POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

PREPARE EACH STUDENT, BY NAME, FOR SUCCESS AT EVERY LEVEL.

Main Office Staff
Hector Wangia, Principal
Danielle Davis, House Principal [5th Grade]
William Lawless, House Principal [6th Grade]
Shawna Smith-Wentzel, House Principal [7th Grade]
Jesse Tupper, House Principal [8th Grade]

Kelly Ortlip, School Secretary
Kim Picard, Attendance Secretary

Counseling Office
Sarah Bachart, Counselor, 5th Grade
Kayla Reeder, Counselor, 6th Grade
Danielle Ambrose, Counselor, 7th Grade
Sophia Perry , Counselor, 8th Grade
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Pottstown Middle School
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Pottstown Middle School Parent & Student Handbook**

Table of Contents

ACCESS TO GRADES, ATTENDANCE, & DISCIPLINE 3
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION 3
ATHLETICS AND CLUBS 3
EXTRA-CURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT 4
ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES 6
ATHLETIC INSURANCE 7
ATTENDANCE 7
ATTENDANCE AUTHORITY/POLICY 8
EARLY EXCUSAL 12
EDUCATIONAL TOURS/TRIPS 12
RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL 13
VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT ATTENDANCE 14
BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING 14
CAFETERIA 15
CHROMEBOOK 1:1 INITIATIVE 15
DISCIPLINE CODE FOR STUDENTS 15
DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCE 19
DRESS CODE 20
EDUCATIONAL TOURS AND TRIPS 21
ELECTRONIC DEVICE 22
EMERGENCY CLOSING OR DELAYED OPENINGS 22
EVACUATION DRILLS 22
FACE COVERINGS/MASKS 23
FAMILY AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES 24
FLEXIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS 24
FIELD TRIP AND STUDENT BEHAVIOR POLICY 24
GRADING SYSTEM (Policy 212) 24
GRADING SYSTEM 25
HONOR ROLL 25
HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION 25
HOMELESSNESS 25
ID CARDS 26
LEAVING SCHOOL 26
LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER 26
LOCKERS 26
LOST AND FOUND 27
MAKE UP WORK POLICY 27
MEDIA RELEASE 27
NURSE 28
PARENT ORGANIZATION 29
PLAGIARISM 29
Off-Campus Activities 29
Rea*sonable Suspicion/Testing* 30
RECORDING INSTRUCTION & INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALSI
Safety, Support, and Threat Assessment 30
SCHEDULE 30
SCHOOL BUS CONSEQUENCES 31
SEXUAL ASSAULT 32
SEXUAL HARASSMENT 32
STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP) 32
STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCESS 32
STUDENT INFORMATION SHEETS 33
STUDENT SEARCHES 33
STUDENT-TO-STUDENT HARASSMENT 34
SUICIDE AWARENESS, PREVENTION AND RESPONSE 34
SUMMER SCHOOL – PRIDE Program 36

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL *36*
TERMINATING OR TRANSFERRING SCHOOL(S) *37*
TECHNOLOGY *37*
Actions Resulting From Misuse 38
Copyright 39
Internet Access 39
Safety 39
TITLE 1 *39*
VISITORS *40*
WORK PERMITS *40*
ASSURANCE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION *40*

**Due to printing schedules for the student agenda, much of the handbook is current; however minor revisions may have been made. The most updated version can be found on the middle school website: http://www.pottstownschools.org/pottstownmiddleschool_home.aspx

ACCESS TO GRADES, ATTENDANCE, & DISCIPLINE

Students and parents can gain access to the most current grades, attendance, and discipline reports by logging into PowerSchool. A link can be found on the school district's website, www.pottstownschools.org; also, by downloading the PowerSchool APP. The APP can be used to view attendance, class work, grades, activities, etc.

Parents/Guardians login information is different from the student's login information. Notifications of absences and failing grades can be sent to parents through the automated system. These notifications must be set up by the parents/guardians. To set up notifications or to sign up, please visit the Pottstown School District web page and follow the link for Parents.

POWERSCHOOL INFORMATION

It is important that students and parents/guardians regularly check attendance and grades via PowerSchool. The parent and school partnership is critical to the academic success of children. Please contact the school if you have forgotten your login or password.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

The Pottstown School District collaborates with Alternative Education Programs designed to work with any student who is not succeeding in the regular classroom setting. Enrollment in any of these programs is through a recommendation from district administration.

ATHLETICS AND CLUBS

There are many enjoyable, interesting, and worthwhile activities available to students who wish to become involved. We strongly urge everyone to select some extracurricular pursuit.

Interscholastic Athletics (GRADE 7-8)

Fall Sports	Winter Sports	Spring Sports
Football Field Hockey Boys' Soccer Girls' Soccer Cross Country Cheerleading	Boys' Basketball Girls' Basketball Cheerleading Boys' Wrestling Girls' Wrestling	Baseball Lacrosse Boys' and Girls' Track and Field Softball

Student Activities (Grades 5-8)

Grade	Activities
5,6,7,8	Band - Concert Band, Jazz Band,
7,8	Marching Band Band Front - Flag
5,6,7,8	Choir
5,6,7,8	Environmental Science
5,6,7,8	National Junior Honor
6,7,8	Society
8	Reading Olympics
	Strive
	Student Council
	WEB
	PBIS Ambassadors
	Maker Space

EXTRA-CURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT

Extra-Curricular activities are a privilege, not a right. In addition to individual team/club rules, all participants are required to adhere to the Extracurricular Code of Conduct as it is outlined below. Infractions to the Code of Conduct may be subject to consequences ranging from suspension from the activity for a determined time period to termination from all school activities for the entire school year. The coaches, advisors and/or administration will determine these consequences.

- Conduct - A firm and fair policy for enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the high school. The community, school administrators, advisors and coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of co-curricular activities, including athletics. The welfare of the student is our major consideration. All participants shall abide by a code of ethics which will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic programs afford. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the student, the team, the club or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct in school, on social media, or in the community, such as, but not limited to, theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality, or violations of the law that tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the program will not be tolerated. Penalties for such violations could range from loss of status on the team or in the club, suspension, or dismissal.
- Equipment - School equipment checked out by a student is the

responsibility of the student. Loss of any equipment is the student's financial obligation.

- Missing Practice or Meetings – A student should always consult their coach or advisor before missing practice/meeting. Missing a meeting, practice or a competition without good reason will be dealt with firmly and could range from loss of status on the team or in the club to suspension or dismissal.
- Travel - All students must travel to and from out of town athletic contests or club activities in transportation provided by the school unless previous arrangements are made and approved by an administrator. Exceptional situations may be weddings, funerals, or pre- approved events. Notifications must be given in writing prior to the event and students must be picked up or dropped off by a parent/guardian.
    - Students will remain with their team/club and under the supervision of the coach/advisor when attending away contests.Students who miss the bus will not be allowed to participate in the contest unless there are extenuating circumstances. (See above)
    - Students are not to drive any vehicles to or from events.
    - All regular bus rules will be followed.
    - Dress appropriately and in good taste when traveling with the team/club.
- College Recruitment - College recruitment information is available in the Career and Counseling Suite.
- Attendance - Students must be in attendance in school in order to participate in practice or events. Exceptions to this rule would involve absenteeism for an excused reason such as college visitation, doctor's appointment, driver's test, or other situations as determined by the administration. Students must be in the high school and middle school by 8:45 a.m. to participate in games or practices that day. Parent notes do not qualify as acceptable excuses for lateness.
- Dismissal From Class - It is the responsibility of the students to communicate with their teachers prior to early dismissal from class for an event. All work shall be made up at the convenience of the teacher.
- Grooming and Dress - Follow school district dress code policy.
    - No spiked or cleated shoes are permitted to be worn in the building.
- Reporting of Injuries - All injuries that occur while participating in athletics should be reported to the trainer/coach immediately. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor or a treatment center, it will be necessary to have an injury report form completed. Once a physician treats an athlete, the athlete must obtain the doctor's permission to return to the activity.

- Locker Room Regulations - Roughhousing and throwing of objects is not allowed in the locker room.
    - All showers must be turned off. The last person to leave the shower room is expected to check all showers.
    - No one except coaches and assigned players are allowed in the locker room.
    - No glass containers are permitted in the locker room.
    - All students are provided with a lock for their lockers. It is the student's responsibility to lock their lockers at all times.
- Hazing - The Pottstown School District does not condone any form of initiation or harassment known as hazing as a part of any school sponsored activity. This regulation is established that no student, coach, volunteer, or employee shall plan, direct, encourage, assist, or engage in any hazing activity. Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health, or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership into a Pottstown School District organization. Endangering the physical health shall include but is not limited to any brutality of a physical nature such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, beverage, drug or controlled substance, or other forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual. Endangering mental health shall include any activity that would subject an individual to extreme mental stress such as prolonged sleep deprivation, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact, forced conduct, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity even if a student willingly participates. If any hazing activities occur, this will result in the coach's immediate termination of responsibilities and/or the release of any and all students involved.

ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Pottstown High/Middle School is a member of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA), and its interscholastic athletic program is governed by the rules and regulations of that association. The athletic program is controlled by the principal of the school and the Director of Co-Curricular Activities.

Pottstown is a member of the Pioneer Athletic Conference. As a full member of the PAC, we adhere to all conference rules and regulations.

The co-curricular activities programs shall be open to all students who meet the following Pottstown School District requirements. Co-curricular activities include all athletics, clubs, non- athletic music/drama programs, assemblies, dances, field trips, or any other non- academic school functions.

- Students must pursue a curriculum approved by the principal or his designee.
- To be academically eligible, a student cannot be failing two or more credits. Eligibility is tabulated at 10:00 a.m. every Friday morning and runs Sunday to Saturday of the coming week. Once a student is ineligible, he/she may not participate in competition until eligibility is checked again the next week and the student is found to be eligible.
    - Students who are ineligible are expected to participate in all practices and team/club study halls as per the directive of the coach or advisor.
    - For purposes of eligibility, all classes are judged by the current number scale, with less than 60% being a failing grade.
    - A student must be in attendance and must arrive at school prior to 8:45 a.m. to participate in a practice, game, or event.
    - PIAA states that any student missing 20 or more days in a semester is ineligible to participate in any interscholastic sports for 45 days after the 20th day.
    - 18 Day Attendance Rule: Once a student accumulates more than 18 absences, the student may forfeit his/her privilege to participate in athletics, field trips, dances, pep rallies, class trips, and all other Co-curricular activities for the remainder of the school year.
    - Students who are suspended out of school (OSS) or expelled may not participate in any after school competitions or activities during the period of suspension/expulsion.
    - Students who are assigned in-school suspension (ISS) may not participate in after school competitions on the day(s) of the suspension but are expected to participate in all practices or study halls as per the directive of the coach or advisor.
    - Students who have 5 or more incidents of suspension (ISS (or structured days) or OSS), may forfeit the privilege to participate in athletics, field trips, dances, pep rallies, class trips, and all other Co-curricular activities for the remainder of the school year.
    - No student may participate in a sport that has an outstanding obligation to the co-curricular department until the obligation has

been satisfied.
    - Eligibility for non-academic field trips will be determined by the 18-Day Attendance Rule, 5 or more incidents of suspension, and include the minimum passing grade requirement of 60% in all major subjects.
- In all activities, the coach/advisor shall select the students who shall represent the school. The coach/advisor is given the privilege of cutting (releasing from the team) students to attain a workable or required number. Cuts, when necessary, will be based on students' ability, attitude, and general proficiency.

