

Obama Academy

Parent Handbook

2023-2024



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OBAMA ACADEMY MOTTO AND POEMS

Be sure to memorize these

OBAMA ACADEMY MOTTO

Nothing in life is so complicated,
that it cannot be achieved by discipline and hard work.

WHAT ARE EXCUSES?

Excuses are symbols of nothingness,
They build bridges to nowhere,
Those who use these tools always,
Are masters of nothing.

WASTING TIME

I have only just a minute,
Only sixty seconds in it,
Forced upon me, can't refuse it,
Didn't seek it, didn't choose it,
But it's up to me to use it,
I must suffer if I lose it,
Give account if I abuse it,
Just a tiny little minute,
But eternity is in it.

WHATEVER YOU DO

Whatever you do in life,
Do it so well,
That no one living, no one dead,
Or no one yet to be born,
Can do it any better.

DISTRICT CALENDAR

A PDF can be found on our homepage

2023-2024 School Year Calendar

2023

August 21	Monday	#PittsburghForPPS Back to School Event 11:00 AM
August 28	Monday	First Day of School – All Grades Except Kindergarten Quarter 1 Begins
August 31	Thursday	First Day of School- Kindergarten
September 4	Monday	All PPS Holiday – Labor Day
September 11	Monday	Education Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
September 12	Tuesday	Business and Finance Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
September 20	Wednesday	Agenda Review 6:30 PM
September 25	Monday	School Only Vacation Day– Yom Kippur
September 26	Tuesday	Public Hearing 6:00 PM
September 27	Wednesday	Legislative Session 6:30 PM
September 29	Friday	Early Dismissal – Half Day/Teacher Professional Development
October 2	Monday	Business and Finance Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
October 3	Tuesday	Education Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
October 6	Friday	Q1 Interim Progress Report Distribution
October 9	Monday	Parent Teacher Conferences for Early Childhood, PreK-5, PreK-8, and 6-8 Schools. No school for students with conferences.
October 13	Friday	Parent Teacher Conferences for 6-12 Schools, 9-12 High Schools, Pittsburgh South Hills, Special Schools, Early Head Start Classrooms & SciTech ECE Home Visits. No school for students with conferences.
October 18	Wednesday	Agenda Review 6:30 PM
October 23	Monday	Public Hearing 6:00PM
October 25	Wednesday	Legislative Session 6:30PM
October 27	Friday	Early Dismissal – Half Day/Teacher Professional Development
November 1	Wednesday	Q1 Ends
November 2	Thursday	Q2 Begins
November 6	Monday	Business and Finance Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
November 7	Tuesday	Election Day – No School (Students Only) Teacher and Staff Professional Development
November 10	Friday	No School - Veteran's Day Observation
November 14	Tuesday	Education Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
November 15	Wednesday	Agenda Review 6:30PM Q1 Report Card Distribution
November 17	Friday	Early Dismissal – Half Day/Teacher Professional Development
November 20	Monday	Public Hearing 6:00PM
November 21	Tuesday	Legislative Session 6:30PM
November 23-27	Thursday – Monday	All PPS Holiday- Thanksgiving Monday- School Only Vacation Day
December 4	Monday	Budget Public Hearing and Board Reorganization
December 5	Tuesday	Education Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
December 6	Wednesday	Business and Finance Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
December 13	Wednesday	Agenda Review 6:30 PM
December 15	Friday	Early Dismissal – Half Day/Teacher Professional Development
December 18	Monday	Public Hearing 6:00PM Q2 Interim Progress Report Distribution
December 21	Wednesday	Legislative Session 6:30PM

December 25 – January 2	Monday - Tuesday	No School- Winter Break Vacation
2024		
January 3	Wednesday	Winter Keystone Wave 2 Exams Begin
January 8	Monday	Business and Finance Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
January 9	Tuesday	Education Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
January 15	Monday	No School- MLK Day
January 17	Wednesday	Agenda Review 6:30PM Winter Keystone Wave 2 Exams End
January 22	Monday	Public Hearing 6:00 PM
January 24	Wednesday	Legislative Session 6:30PM First Semester Ends/Quarter 2 Ends
January 25	Thursday	No School (Students Only) / Clerical Day
January 26	Friday	No School (Students Only) / District Professional Development
January 29	Monday	Second Semester Begins / Quarter 3 Begins
February 2	Friday	Early Dismissal – Half Day/Teacher Professional Development
February 5	Monday	Business and Finance Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
February 6	Tuesday	Education Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
February 7	Wednesday	Quarter 2 Report Card Distribution
February 16	Friday	Early Dismissal – Half Day/Teacher Professional Development
February 21	Wednesday	Agenda Review 6:30PM
February 26	Monday	Public Hearing 6:00PM
February 28	Wednesday	Legislative Session 6:30PM
March 1	Monday	Early Dismissal – Half Day/Teacher Professional Development
March 4	Monday	SAT School Day – 11 th Grade Business and Finance Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
March 5	Tuesday	Education Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
March 7	Thursday	Quarter 3 Interim Progress Report Distribution
March 13	Wednesday	Agenda Review 6:30 PM
March 15	Friday	Early Dismissal – Half Day/Teacher Professional Development
March 18	Monday	Public Hearing 6:00 PM
March 20	Wednesday	Legislative Session 6:30 PM
March 25-29	Monday-Friday	No School- Spring Break Vacation
April 2	Tuesday	Business and Finance Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
April 3	Wednesday	Education Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
April 5	Friday	Quarter 3 Ends
April 8	Monday	Quarter 4 Begins
April 10	Wednesday	School Only Vacation Day- Eid al-Fitr
April 17	Wednesday	Agenda Review 6:30 PM
April 19	Friday	Quarter 3 Report Card Distribution
April 22	Monday	Public Hearing 6:00 PM
April 23	Tuesday	School Only Vacation Day- Election Day
April 24	Wednesday	Legislative Session 6:30 PM
April 22-26	Monday - Friday	PSSAs ELA Testing Window
April 29-May 3	Monday – Friday	PSSAs Math, Science, and Make-ups Testing Window
May 6	Monday	Business and Finance Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
May 7	Tuesday	Education Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
May 13	Monday	Spring Keystone Exams Begin
May 15	Wednesday	Agenda Review 6:30PM
May 17	Friday	26 th Annual Take a Father to School Day Quarter 4 Interim Progress Report Distribution
May 20	Monday	Public Hearing 6:00PM
May 22	Wednesday	Legislative Session 6:30 PM
May 24	Friday	Spring Keystone Exams End
May 27	Monday	All PPS Holiday – Memorial Day
June 10	Monday	Business and Finance Committee Meeting 5:30 PM

DISTRICT CALENDAR

A PDF can be found on our homepage

June 11	Tuesday	Education Committee Meeting 5:30 PM
June 12	Wednesday	Last Day of School- All Students 5 th and 8 th Grade Promotions
June 13-14	Thursday-Friday	High School Commencements
June 18	Tuesday	Agenda Review 6:00PM
June 19	Wednesday	All PPS Holiday – Juneteenth
June 24	Monday	Public Hearing 6:00PM Quarter 4 Report Card Distribution
June 26	Wednesday	Legislative Session 6:30 PM
<p align="center">Dates are subject to change.</p> <p>Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender (including gender identity or expression), sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or disability in its programs activities or employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries may be directed to the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Title IX Coordinator or the Section 504/ADA Title II Coordinator at 341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, (412) 529-3950, TitleIXCoordinator@pghschools.org or (412) 529.HELP (4357).</p>		

BELL SCHEDULES

At the Obama Academy

Morning Entry Begins 7:15 a.m. Breakfast 7:15-7:35 a.m.

