What is a 504 Plan?

A 504 Plan, sometimes called a Chapter 15 Service Agreement, is an official and structured way to ensure that qualified students with disabilities are not discriminated against and receive the same opportunities to achieve academic, nonacademic and extracurricular success as nondisabled students.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Chapter 15 of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education regulations are nondiscrimination provisions which apply to public schools. 504 Plans may include a variety of services and accommodations that meet the specific needs of individual students. They are not considered special education programs. Instead, they are written agreements outlining aids, services and accommodations that a student requires in order to equally participate in the school program.

A 504 Plan is reviewed every year by a team of individuals familiar with the student, including the student’s teacher, parent/guardian, school administrator, and school nurse, where applicable. If evaluation information demonstrates that the student no longer requires the 504 plan to equally access the school program, then the team can discontinue the plan after providing written notice to the parent/guardian.

Some students with physical or mental impairments may also qualify for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and can receive specially designed instruction through the District’s special education programs. Please contact the District’s Program for Students with Exceptionalities at 412-529-3132.

Who is Eligible?

In order to qualify for a 504 Plan, a student must have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities. Examples of major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual activities, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking and communicating. This list is provided by way of example and is not intended to cover all “major life activities” that, if substantially limited, could qualify a student for a 504 Plan.

Parents or guardians who would like to have their child evaluated for 504 services, may make a written and verbal request to the child’s principal, counselor, or social worker, and follow the steps for evaluation, as listed on the reverse side of this fact sheet.
How are Children Evaluated for a 504 Plan?

There is a formal process for requesting a student be evaluated for 504 services. Students may either be recommended for evaluation by a parent or guardian, or by a school staff member.

Parents or guardians can initiate the process by sending a written request to the principal, counselor, or social worker of the child’s school. This written request should include all relevant medical records. The District will respond in writing within 25 days of the receipt of the written or verbal request. The response shall be in the parents’ native language or mode of communication, and will include:

- A Section 504/Chapter 15 Procedural Safeguards Notice, stating what safeguards are available for the student and family.
- The District’s request for additional records and/or information, if necessary.
- The parent’s/guardian’s right to meet with the appropriate school officials to discuss the issues associated with accommodating the student.
- The parent’s/guardian’s right to file suit in federal court under Section 504.

The school is not alleviated of their obligations under 504 if the parent/guardian does not make a request for evaluation.

Any school staff member may refer a student for evaluation. If the District determines that an evaluation is appropriate, written notice will be sent to the parents/guardians in the parents’ native language or mode of communication. The written notice will include:

- A statement that the District believes the student is qualified persons with a disability under Section 504/Chapter 15.
- The basis for this belief.
- A permission form to evaluate the student for Section 504 eligibility, which will include the procedures and types of tests that will be administered.
- The District may request additional medical records, including a medical diagnosis and the basis of the diagnosis, a prognosis, and a suggested treatment plan.
- The parents’ right to inspect and review all relevant school records.
- The parents’ right to meet with appropriate school officials to discuss the issues associated with evaluating or accommodating the student.
- The requirement that the parents agree to the student’s identification as a protected persons with disabilities and execute a service agreement before the school district will provide the proposed related aids, services or accommodations.
- A copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice.

Evaluations are expected to be completed within 60 calendar days of receipt of written permission from the parent or guardian.
Pittsburgh Public Schools is committed to maintaining a safe, positive environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities are not consistent with the educational goals of the District and are, therefore, prohibited. School staff are not permitted to sanction, promote, or facilitate hazing activities.

**What is Hazing?**

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

**What is Aggravated Hazing?**

Aggravated Hazing occurs when a person commits an act of hazing as defined above that results in serious bodily injury or death to a student. If Aggravated Hazing occurs, that means the person committing hazing:

1. Acted with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the victim student; or
2. Caused, coerced, or forced the consumption of an alcoholic liquid or drug by the victim student.

Any activity described above will be deemed a violation of the District’s Anti-Hazing Policy regardless of whether the consent of the student was sought or obtained, or the conduct was sanctioned or approved by the school.

