

# Peters Township School District



## Peters Township Middle School 2023-2024 Handbook

## Table of Contents

Message from the Superintendent.....	7
Board of Directors.....	7
Administration.....	7
Introduction.....	9
Our School District .....	9
Our District Mission .....	9
Vision Statement .....	9
Shared Values .....	9
Our Responsibilities.....	10
Responsibilities of Students .....	10
Responsibilities of Parents .....	10
Responsibilities of Teachers and other Employees .....	10
Responsibilities of the Principal and Assistant Principal .....	11
Responsibilities of other School Personnel.....	11
Responsibilities of the District’s Administrators and School Board .....	11
School Calendar .....	12
Administrative Staff Directory .....	13
SECTION II: Student Information.....	14
Examples: Level I Disciplinary Infractions .....	14
Level I Disciplinary Options/Responses .....	14
Disciplinary Infractions .....	14
Disciplinary Options/Responses .....	14
Disciplinary Infractions .....	14
Disciplinary Options/Responses .....	14
Academic Integrity (School Board Policy 145).....	14
Assessment and Evaluation of Student Progress (School Board Policy 127 & 213) .....	15
Attendance and School Absences (School Board Policy 204) .....	15
Attendance Requirement for Participation in Extracurricular Activities.....	16
Preplanned Educational Tour or Trip .....	16
Booster/Support Groups (School Board Policy 915) .....	17
Building Security/ School Visitors(School Board Policy 907) .....	17
Bullying/ Cyberbullying (School Board Policy 249) .....	18
Bus Procedures (School Board Policy 810) .....	18
Cameras & Audio Recording Devices (School Board Policy 810.2) .....	19
Care of School District Materials (School Board Policy 224) .....	19
Character Counts .....	19

Confidential Communications of Students (School Board Policy 207) .....	19
Controlled Substance/Paraphernalia, Drugs and Alcohol (School Board Policy 227) .....	19
Corporal Punishment (School Board Policy 218) .....	20
Disciplinary Procedures (School Board Policy 218) .....	20
Education Committee: Parent Feedback_ (School Board Policy 906) .....	21
Enrollment (School Board Policy 200) .....	22
Proof of Residence (School Board Policy 200.1) .....	22
Eligibility of Nonresident Students (School Board Policy 202).....	22
Exemption from Instruction (School Board Policy 105.2) .....	22
Student Expression/Dissemination of Materials (School Board Policy 220) .....	23
Facility Usage (School Board Policy 707) .....	23
False Alarms/Calls/Threats or Tampering with Safety Equipment or Devices (School Board Policy 218.2) .....	24
Flag Salute and Pledge of Allegiance (School Board Policy 807) .....	24
Forms .....	24
Gifts, Grants, and Donations to the District (School Board Policy 702) .....	24
Gifts to Board Members and District Staff Including Coaches (School Board Policy 319, 322, 827, 915).....	24
Harassment and Sexual Harassment (School Board Policy 103 & 103.1) .....	25
Hazing (School Board Policy 247) .....	28
Homework (School Board Policy 130) .....	29
Interscholastic Athletics (School Board Policy 123).....	29
Review of Instructional Material (School Board Policy 105.1) .....	31
Laser Pointers (School Board Policy 237) .....	31
Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries (School Board Policy 824) .....	31
Naloxone (School Board Policy 820) .....	33
Open House .....	33
Promotion and Retention (School Board Policy 215).....	33
Public Attendance at School Events (School Board Policy 904) .....	34
Safety Drills (School Board Policy 705 & 805) .....	34
Safe to Say Something & Safe Schools Tip Form.....	35
School Closings and Delays .....	35
School Lunch Program (School Board Policy 808) .....	35
Searches (School Board Policy 226) .....	37
Service Animals (School Board Policy 718) .....	38
Skateboards, Hover boards, Roller blades and Skates .....	38

Standardized Testing .....	38
Student Complaint Process (School Board Policy 219) .....	39
Student Fundraising (School Board Policy 122, 123, 229) .....	39
Student Grades .....	40
Grading Scale.....	40
Student Photos/Images for Publicity Use (School Board Policy 902) .....	41
Student Records (School Board Policy 216) .....	41
Student Responsibilities (School Board Policy 235) .....	43
Student Trips (School Board Policy 121) .....	43
Suicide Prevention (School Board Policy 819) .....	44
Surveys of Students (School Board Policy 235.1) .....	45
Technology Use (School Board Policy 815) .....	45
Threat Assessment (School Board Policy 236.1) .....	46
Tobacco and Vaping Products (School Board Policy 222) .....	46
Valuables .....	47
Visitor Management .....	47
Volunteers (School Board Policy 916) .....	47
Weapons and Dangerous Instruments (School Board Policy 218.1) .....	48
Withdrawals .....	48
Examples: Level I Disciplinary Infractions .....	50
Level I Disciplinary Options/Responses .....	50
SECTION III: Student Code of Conduct .....	50
Disciplinary Options/Responses .....	50
Disciplinary Infractions .....	50
Disciplinary Options/Responses .....	50
Disciplinary Infractions .....	50
SECTION IV: Student Services.....	56
Examples: Level I Disciplinary Infractions .....	56
Level I Disciplinary Options/Responses .....	56
Disciplinary Infractions .....	56
Disciplinary Options/Responses .....	56
Disciplinary Infractions .....	56
Disciplinary Options/Responses .....	56
Language Instruction Educational Program for English Learners (School Board Policy 138).....	56
Gifted Support (School Board Policy 114) .....	56
Health Services .....	56

Accidents, Injuries, and Illness .....	56
Emergency Contact Information.....	57
Diabetes Management (School Board Policy 209.2).....	57
Immunization and Communicable Diseases (School Board Policy 203) .....	57
Medications (School Board Policy 210).....	57
Physical and Dental Examinations (School Board Policy 209).....	58
Possession/Use of Asthma Inhalers/Epinephrine Auto-Injectors (School Board Policy 210.1) .....	58
Severe Food Allergies (School Board Policy 209.1) .....	59
Wellness of Students (School Board Policy 246).....	59
Homeless Students (School Board Policy 251) .....	59
School Counseling Services (School Board Policy 112) .....	60
Special Education Services (School Board Policy 113) .....	60
Student Assistance Program (School Board Policy 236) .....	60
SECTION V: School District Policies .....	61
Peters Township Middle School .....	64
625 East McMurray Road.....	64
McMurray, PA 15317 .....	64
724-941-2688.....	64
Our Middle School .....	65
Attendance .....	65
Absences .....	65
Arrival Procedures .....	65
Absences .....	65
Tardiness .....	65
Early Dismissals.....	66
Discipline .....	66
Cutting Class.....	66
Disciplinary Consequences .....	67
After-School Detention.....	67
In-School Suspension.....	68
Out-of-School Suspension .....	68
Saturday Detention.....	68
Rules for After-school detention, Saturday detention, and in-school suspension: .....	68
Theft/Stolen Property .....	68
Tobacco and Vaping Products .....	69
General Information .....	69

