunting, oversleeping, missing the bus, or other reasons deemed unexcused by the principal according to the Pennsylvania School Code.

After three (3) illegal absences, state law requires that the student's parents/guardians be notified. The notice shall include a description of the consequences and will offer a School Attendance Improvement Conference. If there are any further illegal absences, a second notice will be sent home and a School Attendance Improvement Conference will be offered. After the School Attendance Improvement Conference, a hearing may be held before the Peters Township Magistrate. This hearing could result in a fine for violating the state law that requires a student to attend school.

General Information

ANIMALS/PETS: Prior approval must be obtained from the principal or designee to have any animals/pets brought to school. Animals are not to be transported on the bus and must be under the care of an adult at all times. Pets of any kind are not permitted outside of vehicles during the school day including during drop off and pickup times. Pet owners assume all responsibility for the care, damage, and actions of the animal.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Students should listen carefully to the morning announcements each day. Important information will be shared about the school day and school events. Announcements are made every day concerning daily news and upcoming events.

ASSEMBLIES: Assemblies are scheduled throughout the school year for a variety of purposes. Topics include school-wide themes, curriculum-related presentations, and special guest speakers. It is expected that students will listen and display appropriate audience behaviors at each assembly by following two rules:

1. Students should give the speaker their total attention.
2. Students should react appropriately to what takes place on stage – to laugh when things are funny, enjoy themselves, and applaud a good performance. They should never “boo” anyone or act rowdy during an assembly. Students may be removed from the auditorium and may face additional disciplinary action for disruptive or disrespectful behavior.

BULLETIN BOARDS: Bulletin board space is provided for the use of students and student organizations. However, the use of certain bulletin boards may be restricted for school use.

The following general rules on posting are to be observed:

1. Identification on any posted notice is required of the student or student group, including the name of at least one person of the group posting such notice.
2. Notices or other communications shall be officially dated before posting and approved by the principal.

BULLYING: **Bullying** means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:[\[1\]](#)

1. Substantial interference with a student's education.
2. Creation of a threatening environment.
3. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Students will be taught what bullying means, how to recognize when it happens, and positive ways to respond to and report the behavior. Students, parents/guardians, faculty and staff members must work together to prevent and stop bullying.

CAFETERIA/FOOD SERVICES: Hot lunches are provided for those children wishing to buy them. Milk is included with the hot lunches or may be purchased separately. Information about the menu and cost of school lunches is available on our District website. At times, the menu may need to be changed without prior notice. Students may charge their accounts through our point-of-sale program. Please note the following rules:

1. *When entering the cafeteria, students will get into line to purchase food and/or beverage items.*
2. *Cutting in line is not permitted, even if a friend saves a place. If a student cuts into the line, they will be sent to the end and served last.*
3. *Students are to remain seated and not move from table to table without permission.*
4. *Two-liter bottles of drinks are not permitted.*
5. *All food is to be eaten in the cafeteria and nothing is to be taken out of the cafeteria.*
6. *Students will be instructed to clean their tables and floor area before leaving the cafeteria.*
7. *When asked to pick up paper off the floor, a student should do it; it is not important that they did not put it there. We all share the responsibility for keeping the cafeteria clean.*
8. *Students will follow the directions of the cafeteria monitors when being dismissed. They will explain what exit to use.*
9. *Saving seats is not permitted.*

Free or reduced-price meals are available to students whose families meet certain federal guidelines. Applications and further information can be obtained at each school office.

DRESS CODE: McMurray Elementary School has established a set of rules concerning the clothing that students wear to school. With the concern for the safety, health, and welfare of the students, as well as the prevention of disruption of the educational process, please keep in mind the following personal appearance guidelines:

1. Clothing worn to school should not be distracting or immodest. Student dress and appearance that is distracting or disruptive to the educational process is not permitted.
2. Tank style shirts are permitted as long as the shoulders are covered by at least three fingers width. "Racer-back" style shirts, camisoles, spaghetti straps, shirts with cut-outs, etc. are not permitted unless worn under a cardigan or shrug which covers the shoulders.
3. Shorts are permitted if they are at least thumb tip length or longer. Skirts must also be thumb tip length or longer. Leggings under shorts or skirts is acceptable.
4. Students are not permitted to wear clothing that is revealing, including bare midriffs. It is inappropriate for students to wear pants that hang below the waist and expose any type of undergarment, even if they are wearing a long shirt covering the undergarment.
5. Clothing that contains suggestive language or which displays alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or violent images is not permitted.
6. Footwear must provide protection and stay securely on the feet.
7. Hats, bandanas, and hoodies are not to be worn in the building.
8. Whenever a student is representing the school as a participant in an extracurricular activity such as a sporting event, school contest, or other activity, they will dress according to the guidelines of the teacher or sponsor in charge.
9. Hair coloring and styling must be done outside of the school day and off school property, including transportation, and may not be such that it is disruptive to the educational process.