Students, parents/guardians or third parties may submit a complaint of hazing to the District for investigation.

**What do I do if I want to report hazing?**

A student who believes that they have been subject to hazing is encouraged to promptly report the incident to the school principal or designee. Students are encouraged to use the District’s report form, available from the school principal, or to put the complaint in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted and documented. Upon receipt of a complaint of hazing, the school principal or designee shall determine what, if any interim measures should be put in place to protect students from further hazing, bullying, discrimination or retaliatory conduct related to the alleged incident and report.

Need more information?

Contact Student Support Services at 412-529-3950 or studentservices@pghschools.org. For a full copy of the Code of Student Conduct, please visit pghschools.org/codeofconduct.
Regular school attendance—the key to success.

Regular school attendance is vital to every student’s academic, social, emotional and physical development. When a student attends school and actively participates in class, the student develops skills and knowledge necessary to progress from grade to grade, as outlined in the District’s curriculum objectives. It is the policy of Pittsburgh Public Schools that all students attend school every school day unless they are absent for an approved reason. Approved reasons are listed to the right.

Parents/guardians have the responsibility to see that their children attend school regularly. It is the responsibility of the school principal to enforce the attendance guidelines that have been established by the District. In many schools, the responsibility for monitoring attendance rests with the school counselor or social worker, under the direction of the principal.

When is a child considered absent?

Students are marked absent if they do not attend school for the entire day or part of the day. Individual class attendance is also taken on a daily basis, and unexcused absence from class is prohibited. Students are also considered absent if they are tardy to class or school, or are dismissed early.

Parents/guardians must provide written notification of a child’s absence within three (3) days. Students may have up to ten (10) cumulative days of excused absences with parent/guardian notification in any academic year. All absences beyond ten days require an excuse from a licensed health care professional.

Students are permitted and expected to make up any assignments, homework or exams missed due to lawfully excused absences. Parents/guardians can arrange to pick the students’ work up through school administration.

Approved reasons for absences include:

- Illness
- Student medical appointments or medical emergencies
- Bereavement
- Religious holidays or religious instruction
- Weather emergencies
- Participation in school-related activities, including field trips, mentoring, and more
- Principal-approved excuses, such as college visits, counseling or support groups, or educational vacations
- Involuntary exclusions, such as out-of-school suspensions, incarceration, or home detention

Attendance is one of several criteria that determines eligibility for The Pittsburgh Promise scholarship. Students must maintain a 90% attendance rate in order to be eligible for The Pittsburgh Promise. Out-of-school suspensions and unexcused absences count against a student who would like to receive the scholarship.

Who must attend school?

Pittsburgh Public Schools is required by law to enforce compulsory school attendance. Pennsylvania law requires all children between the ages of eight (8) and seventeen (17) attend school unless they are excused for an approved reason. If a child is enrolled in school prior to age eight (8) that child is also subject to compulsory school attendance.
Attendance Procedures

School principals implement the District’s policies regarding attendance but may also develop additional attendance referral procedures that are needed to implement compulsory school attendance for their individual school. Classroom teachers take attendance daily, including period attendance, and must report unlawful or unexcused class absences to the school principal or designee. Homeroom teachers also maintain daily attendance records and immediately report unlawful or unexcused absences to the principal. Homeroom teachers must make every effort to contact a student’s parent/guardian immediately after each unexcused absence and collect and record all written excuses for a student’s absence as required by the District policy and procedures.

When a student violates attendance policies...
The Pennsylvania Department of Education requires schools to follow these listed procedures to notify a parent/guardian of their child’s unlawful absences.

1. Parents will receive a first and second notice of their student’s absence. Notice must be made in the student’s and parent/guardian’s preferred language and mode of communication. It must also contain the legal penalties established for the violation of compulsory attendance laws as well as the name and contact information for the person responsible for monitoring attendance at the child’s school.

2. After the third unlawful absence the student is considered “habitually truant” and the parent/guardian will receive a third notice requesting they schedule a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) with the school’s counselor or social worker.