Grades 11-12	
1	7:40-7:49
2	7:53-8:37
3	8:41-9:24
4	9:28-10:11
5	10:15-10:58
6	11:02-11:32
7-8	11:36-12:19
9-10	12:23-1:06
11	1:10-1:53
12	1:57-2:40

Grades 9-10	
1	7:40-7:49
2	7:53-8:37
3	8:41-9:24
4	9:28-10:11
5	10:15-10:58
6-7	11:02-11:45
8	11:49-12:19
9-10	12:23-1:06
11	1:10-1:53
12	1:57-2:40

Grades 6-8	
1	7:40-7:49
2	7:53-8:37
3	8:41-9:24
4	9:28-10:11
5	10:15-10:58
6-7	11:02-11:45
8-9	11:49-12:32
10	12:36-1:06
11	1:10-1:53
12	1:57-2:40

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE ORGANIZATION

At the Obama Academy

The Obama Academy is an IB World School. This means that all of our students participate in a full course load of International Baccalaureate Program classes every year they study with us. The International Baccalaureate (IB) is an organization that coordinates with schools throughout the world to help students become “active, compassionate and lifelong learners.” The Obama Academy enrolls all of our students in 2 separate IB Programs. From 6th-10th grades, students are all enrolled in Middle Years Program (MYP) classes. All 11th and 12th grade students are then enrolled in a full course load of Diploma Program (DP) classes.

Diploma Program (DP) classes are designed to be college level classes taught in 11th and 12th grades. Participating in DP classes requires extraordinary effort from our students. The reading, analysis and homework levels are comparable to what students will experience when they go to college. Students can take Diploma Program (DP) Exams to receive college credit. Doing well on these exams can help students receive credit for college. Simply attempting the exam is an excellent preparation for further learning. Even though completing these exams is not necessary for graduation, **we expect Obama Academy students to take at least one DP Exam their Senior year.**

To develop students into well rounded individuals, and prepare them for the rigors of the DP classes, our students all take Middle Years Program (MYP) classes from 6th through 10th grades. Middle Years Program classes are designed to give students the breadth of knowledge and skills they will need to complete the rigorous DP courses in 11th and 12th grades.

The Middle Years Program culminates with students completing a Personal Project in their 10th grade year. All Obama Academy students are required to submit their Personal Project in time for evaluation by the International Baccalaureate Organization in April. The Personal Project also counts as your Pittsburgh Public Schools' Graduation Project.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE ORGANIZATION MISSION STATEMENT

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end, the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.



These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

At the Obama Academy

Students learn best when their families are engaged in their learning and school community. There are several ways you can be involved in your child's education at the Obama Academy.

CHECK GRADES AND ATTENDANCE ONLINE

Parents and guardians have access to their students' grades and attendance through the Home Access Center (HAC). A link to log in to HAC can be found on the PPS website (<https://www.pghschools.org/Page/4928>) Logging in as a parent or guardian will allow you to view information for all of your students currently enrolled in PPS. If you do not remember your login information, you have to contact the district help line, 412-529-HELP (4357)

Grades are updated bi-weekly on Fridays. Please alert administration if you do not see updates.

KEEP YOUR RECORDS UP TO DATE

If you move, or change your phone number or email address, please inform the school so that you can be sure to receive all of the vital information we send out about your child's education. Call the main office 412-529-5980, and tell them that you need to update your address or phone number.

ATTEND MONTHLY CONFERENCES

Beginning in October, we will hold open parent conferences the first Thursday of every month, from 2:45-3:10 p.m. Please call to make an appointment for the monthly conferences. If Covid-19 protocols prevent us from having in person parent conferences, we will be able to meet with your students' teachers via Teams meetings.

USE ONLINE INFORMATION SOURCES

The Obama homepage (<https://www.pghschools.org/ibworld2>) has announcements about upcoming events posted. You can also sign up for our weekly informational [email blasts](#) and our Instagram account [obamaacademynews](#). Obama Academy teachers use Talking Points as a way to quickly communicate with families. Download the Talking Points app on to your phone today. There is also an Facebook page you can join. Barack Obama Academy of International Studies 6-12 @PghObama School.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Keep Our Community Safe

MASK REQUIREMENTS

Students, staff, and guests must abide by the mask requirements set by the Pittsburgh Public School District. These requirements may change depending on the level of community transmission of COVID-19. The current PPS mask requirement can be found at the bottom of the PPS homepage, <https://pghschools.org>

COVID-19 EXPOSURE PROCEDURES

Students who were in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID -19, or test positive themselves, must inform the Obama Academy Office immediately. Close contact is defined by the district as being less than 3 feet apart from someone for 15 minutes or more, without a mask.

To report a positive test or potential exposure, families should call the Obama Academy office (412) 529-5980 or complete the following online form. <https://tinyurl.com/boaiscovidreport>

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT (CONT.)

At the Obama Academy

Join the PTSA- The Parent Teacher Student Association meets

The PTSA was created to “support and provide resources to the Obama Academy community, fostering an outstanding educational experience through communication, engagement and unity. The meet once a month. You can email the PTSA for more information at obamaptsa@gmail.com.

Join the PSCC- Parent School Community Council

The purpose of the Pittsburgh Obama Academy PSCC is to provide ongoing communication between the school and parents, guardians and community groups regarding issues that are important to the success of our students. PSCC Meetings will alternate between the 2nd Wednesday of the month in an evening and the 2nd Wednesday of the month in a morning. The meetings will be virtual using Microsoft Teams. Links to join will be sent via email and Talking Points the week of the meeting.

Semester 1 Meetings

Wednesday, September 20 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, October 11 8:30-9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, November 8 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, December 13 8:30-9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, January 10 6:30-7:00 p.m.

Semester 2 Meetings

Wednesday, February 14 8:30-9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 13 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, April 17 8:30-9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, May 8 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Volunteer at the Obama Academy

We encourage parents to take an active role at Pittsburgh Obama by volunteering their services and expertise. We welcome all parents on a regular, as well as an occasional basis, to assist in the daily programming. Go to the PPS volunteer page to obtain all of the necessary forms and clearances to be able to volunteer. (<https://www.pghschools.org/Page/3958>)

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Absences, Lates Early Dismissals, Closings

ABSENCES

Parents or guardians must turn in written explanations for Excused Absences within three (3) calendar days of students' absences. If the school does not receive a written explanation within three (3) calendar days of any absence, the absence will be permanently counted as Unexcused and/or Unlawful. Students should drop their absence notes off in the main office, and put them in the appropriate grade level box.

LATES

When students are late, they must use their id cards to scan into the building to record their arrival times. If the id scanner is unavailable, they need to sign in on the tardy sheet.

EARLY DISMISSALS

Any student requesting an early dismissal should present a request to the office at the beginning of the school day. The request should include:

- student's name

- homeroom

- date

- time

- reason for early dismissal

- a parent or guardian's signature and a

- telephone number at which the parent or guardian may be reached.

Requests for early dismissals should be made over the phone only in case of emergency. The school will reach out to the parent or guardian to confirm the students' early dismissals. At the time designated, the student must report to the main office to complete the sign out process.

Requests for early dismissals can be turned in to the main office by hand at the start of the day or submitted on the following online form. <https://tinyurl.com/boaisearlydismiss>

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

Should an emergency arise, or serious weather conditions make roadways impassable, the District may cancel school for the day, delay the start time, or move instruction to an online platform. Announcements will be made on local radio and TV stations, robo-calls and talking points messages may also be sent and announcements posted on the District homepage <https://www.pghschools.org/ibworld2>

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

update Contact and Health Information

ADDRESS, PHONE AND EMAIL INFORMATION

It is important that the Obama Academy has the contact information for all families. If there is a change in your address, phone number or contact email, please inform the main office 412-529-5980 immediately.