ATHLETIC INSURANCE

The Pottstown School District makes it possible for all students to purchase insurance covering accidents. The cost is nominal. This policy normally covers any accidents from the time the student leaves home until he returns home, provided there is not an extended period of time after school hours. Teachers will make the necessary information available to their homeroom students at the beginning of each term.

No student may participate in any sport unless covered by either school insurance or adequate insurance from some other source. Parents who do not take advantage of the school insurance program must complete a form indicating the type of insurance that they carry and releasing the school district from responsibility for injuries that may be received by participating in the sport.

For those students who carry school insurance, a claim form is available at the school to which the parents should attach all bills. When these are returned to the school, they will be forwarded to the insurance company and the insurance company will fulfill its obligations in regard to the injured student. In order to be honored, the forms must be filled out completely.

ATTENDANCE

It is expected that each student will be present every day that school is in session. Every absence and tardy is entered on each student's permanent record. Parents are encouraged to call the Attendance Office at 610-970-6665 to notify the school when their child will be absent and must submit a written note.

The District uses a student attendance system called SafeArrival. This system makes it easier for families to report their child’s absence, reduces time to verify student attendance, and enhances the tracking of unverified student absences.

SafeArrival, families can report their child’s absence using any of these three convenient

methods. These options are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Future absences can be reported at any time.

1. Using a mobile device - download and install the SchoolMessenger app from the Apple App or Google Play stores (or from the links at https://go.schoolmessenger.com) and create an account. To report an absence:
    - Sign in
    - Select Attendance
    - Report an Absence
2. Use the SafeArrival website- https://go.schoolmessenger.com and create an account.
    - Sign in
    - Select Attendance
    - Report an Absence

Students may not be permitted to make up work from unexcused or unlawful absences. Upon returning to school from any absence:

- Students must submit a written parental statement that includes the student's first and last name, date(s) of the absence(s), and reason for the absence, phone number and parent/guardian signature.
- Notes are to be given to the Attendance Office clerk. Notes may also be faxed.
- Phone calls are not valid legal excuses. All excuses must be in writing.
- If the student does not submit this written note within three (3) days of his/her return to school, the absence is considered unlawful. Students over the age of 17 will be considered unexcused (see board policy for more information).
- No more than ten (10) parental notes will excuse a child per school year.
- After the tenth (10) cumulative absences per semester, a physician's excuse is required for each absence. Physician's notes must document that the student has been seen in the office or it is considered unlawful or unexcused. No parent excuses will be accepted.
- Unlawful and unexcused absences resulting from the failure to turn in an approved note within the 3 day time period will not be changed.
- Students absent five (5) or more consecutive school days *within the same school year* must present a physician's excuse.
- Students needing to leave school early for any reason must have a handwritten note turned into the Attendance Office the morning of the dismissal. The note must include a parent/guardian signature and phone number where they can be reached to verify the note.

- The State of Pennsylvania defines “truancy” as a student who has missed 3 days of unexcused absence from school and “habitual truancy” as a student who has 6 or more days of unexcused absence from school in a school year.

- Students who are absent for more than four (4) school days during a marking period will be considered ineligible to participate in school-sponsored trips, pep rallies, dances, activity nights, and other co-curricular events occurring during or immediately following that marking period.

- When a student has a medical or dental appointment that requires early dismissal from school, a note from that office must be turned in immediately upon returning from the appointment. If the note is not handed in, the absence will be recorded as unlawful.

- Students who arrive late because of an emergency situation must bring a note signed by the parent that explains the emergency. Should tardiness become chronic, the administrator may record each tardy as unexcused (Policy 204). Please note that students who arrive after 8:45 AM and are not excused will be ineligible to participate in sports and other extracurricular activities that day. If you are not in your homeroom by 7:55 a.m., you are late. If arriving after 11:15 a.m., you are A.M. truant unless excused.
- Pottstown School Board Policy 204 states:
    - The Board requires that school age students enrolled in district schools attend school regularly, in accordance with state laws. The Board recognizes the importance of regular attendance to ensure student success in the district’s instructional program.

ATTENDANCE AUTHORITY/POLICY

Attendance shall be required of all students during the days and hours that school is in session, except that authorized district staff may excuse a student for temporary absences upon receipt of satisfactory evidence of mental, physical, or other urgent reasons that may reasonably cause the student's absence.

The following students shall be excused from the requirements of attendance at the schools of this district:

- On certification by a physician or submission of other satisfactory evidence and on approval of the Department of Education, children who are unable to attend school or apply themselves to study for mental, physical or other reasons that preclude regular attendance.
- Students enrolled in nonpublic or private schools in which the subjects

and activities prescribed by law are taught.

- Students attending college who are also enrolled part-time in district schools shall be counted as being in part-time attendance in this district.
- Students attending a home education program or private tutoring in accordance with law.
- Students fifteen (15) or sixteen (16) years of age whose enrollment in private trade or business schools has been approved.
- Students fifteen (15) years of age, and fourteen (14) years of age who have completed the highest elementary grade, who are engaged in farm work or private domestic service under duly issued permits.
- Students sixteen (16) years of age regularly employed during the school session and holding a lawfully issued employment certificate.

Excused/Lawful Absence

For purposes of this policy, the following conditions or situations constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:

- Illness, including if a student is dismissed by designated district staff during school hours for health-related reasons.
- Obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts in any state, commonwealth or territory
- Quarantine.
- Family emergency.
- Recovery from an accident.
- Required court attendance.
- Death in the family.
- Participation in a project sponsored by a statewide or countywide 4-H, FFA or combined 4- H and FFA group, upon prior written request.
- Observance of a religious holiday observed by a bonafide religious group, upon prior written parental request.
- Non-school-sponsored educational tours or trips, if the following conditions are met:
    - The parent/guardian submits a written request for excusal prior to the absence.
    - The student's participation has been approved by the Superintendent or designee.
    - The adult directing and supervising the tour or trip is acceptable to the parents/guardians and the Superintendent.
    - College or postsecondary institution visit, with prior approval.
    - Other urgent reasons. Urgent reasons shall be strictly construed and do not permit irregular attendance.

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.

Temporary dismissal

The following students may be temporarily excused from the requirements of attendance at district schools: Students receiving tutorial instruction in a field not offered in the district's curricula from a properly qualified tutor approved by the Superintendent, when the excusal does not interfere with the student's regular program of studies.

- Students participating in a religious instruction program, if the following conditions are met:
  - The parent/guardian submits a written request for excusal. The request shall identify and describe the instruction, and the dates and hours of instruction.
  - The student shall not miss more than thirty-six (36) hours per school year in order to attend classes for religious instruction.
  - Following each absence, the parent/guardian shall submit a statement attesting that the student attended the instruction, and the dates and hours of attendance.
- School age children unable to attend school upon recommendation of the school physician and a psychiatrist or school psychologist, or both, and with approval of the Secretary of Education.

Parental Notice of Absence

Absences shall be treated as unlawful until the district receives a written excuse explaining the absence, 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. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days shall require an excuse from a licensed practitioner of medicine.

Unexcused/Unlawful Absence

For purposes of this policy, absences which do not meet the criteria indicated above shall be considered an unexcused/unlawful absence. An out-of-school suspension may not be considered an unexcused absence.

Enforcement of Compulsory Attendance Requirements

Student is Truant - When a student has been absent for three (3) days during the current school year without a lawful excuse, district staff shall provide notice to the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student within ten (10) school days of the student's third unexcused absence.

The notice shall:

- Include a description of the consequences if the student becomes habitually truant; and when transmitted to a person who is not the biological or adoptive parent, may also be provided to the child's biological or adoptive parent, if the parent's mailing address is on file with the school and the parent is not precluded from receiving the information by court order.
- The notice may include the offer of a School Attendance Improvement Plan.

If the student incurs additional unexcused absences after issuance of the notice and a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) was not previously held, district staff shall offer a School Attendance Improvement Conference.
School Attendance Improvement Conference - District staff shall notify the parent/guardian in writing and by telephone of the date and time of the School Attendance Improvement Conference. The purpose of the School Attendance Improvement Plan is to examine the student's absences and reasons for the absences in an effort to improve attendance with or without additional services.
The following individuals shall be invited to the School Attendance Improvement Conference:

- The student.
- The student's parent/guardian
- Other individuals identified by the parent/guardian who may be a resource.
- Appropriate school personnel
- Recommended service providers

Neither the student nor the person in parental relation shall be required to participate, and the School Attendance Improvement Plan shall occur even if the person in parental relation declines to participate or fails to attend the scheduled conference.
The outcome of the School Attendance Improvement Conference shall be documented in a written School Attendance Improvement Plan. The Plan shall be retained in the student's file. A copy of the Plan shall be provided to the person in parental relation, the student and appropriate district staff.
The district may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until after the date of the scheduled School Attendance Improvement Conference has passed.

Student is Habitually Truant - When a student under fifteen (15) years of age is habitually truant, district staff:

- Shall refer the student to:
  - A school-based or community-based attendance improvement program; or

- The local children and youth agency.

- May file a citation in the office of the appropriate judge against the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student.

When a student fifteen (15) years of age or older is habitually truant, district staff shall:

- Refer the student to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program; or
- File a citation in the office of the appropriate judge against the student or the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student.

District staff may refer a student who is fifteen (15) years of age or older to the local children and youth agency, if the student continues to incur additional unexcused absences after being referred to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program, or if the student refuses to participate in such program.

Regardless of age, when district staff refer a habitually truant student to the local children and youth agency or file a citation with the appropriate judge, district staff shall provide verification that the school held a School Attendance Improvement Conference.

Filing a Citation - A citation shall be filed in the office of the appropriate judge whose jurisdiction includes the school in which the student is or should be enrolled.

Additional citations for subsequent violations of the compulsory school attendance requirements may only be filed against a student or person in parental relation in accordance with the specific provisions of the law.

Special Needs and Accommodations

If a truant or habitually truant student may qualify as a student with a disability, and require special education services or accommodations, the Director of Special Education or designee shall be notified and shall take action to address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.

For students with disabilities who are truant or habitually truant, the appropriate team shall be notified and shall address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.

Discipline

The district shall not expel or impose out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment or transfer for truant behavior.

EARLY EXCUSAL

A request for early dismissal to leave school for a medical or dental appointment,

court appearance, family emergency or other urgent reason will be considered if a note from the parent/guardian is presented to the principal or designee prior to the appointment.