The following participants are invited to the conference in order to review the reasons for absence and discuss how to improve school attendance: the child, a parent/guardian, other non-school personnel who may be a resource, the principal or other attendance officer and recommended service providers. The outcome of the conference must be formalized in a written School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP). Please note, that the school must hold the SAIC even absent participation from the parent, student and other non-school personnel.

3. If, after creating a School Attendance Improvement Plan, a student under the age of seventeen continues to be unlawfully absent at any point within the school year, the student’s parent or guardian will be advised that if the student continues to be absent in violation of the compulsory attendance requirements further action will be initiated, which may include a citation being filed with the local magistrate.

Students under the age of 15 who are habitually truant will be referred to Allegheny County Children, Youth and Families (CYF) for services. This referral may be in addition to filing a citation with the local magistrate as long as the required School Attendance Improvement Conference has occurred.
School Dress Codes

While students maintain freedom of expression in their manner of dress, the School District has adopted a dress code to maintain a positive learning environment. Another goal of the dress code is to foster the health, safety and welfare of District students. Parents/guardians are advised to review their child’s school-specific dress code for further information.

Students are expected to wear clothing which is appropriate and compliant with the District and school dress codes at all times while at school and school-sponsored events whether on or off school premises.

School principals are authorized to establish a school-specific dress code or uniform policy. Individual school dress code provisions must be consistent with Board policy, administrative guidelines, and the Code of Student Conduct. The Dress Code policy and administrative guidelines can be found by following the links located here: www.pghschools.org/policies.

Schools that choose to include a list of prescribed dress or uniform attire in their school handbook may not delineate appropriate clothing articles by gender; but, rather, must create one list of appropriate attire for all students.

Students have the right to dress in accordance with their stated gender identity and/or expression within the parameters of District and individual school dress codes.

Students may not wear...

...any apparel or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures, or any combination thereof:

- Advocates or promotes sexual activity or violence.
- Advocates or promotes the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Demeans or degrades another because of race, sex, gender (including gender identity or expression), religion, national origin, handicap or disability.

Need more information?
Contact Student Support Services at 412-529-3950 or studentservices@pghschools.org. For a full copy of the Code of Student Conduct, please visit pghschools.org/codeofconduct.
Pittsburgh Public Schools is a drug free School District. Drugs and alcohol are strictly prohibited on school grounds, at all school activities, functions, or events, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and school-sponsored events.

Students shall not possess, use, distribute, or be under the influence of any intoxicant of any kind. Any amount of an illegal drug is considered a violation of Board policy and the Code of Student Conduct. The possession of drug-related paraphernalia also constitutes a violation of Rule 307 – Prohibition on Drugs and Alcohol.

Use of a drug as authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed health care professional for the student for whom it is prescribed shall not be considered a violation of Rule 307, but may be a violation of the Use of Medications policy.

Failure to comply with the Use of Medications policy may also result in school discipline. This policy can be viewed by visiting www.pghschools.org/policies.
Prohibition on Drugs and Alcohol (6–12) – Code of Conduct Rule 307 & 407 Violations

Pittsburgh Public Schools is a drug free School District. Drugs and alcohol are strictly prohibited on school grounds, at all school activities, functions, or events, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and school-sponsored events.

Students shall not distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while at school, at school events, or traveling to and from school.

A student shall not possess, use, distribute, or be under the influence of any intoxicant of any kind. However, in an effort to minimize exclusionary discipline, a graduated response to the handling of drugs based on the severity of an offense is outlined according to drug offense categories listed below.

**Level 3/Rule 307**

Rule 307 of the 6–12 Code of Student Conduct addresses drugs including less serious offenses of marijuana, paraphernalia, and alcohol. However, in an effort to minimize exclusionary discipline, a graduated response to the handling of drugs based on the severity of an offense is outlined according to drug offense categories listed below.

Rule 307 violations includes first-time offenses of marijuana under five (5) grams, alcohol, and possession of paraphernalia occurring in the same school year.