After-School Activities .....	69
Announcements.....	69
Assemblies .....	69
Assignment Books .....	69
Awards Criteria – Grade 8 .....	70
Backpacks/Bookbags/Purses.....	71
Cellular Phones .....	72
Dress Code .....	72
Elevator .....	73
End-of-Year Requirements .....	73
Fire and Other Emergency Drills .....	73
Gifts and Parties .....	73
End-of-the-year-Averaging.....	73
Retention .....	74
Gum.....	74
Hallways and Stairwells.....	74
Homework Communication.....	74
Hot Shots Program.....	74
Lost or Damaged Books.....	75
Parent/Teacher Conferences .....	75
Pass Time Between Classes .....	75
Petitions.....	76
Selling and Buying Items .....	76
Sports .....	76
Girls Sports .....	77
Grades .....	77
Season .....	77
Boys Sports .....	77
Grades .....	77
Season .....	77
Co-Ed Sports.....	77
Grades .....	77
Season .....	77
Student Activities.....	77
Student Deliveries .....	78
Study Lab .....	78

Substitute Teachers .....	79
Use of Facilities .....	79
Visitors .....	79
Walker's Permission Form .....	79
Work Permits .....	79
Yearbook.....	79
Regular Bell Schedule – PTMS 2023-2024.....	80
One Hour Delay Bell Schedule – PTMS 2023-2024 .....	81
Two Hour Delay Bell Schedule – PTMS 2023-2024 .....	82
PM Assembly Bell Schedule – PTMS 2023-2024.....	83

## ***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](http://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**

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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](http://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 21<sup>st</sup> 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**

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

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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)**

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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. 1<sup>st</sup> violation- suspension for the remainder of the season
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> violation- suspension for the remainder of the season and the following season
  - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> 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. 1<sup>st</sup> violation- suspension for the remainder of the season
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> violation- suspension for the remainder of the season and the following season
  - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> 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	<a href="http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/SafeSchoolsTipForm_BH.aspx">http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/SafeSchoolsTipForm_BH.aspx</a>
Pleasant Valley Elementary School	<a href="http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/SafeSchoolsTipForm_PV.aspx">http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/SafeSchoolsTipForm_PV.aspx</a>
McMurray Elementary School	<a href="http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/SafeSchoolsTipForm_McM.aspx">http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us/SafeSchoolsTipForm_McM.aspx</a>

## **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](http://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](http://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](http://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)**

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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**

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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**

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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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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**

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### **Grading Scale**

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

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
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:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
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 30<sup>th</sup> 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**

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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**

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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](http://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)**

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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](http://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**

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

## **Discipline Responses – Level IIA**

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

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

## **Discipline Responses – Level IIB**

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

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

## **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.

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

- 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:

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

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

3<sup>rd</sup> 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)**

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#### 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, 5<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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	<b>200 SERIES - PUPILS</b>
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		

# VI

## SECTION VI: Peters Township Middle School Handbook

The Peters Township Middle School Student/Parent Handbook is designed to give parents/guardians and students a general understanding of the rules and regulations regarding attendance, procedures, and educational matters in our school.

School board policies contain more specific and extensive rules/procedures and supersede any provisions of the handbook. If there are any inconsistencies between the procedures listed here and the school board policy, the most recently adopted school board policy will prevail. School board policy numbers are referenced throughout the handbook. Full copies of the policies can be found on the School Board/District Policies tab of the District website.

This handbook is reviewed at the end of each year to maintain its consistency with policy adoptions. The handbook is not a contract between the school and parents/guardians or students. We reserve the right to change it at any time during the school year. Any changes in policy made during the school year will be communicated to students, parents/guardians, and staff and may also be accessed through the school District website.

## ***Welcome to Peters Township Middle School***

*2023-2024*

*Dear Students and Parents,*

*Welcome all new students and welcome back returning students (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade) to the 2023-2024 school year!*

*PTMS is a school where all children learn and where each child is valued for his/her own abilities, talents and learning styles. We have a dedicated and talented staff. The staff emphasizes success in the learning process and to fulfill this goal, we incorporate interesting and innovative experiences in our curriculum. The principals, faculty and staff of PTMS are available to assist and support you throughout the year.*

*Because middle school is a time of change and exploration, our program is student centered and academically challenging. Many opportunities are provided for parents to become involved in their child's learning experiences. We encourage student and parental input and invite you to be a part of the middle school community. Please contact or visit our counseling office and the website for more information.*

*Each year the student/parent handbook is revised. Our goal is to provide a comprehensive at-home guide to assist you in finding information regarding Middle School procedures, services, and school District policies. We hope that this handbook will be a resource to help you to find answers to questions you may have to make your year a successful one.*

*Sincerely,*

*Adam D. Sikorski  
Principal*

Peters Township Middle School  
625 East McMurray Road  
McMurray, PA 15317  
724-941-2688

## ***Achievement, Character, Community***



## **Our Middle School**

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The Peters Township Middle School was first organized in 1968, featuring an educational program designed for young people entering adolescence. Previously located at 625 East McMurray Road in McMurray, the school's facilities opened in the fall of 1988. PTMS was reconfigured for the 2021-2022 school year as 6<sup>th</sup> grade was added as part of the Middle School model. The location of PTMS is now at the site of the "old" high school which featured an extensive renovation process in the Winter, Spring, and Summer of 2021.

## **Attendance**

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### **Absences**

When a student returns to school after being absent, they are responsible for bringing in an excuse on the day they return to school explaining exactly why the student was not in school. **The student is to give the excuse to the attendance secretary in the main office.** This excuse must be signed and dated by a parent or legal guardian. It is the student's responsibility to find out what work is due when they return from an absence. Consequences may be issued for repeated failure to submit absence excuses after multiple notifications. Please refer to School Board Policy: Pupil Attendance, Absence, and Tardiness. Below are attendance procedures specific to the middle school.

### **Arrival Procedures**

Upon arrival to the school, students should go to their lockers to get their books and then report directly to 1<sup>st</sup> period. A warning bell rings at 7:55 A.M. signaling students to go to their first period class. A student will be marked late if not in 1<sup>st</sup> period when the tardy bell rings at 8:00 A.M. Students are permitted in the building at 7:45 A.M. Students arriving prior to 7:45 A.M. are required to wait outside the building on the sidewalk or inside the vestibule if there are poor weather conditions. Students who have appointments with teachers are required to report to the office and sign in.

### **Absences**

When a student returns to school after being absent, they are responsible for bringing in an excuse on the day they return to school explaining exactly why the student was not in school. **The student is to give the excuse to the attendance secretary in the main office.** This excuse must be signed and dated by a parent or legal guardian. It is the student's responsibility to find out what work is due when they return from an absence. Consequences may be issued for repeated failure to submit absence excuses after multiple notifications. Please refer to School Board Policy: Attendance.

### **Tardiness**

A student who arrives late must report to the attendance secretary in the main office with a note from a parent/guardian indicating the reason for the tardiness. The attendance secretary will issue a "Tardy Pass," which must be obtained **before** leaving the main office so that a student can be admitted to class.

Students arriving between 8:01 A.M. and 11:29 A.M. will be marked tardy. Students arriving between 11:30 A.M. and 12:42 P.M. will be marked as a half-day absence. Students arriving after 12:42 P.M. will be marked as a full-day absence. Coaches are responsible for checking attendance for athletic events. Students who are absent all day or are marked as a full-day absence (arriving after 12:42 P.M.) are not permitted to participate.