EDUCATIONAL TOURS/TRIPS

The district strongly discourages student absence from school except when illness or other urgent reasons prevent the student from attending. District officials are aware that it is not always possible to schedule family trips and vacations while school is not in session. In keeping with the district's guiding philosophy, but also recognizing the importance of the family unit, the Board will approve educational tours or trips not sponsored by the district up to a maximum of five (5) school days per student per year. Exceptions to the five (5) day rule may be considered by the Superintendent if compelling, extenuating circumstances warrants such consideration. The following provisions must be met for approval/conditional approval of an educational tour/trip:

1. A parental request for excused absence must be submitted on the designated form to the building principal or designee for consideration at least three (3) days prior to the date of the intended trip. The request must include a statement detailing the educational value of the trip and the name of the person responsible for supervision. Questionable requests will be submitted to the Superintendent for final determination.
2. The building principal will evaluate the request in terms of its educational value, duration, and adequateness of the supervision. If approved, the absence will be considered
   excused, subject to the student's satisfactory completion of the assignments missed. At the secondary level (grades 7-12), students must also present a written report highlighting the educational aspects of the trip. Elementary students (grades K-6) are encouraged to share the trip experience with their class upon return to school. Prior to leaving on the trip, it is the responsibility of the student to seek assignments. It will be the responsibility of the student to make-up all work missed during the absence as per their student handbook requirements. If the class work and/or the written report is not completed and submitted to the building principal or designee, the days will be considered unlawful or unexcused and subject to the compulsory attendance laws, which may result in a fine.
3. The absence of a student taking a tour or trip which has not received prior approval from the building principal as being educational in nature will be considered unexcused or unlawful and subject to the provisions of the compulsory attendance laws.
4. A student may be excused from school to accompany his/her family to

attend important family functions, such as graduations, weddings, funerals, etc., which are out of town and require lengthy travel. An excuse from school for this reason shall require prior approval from the building principal or designee and satisfactory completion of all work missed during the period of absence.

5. No educational trip will be excused during end of semester or end of year final exams.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

- Students shall be released from school only to a parent/guardian or person authorized by the parent/guardian.
- Students of separated or divorced parents/guardians will be released to either parent/guardian unless a court order excluding one (1) parent/guardian from this right is provided to the principal.
- In case of illness, it shall be determined that the parent/guardian or another person authorized by the parent/guardian is available to receive the student.
- Students shall not be dismissed during school hours for non-school activities such as private music lessons, dancing lessons, scouts, etc., except with the approval of the principal.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations for the attendance of students which:

1. Ensure a school session that conforms to requirements of state law and regulations.
2. Govern the keeping of attendance records in accordance with law.
3. Distribute annually to staff, students, and parents/guardians Board policies and school rules and regulations governing student attendance, tardiness, absences and dismissal via student handbooks or other written or electronic publications.
4. Impose on truant student's appropriate incremental disciplinary measures for infractions of school rules, but no penalty may have an irredeemably negative effect on the student's record beyond that which naturally follows absence from classroom learning experiences.
5. Identify the habitual truant, investigate the causes of truant behavior, and consider modification of the student's educational program to meet particular needs and interests.
6. Ensure that students legally absent have an opportunity to make up work.
7. Issue written/verbal notice to any parent/guardian who fails to comply with the compulsory attendance law, within three (3) days of any proceeding brought under that law. Such notice shall inform the parent/guardian of the

date(s) the absence occurred, that the absence was unexcused and in violation of law, that the parent/guardian is being notified and informed of his/her liability under law for the absence of the student, and that further violation during the school term will be prosecuted without notice.

The School Code of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania defines absence as the nonattendance of a pupil all those days and half days when school is in session. There are three kinds of absences:

1. Excused absences include: illness, quarantine, death in the immediate family, approved educational trips, religious obligations, driver's examination, approved college visitation, approved interviews, jury duty, court appearances, or family emergency.
2. Unexcused absences are recorded for all other reasons other than those listed above.
3. Unlawful absence is the unexcused absence for all students under the age of 17. Unlawful absences are always unexcused absences.

VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT ATTENDANCE

Regardless how Pottstown School District may deliver virtual instruction (fully virtual for all students), students will be required to log attendance each day they are not in their physical classroom. Attendance may be recorded by attending the session live or students responding to an attendance question if the lesson is asynchronous. Logging on for attendance does not excuse a student from completing work for the day, likewise, completing work for the day does not constitute attendance for the day.

Whether in a virtual environment or in the actual classroom, students in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are expected to attend a minimum of 180 days of school for a minimum of 900 hours in grades K-6 and 990 hours in grades 7-12. Failure to meet these minimum requirements can only be excused by a note from a parent/guardian or physician. Please refer to Policy 204 for more details about attendance expectations.

BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING

Pottstown School District Policy 249 states:

Bullying* means an 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 doing any of the following:

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

*Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

CONSEQUENCE FOR VIOLATION

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include:

1. Restorative conference or peer-mediation between students.
2. Counseling within the school.
3. Parental conference.
4. Loss of school privileges.
5. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
6. Detention.
7. Suspension.
8. Expulsion.
9. Counseling/Therapy outside of school.
10. Referral to law enforcement officials.
11. Transfer to another school building, classroom, or school bus.

CAFETERIA

Lunch is provided in the cafeteria. Students are not permitted to leave school for lunch or have delivered food from outside vendors.
Food is not to leave the cafeteria without permission from an administrator.
Loud and boisterous behavior is inappropriate and is not tolerated in the cafeteria.
Book bags, jackets, cell phones, and other personal belongings or school materials are not permitted in the cafeteria.
Students are to:

- Enter the cafeteria and form lines in order to be served.
- Place all paper and debris in proper containers.
- Deposit trays and dishes at the service window.

Students will be dismissed from the cafeteria by the proctor in charge.
Students must have a pass to leave the cafeteria.
One (1) student per seat.

CHROMEBOOK 1:1 INITIATIVE

Out lined in the 1:1 Chromebook Handbook

CLASSROOM SAFETY

In order to ensure and enhance the safety of our schools, all classroom, office, and internal as well as external doors must remain locked at all times. Teachers may choose to use a small device like magnets to allow for easy entrance and egress between classes. However, unless otherwise authorized by the building principal, all doors are to remain locked at all times.

DISCIPLINE CODE FOR STUDENTS

The Pottstown Middle School recognizes the value of a positive behavior support program and utilizes this method as the first avenue to communicate and manage expected behaviors within the building. We expect students to follow the basic guidelines outlined here:

A successful PMS student is a Trojan HERO
H - Honor Safety
E - Embrace Responsibility
R - Respect Everyone
O - Offer Help

As with any developmental adolescent, sometimes behavior choices do not align with school expectations and warrant a disciplinary consequence. The administration expects each student to demonstrate behavior that shows respect for all persons and property. It is each student's responsibility to demonstrate desirable behavior that is conducive to a good learning atmosphere. The guidelines outlined in this section represent the consequences for violations of the Discipline Code for PMS students. Consequences may be modified if alternative or additional actions will serve the best interest of the student and/or school environment. Please note that this list of unacceptable behaviors is not inclusive. Any event not mentioned below will be addressed by the administration. Recognizing discipline as a learning opportunity and students in grades 5-8 are at different developmental levels, administration reserves the right to differentiate discipline as appropriate for students' developmental needs.

Administration may use higher levels of disciplinary measures as necessary. The code is divided into three levels, which apply to the severity and/or frequency of the behavior. Police will be notified whenever federal, state, county, or municipal laws are violated.

We recognize that clear expectations and relationship building are vital to addressing student behaviors as well as the educational relationship between staff and students.

Students may be deemed **ineligible to participate in co-curricular events** during the current marking period if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Have **more than four (4) school days of absence** during the marking period.
- Are involved in a **physical altercation or fight** at school or during a school-sponsored activity.
- Receive **two (2) major disciplinary referrals** during the marking period.
- Receive an **out-of-school suspension (OSS)**.
- Have other significant disciplinary concerns that, in the judgment of school administration, warrant removal from the activity.

Students who become ineligible may not participate in school-sponsored trips, pep rallies, dances, activity nights, or other co-curricular events during the applicable eligibility period. **School administration may review extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis.**

Eligibility may be restored at the beginning of the next marking period, provided the student meets the attendance and behavioral expectations outlined above.

	Level 1 Definition: Typically handled at the teacher level. Student misbehavior that impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school. The following chart is meant as a guideline for Level 1 infractions that are administered by the staff or administration. Consequences may vary on a case-by-case basis. Any student who has reached the level of 3-5 days of detention for a Level 1

Level 1	infraction can have further occurrences of the same infraction considered an act of insubordination.	
	Intervention and Consequence Options	
	Warning Letter of apology Loss of privilege(s) Parent contact Peer mediation Other – determined by administration	Student conference Reinforcement of appropriate behavior Before or after school detention (1-5 days) Lunch detention (1-5 days) Written reflection of incident Temporary placement classroom

Level 2	Level 2 Definition: Handled at the teacher or administrative level. Student misbehavior in which the frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school. Level 2 infractions are incidents that do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others but are serious enough to require corrective action on the part of administrative personnel. Level 2 infractions may be referred to law enforcement depending on the number of occurrences and/or seriousness of offense. The following chart is meant as a guideline for Level 2 infractions. Consequences may vary on a case-to-case basis.	
	Intervention and Consequence Options	
	Administrator conference with student and/or parents Phone call / letter to parents In-School Suspension (.5-5 days) Rec. for counseling with Creative Health Referral to extra / co-curricular activity Behavior contract Other – determined by administration	Before or after school detention (1-5 days) Lunch detention (1-5 days) Loss of privilege(s) Peer mediation Check-ins with guidance office Provide mentor for student SAP referral

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">*Appropriate when Level 1 interventions and consequences have been ineffective or behavior is so severe as to warrant administrative intervention.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Level 3</td><td colspan="2">Level 3 Definition: Handled at the administrative level. Student misbehavior that results in violence (verbal or physical or terroristic threats) being directed at another person or to property. These misbehaviors can pose a direct threat to the safety of others in the school. Level 3 infractions can also include continuations from Level 1 or Level 2 infractions. Level 3 infractions are subject to law enforcement referral. In addition, any Level 3 infractions may result in administrative hearing, expulsion, and charges filed in partnership with the police.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Intervention and Consequence Options</td></tr>
<tr><td>Administrator conference with student and parent
Parent / guardian notification attempt(s) required
In-School Suspension (.5-5 days)
Out of School Suspension (1-10 days) Referral to extra / co-curricular activity
Other – determined by administration</td><td>Loss of privileges
SAP referral
Peer mediation
Check-ins with guidance office Provide mentor for student Behavior contract
Rec. for counseling with Creative Health</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">*Appropriate when Level 2 interventions and consequences have been ineffective or behavior is so severe as to warrant administrative intervention.</td></tr>
</table>