Start of the Year Information

At the start of the school year there are several forms that must be completed and submitted to the office.

Emergency Care Form (All Students) A copy can be found on the Obama Academy Homepage
www.pghschools.org/ibworld2

School Medication Policy

Any medication to be taken by a student during school hours must be brought to the office immediately upon the student's arrival at school.

Medication will be dispensed in accordance with the district guidelines identified below:

- Most medications (prescription and non-prescription) shall be administered in school **only** on a written order of a family physician and a written request from parent/guardian/family.
 - Rescue Medications that have been specifically permitted by School Health Services to be in the possession of the child, must be registered in the office. The school nurse practitioner will see to training the child, informing the staff and monitoring the use of these medications.
 - All medications will be dispensed under the supervision of the school nurse practitioner.
- All medications must be in the original pharmacy container(s).

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Cafeteria and Library

CAFETERIA SERVICES

Free breakfast is served in the cafeteria from 7:15– 7:35 a.m. All students must leave this area at that time and report to homeroom at 7:40.

As an integral part of the total school program, breakfast and lunch are provided to all students free of charge. Meals are carefully planned so that students may be served well balanced meals. Observing the following rules will help create a pleasant, orderly and efficient cafeteria:

Lines at serving areas are to be single file. Each student is provided with an account utilizing a five digit code they are asked to key in at the cash register, or utilize their Student ID.

Students may use the lavatories or obtain a drink of water during the lunch period. However, they are expected to be considerate of others who may also wish to use such facilities.

Students may converse quietly with other students at their table. Visiting from table to table is permitted.

All trash from lunches is to be placed in the trash cans provided. Each student should help clean their own area. If food is spilled, the student is to clean the spillage.

Misconduct or abuse of the cafeteria facilities as outlined below may result in exclusion from cafeteria privileges and could result in suspension:

Refusing to follow and obey the direction of the cafeteria supervisors and the general rules of cafeteria operations.

Throwing food or an object(s) in the cafeteria.

Leaving the cafeteria without authorization from the person in charge.

Being in an unauthorized area of the building without permission after being given a verbal warning.

Inciting a general disturbance in the cafeteria

*****PLEASE NOTE*****

Disciplinary action may be taken at the administration's discretion in accordance with our discipline code.

LIBRARY

Our library media center is located on the second floor in the center of the building. It is a busy place in constant use by students and faculty for many purposes. Students may visit the cafeteria from lunch if they have a pass from the librarian.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Entering and Leaving the Building

ENTERING THE BUILDING

Students will be able to enter the school at 7:15 a.m. each morning and dismissed at 2:40.

When dropping your child off or picking up your student up please use East Liberty Blvd or North Beatty Street

At the start of school in the morning, all middle school students should enter the building at stairwell C from E. Liberty Blvd. This entrance is located at the end of the ramp by the parking lot.

High school students will use the main entrance located on Highland Ave.

After 1st period, all students should enter the building through the main entrance located on Highland Ave.

All students must be picked up on time at the end of the day or they must catch the bus home if they are PAT bus riders. Teachers and staff will not be available for late pick-ups as we will be engaging in professional learning at the end of the school day.

LEAVING THE BUILDING

While school is in session (which includes after school activities), students are not permitted to leave the school grounds unless authorized to do so by a building administrator. Students cannot go to Sunoco during school hours. Students may not use uber eats or any other delivery service to drop food off during school hours. **Students who leave the premises without permission will be subject to consequences based on the student code of conduct.**

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

GPA

There is more to learning than the final letter grade that shows up on a report card, but the reality of academic life is that grades and GPA matter a great deal.

TO BE ABLE TO ATTEND HIGH SCHOOL AT THE OBAMA ACADEMY, MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS MUST HAVE A 2.5 GPA IN THE 7TH GRADE.

TO BE ABLE TO REMAIN IN THE OBAMA ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL, STUDENTS MUST MAINTAIN A 2.0 GPA.

TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE PITTSBURGH PROMISE, STUDENTS MUST HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL GPA OF 2.5 OR HIGHER.

How to Calculate GPA—Middle School

A GPA is a 4 point scale that provides a rough estimation of how you are performing in school. Your GPA is calculated at the end of every marking period. Each letter grade is assigned a point value.

A=4 B=3 C=2 D=1 E=0

At the end of the marking period, all of your classes' points are added together, and then that number is divided by the total number of classes.

1st Marking Period Example 1

Classes	Grade	Points
Communications	B	3
French	B	3
Design	B	3
Phys. Ed.	C	2
Visual Art	A	4
Math	A	4
Science	C	2
World History	A	4
TOTAL		25
GPA		3.125
(25 points divided by 8 classes)		

1st Marking Period Example 2

Classes	Grade	Points
Communications	C	2
French	C	2
Design	C	2
Phys. Ed.	A	4
Visual Art	D	1
Math	C	2
Science	C	2
World History	B	3
TOTAL		18
GPA		2.25
(18 points divided by 8 classes)		

At the end of the year, the 4 GPAs will be averaged together and divided by 4. This will be the students' final GPA for the year. This final GPA must be above 2.5 for students to be eligible to apply for high school at the Obama Academy.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

GPA Continued

How to Calculate GPA—High School

High School GPAs are calculated on a semester basis. A semester consists of 2 marking periods and a final exam grade. A semester GPA will consist of 3 parts. 40% will be the first marking period in that semester. 40% will be the second marking period. 20% will be the results of a final exam.

1st Marking French Semester Grade Example

French Grade

1st Marking Period Grade: 85%

2nd Marking Period Grade: 80%

Final Exam Grade: 94%

Final Grade: 84.8% = B

Weighted Classes

All Obama Academy high school classes are considered For weighted classes, you would multiply the points associated with a grade by 1.5. So in a weighted class, a B would be worth 4.5, rather than 3.

Weighted GPA Example no honors class

Classes	Grade	Points
English	B	3
Japanese	B	3
Design	B	3
Phys. Ed.	C	2
Visual Art	A	4
Math	A	4
Biology	C	2
World History	A	4
TOTAL		25
GPA		3.125
(25 points divided by 8 classes)		

Weighted GPA Example with honors class

Classes	Grade	Points	Honors Points
English (honors)	B	3	4.5
Japanese	B	3	3
Design	B	3	3
Phys. Ed.	C	2	2
Visual Art	A	4	4
Math (honors)	A	4	6
Biology (honors)	C	2	6
World History	A	4	4
TOTAL		25	32.5
GPA		3.125	4.06
(32.5 points divided by 8 classes)			

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Service in Action

Service is an important part of the learning at the Obama Academy. As an IB school, we expect all our students to participate in service activities throughout their time with us. Students enrolled in the MYP program at the Obama, which is all students from 6th through 10th grades are expected to complete and reflect on service work. 6th–8th grade students are expected to complete at least 10 hours of service work over the course of a school year. 9th and 10th grade students are expected to complete at least 20 hours of service work.

There will be opportunities for the completion of service throughout the course of the year in school, but students are encouraged to participate in activities outside of the school as well.

Once students have completed service, they should complete a reflection form about the work that they did. Students should focus on what aspects of the Learner Profile they developed while completing the service, as well as what Learning Outcomes they found. The learning outcomes looked at in the MYP are.

Awareness – become more aware of your own strengths and areas for growth

New Skills – undertake challenges that develop new skills

Initiative – discuss, evaluate and plan activities that are driven by you

Commitment – persevere in action

Collaboration – Work Collaboratively with others

Global Values – Develop international-mindedness through global engagement and intercultural understanding

Ethics – consider the ethical implications of your actions.