**A medical excuse is required for medical appointments and medically excused tardiness will not be counted toward cumulative tardies for disciplinary purposes.** An excuse from a parent indicates that the parent is aware the child was late for school and will be noted as "Absent Excused (AE)" in PowerSchool. However, for purposes of discipline, these types of tardies are still identified as nonmedical tardies. Students receiving more than five nonmedical tardies may be subject to disciplinary consequences. NOTE: When calculating the number of tardies for disciplinary consequences, please be aware that half-day absences (arriving between 11:30 AM and 12:42 PM) are also included in that total.

**The disciplinary consequences for tardies are as follows:**

<b>5 nonmedical tardies</b>	<b>verbal warning</b>
<b>7 nonmedical tardies</b>	<b>After School Detention</b>
<b>10 or more nonmedical tardies</b>	<b>Saturday Detention</b>
<b>Continued nonmedical tardies may result in additional detentions, Saturday detention, in-school suspension, removal from school-based activities, and/or referral to the district magistrate</b>	

Nonmedical tardiness can be calculated on a cumulative basis and referred to the District magistrate when the total amount of unexcused tardiness exceeds 3 school days, subject to the notice and meeting provisions for addressing truant behavior.

The school will not expel or impose out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment or transfer for truant behavior, including unexcused tardiness.

### **Early Dismissals**

If a student needs to be dismissed from school for a medical appointment or other important reason, he or she must bring in a note from a parent/guardian explaining the reason and the time for dismissal. It must be taken to the attendance secretary as soon as the student comes to school in the morning. The student's name will be placed on the Morning Notice so his/her teachers will be aware of the early dismissal. However, it would still be a good idea for the student to remind the classroom teacher of his/her early dismissal. A doctor's medical excuse must be handed in upon returning to school. **Parents or guardians picking up their child for an early dismissal must come into the office to sign their child out.** Students returning to school from an appointment or who arrive late must check in with the attendance secretary and get a pass before going to class. Students are not permitted to leave the office without permission for an early dismissal. Parents do not need to sign their child in after an appointment. If a student has an appointment at the start of school and will be coming to school afterward, they must bring an excuse the day before, or ask the doctor for an excuse at the time of the appointment. Releasing children to parents or other persons via a telephone message will not be permitted. If a person is **not** a parent, a note from parent or guardian **must** be presented, indicating the identity of the person picking up the student.

## **Discipline**

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### **Academic Misconduct**

Academic Integrity is honest and responsible scholarship. Students respect their own learning as well as that of others by submitting their own original work, citing sources, identifying work completed collaboratively, and maintaining honesty during assessments.

School Board Policy 145 specifically addresses the failure to uphold academic integrity, the types of infractions associated, and the resulting consequences.

Plagiarism, Falsification/Fabrication, Tampering, Cheating, and Unauthorized Collaboration are all recognized violations of academic misconduct.

### **Cutting Class**

Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility by reporting to all classes and assigned areas, in a timely manner, as scheduled. Students have 4 minutes to travel in-between classes at the Middle School. If students are found in areas without authorization by staff members, they will be considered Cutting Class.

### **Excessive Tardies and Missed Homework**

Students who have excessive tardies (see chart above) or who have continued missed homework (at least 3 identified by the teacher) may be assigned to After School detention. Students will be permitted to complete school work during this after school assignment.

### **Fighting**

Fighting is defined as any or all students involved in the exchange of punches or physical force and will result in any or all students being suspended. Students are expected to attempt to resolve conflicts in a peaceful, civil manner and are encouraged to report concerns to school personnel for assistance when needed.

## **Disciplinary Consequences**

No student has the right to interfere with the education of other students. It is the responsibility of every student to respect the rights of teachers, other students, administrators, and everyone involved in the operation of the school. However, when those rights are violated, the person who made the mistake will be disciplined. Discipline takes many forms, most of which are listed below. The type of discipline used is intended to stop a disruption or correct a problem. Reasonable physical force may need to be used by teachers and school personnel:

1. to stop a fight or a disturbance
2. to take away a weapon or other dangerous objects
3. for self-defense
4. for the protection of other people and property
5. to remove a disruptive student who refuses to leave after being asked

Types of Discipline can include:

1. Verbal Reprimand  
When this happens, the teacher or principal generally tells the student what they did wrong and that it needs to be corrected.
2. Conferencing with the Student  
The teacher or principal may meet with the student to discuss a problem and what can be done to solve it. Teachers and principals act *in loco parentis* and do not need permission from a parent/guardian to speak with a student.  
  
*In Loco Parentis: Teachers, guidance counselors, Assistant Principals and Principals in the public schools have the right to exercise the same authority as to conduct and behavior over the pupils attending school, during the time they are in attendance, including the time required in going to and from their homes, as the parents, guardian, or persons in parental relation to such pupils may exercise over them.*
3. Contacting the Student's Parents/Guardian  
The teacher or administrator may decide to call the student's parents or write them a letter explaining what the problem is and ask for their support in helping to correct the situation.
4. Conferencing with Parents/Guardians  
Sometimes a teacher or the principal will ask the student's parents to come to the school to discuss a matter.
5. Removal of Privileges  
School privileges may be withdrawn from a student for a period of time because of misbehavior. This may include restricting the use of a hall pass or not permitting a student to attend an assembly, special trip, or eat lunch with their peers. It also may involve removal of a student from extra-curricular activities and/or school events, including but not limited to, dances and picnics.

Types of Consequences can include:

### **After-School Detention**

A student will be given a detention notice listing the reason for his/her punishment, as well as the time and place of the detention. Parents are to sign the notice; it is the student's responsibility to return the signed detention slip to the office. It is important that parents be aware of when their child has been issued a detention. Therefore, students who fail to

return signed detention notices will not be permitted to stay for detention and may receive additional disciplinary action. Students receiving several after-school detentions will incur increased disciplinary action.

### **In-School Suspension**

When a child is assigned an in-school suspension, the following guidelines are to be followed:

1. Students must report to the middle school office upon arrival to school on the day(s) of the in-school suspension. They are not permitted to go to their lockers first.
2. Students will not be permitted to eat in the cafeteria; they may either bring a lunch or a lunch will be purchased at the student's cost and brought to them.
3. Students will be supervised and will complete their class work as well as reflection essays in the in-school suspension room.
4. Students assigned in-school suspension will be given a chance to respond. Parents will be notified when an in-school suspension has been issued.

### **Out-of-School Suspension**

Every principal or designee in charge of a public school may temporarily suspend any student for disobedience or misconduct.

### **Saturday Detention**

When behavior warrants a more severe disciplinary action than an after-school detention, an administrator may assign a student to a 2-hour (8:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.) or 4-hour (8:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.) Saturday detention. The student will be given the detention notice, which will list the offense and time of the detention. Parents are to sign the notice and the student is to return the notice to the attendance secretary. Failure to serve the detention will result in further disciplinary action, which includes out-of-school suspension. Students who arrive after 8:00 A.M. will not be admitted to the building and therefore will not have the opportunity to serve their detentions.