	1	2	3
Abusing / Misuse of Computer	x	x	
Abusive or Unacceptable Language Toward Staff	x	x	
Abusive or Unacceptable Language Toward Student	x	x	
All Other Forms of Harassment / Intimidation		x	x
Argument	x		
Bomb Threats			x
Bullying	x	x	x
Bus Violation	x	x	
Cafeteria Violation	x	x	
Cheating on a Test/Classwork	x	x	
Criminal Offense / Attempt of (i.e. robbery, assault, rape, kidnapping, arson/false alarm, stalking, etc.)			x
Criminal Trespassing			x
Cut Class	x	x	x
Cut ISS	x	x	x
Cut Lunch Detention	x	x	
Cut School	x	x	x
Cut Teacher Detention	x		
Cut After School Administration Detention	x	x	
Defiance in Language/Actions	x	x	x
Disorderly Conduct		x	x
Disrespect Toward Teacher/Staff	x	x	x
Disruptive Behavior	x	x	x
Eating in Class/Gum Chewing	x		
Endangering the Welfare of Others	x	x	x
Entering Area/Room Without Permission	x	x	
Failure of Disorderly Persons to Disperse	x	x	X
Failure to Follow ISS Rules		x	X
False Fire Alarm			x
Fighting*		x	x
Forging/School Related Documents	x	x	x
Horseplay	x	x	
Inappropriate Language/Actions	x	x	x
Inappropriate Physical Contact	x	x	x

Inappropriate Use of an Electronic Device	x	x	
Insubordination	x	x	
Late to Class/Homeroom/School	x	x	
Leaving Building without Permission		x	X
Leaving Class without Permission	x	x	
Misbehavior with Substitute Teacher	x	x	
Misuse of Pass	x	x	
Open Lewdness/Indecent Exposure	x	x	x
Physical Aggression Towards Staff		x	x
Physical Aggression Towards Students	x	x	X
Racial/Ethnic/Gender Intimidation	x	x	X
Repetitive Classroom Behavior		x	x
Sexual Assault			x
Sexual Harassment		x	x
Terroristic Threats (not bomb)			x
Theft/Robbery		x	X
Threatening Staff or Other Students	x	x	X
Vandalism		x	X
Verbal Fight/Disorderly Conduct		x	x
Violation of Drug Abuse Policy			x
Violation of Weapons Policy			x

Any student may be interviewed by a teacher, school administrator, or school resource officer at any time for any reason. Notification of parents/guardians before or after is not required by law.

*Repeated Fighting: Students are expected to resolve conflicts in a safe and respectful manner. Any student who engages in physical fighting is subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. A student involved in more than one physical altercation during a school year may be referred to law enforcement, and the school reserves the right to pursue further action from the police , including but not limited to Disorderly Conduct, when permitted by law and deemed appropriate based on the circumstances of the incident.

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCE

- Administrative Disciplinary Misconduct Hearing: An informal hearing with administration at the central office. This meeting usually occurs at the Administration Building.
- After/Before School Detention: Students may be assigned to serve

detention during either before school or after school sessions and will be given 24-hours notice. Students are responsible for attending their detentions on the scheduled days. Before school detention sessions are from 7:10 a.m. to 7:50 a.m. After school detention sessions are from 2:25 p.m. to 3:10 p.m. Detention will be held on early dismissal days unless otherwise announced.

- Escort List: Students who are unable to follow school expectations in the hallways or bathrooms, will be placed on the escort list for a set amount of time. Students will be required to be escorted by an adult if they are in the hallway for any reason. This escort will be called by their teacher prior to the student leaving the classroom.
- Alternative Education Placement: Placement in either an internal or external program outside the regular school day.
- Board Hearing: Formal hearing that may result in expulsion.
- Temporary Placement Room (TPR): One-half (.5) to five (5) days (per offense) in the ISS room. Parents may request a conference. It is the responsibility of the student to request work from the classroom teacher. ISS runs from 7:50 a.m.-2:25 p.m. Students who are assigned ISS must report to the ISS room immediately upon entering the building. It is the student's responsibility to report to ISS. All students in ISS must complete the required ISS assignments in order to receive credit.
    - If you are absent the day your detention or ISS has been assigned, you are responsible for attending the detention or ISS on the day you return to school.
    - If you are absent the day you are assigned ISS and have a field trip the day you return, you must serve ISS and are not permitted to attend the field trip.
    - Students who serve ISS may practice, but may not participate in games or travel with their team. Otherwise, they are not permitted to participate in any school activities during the period of suspension.
- Lunch Detention: These are assigned by the teacher or administration to be served in locations other than the cafeteria.
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)/Expulsion: Students who are suspended out of school (OSS) or expelled may not participate in any school activities during the period of suspension/expulsion and may not be on school property. In addition, students are not permitted to attend sporting events, concerts, and school trips on school grounds. One (1) to ten (10) days out of school under the supervision of the parent/guardian. A parental conference with an administrator is required prior to reinstatement.
- Parent Conferences: Teachers will contact parents regarding disciplinary

concerns and may request more formal conferences if needed.

- Informal Principal's Hearing: A meeting with student, parent/guardian, and building administrator or their designee.
- Teacher Detention: Students may be assigned to detention with a teacher before or after school. Students will be given 24 hours' notice and teachers will notify parents of detentions. Failure to attend will result in additional consequences.

DRESS CODE

Purpose

- The school board recognizes its obligation to provide schools where the health, safety, and welfare of the students who attend those schools are given paramount consideration and where a positive learning environment must be maintained.
- The school board is aware of its obligation to make every effort to minimize the opportunities for student distraction and/or disruption in the schools.
- Exceptions to the dress code may be made by school administration for the purposes of school spirit days.

General Guidelines

- No representation of sex, drugs, weapons, gang affiliation, violence, or offensive language shall be displayed by any aspect of a student's dress including but not limited to clothing, backpacks, jackets, jewelry, tattoos, shoes, etc.
- Undergarments should not be exposed in any way.
- Footwear must be worn at all times
- Sunglasses may not be worn in the school building.
- Clothing should not be overly baggy or overly tight.
- Clothing is expected to be clean, representing personal pride.

Tops

- Clothing must completely cover the midriff and back.
- Dresses and shirts worn over tights or leggings should be no shorter than fingertip length.
- Tops must cover the entire torso completely (cleavage, back, upper arms, midriff, etc.) in a material that is not see-thru.
- Undergarments should not be visible.

Pants/Shorts/Skirts/Dresses

- Bottoms should not be sagging or worn lower than the hip.

- Undergarments should not be visible.
- Appropriate length no shorter than fingertip length.
- Tights and yoga pants are permitted with a dress or top of an appropriate length (no shorter than fingertip length).

Shoes and Footwear

Shoes and footwear must be appropriate for school wear, and consistent with good safety practices. All footwear should include a back or strap around the heel. Examples of inappropriate shoes or footwear, which are not permitted under this policy, would include such items as:

- Flip-flops, “slides”, or "jellies"
- All footwear that presents a safety hazard including, but not limited to the following:
    - Loose fitting
    - Laces untied or missing
    - Excessively high platform shoes
    - Excessively high heels
    - Shoes without a back

Students in lab areas, in physical education class, or participating in sports, must wear sneakers that completely cover the tops of the feet, and are appropriate to the activity being conducted

Headwear

- Headwear worn consistently for religious reasons is permitted.
- Other headwear may be necessary for safety reasons for classes and programs.
- Hats and hoods are not permitted to be worn in buildings.
- Ski masks may not be worn in the building.
- Other headwear outside of these instances must be approved by the administration.

EDUCATIONAL TOURS AND TRIPS

School Board Policy 204 states: The district strongly discourages student absence from school except when illness or other urgent reasons prevent the student from attending. District officials are aware that it is not always possible to schedule family trips and vacations while school is not in session. In keeping with the district’s guiding philosophy, but also recognizing the importance of the family unit, the Board will approve educational tours or trips not sponsored by the district up to a maximum of five (5) school days per student per year. Exceptions to the five (5) day rule may be considered by the Superintendent if compelling, extenuating circumstances warrants such consideration. The following provisions must be met

for approval/conditional approval of an educational tour/trip:

1. A parental request for excused absence must be submitted on the designated form to the building principal or designee for consideration at least three (3) days prior to the date of the intended trip. The request must include a statement detailing the educational value of the trip and the name of the person responsible for supervision. Questionable requests will be submitted to the Superintendent for final determination.
2. The building principal will evaluate the request in terms of its educational value, duration, and adequateness of the supervision. If approved, the absence will be considered excused, subject to the student's satisfactory completion of the assignments missed. At the secondary level (grades 7-12), students must also present a written report highlighting the educational aspects of the trip. Elementary students (grades K-6) are encouraged to share the trip experience with their class upon return to school. Prior to leaving on the trip, it is the responsibility of the student to seek assignments. It will be the responsibility of the student to make-up all work missed during the absence as per their student handbook requirements. If the class work and/or the written report is not completed and submitted to the building principal or designee, the days will be considered unlawful or unexcused and subject to the compulsory attendance laws, which may result in a fine.
3. The absence of a student taking a tour or trip which has not received prior approval from the building principal as being educational in nature will be considered unexcused or unlawful and subject to the provisions of the compulsory attendance laws.
4. A student may be excused from school to accompany his/her family to attend important family functions, such as graduations, weddings, funerals, etc., which are out of town and require lengthy travel. An excuse from school for this reason shall require prior approval from the building principal or designee and satisfactory completion of all work missed during the period of absence.
5. No educational trip will be excused during end of semester or end of year final exams.

EXTRA CURRICULAR, OVERNIGHT AND ABROAD TRIPS

<u>Eligibility</u>

These trips are a privilege, not a right. Safety and learning of all students on the trip is the priority of the staff at all times. Students that become ineligible at any time before the trip and during the pay schedule period may not be eligible for a refund, subject to administrative discretion.

Eligibility is determined at the sole discretion of the administration, taking the following factors into consideration:

Academic Standing:
Students who participate in these optional field trips must be in good academic standing preceding the trip and have demonstrated the ability to make up for missing work in a timely manner.

Attendance:

Regular school attendance is an important expectation for participation in extracurricular, overnight, and abroad trips. Students are expected to demonstrate consistent attendance throughout the school year. Habitual truancy, excessive unexcused absences, or a pattern of poor attendance may be considered when determining a student's eligibility to participate in a trip or extracurricular activity. Attendance decisions will be made at the discretion of the administration after reviewing the student's overall attendance record and individual circumstances.

Behavior:
Disrespectful, insubordinate, or unsafe behavior on a trip is unacceptable and may result in exclusion from activities in addition to disciplinary action at school. If a student on an overnight trip displays behavior that is insubordinate, interferes with the learning of other students, or jeopardizes the safety of students or staff, then the student may be declared ineligible to attend future trips. In extreme cases, parents may be asked to arrange for the student's immediate transportation home. As a student I agree to abide by the PSD code of conduct *(as a parent or guardian I acknowledge that I am aware)* in order to participate in a PSD sponsored field trip. I understand that all rules for appropriate school behavior and expectations set by PSD apply during a trip. All

disciplinary responses for inappropriate behaviors outlined in the PSD handbook and PSD policies will apply to all trips.