<https://tinyurl.com/eaglesservice>

A form summarizing how much service work has been submitted will be sent home with progress reports each marking period.

If students are struggling to find some service activities, they may find some activities on the Obama Service Page.

[Website with Service Information.](#)

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Dress Code

We expect Obama Academy students to be dressed appropriately. If a student and /or parent/guardian are uncertain as to the appropriateness of clothing for school, they should check with the school principal, director or assistant principal before the clothing is worn to school. The principal, director or assistant principal will be the final judge of the appropriateness of student dress and appearance.

The following are dress and footwear items that are prohibited.

1. Clothing that is revealing, suggestive, immodest or that depicts obscene, vulgar, disturbing, distracting, or inappropriate terminology or images. Examples of such dress include halter tops, tank tops, mesh clothing, muscle shirts, boxer shorts, bicycle shorts, see through clothing, any skirt, shirt, or other top that exposes undergarments or bare midsection.
2. Clothes that advertise, promote or display alcohol, illegal drugs or suggest, promote, or imply the use of alcohol or drugs.
3. Clothes which depict or suggest sexual content, vulgar images, or obscene language.
4. Clothes that advertise, promote, display, or imply the use of tobacco products.
5. Clothes that depict violent acts or weapons.
6. Clothes that depict bigotry, hatred, and discrimination.
7. Clothing that depicts cults, gangs, or membership therein.
8. Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be no shorter than 4 inches above the knee when student is standing.
9. Jeans/pants with large holes that reveal the body above the mid-thigh are not permitted. Shorts or leggings must be worn underneath to cover the holes
10. Hats, caps, visors, bandanas, bandana patterned headbands, scarves and do-rags are not to be worn in school.
11. Outdoor clothing (coats, jackets, large, hooded jackets, gloves, etc.) is not to be worn in the classroom.
12. Pants are to be worn around the waist with belts buckled. Underwear should not be visible.
13. Jewelry, accessories, or adornments that pose a potential health/safety hazard or that depict obscene, vulgar, disturbing, distracting or otherwise inappropriate terminology or images are prohibited.
14. Proper footwear must be worn in school at all times. The wearing of flip flops, shower or beach shoes, slippers or other footwear that has no defined heel or heel strap, or that is not securely fastened to the foot is prohibited.
15. Sunglasses should not be worn inside the building

This prohibition shall be in effect during regular school hours and at any school-sponsored event whether on or off school premises.

SWIMSUITS IN PHYS. ED CLASS

On days when students have swimming classes, they are required to take home wet swimsuits and towels in a plastic swim bag. Swimsuit requirements are one-piece swimsuits with a brief cut or swim trunks. **Speedos and two-piece swimsuits are not permitted.**

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

cellphones

CELL PHONE POLICY

Cellphones are not to be used during school. Every student is assigned a personal Yondr Pouch. While the Yondr Pouch is considered school property, it is each student's responsibility to bring their Pouch with them to school every day and keep it in good working condition.

Daily Process

As students arrive to school, they will:

- 1- Turn their cellphone off
- 2- Place their cellphone inside the Pouch and secure it in front of school staff.
- 3- Store it in their backpack for the day.

At the end of the day, students will open their Pouch, remove their phone, and put it in their backpack. Students must bring their Pouch to school with them each day.

Students arriving late, or leaving early, will pouch/ unpouch their phones in the Main Office.

Violations

Pouch Damage/ Lost Pouch/ Using Cellphone During School

If a student damages their Pouch, or is caught on their phone, Administration will collect the cellphone/ Pouch, and call home.

1st Occurrence: Parent/ Guardian will be notified by teacher or administration. The student's phone will be returned at dismissal.

2nd Occurrence: Depending on the type of violation, the student's phone will be collected and only returned to a Parent/ Guardian 21 years of age or older. Also, the rules of the students code of conduct will be applied.

Forgotten Pouch

If a student forgets their Pouch, their cellphone will be collected, and Administration will call home to remind the parent of the policy. The phone will be returned to the student at dismissal.

If a student consistently forgets their Pouch, it is considered Lost.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Property and Electronic Devices

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are held responsible for the proper care and use of all books, supplies, combination locks, apparatus or equipment furnished by the school. Students who damage school property will be required to pay for repairs and/or replacement.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are advised against bringing large sums of money or items of considerable value to school. The school cannot assume the responsibility for the loss or theft of personal property.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic devices which have no legitimate educational purpose are not to be brought to school. Electronic devices include but are not limited to headphones, iPods, video games or similar devices. Students found to be in violation of this rule will be subject to confiscation of the device and possibly suspension. Confiscated items will be returned to parents/guardians only.

WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS

Any student found with weapons as defined in the Code of Student Conduct, will be subject to consequences outlined by the PPS Student Code of Conduct.

ATHLETICS

Get Involved

SPORTS PHYSICALS

Any students wishing to try out and participate in any sport must have a completed physical before being permitted to participate. The Board of Education requires a physical for each school year. If a student participates in multiple athletic activities throughout the school year, each new season will require a physical re-examination. All necessary forms can be found on the PPS Athletic page (<https://www.pghschools.org/Page/677>)

A limited number of free school physicals will be provided each season on a first come, first serve basis.

GPA REQUIREMENT

High school students must have at least a 2.0 GPA to be considered eligible for sports participation. This is checked each report period throughout the school year.

SPORTS SEASONS

The following sports are available in each season

Middle School Sports

FALL

Cross Country
Boys and Girls Volleyball

WINTER

Swimming
Basketball
Wrestling

SPRING

Boys and Girls Soccer

High School Sports

FALL

Cross Country
Girls Volleyball
Football
Girls Tennis
Boys and Girls Soccer

WINTER

Swimming
Basketball
Wrestling

SPRING

Boys Volleyball
Track
Baseball
Softball

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAURETE

Learner Profile

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

Open-Minded

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

Principled

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

Caring

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.



Inquirers

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

Communicators

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Reflective

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

Knowledgeable

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.



Balanced

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

Thinkers

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

Risk-Takers

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAURETE

Terminology

The IB has unique terms to refer to things, so that all around the world, students at IB school can share a common vocabulary and make connections.

Subject Names

Design— Learning about creative problem solving processes MYP only

Individuals and Societies—Social Studies MYP and DP

Language Acquisition— World Language MYP and DP

Language and Literature— English MYP and DP

Theory of Knowledge—Philosophy of Knowledge DP Only

Grade Names

MYP Year 1—6th Grade

DP Year 1—11th Grade

MYP Year 2—7th Grade

DP Year 2—12th Grade

MYP Year 3—8th Grade

MYP Year 4—9th Grade

MYP Year 5—10th Grade

Diploma Program Exams

Diploma Candidates—students sitting for the full IB Diploma, taking DP exams in all 6 classes, turning in an Extended Essay and TOK Presentation to IB and submitting 100 CAS Hours.

Certificate Candidates—students taking 4 or fewer DP exams. Not sitting for the full Diploma

Higher Level Exams—More challenging DP exams. To receive college credit, students need to take HL exams. Diploma Candidates need to take at least 3 HL exams.

Standard Level Exams—Slightly shorter DP exams. Students can take at more 3 of these exams if sitting for the full Diploma.

MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAM

Grades 6-10



MYP Model Explanation

At the center of the MYP model, you can see the student. Immediately surrounding the student is the Learner Profile, a list of 10 characteristics that all IB schools work to develop in our students. The next ring of the circle are the Global Contexts, Concepts, and the Approaches to Teaching and Learning. As teachers design instruction, these are the big picture ideas we keep in mind to ensure our students' experiences are engaging and placed in a framework. Action, Service, Community and Personal Projects, the next ring are the activities that students engage in to better the state of the world. The final list are the 8 subject areas that we teach to keep kids well rounded.

MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAM

Personal Project

The MYP Personal Project is designed to be the culmination of students' MYP experience and prepare them for the challenges of the Diploma Program classes they will be taking in 11th and 12th grades.

In the MYP Personal Project, students can learn about almost anything that interests them. Students really can work on just about anything with the Personal Project. As long as it is something that interests students, and helps them learn something new, they can make it into a Personal Project. In addition to the Product that students create, at the end they will also need to compose a Report. The Product is something that they have created or done, and the Report describes their process and outlines how they grew from the experience.

There are two kinds of products:

- Something that students do
- Something that students make

Some examples of something that students DO could be:

- Hosting a basketball camp for kids
- Training for a triathlon
- Collecting items for needy people, in the United States, or abroad
- Hosting a walk to raise funds and awareness of a cause that is important to you.

These are not tangible. You can't hold them in your hand, but they can be very meaningful. If a student's Product is something that you do, it is important that they document your process along the way and make sure that there is some kind of evidence of what was accomplished.

Some examples of something that students MAKE could be:

- Designing and sewing clothing
- Making a musical instrument
- Creating a website, video game or app
- Writing a short story or novel
- Creating a piece of art
- Making a video documentary or pod-cast about something that interests you

All 10th grade students will be assigned a supervisor to help guide them through the Personal Project. The Supervisor will help students work through the Personal Project. They will probably NOT be an expert in whatever field students chose to do, but they will be experts in helping them figure out how to stay organized and focused on their goals, and assisting them overcome whatever obstacles are in their way. Students will meet with their Supervisors monthly.

MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAM

Subject Areas

To ensure that students receive a well rounded academic education, students at MYP school are all required to take classes in 8 subject areas every year of their enrollment.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

6TH GRADE COMMUNICATION	10TH GRADE ENGLISH
7TH GRADE COMMUNICATION	JOURNALISM
8TH GRADE COMMUNICATION	
9TH GRADE ENGLISH	
JOURNALISM	

INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETIES

GEOGRAPHY	
WORLD HISTORY	AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY
U.S. HISTORY TO 1850	
CIVICS	
U.S HISTORY 1850– PRESENT	

MATHEMATICS

6TH GRADE MATHEMATICS	ALGEBRA 2
7TH GRADE MATHEMATICS	STATISTICS
8TH GRADE MATHEMATICS	
ALGEBRA 1	
GEOMETRY	

SCIENCES

6TH GRADE SCIENCE
7TH GRADE SCIENCE
8TH GRADE SCIENCE
BIOLOGY
CHEMISTRY

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

FRENCH 6TH-10TH GRADE
SPANISH 6TH-10TH GRADE
GERMAN 6TH-10TH GRADE
MANDARIN 6TH-12TH GRADE
JAPANESE 6TH-10TH GRADE

ARTS

VISUAL ARTS	THEATER
STEEL DRUMS	MOVEMENT
BAND	
CERAMICS	
ACTING	

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

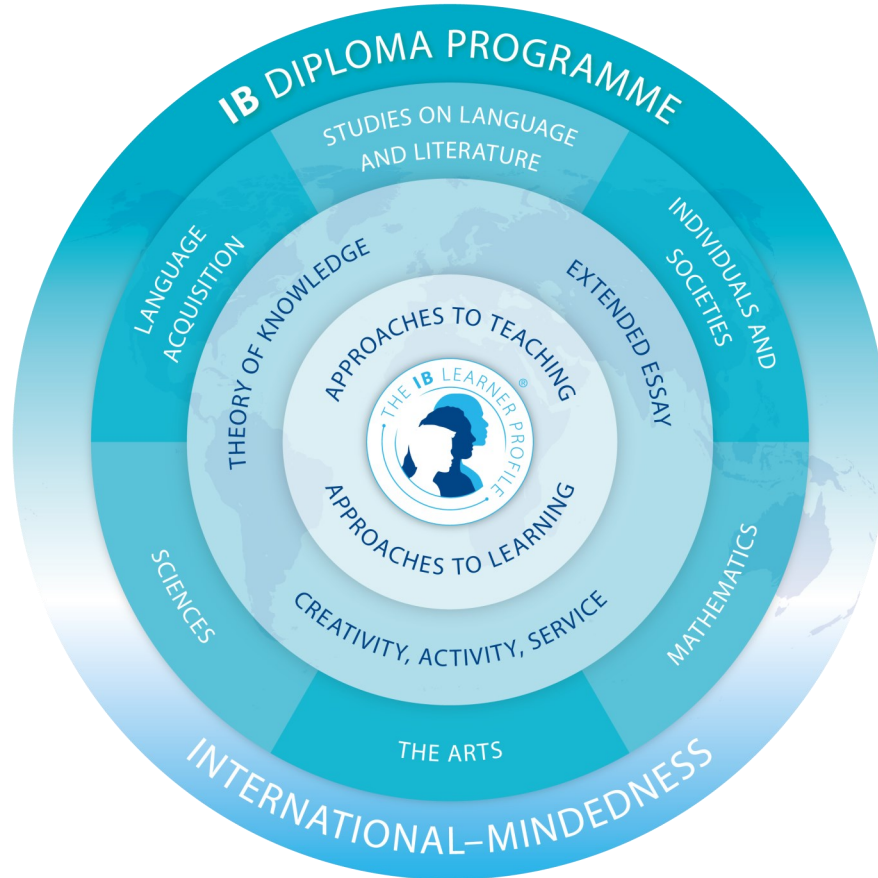
6TH GRADE PE AND HEALTH	9TH GRADE PE
7TH GRADE PE AND HEALTH	10TH GRADE PE
8TH GRADE PE AND HEALTH	
9TH GRADE HEALTH	
10TH GRADE HEALTH	

DESIGN

6TH GRADE DESIGN
7TH GRADE DESIGN
8TH GRADE DESIGN
9TH GRADE DESIGN
10TH GRADE DESIGN

DIPLOMA PROGRAM

Grades 11-12



DP Model Explanation

At the center of the DP model, you can see the student. Immediately surrounding the student is the Learner Profile, a list of 10 characteristics that all IB schools work to develop in our students. The next ring of the circle are the Approaches to Teaching and Learning. As teachers design instruction, these are the big picture ideas we keep in mind to ensure our students' experiences are engaging and placed in a framework. Theory of Knowledge, the Extended Essay and Creativity, Action and Service Hours make up the next ring, as the activities that students engage in to better the state of the world. The final list are the 6 subject areas that we teach to keep kids well rounded.

DIPLOMA PROGRAM

Subject Areas

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

11TH GRADE ENGLISH

12TH GRADE ENGLISH

INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETIES

HISTORY OF THE AMERICAS

PSYCHOLOGY

TOPICS IN 20TH CENTURY HISTORY

MATHEMATICS

MATH STUDIES 11

MATH STUDIES 12

SCIENCES

11TH GRADE PHYSICS

12TH GRADE BIOLOGY

12TH GRADE SPORTS SCIENCE

12TH GRADE CHEMISTRY

12TH GRADE PHYSICS

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

SPANISH

FRENCH

JAPANESE

MANDARIN

ARTS

FILM

MUSIC

VISUAL ARTS

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE AND EXTENDED ESSAY

11TH GRADE TOK

11TH GRADE EXTENDED ESSAY

12TH GRADE TOK

PHYSICAL EDUCATION PE IS THE ONE NON DP CLASS THAT STUDENTS TAKE IN 11TH AND 12TH GRADES

11TH GRADE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PPS MAGNET POLICY

Know your rights and responsibilities

ACCEPTANCE TO THE OBAMA ACADEMY

The Obama Academy is a whole school magnet program. Every student who attends the Obama Academy must apply with the PPS Magnet Office (412)529-3991 magnetoffice@pghschools.org. All students who are admitted to any PPS magnet program must agree to comply with any course requirements, procedures and dress codes that are set forth in the school description to begin their program.