Should a student come to school wearing inappropriate clothing, they will be asked to correct the situation and/or the parents will be contacted. Parents may be asked to bring a change of clothing to school. Students who repeatedly violate dress code standards may be subject to disciplinary action including recess or before/after school detention, and may lose privileges to wear shorts, sandals, etc.

EDIBLE TREATS: McMurray Elementary does not permit edible treats from home to be distributed during birthdays or special occasions outside of PTA-planned holiday parties. During PTA-planned holiday parties, a classroom treat will be pre-approved by the principal for distribution. Students may bring prepackaged treats for distribution on PTA-

planned holiday party days, but these treats will be sealed in a bag with the students' name on them and stapled shut so their ingredients can be reviewed by our students' parents at home.

ELEMENTARY STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ESAP)/KIDTALK: The Elementary Student Assistance Program (ESAP) and KIDTALK programs are both part of an initiative that addresses the challenge of helping those elementary students who are having trouble in school. These processes are positive, success-oriented programs that utilize specific assessment and intervention strategies to help remove barriers to academic success for elementary children in the regular classroom. It is a team approach designed to assist students in the school environment within the regular classroom.

ELEMENTARY COUNSELING: School counselors work with students individually, in small groups, and in the classrooms. Services are provided in academic, social, and behavioral areas.

ELEVATOR KEYS: These are available for students with physical challenges or with medical excuses. Keys may be procured and returned to the school nurse daily.

GUM: It is a school rule that students are not to chew gum in the building.

HALLWAYS and STAIRWELLS: Students should not run, rather, they should walk on the right-hand side of our hallways and stairwells when navigating the building.

H.E.R.O PROGRAM: The McMurray HERO program (Helping Everyone Respect Others) is an opportunity for our students and staff to discuss important topics in our school during class meetings. HERO meetings take place in the schedule once a month. During meetings, the homeroom teacher facilitates discussions on topics such as: Friendship, Gratitude, Compassion, Kindness, Respect, Leadership, Responsibility, etc.. We also discuss how to respond to danger through ALICE training and drills during HERO. The HERO program helps us communicate with our students and reinforce the behavioral expectations we have of them in an effort to improve the McMurray experience for all.

HOLIDAY PARTIES: There are three (3) PTA-sponsored parties per year: Halloween, Winter Holiday, and Valentine's Day.

HOMEROOM ASSIGNMENTS: Classroom assignments will be posted via PowerSchool in August. Notification of these postings will take place via e-mail blast.

INTERNET: Internet access is provided in each school. Students may use the Internet in correlation with the curriculum, under adult supervision, and in accordance with PTSD policies.

INTRAMURAL PROGRAM: Various after-school intramural events take place during specified periods throughout the year. Students and parents/guardians will receive information on programs in the fall. Students must submit a note signed by a parent/guardian for each time they participate in intramurals.

LOST AND FOUND: Lost articles, when found, are taken to a designated Lost & Found area where they may be claimed. Please label your child's belongings. Those items thought to be of significant value will be retained in the school office until they are claimed. Lost and found items not claimed at the end of the year will be donated to a charitable organization.

MATHEMATICS ACCELERATION: During the fourth nine (9) weeks of each school year, all students will have the opportunity to take an accelerated math assessment. This assessment represents mathematical content from the following year's curriculum. Students who score an 80% or higher will be eligible to accelerate to the next grade level's math. This assessment will be administered to all students unless a parent opts their child out of the assessment.

NOTES, MESSAGES, LUNCHES AND DELIVERIES: Any deliveries dropped off by parents or guardians should be labeled with the child's name and classroom number and left at the office. The school secretary will email the classroom about the delivery. No one will be permitted to go directly to a classroom. Access to our school is secured during the day.

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1. Vendors are prohibited from making food deliveries for students.**
- 2. Please do not bring lunches for children other than your own.**

PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT IN PROGRAMS: Throughout the school year, there are opportunities for parents/guardians to become involved within the school and the School District. Committees or special councils consisting of administrators, teachers, staff, and parents/guardians are formed as needs arise. Information on these and other parent/guardian involvement programs is available through the office.

PARENT/TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA): The PTA in each elementary school is a viable organization that brings parents/guardians and teachers together to benefit the students. In addition to monthly business meetings, each PTA sponsors educational and recreational activities that support the schools. Membership information may be obtained from each school unit or by contacting one (1) of the PTA presidents.