With the approval of the building Principal, a student who has previously committed a serious disciplinary violation or behaved unacceptably but has since consistently demonstrated good evidence of improved behavior and dependability, may have the opportunity to participate in a school-sponsored trip.

If, at any time, a student's behavior (before, during and after) is impacting the safety of him/herself or others or impacting the overall trip experience for the other students, parents will be contacted and the student will be refused participation or continued participation. The district reserves the right to prohibit a student from attending the trip due to serious allegations or a pending police investigation and/or an incident that would pose detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the students.

Medication/Health Management

All student medication to be administered by a staff member or nurse must be disclosed by the deadline for the first deposit for that trip. All student medication to be administered by a nurse or parent must be disclosed by the deadline for the first deposit for that trip. The only exception is a new prescription, which must be disclosed within one week of receiving the medication. The administration reserves the right to declare a student ineligible for an overnight trip if the nature of the student's health condition and or medication requirements is in conflict with the demands and rigors of the field trip schedule or presents a safety concern. All medications that may be taken, whether administered by staff or self administered, including over-the-counter medications, must have the necessary medical forms signed by a physician and turned in by the stated deadline. Parents of students in grades 9-12 may provide virtual supervision of student-administered medication if pre-approved by the school nurse.

Any item prohibited in or on school property as stated in the PSD handbook or policies is also prohibited on any trip and all disciplinary responses for inappropriate items and substances outlined in the PSD handbook and PSD policies will apply to all trips.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE

- Electronic devices used for personal reasons can cause a serious distraction to learning and as such should not be visible or used for personal reasons during class time. No EXCEPTIONS. Electronic devices are defined as anything with an "on/off" button.
    - Examples: cell phones, Kindles, iPads, iPods, gaming devices, Nooks, headphones,
      earbuds, Bluetooth speakers or any other listening device, etc.
- Electronic devices should be kept in student lockers, with the house principal, or at home.
- Refusal to keep electronic devices in one of these three places could result in an office referral or in administration confiscating devices and returning them only to the parent or guardian, during office hours, M-F 7:00 am until 3:00pm.
- Students who take pictures or videos that are deemed inappropriate by administration will be in violation of the Pottstown School District Technology policy and will incur consequences commensurate with violation of said policy. Please refer to the Technology policy for more details.
- Students are prohibited from making phone calls during the school day without administrative permission.
    - Any student needing to make a phone call should see an administrator in the office for permission.
- Inappropriate use of electronic devices will result in staff requesting the student to turn over the device until the end of the day.
- Refusal to hand over the electronic device at the request of the faculty or staff will be deemed as insubordination and the student may face disciplinary consequences as appropriate according to the disciplinary matrix.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OR DELAYED OPENINGS

In the event school is to be canceled or the opening delayed as a result of inclement weather, information will be available on the school district website, www.pottstownschools.com.

- Breakfast will not be served during school days having a delayed opening.

EVACUATION DRILLS

Evacuation drills will be conducted periodically. Signs are posted in each room to indicate the proper direction to the nearest exit. For the safety of all:

- When appropriate, follow the *run-hide-fight* protocol as trained
- When students hear the alarm or announcement, it is imperative that they listen

to the message and respond accordingly.
- Students should not talk; they should move quickly.
- If the designated exit is blocked, turn around and use the closest open exit.
- When reaching the outside of the building, stay with your class and move to your assigned spot until directed to return to the building by a PMS staff member.
- Students will return to the building after the all-clear signal is given and when directed to do so by a PMS staff member.
- Students who exit the building from an exit different from their class must report to the person in charge of attendance in that area.

FAMILY AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The Family Services Coordinator is available to support school teams and families as they decide how to best assist a family in need of resources and support outside of the PSD. The intention is to facilitate a positive connection for families and students to any support that will help them be more successful in school and the community. These resources can include, but are not limited to: housing assistance, utility assistance, food, clothing, shelter, medical care, mental health care and medical insurance. Support can be found through our school social worker.

VIRTUAL DAYS

In the event the district would need to utilize a Virtual Day, all Pottstown School District students, parents, and staff members will receive notice about the Virtual Day, how to log student attendance, how to access the instructional materials, and instructions for families in need of accommodations including technological accommodations for the day.

FIELD TRIP AND STUDENT BEHAVIOR POLICY

- Students may not participate in a trip without a permission/medical form completed and signed by a parent/guardian.
- Students must prove they have medical insurance in order to participate in any trip.
- In the event a student becomes involved in unacceptable behavior while participating in a field trip or class trip, the student will be returned to PMS and the expenses for the return trip will be borne by the student's parent/guardian. The individual will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities for the balance of the school year.

GRADING SYSTEM (Policy 212)

Various methods of reporting, appropriate to grade level and curriculum content, shall be utilized. Both student and parent/guardian shall receive ample warning of a pending grade of failure, or one that would adversely affect the student's academic

status. Any student whose average grade becomes a “D” or “F” will require parent/guardian notification beyond the online grading program. All attempts will be documented. Notification may occur through phone calls, face-to- face contact, emails, text messages, or U.S. Mail.
Scheduling of parent-teacher conferences shall occur at times that ensure the greatest degree of participation by parents/guardians.
Review and evaluation of methods of reporting student progress to parents/guardians shall be conducted on a periodic basis.
Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled in the fall and spring and as the need arises.

GRADING SYSTEM

All report cards using letter grades or numbers will conform to the following classifications:

A - 90-100
B - 80-89
C - 70-79
D - 60-69
F - 0-59
I - Incomplete**
WF - Withdrawn Failing**
WP - Withdrawn Passing**
M - Medical Excuse**
**Used at the secondary level.

HONOR ROLL

Refer to Board Policy Honor Roll
(Policy 213) 5th-8th Grades will have 2 tiers of Honor Roll:
Tier I – High Honors: Above a 90% in all subjects (Core and Related Arts) Tier II – Honors: Above an 80% in all subjects (Core and Related Arts)

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

When it is deemed appropriate, the services of a teacher may be obtained to provide instruction to a child with a temporarily handicapping condition. The child’s attending physician is asked to submit a completed form to the Director of Student Services and Special Education which includes the diagnosis, prognosis, and estimated length of time that the child will be remaining at home.
There is a form available for this purpose and can be secured in the principal’s

office. Parents are encouraged to pick up the form and have it completed by the attending physician. In addition, the physician should designate the following: circumstances under which lessons should be taught (lying on a bed, or the period of time the child may be sitting), the maximum number of hours of instruction the child can tolerate per day and week, and other specific instructions which must be followed in order to effect normal recovery from the handicapping condition.

HOMELESSNESS (McKinney Vento eligibility)

Each school district is required to designate a liaison to ensure that students experiencing housing instability are properly identified, enrolled, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in school. Students who lack a fixed, regular and adequate residence or are not in the care of their guardian maybe eligible for McKinney Vento support. Examples of this may look like families facing eviction, runaway youth, victims of domestic violence, fire, loss of employment or hospitalization/incarceration. If you feel your student is experiencing any difficulties accessing their education because of concerns relating to housing stability, please reach out to our homeless liaisons:

Christine Sellers csellers@pottstownk12.org

ID CARDS

School District picture ID cards are made available to all students. The ID must be available for presentation upon request by bus drivers.

LEAVING SCHOOL

Dismissal of classes will be at 2:25 unless otherwise noted. Students not engaged in any supervised school activity must leave the school premises by 2:40. On days with early dismissals all students must leave the building within 10 minutes of the dismissal time. Failure to comply with this rule may result in disciplinary action for insubordination and/or legal action for trespassing.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

The Library is a welcoming, inclusive space where all students can read, create, collaborate, explore, and learn. Everyone shares responsibility for maintaining an environment that is safe, respectful, and supportive of all learners.

Students are encouraged to ask the librarian for assistance with finding books, conducting research, using technology, discovering

new interests, or developing creative projects. The library is a place where curiosity, creativity, and lifelong learning are celebrated.

To help make the library a positive experience for everyone, students are expected to:
Have a pass from a teacher and check in with the librarian.
Respect the learning environment by being considerate of others who are reading, studying, or working.
Treat classmates, staff, library materials, technology, and furnishings with care and respect.
Explore library resources for research, reading, creativity, and learning. Activities that interfere with learning or violate school technology expectations are not permitted.
Follow all school rules and contribute to an environment where everyone feels welcome, valued, and safe.

Students are responsible for returning borrowed library materials by their due dates. Overdue or lost materials may result in temporary borrowing restrictions until the items are returned or resolved according to school procedures.

LOCKERS

Lockers are assigned the first day of school by your homeroom teacher. Lockers will be inspected by the student and homeroom teacher for any damage at the beginning and end of the school year.
Students may access lockers four times per day:

- Morning
- Before Lunch
- After Lunch
- Dismissal
- Permission by Pottstown Middle School employee

Students are responsible for the contents and the interior of their locker and will be charged at the rate of $40.00 per hour plus the cost of materials for the removal of graffiti or to fix damage.
Students are not permitted to change lockers without permission.
Students should not exchange locker combinations with anyone.
Students should not share lockers with other students.
THE SCHOOL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR PROPERTY STOLEN FROM LOCKERS.

- We recommend that students not bring valuables to school. Lockers

may not be used as a depository for any object which is prohibited by law or which poses a threat to the health, safety or welfare of the occupants of the school building.

- Students are given a temporary privilege to use a locker, but have no expectation of privacy therein.

All lockers are and shall remain the property of the school district. Please refer to Student Searches for more information regarding lockers.
Students in Wellness and athletics will be provided with lockers. Students should not keep any valuables in these lockers.

LOST AND FOUND

Students who lose or misplace any of their belongings should first look for them in the room where they used them the last time. If unable to locate the lost item, report to the main office before or after school.
Articles that are found should be turned into the main office.

MAKE UP WORK POLICY

When a student has a legally excused absence, he/she will have the number of days he/she was absent plus one day to make up work. (Example: If a student is legally absent from school on a Monday and Tuesday, he/she will have Wednesday, Thursday and until the end of the school day on Friday to make up and hand in any missed work).
If a student is unlawfully absent, he/she may be ineligible to make up work and may receive a 0 for any missed work in accordance with state law.
More time may be provided at the discretion of the teacher. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements to make up for any missed work.

MEDIA RELEASE

From time to time photographs, slides, or videotapes are taken on school property by school personnel or by media photographers. These may be individual pictures, small groups, or whole class shots. If you want to restrict any use of such visuals, put your request in writing to the building principal - HWaniga@pottstownk12.org.