6th Grade Acceptance

5th grade students from PPS language feeder schools, Linden, Liberty, Phillips and Fulton have automatic acceptance to the Obama Academy, as long as the list the Obama Academy 1st on their magnet application, turn their application in on time, and agree to continue to study the language they were learning at the feeder school. If there are still spaces available after all of these students have been admitted, a weighted lotter will be used to select the remainder of the class. Students coming in through the weighted lottery will be registered for an introductory language class.

9th Grade Admittance.

Everyone who wants to come to the 9th grade at the Obama Academy MUST submit an application to the PPS magnet office. Even current 8th grade Obama Academy students must apply to come to the 9th grade. Current 8th grade Obama students have automatic acceptance to the 9th grade, as long as they apply on time, list the Obama Academy first on the application, turn their application in on time, agree to continue to study the language they have been learning from 6th-8th grade, and meet the entrance criteria for 9th grade. If there are still spaces in the 9th grade, those spots will be filled with students taken in a weighted lottery, who also meet the criteria. The criteria for admittance to 9th grade at Obama Academy are: a 2.5 GPA or higher in 7th grade, a proficient or better score on the English PSSA and no major suspensions.

7th, 8th, 10th, 11th, 12th Grade Entry

Because of scheduling and staff limitations, we are not able to provide students introductory language courses in 7th, 8th, 10th, 11th or 12th grades. Students who apply to come to the Obama Academy in one of these grades must pass a proficiency exam to demonstrate their ability to keep up with the language class in that particular grade level. Passing this exam is not a guarantee of admittance to Obama Academy.

PPS MAGNET POLICY (CONT)

Know your rights and responsibilities

REMAINING AT THE OBAMA ACADEMY

To remain a student in the Obama Academy magnet program students must meet the following criteria.

Middle School Criteria

High School Criteria

Students who fail to meet the criteria listed above, or who look as if they are in danger of failing to meet them in the near future may be placed on probation.

EQUITY STATEMENT

We at Pittsburgh Obama believe:

- All students will have access to educational resources in order to thrive emotionally, socially, and academically.
- Meaningful, positive relationships between all community members empower students to be successful.
- It is essential to commit to learning what is culturally relevant, make connections with students, and implement what matters to them.
- Students will develop skills to be independent, active life-long learners.
- That student voice is a critical component to everyday learning and students will be empowered to advocate for themselves and others.

Commitments:

- We will commit to continually educating ourselves in the areas of equity and culturally responsive teaching.
- We will commit to implementing and upholding equitable practices and culturally relevant pedagogy in our school and daily lives.
- We commit to meeting the individual needs of all students.
- We will work to see the conditions we are conditioned not to see (privilege, achievement gap, understanding our students' culture).
- We will call out inequities.
- We respect and celebrate individuality.
- We are committed to having honest and open conversations about student progress in positive terms, emphasizing growth.
- We are committed to actively engage in knowing the communities our students live in.
- We will not confuse equality with equity.
- We will invite the students to lead with their voices when their lived experiences are more relevant than our perspective.

HOMework AND LATEwork POLICIES

HOMEWORK POLICY

Students are responsible for completing all work assigned in a timely manner. This independent practice serves as a strong foundation for academic success. Students are expected to record homework in the agenda book daily and complete it as assigned. Parents and students alike will benefit by reviewing the agenda books and the completed work on an ongoing basis.

The purpose of homework is to help the students LEARN. Students need to view homework as a study tool that helps them to practice what is learned in the classroom. It serves as a vital supplement to the lesson. Without it, the learning that is done in the classroom is superficial, because it is not reinforced or practiced. The effect of homework is most beneficial when it is completed in conjunction with the lesson.

Late Work Policy

Student grades should be an undiluted reflection of what they know, understand, or are able to do. At Pittsburgh Obama, we believe students should receive feedback in the forms of next steps and grades that reflect understanding. We understand that students may turn in assignments of any kind late, we must still assess their knowledge and not their tardiness. That is just one form of dilution of grades. We support both forms of thought and believe that students need to understand the consequences of not meeting deadlines. Student work should first be assessed as if it were turned in on time, then calculated with points deducted. Both scores should be visible on student work.

Thus, the Obama late policy is as follows:

- 1-2 days late – no deduction
- 3-5 days late 1% point
- 6 days and beyond – 3% points

It is a must that all three notations be written on the assignment (original score, deduction for tardiness, and the new score).

Example 1, if a student's original assessed work earned a 94% but was late, then the student's grade should be a 93% if 3-5 days late or a 91% if 6 days or more late.

Example 2, if a student's original assessed work earned a 78% but was late, then the students grade should be a 77% if 3-5 days late or a 74% if 6 days or more late.

Example 3, if a student's original assessed work earned an 81% but was late, then the students grade should be an 80% if 3-5 days late or a 78% if 6 days or more late.

The only exception to this school wide policy is that a teacher has already established a policy of accepting late work that does not exceed a 3% point deduction. Furthermore, all late work must be submitted to teachers no later than two weeks prior to grades closing for each quarter.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

A clear Academic Integrity Policy is a central component of the Obama Academy's effort to prepare students "to become well-rounded, globally competitive, compassionate and confident, in a safe and supportive environment," as outlined in our Mission Statement.

The Obama Academy's Academic Honesty Policy also helps students to develop several of the characteristics associated with the IB Learner Profile. **Principled** individuals give credit where it is due and do not take the work of others without proper attribution. Effective **Communicators** will include the sources of ideas and information expressed, so that audiences can place the work in its proper context. Those who consider themselves **Inquirers** and **Thinkers** must have a clear record of the development of their information so that they are able to **Reflect** about their work during and after its completion. No one can truly claim to be **Knowledgeable** if they are unable to explain the derivation of their opinions.

In their publication *Five Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity* the Center for Academic Integrity outlines the core principles that drive the academic integrity in their 1999 publication; *Honesty, Trust, Fairness Respect and Responsibility*. Encouraging these values at all times through our focus on the Learner Profile, not only when students submit academic assignments but throughout their day, we set students up to continue to uphold these ideals when doing academic work. By working on our students' Approaches to Learning Skills throughout the year, we provide students the tools they need to live up to these five core principles when completing academic work.

Rationale for Academic Honesty Policy

Far too often, a school's academic honesty policy is presented as a list of consequences to punish people who cheat on tests and quizzes, or try to submit work written by other people as their own when turning in a paper. The true concept of academic honesty is much broader. It covers every aspect of an IB Learner's academic behavior, both in, and outside of, class. By committing to the idea that IB Learners never do anything that may give them an "unfair advantage" over others, IB schools create an atmosphere of supportive, creative learning. By acknowledging sources of ideas and information, IB Learners demonstrate that they are willing to have their thought process critiqued by others, able to reflect on how they arrived at their own conclusions, and respect work done by others.

Every member of the Obama Academy community has responsibilities they must meet to ensure the academic integrity of the school.

Teacher Responsibilities

- Provide instruction in summarizing and paraphrasing of information
- Provide students with the subject specific format for citations and research protocols
- Inform students about proper behavior during the completion of work and exams
- Guide students to enable them to tell the difference between Collaboration and Collusion
- Explain how students can maintain academic honesty and why it is important
- Address violations of academic integrity through Restorative Practices
- Verify authenticity of student work through student conferences and online resources
- Provide feedback and additional instruction to students as needed
- Provide clear and accurate instructions for exams and assessments
- Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate where their ideas originated
- Protect the fidelity of all exams and assessments
- Review Academic Integrity Policy with students

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY (CONT.)