PARENT/GUARDIAN/TEACHER CONFERENCES: Peters Township School District's elementary teachers and principals are available to schedule conferences on the District's designated Parent/Guardian -Teacher Conference Days in October/November or by special appointment. On the designated days in October/November, conferences are held throughout the day and last approximately 15 minutes.

Teachers will establish and communicate the means for parents/guardians to schedule a conference. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or team of teachers.

Throughout the year, teachers may contact parents/guardians to review a child's progress in school. Parents/Guardians are welcome to initiate conferences and may do so by contacting their child's teacher. Conferences may also be arranged by or with the principal. By sharing information, teachers and parents/guardians can build a strong foundation for a positive and rewarding school experience.

PARKING: Visitor parking is provided in designated areas. To provide access for emergency vehicles, there is to be no parking along the yellow curb. If you park illegally, you may be towed or ticketed. Cars parked in the bus lanes must be moved by 3:15 PM.

PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY USAGE: Personal technology shall include any device capable of capturing, storing, and/or transmitting information, including text, audio, and/or video data such as cellular phones, gaming, ebook readers, smart watches, and tablet computing devices. The District shall not be liable for the loss, damage or misuse of any electronic device brought to school by a student. These devices may only be brought to school with permission from the parents/guardians and must be handled according to PTSD policy and school rules. They may not be used during the school day without permission from and the supervision of a member of our staff. Disciplinary actions will be taken when a student violates school rules and/or District policy.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/RECESS EXCUSES: It is assumed that a child who is well enough to be in school is well enough to go outdoors for recess or to participate in gym class. If a child must remain indoors during recess, a note must be written by the parent/guardian explaining why the child must do so. A note from the family physician

may be required if the request is for three (3) or more days, if a child is to be excused from physical education class, or if the requests become too frequent. Please be sure that children are dressed appropriately for the weather.

SCHOOL PICTURES: Notification concerning school pictures will be sent home with your child. Pictures are taken early in the school year and are a PTA-sponsored function.

SCHOOL SPONSORED OR RELATED ACTIVITIES:

1. After-School Classes/PTA (Grades 4 and 5)
2. Ambassadors – Assist with special events (5th Grade)
3. Band (Grades 4 and 5)
4. Chorus (Grades 4 and 5)
5. Intramurals (Grades 4 and 5)
6. Orchestra (Grades 4 and 5)
7. Reflections/PTA (Grades 4 and 5)
8. Student Council (Grades 4 and 5)
9. Talent Show/PTA (Grades 4 and 5)

SELLING ITEMS: Students are not permitted to sell anything without the principal's permission.

SPECIAL CONTENT:

ART: Students in Grades 4-5 receive art instruction one (1) day per week throughout the school year. They are encouraged to create, problem solve, and explore a variety of art media. In addition, the elementary art program provides exposure to art appreciation and famous works of art, as well as the relationship of art to other disciplines and the world around us. Art classes receive an overall grade for their complete body of work at the close of the year. This grade is finalized at the end of the fourth quarter.

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS: Computer Application classes are provided for students one (1) day per week during the school year. During this time students are provided instruction in the areas of technology literacy, digital citizenship, and computer programming. Class assignments and activities include keyboarding lessons, productivity programs (word processing, presentations, spreadsheets, and graphs), digital interactives, coding projects, and robotics.

Computer Applications classes receive an overall grade for their complete body of work throughout the school year. This grade is finalized at the end of the fourth quarter.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC: Grades 4-5 students may choose to play an instrument in the band or orchestra. Lessons are provided throughout the day in a pullout program once a week during the explore/resource blocks.

LIBRARY/MEDIA SERVICES: Library classes are provided for students one (1) day per week during the school year. Our school has a large library, and students are encouraged to use it for recreational reading, as well as for the support and the integration of academic classes. Additionally, our students utilize an innovative makerspace that allows students to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to solve higher-level thinking problems and challenges. The librarian has an information literacy curriculum that provides specific library skills instruction at all grade levels. Inclusive in the curriculum is literature appreciation. Literature appreciation exposes students to the various types of literature and provides programs to encourage all children to read regularly. The librarian also teaches comprehensive units that cover digital citizenship and online research skills. A wide selection of fiction and non-fiction books, biographies, graphic novels, videos, and audio books can be found in the library-media center. Print and electronic information can be found in order for students to complete assignments.

PA ACCESS: A computerized library system that links libraries across the state of Pennsylvania, is available at the elementary schools. PA ACCESS offers POWER Library, an informational database as well as interlibrary loans from all libraries in PA. Books can be requested through the library staff.