MEDICATION (Prescription and Nonprescription Drugs)

Medication should be scheduled around school hours if possible. Medication orders are required from a physician for all prescription and over-the-counter medicine. The order from the physician must include:

- Student's name
- Name, signature, and phone number of the licensed prescriber
- Name of medication

- Route and dosage of medication
- Frequency and time of medication administration
- Date of the order and discontinuation date
- Specific directions for administration if necessary

All medications administered in school require the completion of the "Authorization for School Medication Administration" form found on the district website under Nursing Services. A new prescription is needed EVERY school year for medicine that is taken on a long term basis.

Physicians' orders (licensed prescriber's order) do not carry over from one (1) school year to the next. They are good for one (1) school year and summer only.

A parent/guardian or a responsible adult designated by the parent/guardian should deliver all medications to the school. The medication must be in the original over-the-counter or pharmacy labeled bottle. Prescription medication labels must contain:

- Student's name, address, telephone number and Federal DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) number of the pharmacy
- Patient name
- Directions for use (dosage, frequency and time of administration, route, any special instructions)
- Name and registration number of the licensed prescriber
- Prescription serial number
- Date originally filled
- Name of medication and amount dispensed
- Controlled substance statement, if applicable
- Medications in plastic bags or containers other than their original pharmacy container are NOT acceptable.
- For life threatening allergic reactions, oral Benadryl and/or epinephrine may be administered.

Epinephrine Opt-Out –The Pennsylvania Public School Code, Section 1414.2(g) allows parents/guardians to request an exemption to the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector for their student. In order to request this exemption, contact the school nurse to make an appointment to discuss this decision, review and sign the opt-out form. Parents/guardians wishing to choose this option should meet with the school nurse to discuss their decision and then review and sign the opt-out form in the presence of the school nurse.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Pottstown School District affirms that no person shall, on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, age, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, veteran's status or genetic information be excluded from participation

in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any educational program or activity as required by Title IX and its regulations.. In addition, no person shall, on any of these bases, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in employment, or recruitment, or consideration, or selection, therefore, whether full-time or part-time, under any educational program or activity operated by the district.

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to Pottstown School District's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both. Pottstown School District's designated Title IX Coordinator/Compliance Officer should be contacted regarding any inquiries as to the application of Title IX or filing a harassment complaint.

Title IX Coordinator/Compliance Officer:

FOR ADULTS:

Mr. Matthew A. Boyer

Director of Human Resources

mboyer@pottstownk12.org

610-970-6602

FOR STUDENTS:

Dr. LaTanya White-Springfield

Director of Student Services

lwhitespringfield@pottstownk12.org

610-970-6615

Email is preferred means of communication for all Title IX issues and for any reporting purpose you are encouraged to use this central reporting system - Email at : titleixreporting@pottstownk12.org

Pertinent information related to Title IX and reporting can be found on the Pottstown School District Website under Title IX Policy & Procedures

NURSE

- The nurse is available Monday-Friday, 7:10 a.m. to 2:40 p.m., with the exception of a 30 minute lunch break. This is subject to change when an emergency arises.
- Sick students must have a pass to report to the nurse's office. All students reporting to the nurse's office must have a pass and will not be accepted without one.
- Sick students who are sent home will receive a pass from the nurse to sign out with the attendance office. Students may not leave the building because they are ill without following the proper procedures.
- Standing orders are followed and FIRST AID ONLY is given. If further treatment is needed, parents and guardians will be contacted at home or work.

- Students are not permitted to use their phone in the nurse's office.

State law requires that all school students be completely immunized in the following areas:
4 doses of tetanus/ 4 doses of diphtheria, 3 doses of polio , 2 doses of measles, mumps, rubella; if in 7th or 8th grade, you also need: 3 doses of hepatitis, age appropriate doses of varicella – or history of disease.

PARENT ORGANIZATION

The Pottstown Middle School works in partnership with parents to support our students academically. The Friends of Pottstown Middle School is the parent organization that meets monthly to discuss fundraising and programming to support the students' experience during the middle school year. We encourage and support all parents to get involved with this organization.

PLAGIARISM AND UNAUTHORIZED USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Plagiarism is the willful presentation of someone else's work, ideas, or words as one's own without giving proper credit to the original source. This includes material copied from books, encyclopedias, websites, the Internet, classmates, friends, family members, or any other source. It also includes submitting work generated in whole or in part by artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT or other AI applications) as one's own when such use has not been expressly authorized by the teacher or when proper acknowledgment has not been provided. Plagiarism and the unauthorized use of AI are considered academic dishonesty and are not permitted. Students are expected to complete and submit their own original work unless otherwise directed by their teacher. Any assignment found to contain plagiarized material or unauthorized AI-generated content may receive a failing grade, and the student may be required to complete the assignment again or be subject to additional disciplinary consequences in accordance with school policy.

POSSESSION/USE OF DRUGS (PARAPHERNALIA AND/OR USE OF ALCOHOL OF OTHER DRUGS, LOOK-ALIKE DRUGS, NARCOTICS, MOOD ALTERING SUBSTANCES, OR OTHER HEATH ENDANGERING COMPOUND)

Pottstown School Board Policy 227, in part, states:

- For purposes of this policy, under the influence shall include any consumption or ingestion of controlled substances by a student.
- For purposes of this policy, look-alike drugs shall include any pill, capsule, tablet, powder, plant matter or other item or substance that is designed or intended to resemble a controlled substance prohibited by this policy, or is

used in a manner likely to induce others to believe the material is a controlled substance.

- For purposes of this policy, drug paraphernalia shall include any equipment, utensil, or item which in the school administrator's judgment can be associated with the use of drugs, look-alike drugs, alcohol, mood altering substance, or health endangering compound.
- The Board prohibits students 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.
- The Board may require participation in drug counseling, rehabilitation, testing or other programs as a condition of reinstatement into the school's educational, extracurricular or athletic programs resulting from violations of this policy.
- In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the district shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.

Off-Campus Activities

This policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property and would otherwise violate the Code of Student Conduct if any of the following circumstances exist:

1. The conduct occurs during the time the student is traveling to and from school or traveling to and from school-sponsored activities, whether or not via school district furnished transportation.
2. The student is a member of an extracurricular activity and has been notified that particular off-campus conduct could result in exclusion from such activities.
3. Student expression or conduct materially and substantially disrupts the operations of the school, or the administration reasonably anticipates that the expression or conduct is likely to materially and substantially disrupt the operations of the school.
4. The conduct has a direct nexus to attendance at school or a school-sponsored activity, for example, a transaction conducted outside of school pursuant to an agreement made in school, that would violate the Code of Student Conduct if conducted in school.
5. The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property.
6. There is otherwise a nexus between the proximity or timing of the conduct

in relation to the student's attendance at school or school-sponsored activities.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution. The Superintendent or designee may assign a less severe consequence including but not less than a forty-five (45) day minimum alternative education placement for any student grade 7 through 12.
The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report required incidents and may report discretionary incidents involving possession, use or sale of controlled substances on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.

The Board prohibits the use of anabolic steroids by students involved in school-related athletics, except for a valid medical purpose. Bodybuilding and muscle enhancement, increasing muscle bulk or strength, or the enhancements of athletic ability are not valid medical purposes. Human Growth Hormone (HGH) shall not be included as an anabolic steroid.
Reasonable Suspicion/Testing
If based on the student's behavior, medical symptoms, vital signs or other observable factors, the building principal has reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of a controlled substance, the student may be required to submit to drug or alcohol testing. The testing may include but is not limited to the analysis of blood, urine, saliva, or the administration of a Breathalyzer test.

RECORDING INSTRUCTION & INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
Recording or taking pictures of any educational content presented by an employee of Pottstown School District for any purpose is unacceptable and illegal. All materials presented and distributed to families to support students in their ongoing academic program are presented for that explicit reason only and are intended solely for the use of and by identified students within the Pottstown School District.

Recording or taking pictures and sharing, posting, or distributing, in any way, the instructional video content or instructional materials of employees of Pottstown School District is strictly prohibited and violates both state and federal laws.

Safety, Support, and Threat Assessment

Pottstown School District is committed to a proactive approach to safety. Our building has a multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Team (including administrators, counselors, and mental health professionals). The team's purpose is to evaluate any reported threats of violence or self-harm and to provide students with the interventions and resources they need before a crisis occurs.

How to Report Concerns:

- Contact Your Counselor: Students and parents are encouraged to report any concerning behaviors, social media posts, or statements directly to a School Counselor or Administrator. Early intervention is key to keeping our school safe. In addition, If you become aware of a potential threat or a student in distress, please contact your School Counselor or a building administrator immediately. Timely reporting allows the Threat Assessment Team to provide necessary mental health or safety supports.
- Safe2Say Something: For anonymous reporting, Pennsylvania provides the Safe2Say Something system. You can submit a tip 24/7 via the app, the website at www.saysomething.net, or by calling 1-844-SAF2SAY. This system is monitored by professionals who coordinate with school officials and local law enforcement.

SCHEDULE

AM Procedures:

- Breakfast is available to all students in grades 5, 6, 7, 8
- Breakfast starts at 7:30 and ends at 7:50am
- Breakfast is not served on delayed opening days. Pottstown Middle School doors open for all students at 7:30.
- All students not eating breakfast must report to the gymnasium until 7:50. Students must be in HOMEROOM at 7:55.
- Students are considered TARDY when in the building but, not in HOMEROOM BY 7:55 AM
- Bell Schedules: Bell schedules for all grades can be found on the Pottstown Middle School Website

SCHEDULE CHANGE REQUEST

Our goal at Pottstown Middle School is to provide a rich academic environment that meets the needs of all students. We focus on preparing our students for the challenges of high school and life after high school. This means preparing students to face adversity and equipping them with the skills to adjust to a variety of teachers, professors, employers, and others.

Schedule changes will be considered in the event of inappropriate placement, movement between leveled classes, lack of prerequisites, an error in enrollment, or a scheduling conflict.

Please be aware that a single class change may change other aspects of your student's schedule. Counselors will look to see if the requested change is a possibility and then discuss the potential change with parents and the student. If a class change is still requested, a team meeting will be held to determine next steps. Final decision will be made by the administration.

SCHOOL BUS CONSEQUENCES

Students' behavior while waiting for the school bus or while riding the bus must be appropriate to assure the safety of all students.

The following acts of misbehavior are subject to the specified discipline. The counting of offenses are specific to each section not added across sections.