**Level 4/Rule 407**

Rule 407 of the 6–12 Code of Student Conduct addresses drugs including but not limited to amphetamines, barbiturates, any form of cocaine, hallucinogens, designer drugs, narcotics and serious offenses of marijuana, paraphernalia, and alcohol. Rule 407 includes possession of all drugs; high quantities of drugs that meet the threshold of intent to distribute; quantities of marijuana over 5 grams and repeat offenses of marijuana and alcohol occurring in the same school year.

Use of a drug as authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed health care professional for the student for whom it is prescribed shall not be considered a violation of this rule, but may be a violation of the District’s Use of Medications policy. Failure to comply with the Use of Medications policy may also result in school discipline. This policy can be viewed at www.pghschools.org/policies.
Drug & Alcohol Violation Response Structure – Grades 6–12

The below response structure applies to regular education students who do not qualify for the services of an IEP. The response structure recommended for students with disabilities who qualify for an IEP are noted in italics.1

The outlined suspension time frames for Level 3/Rule 307 violations may be reduced upon attendance at the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (ATOD) program. The Student will serve five (5) days of the suspension period (two (2) days for students with IEPs) and the remaining days will be held in abeyance pending the opportunity to attend the ATOD Program as outlined in these guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug Offense Categories</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paraphernalia (First or Repeat Offense)</td>
<td>Possession of paraphernalia with presence of marijuana (residue or quantity under 5 grams)</td>
<td>Repeat offense of possession of paraphernalia with presence of marijuana (any quantity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Type: Alcohol, Marijuana, or Other Drugs (First or Repeat Offense)</td>
<td>First offense of possession of alcohol; First offense of possession of marijuana (residue or under 5 grams)</td>
<td>Repeat offense of possession of alcohol**; Repeat offense of possession of marijuana (any quantity); First offense of possession of marijuana (over 5 grams); Possession of drugs other than marijuana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intent to Distribute</td>
<td></td>
<td>Possession of marijuana over 5 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Possession of marijuana (residue or under 5 grams)</td>
<td>Possession of marijuana over 5 grams or any other drug or alcohol</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tiers of Support</th>
<th>Type of Service by Code of Conduct Infraction Level</th>
<th>Program and Service Provider***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3: Subsequent and/or Serious Offenses</td>
<td>SAP Screening Referrals Alternative Out-of-School Suspension (ATOSS) Programming (Code of Conduct Violation: Level 3)</td>
<td>Designated SAP Providers SHORES Student Achievement Center ATOSS Program Alternative Education Placement Center that Cares Three Rivers Youth Drug Education Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1: Universal Prevention</td>
<td>Drug Awareness &amp; Education Speakers</td>
<td>Allegheny Recovery Krew, CVS Cares, Drug Awareness on Opioids</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Students with 504 Plans are entitled to the same disciplinary protections as those afforded to students with IEPs. Although a 45-day unilateral placement for serious infractions is not automatically available for a student with a 504 Plan, the student’s 504 Team, including the Parent/Guardian, can agree that a 45 day placement is appropriate, so long as the services in the student’s 504 Plan can be effectively implemented at the alternative setting. For students with 504 Plans, schools are directed to consult with the Office of Student Support Services and the Legal Department for guidance.
*Students are provided an opportunity to hold suspension days in abeyance for attendance and compliance with the ATOD program.

**PLEASE NOTE: Students with IEPs may not be referred to a 45-day IAES for possession of alcohol or paraphernalia. For students with IEPs, the term “drug” does not include a controlled substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other provision of federal law. See 34 C.F.R. 300.530.

***As programming may be expanded year to year, please visit the website for the most up to date to date listing: www.pghschools.org/conduct.

Possession of Vape Pens with THC Oil

Possession of a vape pen containing THC oil is a violation of the District’s drug and alcohol policy. The contents of vape pens will be tested to determine if the substance is THC oil. Students who possess one or two vape pens containing THC will be processed under Level 3/Rule 307. Possession of three (3) or more vape pens containing THC will be processed under Level 4/Rule 407. Repeat vape pen violations will also be processed under Level 4/Rule 407.