### **Rules for After-school detention, Saturday detention, and in-school suspension:**

- The student will be informed they are being assigned to detention/in-school suspension and given a chance to respond. Parents will be notified when an in-school suspension has been issued.
- The student must arrive at the middle school by 8:00 a.m. for Saturday detention and report to the office.
- The student is required to bring books, homework, pencils, etc., to Saturday detention.
- During after-school, Saturday detention, and in-school suspension, students will be required to complete a self-reflection packet. The focus of detention is to provide an opportunity for students to reflect on the choices they made. It is not to provide extra time for your child to complete his/her homework.
- The student is expected to serve detention for the entire scheduled time.
- The student is expected to follow the detention proctor's directions, school rules and the code of conduct.
- Failure to serve scheduled detention/in-school suspension will result in additional disciplinary action that will include but is not limited to:
  - (a) Suspension from extra-curricular activities
  - (b) Additional detention/in-school suspension time
  - (c) Out-of-school suspension

### **Theft/Stolen Property**

No person has the right to take the property that belongs to another individual. Any student who is found to have taken the property of another individual and/or that of Peters Township School District will be immediately referred to the office for disciplinary action and/or prosecution according to the Pennsylvania Criminal Code. The police may be called and/or charges may be filed against an individual by the person(s) or entity that had the property stolen and/or at the discretion of the Peters Township Middle School administration as deemed necessary to the offense. A student shall not come into control of the property of another individual that they know to have been lost, mislaid, or delivered under a mistake without taking reasonable measures to restore the property to the person entitled to have it. Additionally, a person shall not intentionally receive, retain, or dispose of property of another, knowing that it has been stolen, or believing that it has probably been stolen. Any items, whether a pencil, book(s), or item(s) of greater value taken from

an individual unknowingly, may be categorized as theft/stealing and dealt with accordingly. Outlined below is the progression of discipline that will occur when a student is found guilty of a stealing/theft offense.

Number of Offenses	Items valued up to \$10	Items valued from above \$10 to \$20	Items valued above \$20 to \$50
1 <sup>st</sup>	1 day ISS	2 days ISS	3 days ISS
2 <sup>nd</sup>	2 days ISS	3 days ISS	3 days OSS
3 <sup>rd</sup>	3 days ISS	2 days OSS	4 or more days OSS and referral to magistrate
4 <sup>th</sup>	2 days OSS	3 days OSS and referral to magistrate	
5 <sup>th</sup>	3 days OSS and referral to magistrate		
Key	ISS: In-school suspension	OSS: Out-of-school suspension	

**NOTE:** Items valued above \$50 will result in 4 or more days OSS and referral to the police department.

## **Tobacco and Vaping Products**

Students found in possession of any form of tobacco or vaping product will receive the following consequences:

**1st offense:** Three (3) days OSS, magistrate citation, referral to Student Assistance Program (SAP) team. This may also include suspension of a student's ability to attend school based activities.

**2nd offense:** Five (5) days OSS, magistrate citation, referral to Student Assistance Program (SAP) team. This may also include suspension of a student's ability to attend school based activities.

**3rd offense:** Administrative discretion following progressive discipline. Possible recommendation to the Board for expulsion.

## **General Information**

### **After-School Activities**

Students attending after-school activities that are held in the gym (e.g., basketball games) are to remain in the gym during the entire activity and are not permitted to congregate in the foyer, hallway, or inside the school. Students attending after-school activities held in other areas of the school (such as the library) must remain in those designated areas. Failure to do so will result in consequences, which may include removal from after-school activities. Students are responsible for their own transportation home.

### **Announcements**

Important information will be shared about the school day and school events each morning and afternoon. Only school-sponsored meetings will be announced over the PA system. These announcements are posted on the school District website at the following address: [www.ptsd.k12.pa.us](http://www.ptsd.k12.pa.us) and are updated daily. Announcements are then posted on the hallway message board outside the office. Students coming to school late or from the high school are expected to check the postings. Announcements will also be shared via the CANVAS portal for students to access.

### **Assemblies**

Students are expected to enter and exit the designated areas in an orderly manner and be seated as directed. Appropriate, respectful audience behavior is expected throughout all assemblies. Students are to give their full attention to the speakers, performances, or programs.

### **Assignment Books**

At the beginning of each school year, students may purchase an assignment book to record homework, grades, and special calendar events. The assignment book also contains students' *Hallway Passport*, the hall pass for them to leave

the classroom. Students must note the date, time, and destination and present it to the teacher for a signature. The assignment book must be with students each time they are in the hall. Replacement books can be purchased in the office for \$5.00. Please note: *Disciplinary action will be taken for students who use/take another student's assignment book or who are in the hallway without a pass.*

### **Awards Criteria – Grade 8**

At the end of the school year, an 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Awards Ceremony is held to recognize our students' participation and performance as members of Peters Township Middle School.

#### Department Awards

The individual content teachers determine these content specific awards. Criteria are posted in the classrooms.

#### President's Award for Educational Excellence

The President's Award for Educational Excellence is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Association of Secondary and Elementary School Principals. This award was developed to honor those students who have achieved high academic goals by their hard work and dedication to learning. Students earning this award must meet both of the following criteria:

1. Earn a grade point average of at least a 3.5 on a 4.0 scale to include semester one and two of grade 7 and semester one of grade 8.
2. Placement in the advanced category on the 7<sup>th</sup> grade PSSA math or ELA test.

#### Student Citizenship Award

This award is designed to foster the development of those traits that the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students associate with the highest qualities of Citizenship and Americanism. The recipients of this award would be outstanding all-around students as seen through the eyes of fellow students not necessarily a student who does well in all subject areas. All 8<sup>th</sup> grade students consider the following when they cast their vote:

1. Dedication to the school
2. Loyalty
3. Ability to get along with others
4. Character
5. Devotion to duty
6. Sense of humor
7. Leadership
8. Unselfishness
9. An understanding and concern for others
10. Good value system
11. Positive attitude
12. Impartiality
13. Ability to work with others
14. Sense of right and wrong
15. Responsibility to be punctual and attend school regularly

#### The Elly Houston Student Kindness Award

These awards are chosen by the teachers on the Clemente, Rooney and Warhol teams, but these teachers are encouraged to elicit feedback from other teachers in the building as they make their final selections.

Teachers should select students from their teams who have best:

- Embodied kindness and thoughtfulness consistently in their interactions with their peers and teachers
- Shown empathy for students who have faced social or academic challenges
- Demonstrated compassion for their fellow students, going beyond words to show caring in action
- Engaged in highly positive and respectful communication with their teachers, staff members and other adults in the building

### Teachers' Award of Excellence

The Teachers' Award of Excellence is designed to recognize the development of those traits which we associate with the highest qualities of citizenship, accomplishment, and strength of character. Recipients of this award will have demonstrated the ability to excel in their academic pursuits, to provide positive leadership, and to participate in school activities. In addition, they will have demonstrated honor, courage, and cooperation. By accepting the challenges inherent in becoming an outstanding citizen, they will have become better persons.