- 810.4: Pushing, hitting, shouting, tripping, littering, profane language, disrespectful to driver, eating or drinking, opening windows against driver's orders, arms or heads out of windows, refusing to identify him/herself to the bus driver, using an unassigned bus stop, changing seats or moving around while the bus is in motion (including safety assigned to the bus), or similar offenses deemed by the principal to merit the following penalties:
    - First Offense: A warning and parents will be notified by phone and mail.
    - Second Offense: Suspension of riding privileges for up to three (3) school days and parents will be notified by phone and mail. For secondary students, detention for three (3) days in addition to the above.
    - Third Offense: Suspension of riding privileges for up to ten (10) school days and parents will be notified by phone and mail. For secondary students, detention for five (5) days in addition to the above.
- 810.4: Fighting, smoking, damaging the bus, throwing objects in the bus, throwing objects out of windows, opening exit doors, or other similar offenses deemed by the principal to merit the following penalties:
    - First Offense: Suspension of riding privileges for three (3) school days and parents will be notified by phone and mail. For secondary students, detention for three (3) days in addition to the above.
    - Second Offense: Suspension of riding privileges for ten (10) school days and parents will be notified by phone and mail. For secondary students, detention for five (5) days in addition to the above.
    - Third Offense: Suspension of riding privileges for twenty (20) school days and parents will be notified by phone and mail. For secondary

students, detention for ten (10) days in addition to the above.

- 810.4: Hitting or pushing the bus driver, throwing objects at the bus driver when he or she is on or off the bus or when the bus is in motion, or similar offenses deemed by the principal to merit the following penalty.
    - First Offense: Immediate suspension of riding privileges indefinitely and parents will be notified by phone and mail. A hearing will be held to determine the length of the suspension of privileges.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Act 110 provides that if a student enrolled in a public school entity is adjudicated delinquent of committing a sexual assault upon another student enrolled in the same public school entity, the public school shall, pursuant to applicable laws and regulations, take one of the following actions:

1. Expel the adjudicated student
2. Transfer the adjudicated student to an alternative education program
3. Reassign the adjudicated student to another school or education program within the public school entity

Act 110 further provides that a public school entity shall ensure that the adjudicated student is not educated in the same school building, transported on the same school vehicle or allowed to participate in the same school-sponsored activities at the same time as the victim.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

While all forms of harassment are prohibited, it is the district's policy to emphasize that sexual harassment is specifically prohibited. Therefore, it is the policy of the Pottstown School District that it will not tolerate verbal or physical conduct by any student who harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another student's work performance or which creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile educational environment. Any observed student sexual harassment by an adult or another student should be reported to the building assistant principal, principal and/or directly to the district administration.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

- The SAP Team is a group of staff members whose purpose is to identify students who are having problems in school because of alcohol or drug abuse, depression, suicidal behavior, and any other "at risk" behaviors which may be self-destructive.
- The SAP Team is an intervention, not a treatment program. The team will act upon referrals from staff, students, parents, and concerned others by first gathering factual information to determine the extent of the problem. The team will then develop recommendations for appropriate action, consistent with school district policy, which will assist students in handling observed

problems.

- If you are concerned about a student who may be depressed, suicidal, or involved with substance abuse, you can make your concern known to the SAP Team.
- All information is CONFIDENTIAL. Drop your concern in the locked box in the Career and Counseling Center. Forms can be obtained from any SAP Team member, the nurse, or in the Career and Counseling Center.

STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCESS

Pottstown School District Board Policy 219 states in part:

The Board recognizes that students may have legitimate concerns and complaints. In addition, the Board believes that the inculcation of respect for established procedures is an important part of the educational process. Accordingly, individual and group complaints shall be recognized, and appropriate appeal procedures shall be provided.

For purposes of this policy, a student complaint shall be one that arises from actions that directly affect the student's participation in an approved educational program. This policy shall not apply to PIAA regulated sports program policy.

The student should first make the complaint known to the staff member most closely involved or, if none is identifiable, a guidance counselor; and both shall attempt to resolve the issue informally and directly. For complaints that must move beyond the first step, the student shall prepare a written statement of his/her complaint, which shall set forth:

1. Specific nature of the complaint and a brief statement of relevant facts.
2. Manner and extent to which the student believes s/he has been adversely affected.
3. Relief sought by the student.
4. Reasons the student feels entitled to the relief sought.

The complaint may then be submitted, in turn, to:

1. The Building Principal.
2. The Superintendent.
3. The Board of Directors.

Each of these three levels will be given fifteen (15) school days (maximum allowed at each level) for hearing of the complaint and preparation of a response. At each level, the student shall be afforded the opportunity to be heard personally by the school authority.

STUDENT SEARCHES

- Entry searches: School officials may conduct entry searches. These searches would be conducted by school administrators or their designee.
    - Students may be asked to open/empty their book bags, backpacks, pockets, remove shoes and/or coats, sweatshirts, sweaters or jackets.
    - Metal detectors (wands) may be used to scan the person.
- Locker searches: Lockers are school property loaned to the student for the student's convenience. Students should not share their assigned locker or combination with anyone. Neither the school nor the district is responsible for lost or stolen items.
    - Building administrators may search a student's locker without prior warning in the interest of the health, welfare, and safety of all school students.
    - Students should have no expectation of privacy.
    - The middle school administration may conduct unannounced safety inspections for drugs and weapons throughout the school year.
- Personal search: In the interest of safety and providing a weapon and drug-free school environment, a student and/or belongings may be searched. (at the discretion of the administrator)

STUDENT-TO-STUDENT HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex/gender identity, disability, age, or marital status includes conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb, or trouble persons.

- Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse. It may also be pressure for sexual activity. It can be repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications and suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats.
- Harassment based upon factors other than sex includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse, repeated remarks of a demeaning nature,
implied or explicit threats concerning one’s grades, etc., and demeaning jokes, stories or activities.
- Bullying, harassment, and abuse are violations of Pottstown School District policies, rules, regulations, and in some cases, may also be a violation of criminal or other laws. The school district has the authority to report students violating this rule to law enforcement officials.

Students at Pottstown who feel they have been harassed should:

- Communicate to the harasser that the student expects the behavior to stop, if the student is comfortable doing so. If the student needs assistance communicating with the harasser, the student should ask a teacher or the principal to help.
- If the harassment does not stop, the student needs to inform the principals, who will then follow-up with students, staff, parents and police.

SUICIDE AWARENESS, PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

In compliance with state law and regulations, and in support of the district's suicide prevention measures, information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parents/guardians, the building principal or other appropriate authority when the health, welfare or safety of the student or any other person is deemed to be at risk.

Referral Procedures

Any district employee who observes a student exhibiting a warning sign for suicide or has another indication that a student may be contemplating suicide, shall refer the student for suicide risk screening and/or assessment and intervention in accordance with district procedures.

In the absence of a warning sign for suicide, students demonstrating suicide risk factors that appear to be adversely impacting the student should be referred to the school counselor, district behavioral health professional, and Student Assistance Program for support and follow-up.

Documentation

The district shall document the reasons for referral, including specific warning signs and suicide risk factors identified as indications that the student may be at risk.

Methods of Intervention

The methods of intervention utilized by the district include, but are not limited to, responding to suicide threats, suicide attempts in school, suicide attempts outside of school, and suicide death. Suicide intervention procedures shall address the development of a safety plan for students identified as being at increased risk of suicide.

Procedures for Students at Risk

A district-approved suicide risk screening or assessment tool may be used by trained behavioral health staff such as counselors, psychologists and social workers. Parents/Guardians of a student identified as being at risk of suicide shall be notified by the school and informed of crisis and community resources. If the school suspects that the student's risk status is the result of abuse or neglect, school staff shall immediately notify Children and Youth Services. The district shall identify

behavioral health service providers to whom students can be referred for further suicide risk screening and/or assessment and assistance.

Behavioral health service providers – may include, but not be limited to, hospital emergency departments, psychiatric hospitals, community behavioral health centers, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and primary care providers.

If the student is identified as being at increased risk of suicide, the district shall create a new, or update a previous, safety plan to support the student and the student's family. The safety plan should be developed collaboratively with input from the student and reviewed with the student's family.

Students with Disabilities

For students with disabilities who are identified as being at risk for suicide or who attempt suicide, the appropriate team shall be notified and shall address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.

If a student is identified as being at risk for suicide or attempts suicide and the student may require special education services or accommodations, the Director of Special Education shall be notified and shall take action to address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.

Documentation

The district shall document observations, recommendations and actions conducted throughout the course of intervention, suicide risk screening and/or assessment and follow-up, including verbal and written communications with students, parents/guardians and behavioral health service providers.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations providing recommended guidelines for responding to a suicide threat.

The district shall maintain a trained school crisis response/crisis intervention team. Team members shall include, but not be limited to, designated administrators, school counselors, school nurse, school psychologist, social worker, School Resource Officers, members of the Student Assistance Program Team, and others as designated by the district such as community behavioral health agency resources.

Response to Suicide Attempt

Methods of response to a suicide attempt utilized by the district include, but are not limited to:

1. Determining the roles and responsibilities of each crisis response team member.
2. Working with families.
3. Notifying students, employees and parents/guardians.
4. Responding appropriately to the media.
5. Collaborating with community providers.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations with

recommended guidelines for responding to a suicide attempt on school grounds or during a school-sponsored event.

Re-Entry Procedures

A student's excusal from school attendance after a behavioral health crisis and the student's return to school shall be consistent with state and federal laws and regulations.

Prior to a student returning to school after a behavioral health crisis, a district-employed behavioral health professional, the building principal or suicide prevention coordinator shall meet with the parents/guardians of the student and, if appropriate, meet with the student to ensure the student's readiness to return to school and to create an individual re-entry plan.

When authorized by the student's parent/guardian, the designated district employee shall coordinate with the appropriate outside behavioral health care providers, request written documentation from the treating facility and encourage their involvement in the re-entry meeting.

The designated district employee will periodically check in, as needed, with the student to monitor the student's progress, facilitate the transition back into the school community and address any concerns.

Re-entry of a student with a disability requires coordination with the appropriate team to address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

- Tardiness, as defined by school law, is lateness regardless of the student's reason. This would include late arrivals that are a result of illness, doctor's appointments, car trouble, inclement weather, etc.
- Students are tardy if they are not in the homeroom when the 7:55 a.m. bell rings.
- All cases of tardiness must be recorded.
- Students who arrive late because of an emergency situation must bring a note signed by the parent that explains the emergency. Tardiness may be considered excused for the following reasons:
    - Late buses
    - Personal illness
    - Medical reasons (with a note from a doctor)
    - Hazardous conditions due to inclement weather
    - Religious obligations

- Family emergencies
- Utility failure
- Job interview (with prior approval)

- Other extenuating circumstances may be considered by a school administrator or the Attendance Office.
- No more than ten (10) parental notes will excuse a child per school year. This includes absentee notes.

Should tardiness become chronic, the administrator may record each tardy as an unexcused tardy. In addition, chronically tardy students may be required to have parental escort for admission.

Students should follow these procedures when tardy:

- If in the building and late to homeroom
  - Go to HR and the HR teacher will mark you as late to school
- If you arrive after 7:55 a.m. or did not make it to HR
  - Report to the Attendance Clerk and receive a late pass
- Give late pass to teacher in charge of your class
- After 11:15 a.m., without a parent note/escort or a physician's excuse, you will be considered AM truant
- You have 3 days to bring in a note from your parent/guardian. Remember that the maximum amount of notes is ten (10) per year.
- Students who are tardy after 8:45 a.m. (unexcused) will not be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities, including practice, for that day.