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (ATOD) Program

The District provides an Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) Diversion Program to students who have violated Code of Student Conduct rules relating to drugs, alcohol or smoking. Students must complete two (2) Saturday sessions or three (3) evening sessions. Students must complete the aforementioned required courses within 60 days of the offense in order for additional suspension days to be held in abeyance. Students must complete each session (1, 2 and 3 for weekdays and 1 and 2 for Saturdays.)

The school principal or designee handling discipline will provide the student and parent/guardian with a copy of the most updated ATOD services and supports information letter with the initial Notice of Suspension. The ATOD services and supports information letter outlines dates, times, and locations for all ATOD Program services and supports.

ATOD services and supports can also be used proactively for students.

Relevant Definitions

**Drugs:** Any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, other intoxicant or substance causing a hallucinogenic or toxic effect, designer drugs, anabolic steroid or any other controlled substance, as defined in Schedules I through V of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. § 812) and further defined by regulations at 21 C.F.R. Parts 1308.11 through 1308.15, or as defined in The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act (35 P.S. §780-101), the Pennsylvania Drug and Alcohol Abuse Control Act (71 P.S. §1690.101), (collectively “the Acts”) or any regulations relating to the Acts, or any successor statutes or regulations.

**Marijuana:** Refers to marijuana, cannabis, THC oil, or any of these substances in any form, including but not limited to, wax-based, edibles, pill, oil, topical forms such as gels, creams or ointments, forms administered by vaporization or nebulization, tincture, or liquid.

**Alcohol:** Any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified wine, or other intoxicating liquor.

**Paraphernalia:** Rolling papers, roach clips, hemostats, pipes or parts of pipes, and other homemade devices used for the ingestion of drugs.
**Drug Residue**: A small or even trace amount of a drug that remains after the larger presence of the substance has been used or removed (for example, the resin which is the byproduct of smoked marijuana).

**Repeat Drug & Alcohol Offense**: Second or subsequent drug and alcohol offense during the same school year. The total offenses in one school year shall include offenses from prior schools in which the student has been enrolled. When a student has more than one drug and alcohol offense in a given school year, any drug and alcohol offense in the subsequent school year is considered a repeat offense.

**ATOD Program**: Alcohol, Tobacco, and other Drug Diversion Program

**IAES**: Interim Alternative Education Setting

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**Need more information?**
Contact Student Support Services at 412-529-3950 or studentservices@pghschools.org. For a full copy of the Code of Student Conduct, please visit pghschools.org/codeofconduct.
Creating Safe and Inclusive Learning Environments.

Pittsburgh Public Schools is committed to creating a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students that is free from discrimination, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. To support this commitment, the District has adopted a nondiscrimination policy specific to protecting the rights of transgender and gender expansive students within its schools.

This policy specifically prohibits discrimination and harassment based upon a person’s actual or perceived gender identity or expression, and directs all allegations to be handled consistent with Board policies, laws and regulations. The Nondiscrimination-Transgender and Gender Expansive Students policy and administrative guidelines can be found at www.pghschools.org/policies.

Rights, Protections and Supports for Transgender and Gender Expansive Students

Our nondiscrimination policy sets forth many protections for transgender and gender expansive students, including:

- The right to privacy, including the right to keep one’s transgender status private at school.
- The right to be addressed by a name and pronoun that corresponds to the student’s gender identity (i.e., on certain school records and documents such as school IDs, classroom rosters or yearbooks).
- The right to have the student’s official/permanent record changed upon presentation of a court-ordered name change or through amendment of state- or federally-issued identification.
- Students shall not be required to provide evidence of medical treatments or procedures prior to asserting rights under the Board Policy.
- Students shall have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity, within the constraints of the dress code adopted by the school.
- Upon notification by a student, parent/guardian or representative that a student is undertaking, planning to undergo, or has completed a gender transition, the school will promptly inform the notifying individual and the student of the right to request a support team, consisting of appropriate school staff such as the school principal or his/her designee, counselor, social worker and teacher(s).
- With respect to all restrooms, locker rooms, changing facilities or overnight facilities, District students shall have access to facilities that correspond to their gender identity. In any gender-segregated facility, any student who is uncomfortable using a shared facility, regardless of the reason, shall upon request, be provided with a safe and non-stigmatizing alternative.
- All students shall be permitted to participate in physical education classes, intramural sports or in any other activity where students are separated by gender, in a manner consistent with their gender identity.
- Each school shall form a point team that will serve as a visible resource for all students who have questions and concerns regarding any issues related to gender identity and expression.
- Training shall be provided for all new and current staff members on their responsibilities under applicable laws and this policy, including teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers, security and health and physical education staff.