The library offers age-appropriate, web-based informational databases for the students to use at school and at home. The databases include: Scholastic Go!, GALE, and PebbleGo Next.

The elementary libraries have an online library automation system: OPAC. Through the Follett Destiny OPAC, students can access all library holdings at any computer terminal in the building and also from home. Students can monitor current checkouts and due dates, manage book renewals, read eBooks, and more.

Books are loaned out for a period of overnight to three (3) weeks, depending upon the resource, and may be renewed as long as they have not been requested. Overdue notices go out electronically via e-mail, and students are required to either return or renew books promptly. It is also recommended that a student have no more than three (3) books out at a time. This permits resources to be adequately shared by all students. Students are responsible for the full replacement cost of lost or damaged library materials.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Every student is scheduled for physical education instruction one (1) day per week throughout the school year. Students are expected to wear comfortable clothing. The Physical Education Department recommends basketball shoes, tennis shoes, or cross trainers for use in class. Running shoes are acceptable. All-terrain shoes, canvas slip-ons, and climbing shoes or boots may not be worn during physical education class. Basic skills are enhanced at the elementary level and students also receive instruction in the rules of various sports.

Physical fitness and building positive attitudes toward individual and team recreational opportunities are also facets of the program. An adaptive physical education program is available for students who cannot participate fully in a regular class or who need additional physical education-related experiences. For those students in grades 4-5 who are interested in additional recreational experiences, an intramural program is available after school throughout the year. Physical Education classes receive an overall grade for their complete body of work throughout the school year. This grade is finalized at the end of the fourth quarter.

VOCAL MUSIC: Students in grades 4-5 receive vocal music instruction in general music one (1) day per week throughout the school year. The program includes singing, movement, music reading, and music appreciation. The students may also enrich their experiences by performing in the chorus. Chorus will take place once a week during resource blocks in the schedule. General music classes receive an overall grade for their complete body of work at the close of the nine-week rotation. This grade is finalized at the end of the fourth quarter.

WORLD LANGUAGES: Students will receive World Language instruction one (1) day per week throughout the school year. Fourth and Fifth grade students continue instruction in Spanish. World Language classes receive an overall grade for their complete body of work at the close of the year. This grade is finalized at the end of the fourth quarter.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT:

ACCESS TO RECORDS: Parents and/or legal guardians of students have the right to inspect, review, copy and request corrections of their child’s records. Where guardianship is an issue, or if parents/guardians are separated or divorced, notice and verification of any court order issued to deny a parent/guardian access to records must be provided to the school District.

END-OF-THE-YEAR AVERAGING: At the conclusion of the school year, the grades from the four (4) marking periods are averaged together using the following values: A-4; B-3; C-2; D-1; F-0. This is the primary, but not the only means by which final grades are determined. Final grade averages for each subject are listed on the report card.

GRADING SCALE: The following represents the grading scale for the Peters Township School District:

Letter Grade Percentage	
A	90% - 100%

B	80% - 89%
C	70% - 79%
D	60% - 69%
F	Below 60%
I	Incomplete

HOMEWORK: Homework is an important part of education. It provides the student with an opportunity to apply what has been learned in school and reinforces independent study skills.

It also gives students practice in using school and community resources and helps to develop self-discipline.

Teachers are responsible for assigning homework that is based on the student’s needs, abilities, and/or interests. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing the work area, time, and conditions necessary to complete assignments. It is the student’s responsibility to do the following:

1. Develop a personal system (i.e., assignment book) for remembering or recording assignments. Be familiar with the expectations of the teachers.
2. Ask the teacher for further directions if the directions of an assignment are not understood.
3. Work that is missed due to student absence will be gathered after the student’s second consecutive day of absence. Parents/Guardians should contact the student’s teachers and request the work that was missed via phone or email. If the request is made before noon, the student’s work will be available to be picked up in the office by the end of the day. **Students are permitted to submit all assignments missed due to an excused absence in a time period that equates to the number of days absent.**

REPORT CARDS: Parents/Guardians may access PowerSchool through the PTSD website. Students and parents/guardians in grades 4-5 receive grade reports through PowerSchool. An explanation of the grading scales used in each area can be found on PowerSchool. PowerSchool also shares with the parents/guardians more information than grades. In addition, there is a section that allows the teacher to comment about student performance in class.

PROGRESS REPORTS: Parents/Guardians may access PowerSchool to check their child’s academic progress.