The standards for this award are:

**Honor** – Strength and stability of character; high standards of conduct; adherence to truth.

**Courage** – Determination and force to do the right thing without public applause and without personal advantage.

**Scholarship** – Attainments in school studies; quality of schoolwork, perseverance, efficiency, and intelligence.

**Leadership** – Ability to lead and to accomplish through group action; ability to work in harmony and in unison with other leaders in accomplishing group results.

**Service** – Kindliness, unselfishness, fellowship, promotion of the interests and the welfare of associates.

### **Backpacks/Bookbags/Purses**

Students may use backpacks or bookbags to transport necessary materials to and from school. Students must store their bookbags in their locker upon arrival to school. Student book-bags may be searched by administration with cause and book-bag privileges can be revoked if students transport items throughout the school which would be an infraction of the code of conduct. Students may also carry a clutch or wrist-wallet with them during the school day.

### **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 and require the principal's pre-approval.

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 such material is to be removed after a prescribed reasonable time to assure full access to the bulletin board.

### **Canvas**

Each teacher will maintain an online classroom platform via Canvas. Students are expected to regularly engage within their Canvas courses based upon the established expectations of each class. Class content, assignments, and homework can be found within these pages. Students are expected to take their student devices home daily as Canvas will be the mode of instruction should a remote learning day be necessary. Please make sure laptops are fully charged prior to each school day.

### **Cafeteria**

Lunch is offered at the middle school, although a student may bring his/her own lunch. Students eating in the cafeteria must follow these rules

1. Students are responsible for having lunch money or a lunch from home.
2. When entering the cafeteria, students will be seated and await direction from lunch proctors before getting in line to purchase food and/or beverage items.
3. Bookbags must be left in student lockers prior to entering the cafeteria.
4. 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.
5. While in the cafeteria, students are to remain seated and not move from table to table.
6. No glass bottles of any kind are permitted and two-liter bottles of soft drinks are not permitted. All food and drinks are to be consumed in the cafeteria.
7. Students will be instructed to clean their tables and floor area before leaving the cafeteria.

8. When asked to pick up items on the floor, a student is to comply. It is not important that they did not put it there. What is important is that we all share the responsibility for keeping the cafeteria clean.
9. Students will follow the directions of the cafeteria monitors when being dismissed. They will explain what exits to use.
10. Saving seats is not permitted.
11. Bringing outside food or drinks from restaurants to feed a group of students is prohibited.
12. Eating lunch in the cafeteria is a privilege. Students may be removed for disciplinary reasons.
13. Assigned seating may also occur at the discretion of the lunch monitors.

### **Cellular Phones**

Upon arrival to the middle school, students who bring cell phones must have them turned off and secured in either their book bag or locker. Students wearing SMART-watches (Ex: Apple Watch) shall turn off all capabilities regarding phone calls, text messages, internet use, and camera. Students are NOT permitted to videotape with their phones or any other electronic devices during the school day, on the bus, or during any school-sponsored activity. If a teacher permits students to utilize their cell phones for instructional purposes, the students will be instructed to retrieve from their locker prior to class and then return at the end of the period. Unless teacher directed, there is no need for a student to utilize their cell phone throughout the school day. Students are permitted to use the phones in the main office should they need to contact a family member. Students are permitted to use their phone when going to the bus at the end of the day. Any cell phones or electronic devices taken from a student whether it belongs to them or not, will be turned into the office and given to an administrator to hold. The parent/guardian may be responsible for picking up his/her child's phone if it is a repeated offense. NOTE: Students are not permitted to use their cell phones or classroom phones to call home to have their parents pick them up when they are ill. Only the nurse can dismiss students who are ill. After-school detentions may be issued for violation of this rule.

### **Possession/Use of Cell Phones**

Offense	Consequence
First	Verbal Warning
Second	Parent Must Pick Up Cell Phone
All further Offenses	Detention and Progressive Discipline

### **Dress Code**

Peters Township Middle School has established a set of rules concerning the clothing which students wear to school. Our goal is to foster discernment and self-respect in our students and promote a healthy school environment. Student dress should be characterized by modesty, neatness and cleanliness. The following guidelines will be used to determine appropriate dress standards for Peters Township Middle School. Students who are not dressed properly will be asked to call their parents to supply appropriate clothing or maybe provided appropriate attire. Students are subject to disciplinary action for dress code violations.

1. Clothing may not be vulgar, obscene, or disturbing.
2. Clothing and/or accessories may not advertise or promote the use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, and/or offensive words or illustrations.
3. Tank-tops or other similar sleeveless shirts must have a strap over each shoulder. Tube-tops and strapless shirts are not permitted.
4. Clothing should cover a student's midriff at all times.
5. Students are not permitted to wear clothing that exposes any type of undergarment.
6. Appropriate footwear is required. (examples: shoes, boots, sneakers, flip-flops)
7. Students may be instructed to wear hair coverings, aprons, eye protection, smocks, or some other proper apparel in specific classes such as physical education, technology education, or art class for health and safety reasons.
8. When 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, coach, or sponsor in charge. Coaches will be responsible for specifying appropriate uniform dress for home and away athletic events.



9. Hats of any kind are not permitted to be worn inside of the building. This includes bandanas/scarves/hoods excluding items of verifiable religious importance.

### **Middle School Advanced Studies**

Students at Peters Township Middle School may be able to enroll in high school courses during the school day. All coursework will count toward graduation credit and their high school GPA in addition to the final grade appearing on the high school transcript. The school counselor at the middle school will coordinate this process. Middle School students who wish to enroll in high school courses are required to meet the following:

- Documented evidence that all prerequisites have been met, and where applicable, all academic screening mechanisms successfully completed prior to scheduling any courses.
- Appropriate level of maturity – determined by the middle school teacher(s) and school counselor.
- Recommendation from the middle school principal or middle school counselor.
- The option to take other courses during this time period provided that they meet the prerequisites. This requires middle school counselor/principal recommendation and/or high school teacher and counselor recommendation.
- Parental approval prior to placement.

More information is available in the PTHS Course Description Booklet and the PTMS and PTHS counseling offices.

### **Elevator**

Use of the elevators is limited to those students who have a doctor's excuse and a note from the school nurse. Students must take the excuse to the nurse's office where an elevator pass can be obtained. Students who do not have the office's permission are not permitted on the elevator and will be issued a detention.

### **End-of-Year Requirements**

Students are expected to fulfill all disciplinary or monetary obligations and/or return all school materials in order to maintain access to PowerSchool, participate in extra-curricular activities (MS and HS level), receive yearbooks or other school services.

### **Fire and Other Emergency Drills**

For student safety, the fire drill sign in each room should be read. When the fire alarm rings, students must remain silent and listen to the teacher's directions. The last person out will shut the classroom door. Students must leave the building in an orderly manner and remain quiet. Failure to follow these rules will result in disciplinary action. Students are expected to follow all directions and procedures and maintain orderly conduct throughout all drills or actual emergency procedures.

### **Gifts and Parties**

Parents must check with the office and nurse's office first if requesting to bring in food for lunch/parties due to severe food allergies. While a student may bring in food from home, they are not to have items directly delivered from any eateries such as pizza or fast-food items. Students and those in their group are responsible for the clean-up.

### **Grades**

The Peters Township School District grading scale is followed in assessing students' work. Please remember that a student has 10 days from the last day of the report period to make up work to change an Incomplete to a letter grade. After the 10 days, the Incomplete becomes an "F."