Number of Incidents of Being Late to School per Semester	Consequences
1-5	Parents/guardians notified by phone and/or writing. After school detention for every 5 lates to school.
10 or more	Citation to District Magistrate

TERMINATING OR TRANSFERRING SCHOOL(S)

- Obtain a release form from the Counseling Center.
- Clean out the locker and return all property books, student ID, etc. Return property to respective teachers, librarian, counselors, attendance office, and have them sign the release form.
- Pay for all lost books, equipment, or fines.
- Return signed release form to Counseling Center.

TECHNOLOGY

Pottstown School District Policy 815 states in part that:

In accordance with district policy, accepted rules of network etiquette, and federal and state law, the following uses of technologies are prohibited:

1. Use of technology for defamatory, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, offensive and/or illegal materials.
2. Use of technology for commercial gain or profit.
3. Transferring copyrighted materials to or from any district technology equipment without the express consent of the owner of the copyright.
4. Bullying/Cyberbullying.
5. Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and offensive or inflammatory communication.
6. Access to obscene or pornographic material or child pornography.
7. Access by students and minors to material that is harmful to minors or is determined inappropriate for minors in accordance with Board policy.
8. Impersonation of another user, anonymity, and pseudonyms.
9. Loading or using unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media.
10. Disruption of the work of other users.

Staff or students illegally accessing, altering, damaging, or destroying any technology equipment, computer network, computer software, or system information within a school system or an external system will be referred to the Pottstown Police Department for investigation and possible prosecution.

Users must immediately notify the Director of Technology if they have identified a possible security problem. The following activities related to access to the district's computer network and the Internet are prohibited:

1. Misrepresentation, including forgery, of the identity of a sender or source of communication.
2. Acquiring or attempting to acquire passwords of others or giving your password to another.
3. Revealing a password or otherwise permitting the use of others, by intent or negligence, of personal accounts for computer and network access.
4. Using or attempting to use computer accounts of others; these actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing".
5. Altering communication originally received from another person or computer with the intent to deceive.
6. Use of the district system to engage in any illegal act, which may threaten the health, safety or welfare of any person or persons, such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, or being involved in a terroristic threat against any person or property.

7. Disabling virus protection software or procedures.

Such violations in the case of students may result in suspension and/or expulsion, and such violations on the part of employees will constitute just cause for dismissal.

Sharing individually assigned accounts and passwords is prohibited. Passwords are designed to protect and any attempt to circumvent system security to gain unauthorized access to technology resources is expressly prohibited and subject to the appropriate punishment.

Student and staff photographs and names that are made available in district-sponsored media are permitted to be displayed on the district web site. Student and staff photographs and names may be displayed on other commercial sites with specific written approval of the Superintendent and parent/guardians.

Students shall not download any information from the Wide Area Network/Internet unrelated to their specific course of study without prior approval of their instructor.

Any commercial endorsement placed on or linked to the district web site shall require the written approval of the Superintendent.

Users will not use the district system for political lobbying.

Actions Resulting From Misuse

Inappropriate or irresponsible use of technology will result in the following actions:

1. In cases where a law or copyright has been violated, a referral shall be made to appropriate law enforcement officials. Such violations in the case of students may result in suspension and/or expulsion, and such violations of the part of employees will constitute just cause for dismissal.
2. Student infractions which are not deemed illegal will result in appropriate school discipline being imposed and/or reviewed by the building principal.
3. Employee infractions which are not deemed illegal but violate Board policy will result in appropriate administrative action/discipline, which may include termination of employment.
4. The user shall be responsible for damages to the equipment, systems, and software resulting from deliberate or willful acts.
5. Vandalism will result in cancellation of access privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, Internet or other networks; this includes but is not limited to uploading or creating computer viruses.

Copyright

The illegal use of copyrighted software by students and staff is prohibited. Any data uploaded to or downloaded from the network shall be subject to fair use

guidelines.

Internet Access

Internet access shall be governed by the same rules and regulations set forth in this policy relating to the utilization of technology.

Middle School And High School Students – Starting in 5th grade, students may have the opportunity to access Internet services at the direction of a staff member. Internet access is a privilege, not a right, and may be removed if any portion of this policy is violated or if the privilege is abused in any other way. Students in middle school will not access the Internet without direct supervision by an adult, such as a teacher or other staff member (e.g., classroom aide).

Safety

To the greatest extent possible, users of the network will be protected from harassment and unwanted or unsolicited communication. Any network user who receives threatening or unwelcome communications shall report such immediately to a teacher or administrator. Network users shall not reveal personal information to other users on the network, including chat rooms, e- mail, Internet, etc.

THREAT ASSESSMENT AND STUDENT SAFETY

OUR COMMITMENT TO A SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The Pottstown School District is committed to providing a safe, secure, and supportive learning environment for every student, employee, and visitor. Student safety is a shared responsibility, and we encourage all members of our school community to speak up when they see or hear something that may affect the safety or well-being of others.

In accordance with Pennsylvania law, the District has established trained School Threat Assessment Teams in each school. The purpose of the Threat Assessment Team is to identify, assess, and respond to behaviors or communications that may indicate a student is at risk of harming themselves or others. The goal of the threat assessment process is prevention through early identification, intervention, support, and appropriate safety planning. A threat assessment is intended to help students and protect the school community and is separate from the student discipline process.

REPORTING SAFETY CONCERNS

Students, parents/guardians, employees, and community members are encouraged to report any behavior or communication that raises concerns for the safety of any individual or the school community.

Examples of behaviors or concerns that should be reported include, but are not limited

to:

- Threats made in person, in writing, electronically, or through social media.
- Statements about hurting oneself or others.
- Drawings, writings, or assignments depicting violence or self-harm.
- Possession or suspected possession of a weapon or weapon look-alike.
- Significant changes in behavior that create safety concerns.
- Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, or other concerning conduct.
- Any behavior that causes someone to fear for the safety of themselves or others.

Students should never assume someone else has already reported a concern.

HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN

Students are encouraged to immediately report concerns to any trusted adult at school, including:

- A classroom teacher
- The Principal or Assistant Principal
- A School Counselor
- The School Nurse
- A Security guard
- **Any other trusted school employee**

Reports may also be submitted anonymously through Pennsylvania's **Safe2Say Something** program by visiting **www.Safe2SayPA.org** or by using the Safe2Say Something mobile application.

If there is an immediate emergency or someone is in immediate danger, call **911** immediately before using Safe2Say Something or notifying school personnel.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A REPORT IS MADE

Every report is taken seriously and reviewed promptly by trained school personnel.

When appropriate, the School Threat Assessment Team may:

- Gather relevant information regarding the concern.
- Assess the level of risk to determine whether a threat exists.
- Develop an appropriate safety and intervention plan.
- Provide behavioral, counseling, mental health, Student Assistance Program (SAP), or other support services.
- Coordinate with parents/guardians whenever appropriate and consistent with

applicable law.
- Coordinate with law enforcement or other public safety agencies when necessary to protect students, employees, or the school community.

Not every report results in disciplinary action. Many concerns are addressed through problem-solving, counseling, behavioral supports, conflict resolution, or other interventions designed to assist students and maintain a safe learning environment.

PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

When appropriate and consistent with applicable law, parents/guardians will be notified and involved in the threat assessment process. The District recognizes that collaboration with families is an important part of supporting student success and maintaining school safety.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Reports of safety concerns are handled as confidentially as possible. Information obtained during a threat assessment is shared only with individuals who have a legitimate educational or safety-related need to know and as otherwise permitted or required by law.

DISTRICT COMMITMENT

The Pottstown School District believes that school safety is achieved through prevention, early intervention, positive relationships, and timely support for students and families. The District will continue to provide training for staff, maintain School Threat Assessment Teams, encourage reporting of safety concerns, and implement evidence-based practices designed to maintain safe and supportive schools.

The District's Threat Assessment procedures are conducted in accordance with the Pennsylvania Public School Code, including Article XIII-E (Threat Assessment), applicable Pennsylvania school safety laws, and Board policies governing student safety, student welfare, bullying, discipline, emergency preparedness, and Safe Schools initiatives.

TITLE 1

As a parent of a student attending a Title 1 school that is receiving Federal Title 1 dollars, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the teacher(s) and instructional paraprofessional(s) who instruct your child. Federal law requires every Title 1 school district to comply and to provide you with the requested information in a timely manner. We are happy to provide this information to you. At any time, you may ask:

- Whether the teacher met state qualification and certification requirements for the grade level and subject he/she is teaching

- Whether the teacher received an emergency or conditional certificate through which state qualifications were waived, and
- What undergraduate or graduate degrees the teacher holds, including graduate degrees and additional degrees, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration.

You may also ask whether your child received help from a paraprofessional. If your child receives this assistance, we can provide you with information about the paraprofessional's qualifications. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which was signed into law in December 2015 and reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1956 (ESEA) includes additional right to know requests. At any time, parents and family members can request:

- Information on policies regarding student participation in assessments and procedures for option out, and
- Information on required assessments that include
    - Subject matter tested,
    - Purpose of the test,
    - Source of the requirement (if applicable),
    - Amount of time it takes students to complete the test, and
    - Time and format of disseminating results.

Our staff is committed to helping your child develop the academic knowledge and critical thinking he/she need to succeed in school and beyond. That commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals meet applicable Pennsylvania state requirements.

VISITORS

The school welcomes and encourages visits to the school by parents/guardians, community residents and interested educators. To ensure order in the school, it is necessary to establish guidelines governing school visits.

- All visitors will be required to produce a driver's license or other government issued photo ID (or provide appropriate identifying information if no such ID is available). Parents/Guardians without a photo ID may pick up children if ID has been verified through alternative means; they may also participate in meetings conducted in the main office area, but may not leave the main office area unescorted and must again, be escorted from that location to the exit.
- Classroom Visits: Parents/Guardians may visit a classroom for limited durations of time in order to not disrupt the schedule nor precipitate inappropriate behavior. If visits are in any way disruptive to the classroom or particular students, they may be limited. The classroom teacher must be notified of the date and approximate time, duration, and purpose of

visitation. The parent/guardian must provide reasonable justification for visitation.

- A visitor's badge must be worn by the visitor at all times while in the building, and the visitor must return to the office to check out when s/he is leaving the building.

WORK PERMITS

- The law requires students to have either:
  - Non-Transferable Work Permits (job-specific, age 14-15)
  - Transferable Work Permits (age 16 and older) Procedures:
- Complete application in the main office. Must bring a copy of one of the following documents:
  - Birth certificate
  - Hospital certificate
  - Passport
- Return form to Middle School office to receive working paper

ASSURANCE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Pottstown School District not to discriminate on the basis of sex, age, handicap, race, color, and national origin in its educational and vocational programs, activities, or employment as required by Title IX, Section 504, Title VI, and the A.D.A.

For information about your rights and grievance procedures, contact the Title IX, 504, Title VI, and A.D.A.