What is Title IX?

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in all federally assisted education programs and activities, including interscholastic and co-curricular athletics.
**Helpful Definitions**

**Gender Identity:** Refers to one’s internal sense of gender, which may be different from one’s assigned sex, and which is consistently and uniformly asserted most or all of the time, or for which there is other evidence that the gender identity is sincerely held as part of the individual’s core identity.

**Gender Expression:** Refers to external cues that one uses to represent or communicate one’s gender to others, such as behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, mannerisms or body characteristics.

**Transgender:** An adjective describing an individual whose gender identity is different from the individual’s assigned sex. Other terms that can have similar meanings are transsexual and trans. An individual can express or assert a transgender gender identity in a variety of ways, which may but do not always include specific medical treatments or procedures.

A student who consistently and uniformly asserts a gender identity different from the student’s assigned sex most or all of the time or for which there is documented medical evidence that the gender identity is sincerely held as part of the student’s core identity.

**Gender Transition:** The processes by which some individuals strive to more closely align their internal knowledge of gender with its outward manifestations. Some people socially transition, whereby they might begin dressing, using names and pronouns and/or be socially recognized as the "other" gender. Others undergo physical transitions in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions.

**Gender Stereotypes:** Refers to stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity, including expectations of how boys or girls represent or communicate one’s gender to others, such as behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, mannerisms or body characteristics.

**Gender Expansive (or, Gender Diverse, Gender Fluid):** A term for people whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectations, such as “feminine” boys, “masculine” girls, and those who are perceived as androgynous. Conveys a wider more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression than typically associated with the binary gender system. This includes people who identify outside traditional gender categories or identify as both genders.

**Sex Assigned at Birth or Assigned Sex:** Refers to the gender designation listed on one’s original birth certificate.
Referral of Incidents to School Police

Pittsburgh Public Schools employs its own school police force through the Division of School Safety in an effort to ensure the safety and welfare of students while in school, at school functions, traveling to and from school, and on school grounds. The Board does not authorize its school police officers to carry firearms. The Division of School Safety and the Office of Student Services coordinate training programs to ensure School Safety staff receive all relevant trainings that school counselors and social workers receive.

School police officers receive trainings specific to their roles as school police officers, including training in de-escalation and restorative practices.

Once an incident is referred to school police, school administration shall provide the following information to responding law enforcement officer(s), if such information is available and applicable:

- Whether the incident is in-progress or has concluded
- Nature of the incident
- Exact location of the incident
- Number of persons involved in the incident
- Names and ages of the individuals involved
- Weapons involved in the incident
- Whether weapons have been secured and the custodian of the weapons
- Injuries
- Whether emergency medical services or the fire department was notified.
- Identity of the school contact person
- Identity of the witnesses
- Whether the incident involves a student with a disability, the type of disability, and its impact on the student’s behavior
- Other information known to the school and believed to be relevant to the incident

Notification to law enforcement shall not be delayed for the purpose of gathering the above information. Please note that referral of an incident to school police does not necessarily mean charges will be filed against the student. Further, school administrators are responsible to ensure that any weapon, drug or other item of contraband is secured pending arrival of school police. Please take a moment to talk with your student about the need to inform an adult anytime they witness a questionable situation, whether they are at home or in school. Let them know that they play a vital role in keeping our schools safe. The guidance and direction you provide as a parents/guardians is important as we work together to keep our schools safe and welcoming for all.