PROMOTION/RETENTION: Students who successfully complete a grade level are promoted to the next grade level at the end of the academic year. Should a student not achieve success, retention may be necessary. Parents/Guardians and the teachers should discuss any possibility of retention early in the second semester. Additional diagnostic evaluation may be required to fully assess a student prior to the decision being made.

Any student who fails two (2) of the core courses (math, science, English language arts, or social studies) may be retained. Students who are being considered for retention must go through the ESAP or KIDTALK process.

STANDARDIZED TESTING: The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is administered as follows: English and Language Arts (ELA) and Math 4th & 5th grade; Science in 4th grade (See the PTSD District calendar for dates.)

TECHNOLOGY: All elementary homerooms at McMurray have access to technology, including 70” Aquos touch screen presentation boards and 1:1 Chromebooks.

Our technology is used to support the curriculum. Students are also given opportunities to use technology as tools for research, productivity, communication, collaboration, creative thinking, and problem solving.

Students that request to bring in a personal electronic device for use at school, such as an iPad, Kindle, or other tablet device should: 1. Seek the permission of their parents/guardians at home 2. Seek the permission of their teacher to use their device in school.

Other items to consider...

- Please note that these devices are only to be used for educational purposes and under direct supervision of a classroom teacher.
- Personal devices are not to be used during indoor or outdoor recess, unless under the direct supervision of a classroom teacher.
- Phones and iPod Touches are not on the list of approved devices because they have proven to be too small to be properly supervised by our faculty.
- Students who have not submitted the proper request are not permitted to use their device at school.
- Teachers should keep a log of the students from their class that have submitted the appropriate request for usage of their personal device.
- All students that wish to bring their personal device to school should submit a request, regardless of whether or not they brought their device to school in the past.

TEXTBOOKS: Each student is issued the textbooks that are necessary for the completion of his/her educational programming. If a licensed physician has determined that an additional textbook for home use is medically necessary for a student, parents/guardians should contact an administrator to discuss this need in more detail.

TRANSPORTATION: The District provides transportation to and from school for all eligible students who live in the District.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION: If your child will be using transportation other than the District-provided buses in the morning, arrival should take place prior to 8:45 AM to prevent interference with bus traffic. No traffic will be permitted to drop off in front of the building between 8:45 AM and 8:55 AM. Car riders arriving after 8:45 AM must be dropped off at the designated point in the side lot by door #6.

If a child will be using transportation other than the bus at dismissal time, the parent or guardian, prior to the close of the day, must provide written notification to the school. Upon parking in the side lot, parents/guardians should exit their cars, proceed to door #6, and check in with the McMurray Staff member on duty in order to receive their children.

Students will be dismissed from their classrooms before the bus riders go to the MPR and released to their parents/guardians once they check in. **Permanent car riders (Car riders that are picked up every day) will be issued passes so that everyday notes will not be needed. Staff members will assist in this process.**

No child will be released to a person other than their parent/guardian without the expressed written consent of their parent/guardian.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES: Upon arrival at school, all students are expected to report to their homerooms. Students are not permitted to enter the school until 8:45 AM unless their parents/guardians are attending a morning meeting, a teacher is working with students, or a student is serving detention. **The school does not provide supervision for students until 8:45 AM with the exception of those who have scheduled appointments.**

BUS ASSIGNMENTS: Students are assigned to buses and bus stops each school year and notified via Powerschool. Notification will take place in August by mail prior to the start of school. Transportation questions should be channeled through the District's Director of Transportation. Change of address should be reported to the Transportation Department so new bus assignments can be made.

BUS CONDUCT: A high standard of student behavior on school buses and while entering or exiting the buses is expected. The bus driver is in charge of the vehicle and his/her instructions are to be obeyed. Any conduct that falls short of the behavioral expectations we have for our students during the school day or is deemed to be unsafe or detrimental to safe bus operation will result in disciplinary actions such as seat assignment, loss of bus riding privileges, detention, or suspension.

BUS DRILLS: Twice during the school year, all students assigned to a bus participate in bus evacuation drills.

WALKERS: Although most students are provided with bus transportation to school, some children are designated as walkers. If your child is assigned to a bus and they will be walking from school, parents/guardians **must** use the District-approved walker form for students to be permitted to walk after school. This form can be located on the District website or in the main office. Walkers (students who walk every day) will be issued passes so that notes are not necessary every day.

McMurray Elementary School

2023-2024 Student Handbook Sign-Off Sheet

Please sign and return this page to your Homeroom Teacher.

I, _____, have read and agree to abide by this Student/Parent/Guardian Handbook. I have discussed the contents of this handbook with my Parent(s)/Guardians(s)

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

***Please keep this Student Handbook available for your reference throughout the year.**