Student Responsibilities

- Always submit authentic, original work. All submitted work should be students' own original creations.
- When collaborating, include the names of all collaborators on the assignment. This includes homework and classwork.
- Check all work to make sure that sources have been acknowledged through accountable talk and academic citation conventions, give credit to other people working in a group.
- Cite sources according to agreed-upon, age-appropriate formats.
- Use cell phones, information technology, and library resources responsibly and with permission.
- Report violations of the academic integrity policy immediately.
- Practice integrity and fidelity in all work.
- Acknowledge assistance from experts, parents, peers, teachers, etc.
- Acknowledge sources for research.
- Seek help as needed to follow policies for academic honesty.
- Follow all instructions and rules given before and during exams and assessments.

Administration Responsibilities

- Provide support through professional development opportunities for instructional staff.
- Work with staff to effectively implement and uphold the Academic Honesty Policy.
- Investigate claims of academic misconduct in a timely and impartial fashion.

Parent Responsibilities

- Provide support and encouragement for creativity in the production of original work.
- Establish expectations for integrity and academic honesty on all work.
- Exhibit interest in students' educational experiences and assignments.
- Allow your student to independently complete projects and tasks.
- Answer questions to help clarify instructions, terminology, or expectations.

Consequences of Academic Misconduct

The Obama Academy will use restorative practices to address any instances of academic malpractice. Consequences for academic dishonesty or malpractice include, but are not limited to:

- Conference with student.
- Restorative circle to discuss and repair harm and clarify policies.
- Phone call to family.
- Appointment with peer mediation/review board.
- Resubmission of original work.
- Discipline referral or behavior tracking notation.
- Further restriction of assessment environment.
- And/or reduction of conduct grade.

Use of AI in school work

IB has issued a statement about the use of AI in your IB submitted work. IB views AI as a tool that must be cited just the same as any other reference material. Obama Academy understands that rapidly evolving technology is impacting every facet of our lives, but AI should not be used in any way to imply an original thought on the part of the student.

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Assessment Philosophy

Effective assessment plays a central role in supporting the students of the Obama Academy as they progress through the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Diploma Programmes. Fulfilling the Mission Statements of the Obama Academy, and the IBO, necessitates that students are able to gauge their progress as they “become well-rounded, globally competitive, compassionate and confident.” Comprehensive assessments provide accurate information about students’ increasing skills and knowledge, enabling students, and their families, to address shortcomings, explore strengths, and maintain perspective on their progress. Proper assessments enable teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching, monitor students’ development and guide future instruction. The common assessment language and philosophy employed by teachers and students across the subjects aids in the transfer of knowledge across disciplines and helps create interdisciplinary understanding.

Beyond tracking strictly academic progress, assessments, when properly administered, provide a framework for students, teachers and families to develop many of the skills of the **IB Learner Profile**. Assessments do more than monitor increasing **Knowledge, Thinking and Inquiry** skills. The structure provided by assessments also enables **Communication** between parties about students’ progress and learning by providing a common point of reference and language. **Reflection** is encouraged through formalized, contextual feedback about submitted work. Everyone involved in the process must be **Open-Minded** so that differencing perspectives on assignments and how they were evaluated can be discussed.

For assessments to be able to achieve these goals, students must be presented with multiple, varied assessment opportunities. These opportunities must consist of authentic tasks that enable students to demonstrate conceptual understanding, and not be dependent on mere recall of facts or simple descriptions.

Assessment Practices

Summative Assessments– At the end of each unit of work, all Obama Academy students will have an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned by completing a summative assessment. Summative assessments can take many forms. Some possible summative assessments include, but are not limited to: presentations, lab reports, research papers, exams and compositions. These summative assessments will require students to apply what they have been learning in authentic and novel situations.

At the start of each new unit of work, all teachers will inform the students about their requirements for the final summative of the assessment for the unit. To enable students to properly prepare and help them to contextualize their learning throughout the unit, teachers will provide rubrics, examples and discuss the expectations for the assignments.

Both MYP and DP summative assessments are evaluated with the programme appropriate, subject group specific, assessment criteria, using a “best-fit” approach. According to the IB publication *MYP: From Principles to Practice*, in this method of evaluation, teachers “work together to establish common standards against which they evaluate each student’s achievement holistically.” Often referred to as a “criterion-related” approach it represents a philosophy that is neither “norm-referenced” (where students must be compared to each other and to an expected distribution of achievement) nor “criterion-referenced” where students must master all strands of specific criteria at lower achievement levels before they can be considered to have achieved the next level.

Teachers will meet regularly to review summative assessments and ensure that teachers in the building are using a common methodology and philosophy when using IB assessment criteria. These reviews will take place across grade and subject boundaries to ensure continuity in application of the assessment criteria.

In addition to the Pittsburgh Public School grading reports in the above mentioned reporting devices, students will also receive MYP specific reports on their students’ progress. At the end of every year, families will receive an MYP report card, showing how well students achieved on each individual MYP criteria evaluated assessments throughout the year and assigning them a final level of achievement on a scale of 1-7, based on their results on the MYP criteria assessed for each subject. The IBMYP report card will be produced through the Managebac system.

Students and families will have online access to the district specific grades through an account with Pinnacle, the online grade-book, and will be able to access the results of MYP assessments through Managebac, and online IB organizational program.

ASSESSMENT POLICY (CONT.)

Formative Assessments- MYP and DP teachers will engage in formative assessments over the course of each unit. Formative assessments are designed to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for students to address the final summative assessment through a wide variety of different evaluations, both formal and informal. Formative assessments also enable students, teachers and families to assess the effectiveness of everyone's efforts and allow for reflection and improvement. To this end, teachers return descriptive feedback, in a timely fashion, to enable everyone to use the formative assessments to guide the process of learning.

Reporting of Results

Over the course of the school year there will be different avenues for reporting on the results of assessments and student progress. District policy requires teachers to assign letter grades A-E for each student at the end of each marking period to provide families with an overview of how each student is progressing in the subject. The grades for each subject are determined by the following scale

90-100%	- A
80-89%	-B
70-79%	-C
60-69%	-D
0-59%	-E

By District Policy, each subject has a predetermined set of categories that must be averaged together to determine the marking period grade. These categories are consistent for each subject across grade levels.

At the midpoint of each marking period, all families will receive a progress report, listing all of the tasks assigned and the student's results as they figure towards each marking period's grade. This is a more detailed listing of the students achievement on each task assigned in class up to that point, as opposed to the larger scale picture provided by the marking period letter grade.

In addition to the Pittsburgh Public School grading reports in the above mentioned reporting devices, students will also receive MYP specific reports on their students' progress. At the end of every year, families will receive an MYP report card, showing how well students achieved on each individual MYP criteria evaluated assessments throughout the year and assigning them a final level of achievement on a scale of 1-7, based on their results on the MYP criteria assessed for each subject. The IBMYP report card will be produced through the Managebac system.

Students and families will have online access to the district specific grades through an account with Pinnacle, the online grade-book, and will be able to access the results of MYP assessments through Managebac, and online IB organizational program.

Homework

Continuing to study and work outside of the school day is an integral part of learning. Teachers at every grade level will assign homework to assist in student learning. There is no set minimum or maximum amount of homework that is assigned over the course of the year. Homework may consist of short assignments to be completed for the next day, or longer assignments that can take more time to complete. As a general rule, students in the earlier grades will receive more structured support and scaffolding for their homework assignments, with the supports gradually removed as students progress through the grades and increase their skills and knowledge.