Need more information?
Contact Student Support Services at 412-529-3950 or studentservices@pghschools.org. For a full copy of the Code of Student Conduct, please visit pghschools.org/codeofconduct.
Safe2Say Something Program

In keeping with the District’s pledge to maintain safe and supportive schools, the District participates in the Safe2Say Something (S2SS) Program.

The S2SS Program is an anonymous reporting system operated by the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General. The program teaches students, teachers, and administrators how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, of individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others.

Students are advised to “say something” to a trusted adult or use the anonymous Safe2Say reporting system.

Other ways to “say something.”

In addition to the Safe2Say reporting system, concerns can still be reported directly to school staff or through the District’s Parent Hotline by phone 412-529-HELP (4357), email parenthotline@pghschools.org, Parent Hotline Live Chat, or by submitting a PPS Support Parent Hotline ticket.

The Safe2Say program offers a 24/7 Crisis Center (1-844-SAF2SAY), mobile app, and website where anonymous tips can be made. For more information or to make an online tip, please visit www.safe2saypa.org.

Pittsburgh Public Schools is committed to implementing the Safe2Say Program with success, which includes quickly addressing threats to the health, safety or welfare of the school community. The District continues to advise students and community members to “say something” BEFORE it is too late. With Safe2Say, it’s easy and confidential to report safety concerns to help prevent violence and tragedies.

Need more information?
Contact Student Support Services at 412-529-3950 or studentsservices@pghschools.org. For a full copy of the Code of Student Conduct, please visit pghschools.org/codeofconduct.
Level 1 Infractions: Offenses that do not lead to out-of-school suspension.

LEVEL 1 INFRACTIONS are non-violent and are considered less serious. Level 1 infractions do not necessarily pose a threat to the health, safety, or property of others. School staff must use appropriate forms of positive, school-wide behavioral interventions and supports to correct misbehavior in less serious infractions. Staff keep a record of interventions and share this documentation at the request of a student, parent/guardian, or administrator. In most cases of Level 1 infractions, students may not necessarily be referred to an administrator. If Level 1 behaviors are repetitive after appropriate interventions have been made, the student should then be referred to an administrator.

101. Tardiness: Arriving late to school or class after the posted school start time without an appropriate excuse.

102. Truancy and Class Cuts: A consistent failure to be in a place of instruction at the assigned time. It is an absence from class or school that the reason or excuse is adequate or does not meet the criteria for an excused absence.

103. Inappropriate Personal Property: Possession and/or use of items designated by the school as inappropriate materials such as electronic devices (See Rule 111), roller blades, skateboards, cards, hats, food, etc. AND any other items that cause distraction or damage to persons or property or otherwise intervene with the learning process. Or, unauthorized possession or use of one's own prescription medication or over-the-counter mild pain medication including but not limited to items such as aspirin, Advil, Aleve, Midol, NoDoze, or herbal supplements, without parental approval and school notification.

104. Pester, Teasing, or Bothering Other Students: Non-confrontational activity that is not appropriate in a school setting and disruptive to the educational process. Engaging in rowdy, rough behavior that interferes with the safe and/or purposeful order of a school. Examples: horseplay; chasing another student in the hallway or classroom, etc.

105. Inappropriate Language or Gestures: Written or verbal remarks or gestures that show a lack of respect, rudeness, or are inappropriate. The use of words or acts which demean, degrade, antagonize, or humiliate a person or group of persons.

107. Refusal To Comply With Posted And Published School Norms and Regulations: Violation of specific posted or written school or class rules that are not necessarily disruptive behaviors; examples: repeatedly chewing gum, repeatedly unprepared for class, dress code violations, etc.

109. Minor Disruption of School/Bus: Violation of the posted or written rules of conduct for the bus that are not necessarily disruptive behaviors; examples: not in assigned seat, eating or drinking on the bus, getting on or off the bus at the wrong bus stop.