Power School, the middle school's on-line grade information system, allows parents to access their child's grades at any time. Please call or visit the counselors' office to sign up.

#### End-of-the-year-Averaging

At the conclusion of the school year, the four letter grades from each of the four marking periods are averaged together to obtain the final grade (A = 4; B = 3; C = 2; D = 1.) The final grade average is listed on the report card for full-year courses as a letter grade. If a child's end-of-year average ends in a 0.5, it is up to the teacher's

discretion as to whether the grade is rounded up. A student who earns a grade of “F” in any three marking periods will fail that course. A student who earns a grade of “F” in each of the final two marking periods must also receive teacher recommendation to pass the course.

### Report Cards

At the end of each marking period, report cards are available online showing the grades students have earned in each class. However, the report card shares with the parents more information than grades. There is a section that allows the teacher to comment about performance in class. This section also gives teachers the opportunity to ask for a conference with the student’s parents.

### Retention

Any student who fails two of the core courses (math, science, language arts, social studies) will be retained unless they attend an approved summer school program to make up at least one of the failed courses. If a student fails one subject, summer school is still recommended though the student will not be retained.

### **Gum**

Students may chew gum at the middle school. However, the gum should not be seen or heard in any way. Chewing gum is a privilege that may be revoked if chewed gum is found anywhere other than the garbage. Teachers and administrators will address loud chewing, blowing bubbles, and improper placement of gum with possible disciplinary consequences. Staff members have the ability to revoke the right of gum chewing at any time should it interfere with their instructional lesson design for that day and will notify students ahead of time. Gum cannot be sold student-student.

### **Hallways and Stairwells**

Students are to walk on the right side of the hallway or stairwell during the change of classes and should do their part in keeping these areas clean and safe.

### **Homework Communication**

Homework, as written by the teacher, will be available online within Canvas under the **Week at a Glance** tab within the class homepage. . This posting is not a substitute for recording homework and asking for explanations in each class. Online access is helpful for students who are absent, and it also increases parental involvement in daily schoolwork. A copy of the middle school textbooks is available for reference at the Peters Township Library.

### **Hot Shots Program**

The Hot Shots Program is an after-school homework opportunity for students who need a supervised setting in which to complete their homework. Students meet after school on Tuesday and Thursday in the library and are supervised by a teacher. From 3:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M., they work on homework and study for tests. Students in need of math help can receive tutoring during the HOT SHOTS time frame. Students can be nominated for both/either components by teachers, parents, school counselors, administrators, or self-nomination. Students remain in the program for a month and may reenter the next month upon request. Transportation must be provided by the parent/guardian. For more information, contact the principals or school counselors.

### **Library-Media Center**

The media center contains a wide selection of fiction and nonfiction books, magazines, and computers available for students to use during the day and study lab time. During class time teachers will frequently schedule classes or send individual students to the library. Two books can be checked out by the student for three weeks and renewed for an additional three weeks. Overdue notices are sent to the student periodically.

For students to visit the library during their study lab 11<sup>th</sup> period, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. Students are to visit the library before first period or between classes (**before ninth period**) to obtain a library pass. The student fills out a library pass and then leaves a student identification card at the library.
2. When the student goes to study lab, the student will fill out their assignment book and get it signed by the study lab teacher. The student will also need to sign out on the classroom sign out sheet.

3. When the student arrives at the library, the student will show the signed assignment book and the library pass to the library staff. At that point, the identification card will be returned to the student.

When the student leaves the library, the student will sign the sign-out sheet and then get their assignment book signed by a library staff member. When the student returns to study lab, the student will sign back in on the classroom sign-out sheet.

#### **Locker Privileges**

Each student will be assigned a locker and given the locker combination. **Students should keep their locker combination a secret.** Students are not permitted to collect or circulate other students' locker combinations or go into other peoples' lockers. Items taken from someone else's locker without the owner's permission is stealing. Serious consequences will result in either case. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Permanent decals are not to be placed in lockers nor are students to write on lockers or post suggestive pictures in them. Lockers are to be kept neat and clean. Lockers belong to the school not to the student and are subject to searches as discussed in the Common Handbook. Note: During unique times (Ex: COVID-19 pandemic) students may not be assigned lockers.

#### **Lost and Found**

There is a Lost and Found located at PTMS. Students may access the Lost and Found in-between classes and/or before or after school. It is recommended that the student's name is placed on important items such as jackets, bookbags, etc., so that it may be easily identified. At the end of each school year, items remaining are donated to charity.

#### **Lost or Damaged Books**

Teachers must be informed if a book is lost in order to issue another one. The student is responsible for paying for a book if it is damaged or lost. At the end of the school year or when moving from the District, the student must return the books that were assigned to him/her. If a different book is returned instead of the book that was issued, the student will be responsible for paying for a lost book. Access to Power School will be suspended and participation in any future extracurricular activities will be suspended until all obligations have been met.

#### **Math Retest**

*The Middle School math department has developed the following retest procedure for any student(s) who earn 69% or below on a math quiz or test:*

1. Any student earning a 69% or lower on an exam can elect to take a retest.
2. If a student wishes to retest, it is his/her responsibility to arrange the retest with the teacher. This must be done within two school days after the original test is returned. The teacher will not ask the student.
3. Retests are available for all chapter tests/quizzes. Only one retest per chapter test or quiz is permitted.
4. The student who chooses a retest must take the entire exam. The re-take will be a different exam but will cover the same material.
5. The highest grade a student can earn on a retest is 70%.

#### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Peters Township School District teachers and principals are available to schedule conferences on the District's designated Parent-Teacher Conference Day in the Fall or by special appointment. Parent/teacher conferences are arranged by appointment or by sign-ups on this designated day. On the designated day in October, conferences are held throughout the day and last approximately 20 minutes. Please note that Parent/Teacher Conferences can be held in-person or virtually based upon parent preference.

While the date in the Fall is a designated time for conferences, additional opportunities to meet with teachers and/or teams can be made available. We encourage parents to contact teachers directly or schedule a meeting date/time with their assigned counselor. By sharing information, teachers and parents can build a strong foundation for a positive and rewarding school experience.

#### **Pass Time Between Classes**

Students are expected to arrive to class on time. There are **four minutes** allotted between each class period for students to travel to their next class. If a student knows they will be late to class, a pass must be obtained from the teacher of

the previous class. Students should not come to the office for a late pass for admission to class. Habitual tardiness will result in disciplinary action.

### **Petitions**

Students have the right to propose and circulate petitions as long as they follow these guidelines:

1. The petition must be addressed to the individual who is to read and act upon it.
2. It must clearly state a purpose or request.
3. The petition must include the name or the organization sponsoring it and the name of at least one student member of that organization. This will give the reader an opportunity to respond to the sponsor(s) of the petition.
4. A petition should not be circulated during class time since this would distract from the lesson.
5. A petition is not to be directed toward any individual student.