Review of the Assessment Policy

At the end of every school year, there will be an opportunity for the Obama community to reflect on and modify the Assessment Policy. Information will be sent out to families and staff informing them of the review, a committee of interested individuals will be organized and proposed changes to the policy will be submitted to the Instructional Cabinet for final approval.

LANGUAGE POLICY

Language Philosophy

The development of our students' language proficiency plays a central role in the culture and life of the Obama Academy. The Mission Statements of the IB Organization and the Obama Academy cannot be realized by students unless they develop strong proficiency in multiple languages. Facility in one's native language is necessary for students develop into inquiring, confident, compassionate and caring people who have a lifelong desire for learning. For students to be globally competitive, well-rounded and respectful of other people and cultures, they need to be able to communicate with people in a second language.

The Obama Academy believes that the key to academic success is clear, concise communication across all subject areas. Since effective communication is paramount to academic achievement, each instructor has a role to play as a teacher of language.

School Language Profile

English is the language of instruction and academic governance at the Obama Academy, and the Pittsburgh Public Schools. Most Obama Academy students use English as the primary language in their homes. Thus, daily instruction across the subjects supports the development of the majority of students' home culture and language. Students who come to the Obama Academy from other language traditions are encouraged to maintain the development of their home language in addition to their English language studies.

The number of families throughout Pittsburgh speaking a language other than English at home is growing, and the presence of so many internationally recognized colleges and universities within the city limits means that access to native and near native proficient language speakers is quite high. We are committed to including these vital communities into the instruction and culture of our school not only for students who speak those languages at home, but also for those students who desire to improve their facility in second, or third, languages.

Support for Mother Tongue Development

While most students who come to the Obama Academy receive instruction in their mother tongue, English, we are committed to students maintaining other languages that our families may speak at home. To this end, we utilize the language resources of the various university and cultural groups in Pittsburgh, for both in school activities, and to support families. Additionally, we always strive to demonstrate that as global citizens, it is necessary for our students and families to achieve proficiency in more than one language.

Overview of Support for Second Language Development

As a city-wide magnet program, serving students from 6th through 12th grades, we work with students who come from a huge spectrum of second language abilities. We are committed to helping improve students' proficiency in not only their native language, but also additional languages. These efforts are not limited to the classroom, but cover after-school and community based learning experiences. All students, at the minimum, strive to improve their proficiency in English and one of the four other languages taught in the school; German, Japanese, French and Spanish. Students have a full period of language study in one of these languages every day (40 minutes for high school and 46 minutes for middle school) to ensure that they have the consistency and continuity necessary for second language acquisition. In further pursuit of language proficiency, students study the same second language throughout their academic career until graduation.

There are several points of entry into the Obama Academy for learners of varying degrees of second language proficiency.

LANGUAGE POLICY (CONT.)

6th Grade Entry

Magnet Feeder Schools- There are 4 elementary language feeder schools that include language instruction in French, Mandarin or Spanish. In their 5th grade year, students from these schools who elect to come to the Obama Academy have automatic acceptance, on the condition that they continue the study of the language they have been learning in elementary school and list the Obama Academy as their first choice on the magnet application. These students are enrolled in classes designed to take advantage of their previous language experiences.

General Population- Students who have not attended one of the language feeder schools must apply to enter through a lottery. There are no requirements for the lottery beyond living within the Pittsburgh city limits. These students are automatically enrolled in introductory level language courses. Students who have studied German, Spanish Mandarin or French may be able to take proficiency exams to pass into more advanced 6th grade classes.

9th Grade Entry

Per district policy, all students wishing to enter the Obama Academy in the 9th grade must apply and prove they meet a predetermined set of criteria.

Continuing Obama Academy Students- 8th grade students who meet the entrance criteria to Obama Academy have automatic acceptance, if they apply. Their acceptance is conditional their continuing to study language they were learning in 6th-8th grade, having a 2.5 GPA in the 7th grade, and achieving at least a Basic rating on their 7th grade English PSSA.

General Population- Students who did not attend the Obama Academy for middle school must also apply to enter a lottery. To qualify for the lottery, students must have a 2.5 GPA in the 7th grade, and achieve at least a Basic rating on their 7th grade English PSSA. Students who are selected are automatically enrolled in introductory level language courses. Students who have studied German, Spanish Japanese Mandarin or French may be able to take a proficiency exam to pass into the more advanced 9th grade class.

7th, 8th, 10th, 11th, 12th Grade Entry

Because of scheduling and staff limitations, we are not able to provide students introductory language courses in 7th, 8th, 10th, 11th or 12th grades. Students who apply to come to the Obama Academy in one of these grades must pass a proficiency exam to demonstrate their ability to keep up with the language class in that particular grade level. Passing this exam is not a guarantee of admittance to Obama Academy.

ESL Support

All students entering the Pittsburgh Public Schools must complete a Home Language Survey. On the basis of this survey, some students are administered an English language screening test. Students whose scores on this test indicates a need for ESL support will have a traveling teacher, assigned by the school district, come to the Obama Academy to support their language development and academic progress as they gain proficiency in the language of instruction.

Interdisciplinary Support of Second Language Development

Because of the commitment to second language learning, teachers from other subjects incorporate the language and culture of the four languages studied in the school, German, Japanese, French and Spanish whenever possible.

Language Acquisition Diploma Programme Testing

Students may opt to test at the Standard Level or the Higher Level Language Acquisition Exam.

INCLUSION POLICY

The Barack Obama Academy of International Studies believes that all students are able to participate fully in an International Baccalaureate education, provided they have proper support and encouragement. We are dedicated to removing barriers that may stand between students and their engagement in an IB Education.

To ensure that every Obama Academy student has full access to an IB Education, free from barriers, all Obama Academy stakeholders have responsibilities they need to meet.

Parents and Guardians are responsible for

- Communicating to teachers, administrators and support staff any information that may impact students' learning
- Supporting students at home and encouraging their participation in learning activities
- Ensuring students come to school
- Regularly accessing grade and attendance information in Home Access Center online

Teachers are responsible for

- Creating and maintaining safe and effective learning spaces
- Communicating with families about students' progress and challenges
- Providing feedback to students about their learning
- Implementing IEPs, 504 Plans, ESL support programs with fidelity
- Documenting students' growth
- Differentiating or using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to enable all students to engage with the content
- Using materials and assessments that are accessible and appropriate for all students
- Communicating concerns regarding potential barriers to learning to administration and support staff
- Building positive relationships with students
- Acknowledging how students' cultures can impact learning and engagement

Administration and Support Staff are responsible for

- Creating and maintaining safe and effective learning spaces
- Providing staff with professional development and training to support the removal of educational barriers
- Scheduling sufficient time for teachers to properly support students

Students are responsible for

- Coming to school and attending classes on time
- Participating in the learning experiences to the best of their abilities
- Providing feedback on their learning and goals to teachers, administrators, and support staff
- Reflecting on their progress

INCLUSION POLICY

The Obama Academy complies with all legal requirements surrounding students' inclusion in their IB education.

The school implements all IEPs, GIEPs, 504 Plans, and ESL support plans faithfully. If students require additional support professionals outside of the classroom, they are provided by the district. These supports can be, but are not limited to, wrap around support, learning support classrooms, ESL tutoring. The progress of students receiving additional support are monitored frequently to ensure that the additional supports are effective.

When teachers, administrators, or support staff believe that a student requires additional support, in the form of an IEP, GIEP, ESL or 504 plan, they will refer the student to the Student Services Department, who will organize the appropriate evaluation in a timely manner. Parents or guardians who request these services will be put in contact with the student services department to organize evaluation as well.