### **Physical Education**

Every student is required to take physical education during the school year. Students must change and dress appropriately for gym. Students must wear shorts, sweatpants/tear-away pants, and T-Shirt that are school colors (red, white, black, or grey). Students must have their first names visible on the front of their shirts. Students may write their names with permanent marker or may have them printed on their t-shirts. We do not recommend purchasing an expensive t-shirt. Tennis shoes are required daily. Students will be assigned a GYM locker to store their clothes/belongings. Each student should lock their valuables.

For safety reasons, students are not allowed to wear jewelry or chew gum during Physical Education class. The physical education teachers at the middle school believe that everyone can and should participate in some type of physical activity when scheduled for physical education class. Even students recovering from an injury or illness can usually participate in some way. With this in mind, the physical education teachers have developed these additional programs:

The Inactive Program is developed for students returning from an illness. **The student needs to bring a note from home requesting this program;** a doctor's excuse may be required. They will still dress in the regular uniform, but will participate as a timekeeper, scorekeeper, referee, or even a team coach. This will keep the student involved and aware of what was covered in class although they will be excused from the regular physical routine.

The Medical Excuse Program is for students with broken arms or legs and those returning from surgery or a long illness. **This program requires a doctor's written medical excuse and is individually suited to the student's disability.** Whenever possible, the student participates in the activity; however, other activities may involve doing research or writing narratives on physical education-related topics. Whenever a student misses an entire unit because of this disability, they are medically excused and not required to make up the missed time. If parents have any questions about the uniforms or the special programs, call and speak with one of the physical education teachers.

### **PTA**

PTA (Parent Teacher Association) is a viable organization that brings parents 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 by contacting the middle school PTA officers. Some of the activities sponsored by our PTA are as follows: Dances, Socials, Outings, End-of-the-Year Activities, The Reflections contest, Snack Days, etc.

### **Selling and Buying Items**

Students are not permitted to sell or buy personal/private items during school hours or at school-sponsored functions.

### **Sports**

The middle school sponsors an athletic program open to all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. It is our goal and expectation that student participation will nurture their physical, social and emotional development in a positive atmosphere that promotes sportsmanship, teamwork, personal growth and a healthy attitude towards competition. We strive to promote

and adhere to the principles outlined in the Youth Exemplifying Sportsmanship (Y.E.S.) Resolution. In order to participate in the sports program, the student must have health insurance, a signed parental permission form, and a physical examination. The student/athlete is responsible for his/her own physical exam. Practices are generally held immediately after school, Monday through Friday. Students are responsible for their own transportation home. **Students receiving after-school detention are not permitted to skip the detention to attend practice or a game. Additional consequences may result.**

Girls Sports	Grades	Season
Volleyball	7-8	Fall
Field Hockey	7-8	Fall
Basketball	7-8	Winter
Softball	7-8	Spring
Cheerleading	7-8	Fall/Winter
Boys Sports	Grades	Season
Football	7-8 (Middle School)	Fall
Wrestling	7-8 (Middle School)	Winter
Wrestling	7-8-9 (Junior High)	Winter
Basketball	7-8	Winter
Co-Ed Sports	Grades	Season
Cross Country	7-8	Fall
Fencing	7-8	Fall/Winter/Spring
Swimming	7-8	Fall
Track	7-8	Spring

## Student Activities

Academic extracurricular activities are opportunities for students to expand their learning experiences beyond regular classroom instruction. We encourage students to get involved at this level so that as they progress through their school years, they will gain lifelong learning experiences and knowledge, and improve decision-making skills. Students may obtain more information on each activity by contacting the sponsor of that activity. Since sponsors sometimes change, they are not listed in this booklet. However, information about activities is repeatedly announced along with the specific sponsor's name. Unless noted, activities are open to all students at all grade levels. Home-schooled students are permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities. Some of the Peters Township Middle School-sponsored activities are described below:

**Bits of Lit:** This award-winning literary publication recognizes and encourages creative expressions through art, poetry, or prose.

**Forensics Team:** Students develop their public-speaking skills, confidence, and poise in locally held competitions October through April. Practice is usually held once a week after school.

**Math Counts:** Students expand their math skills by practicing once a week for the local competition in November. Winners advance to further competition.

**Music:** The Middle School Curriculum includes opportunities for students in band, marching band (grade 8 students at the high school), chorus, and string orchestra.

**Musical/Drama:** Student tryouts are held for the drama/musical productions. Recent presentations have included *Mary Poppins Jr.*, *Seussical Jr.*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Shrek Jr.*, *The Lion King*, and *The Little Mermaid*. Practice usually begins in the late fall with the performance usually occurring in February/March.

National History Day: Students in Grades 6-12 make history come alive as their independent research leads them to uncover information through oral interviews, newspaper or manuscript collections, family letters & photographs, archives, libraries, and historical sites. Development of the long-term project begins in the fall and is supported by monthly general meetings until the local competition at the Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center in March.

Newspaper: Students have opportunities to provide articles for online publication along with learning skills in layout and design.

PA Junior Academy of Science (PJAS): The Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS) is a statewide organization of junior and senior high school students designed to stimulate and promote interest in science among its members through the development of research projects and investigations. Students involved in this club will work to participate in a regional competition displaying and presenting their scientific research project.

Science Olympiad: Competition, consisting of more than 20 events based on talent, training, teamwork and scheduling, applies knowledge of the science world. Practice runs after school as needed. Local competition begins in January.

Spelling Bee: Students may participate in the Washington Country Spelling Bee. Individuals prepare during after-school hours for competition in the spring.

Student Council: Students meet once a month, or as needed, before school to promote school and community service and to develop leadership skills. Its purpose is to give students opportunities to develop and utilize their leadership skills while also fostering a sense of service and community within our school. In addition, the students participate in committees such as Fundraising and Community Outreach, Entertainment and School Spirit, Events, and Principals' Liaison. Members will model academic success, consistent attendance, and exemplary behavior in and out of the classroom. Students who receive an out-of-school suspension, two in-school suspensions, or five detentions (per school year) may be removed from Student Council.

The Works Crew: These selected Grade 8 students participate in using high-level computer skills for video programming productions and operations of the middle school television studio and auditorium. These operations take place during school, after school, and in the evenings.

Yearbook Staff: Middle school students are eligible to work on the Yearbook Staff one or more days per week after school October through March. Tasks include sales and creation of a photo-ready product.

### **Student Deliveries**

Classes will not be interrupted for a delivery and students will not be called to the office to pick up these items. It is the responsibility of the students to make arrangements at the beginning of the year with their parents/guardians concerning what to do if something is forgotten. Items brought into the school to be given to the students (i.e., homework, lunches, gym clothes, etc.) are to be clearly labeled and left on the counter in the vestibule area within the visitor entrance. Students are responsible for coming to the office/vestibule between classes to pick up the item(s). Parents are not permitted to deliver items directly to classrooms. Parents may request an office staff member to retrieve items of value to deliver to the student.

### **Study Lab**

The purpose of study lab is to allow the students time for tutoring, group projects, enrichment activities, make-up work, independent reading, and other activities that are approved by teachers and the administration. **Students are expected to get a pass from the teacher with whom they intend to meet before study lab.** Students must bring materials to work on as required. Depending on teacher availability, activities other than study time may take place during this period. Study labs operate under these rules:

1. The student must have something to do, even if it is simply reading for pleasure.
2. Passes may be granted to the library or computer room dependent upon library procedures. Please see the librarian.

3. Study labs are to remain quiet and orderly.
4. Students are not permitted to leave study lab to “roam” the school. Disciplinary consequences will result. All students must report to the receiving teacher at the beginning of class before the bell rings.

### **Substitute Teachers**

Students are expected to behave properly for a substitute teacher; disciplinary action will result for failure to follow this rule. Students who habitually misbehave for substitutes will receive increased disciplinary action.

### **Use of Facilities**

Students shall have the right of assembly and use of school facilities for such purposes. Students desiring to use school facilities can stop in the office for more information.

### **Visitors**

In accordance with School Board Policy 907, parents of PTMS students are welcome to visit the middle school at any time during the school year. They must call the office in advance to arrange for a visit. A copy of their child’s schedule will be prepared for them. Parents must first report to the office before visiting and provide their driver’s license to be scanned through the *Raptor Visitor Management System*. They must then sign in and put on a visitor badge. **A twenty-four hour notice is required for classroom visits.** Students and parents from other school Districts are not permitted to visit their friends’ classes at the middle school or to have lunch with them. *All visitors will be expected to wear a visitor badge within the building.* Students from the high school are NOT permitted in the Middle School during or after school hours without teacher permission.

### **Walker’s Permission Form**

Peters Township School District provides bus transportation for those students who live outside walking distance of the school. Bus riders are required to take the bus home. On the rare occasion a student must walk home, the official School District form **MUST** be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian. Peters Township Middle School discourages students from walking home due to safety concerns. **Students must provide a note on the day they are going to walk home to the attendance secretary if they normally ride the bus. Students who walk home each day all year do not need to provide such a note each day, but only need to provide one note at the beginning of the year. Walker Forms may be obtained online or in the main office of the Middle School.**

### **Water Bottles and Outside Drinks**

Students are permitted to bring water bottles to school and utilize them throughout the school day. Water bottle filling stations are available at designated locations throughout the school.

Outside drinks (ex: *Starbucks*) are discouraged and are not permitted to be carried throughout the school after classes begin at 8:00am. If a student does bring an outside drink, it must be stored within their locker during the school day. Students are responsible for any damage to the locker or school materials if their outside drink should spill.

### **Work Permits**

Students currently in middle school who plan to work at part-time jobs must apply for work permits in the middle school guidance office. In order to receive a permit:

1. A parent must request the work permit on the student’s behalf.
2. The completed application must be accompanied by a copy of the student’s birth certificate or a baptismal certificate. A physical exam is required.

### **Yearbook**

The students of the Middle School produce an annual yearbook, which includes photos of every student as well as many of the school activities. It is a tradition to sign yearbooks at the close of the school year. Students should make sure they use common sense and avoid inappropriate language or comments when signing another student’s yearbook. Otherwise, they will face disciplinary action.

# Regular Bell Schedule – PTMS 2023-2024

Admittance Bell 7:55

Report Bell 8:00

Attendance and Pledge

- Period 1 8:02-8:43 (41 min)
- Period 2 8:47-9:28 (41 min)
- Homeroom 9:32-9:49 (17 min) **AM announcements**
- Period 3 9:53-10:34 (41 min)

○ <b>Period 4</b>	<b>10:38-11:08</b>	<b>(30 min)</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH</b>
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- Period 4/5 10:38-11:19 (41 min)
- Period 5/6 11:12-11:53 (41 min)

○ <b>Period 6</b>	<b>11:23-11:53</b>	<b>(30 min)</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH</b>
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- Period 6/7 11:23-12:04 (41 min)
- Period 7/8 11:57-12:38 (41 min)

○ <b>Period 8</b>	<b>12:08-12:38</b>	<b>(30 min)</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH</b>
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- Period 9 12:42-1:23 (41 min)
  - Period 10 1:27-2:08 (41 min)
  - Period 11 2:12-2:55 (43 min) **PM announcements**
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# One Hour Delay Bell Schedule – PTMS 2023-2024

Admittance Bell 8:55

Report Bell 9:00

Attendance and Pledge

- Period 1 9:02-9:40 (38 min)
- Period 2 9:44-10:20 (36 min)
- Period 3 10:24-11:00 (36 min)

○ <b>Period 4</b>	<b>11:04-11:34</b>	<b>(30 min)</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH</b>
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- Period 4/5 11:04-11:40 (36 min)
- Period 5/6 11:38-12:14 (36 min)

○ <b>Period 6</b>	<b>11:44-12:14</b>	<b>(30 min)</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH</b>
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- Period 6/7 11:44-12:20 (36 min)
- Period 7/8 12:18-12:54 (36 min)

○ <b>Period 8</b>	<b>12:24-12:54</b>	<b>(30 min)</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH</b>
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- Period 9 12:58-1:34 (36 min)
  - Period 10 1:38-2:14 (36 min)
  - Period 11 2:18-2:55 (37 min) **PM announcements**
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**\*\*\* Bells will not ring during the times in the day when lunch periods are scheduled. \*\*\***

# Two Hour Delay Bell Schedule – PTMS 2023-2024

Admittance Bell	9:55	
Report Bell	10:00	Attendance and Pledge

- Period 1                      10:02-10:32            (30 min)
- Period 2                      10:36-11:04            (28 min)
- Period 3                      11:08-11:36            (28 min)

○ <b>Period 4</b>	<b>11:40-12:10</b>	<b>(30 min)</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH</b>
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- Period 4/5                      11:40-12:10            (30 min)
- Period 5/6                      12:14-12:44            (30 min)

○ <b>Period 6</b>	<b>12:14-12:44</b>	<b>(30 min)</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH</b>
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- Period 6/7                      12:14-12:44            (30 min)
- Period 7/8                      12:48-1:18              (30 min)

○ <b>Period 8</b>	<b>12:48-1:18</b>	<b>(30 min)</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH</b>
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- Period 9                        1:22-1:50              (28 min)
  - Period 10                      1:54-2:22              (28 min)
  - Period 11                      2:26-2:55              (29 min)      **PM Announcements**
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# PM Assembly Bell Schedule – PTMS 2023-2024

Admittance Bell 7:55

Report Bell 8:00 Attendance and Pledge

- Period 1 8:02-8:39 (37 min)
- Period 2 8:43-9:18 (35 min)
- Period 3 9:22-9:57 (35 min)

**Period 4 11:40-12:10 (30 min) 6<sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH**

- Period 4/5 10:01-10:36 (35 min)
- Period 5/6 10:35-11:10 (35 min)

○ Period 6	12:14-12:44	(30 min)	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH
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- Period 6/7 10:40-11:15 (35 min)
- Period 7/8 11:14-11:49 (35 min)

○ Period 8	12:48-1:18	(30 min)	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade LUNCH
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- Period 9 11:53-12:28 (35 min)
- Period 10 12:32-1:07 (35 min)

Period 11A	1:11-2:01	(50 min)
Pass	2:01-2:05	

Period 11B	2:05-2:55	(50 min)
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\*\*\* *Bells will not ring during the times in the day when lunch periods are scheduled.* \*\*\*

**Peters Township Middle 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 Handbook. I have discussed the contents of this handbook with my Parent(s)/Guardians(s)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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