111. Possession of Pagers, Lasers, Radios and Certain Electronic or Telecommunication Devices: Students may possess electronic devices only as permitted by Board policy and applicable school based electronic device restrictions. The District generally prohibits electronic devices from being visible, used, or turned on by students during the school day in District buildings and on District property. The District does recognize that the unique needs of its schools may warrant school level electronic device restrictions. School-based Discipline Committees may establish such restrictions in a manner consistent with Board Policy 216 – Electronic Devices, and any corresponding administrative regulations. Specific information regarding electronic device restrictions must be provided to students and parents/guardians in advance of implementing any restriction.

Electronic device restrictions shall not apply when a student (1) is a member of a volunteer fire company, ambulance or rescue squad; or (2) a student who has a need for such a device due to the medical condition of an immediate family member. Students found to be in violation of electronic device restrictions may be subject to disciplinary action and confiscation of the device. Misuse of electronic devices while on school grounds, at school sponsored activities, or on buses or other vehicles provided by the School District is also prohibited. Continues on reverse side.
Misuse of an electronic devices includes using a cell phone to commit any act which violates the District’s Network Usage and Safety Policy, any individual school computing device use guidelines or mobile computing device program guidelines.

112. Disruption of Class: Repeatedly talking out in class or out of turn, being exceptionally loud, running, throwing objects, failure to follow classroom rules, or other disruptive behavior not defined elsewhere among Level 1 Infractions.

Examples of Guidance Interventions/Continuum of Approaches

- Student/teacher conference
- Parent or guardian/teacher conference
- Student/administrator conference
- Intervention by counseling staff/guidance conference
- Written reflection assignment
- Develop, review, or revise individual student planning tools (e.g., Behavior Support Plan)
- Change in schedule or class (with parent/guardian notification)
- Individual/Group counseling
- Referral to Student Assistance Program (SAP) for prevention (e.g. social emotional skills instruction groups like anger management, aggression replacement, organizational skills) and/or intervention (e.g. behavioral health counseling) services
- School attendance improvement conference/plan
- Referral to mentoring program
- Referral to District-approved Community-Based Organization (CBO)
- Community service (with parent/guardian consent)
- Use of Restorative Practices (i.e. affective statements, restorative questions, circles, small impromptu conferences, etc.)
- Referral to in-school conflict resolution programs (e.g. peer mediation)

Examples of Recommended Disciplinary Actions in Addition to Guidance Interventions Used

- Detention
- In-school suspension or other appropriate alternatives to out of school suspension
- Suspension of field trips, assemblies, or other special privileges

Need more information?
Contact Student Support Services at 412-529-3950 or studentservices@pghschools.org. For a full copy of the Code of Student Conduct, please visit pghschools.org/codeofconduct.
Level 2 Infractions: Offenses that may lead to out-of-school suspension.

LEVEL 2 INFRACTIONS are those of a serious nature that may pose a threat to the health, safety or property of any person. School staff must notify an administrator when a Level 2 infraction occurs. The notification should normally take the form of a discipline referral or statement describing the incident. The administrator must complete an investigation of the incident and gather written statements from all witnesses. The administrator must notify the student and parent/guardian of all charges, consequences and applicable due process rights during the disciplinary process.

202. Damage, Destruction, or Vandalism of School Property: A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause damage to school property, or steal or attempt to steal school property.

203. Damage, Destruction, or Vandalism of Private Property: A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause substantial damage to private property, or steal or attempt to steal private property. Valuable private property should not be brought to school. The District assumes no responsibility for the loss or theft of such property.

209. Unauthorized Presence of Students During School Hours
   A. On School Grounds: A student shall not be on any portion of the school grounds where his/her presence is unauthorized, nor remain after having been either ordered or requested to leave by any school employee possessing apparent authority over student conduct.
   
   B. On Private or Public Property: During school hours students must be in school unless they have an approved reason for absence. Students who are habitually truant from school as described in the Code of Student Conduct may be charged with truancy.

210. Smoking and Tobacco Use: A student shall not use tobacco or any electronic smoking device in school buildings, school buses, or on any property owned by, leased by or under the control of the Board of Public Education. This property includes, but is not limited to, sidewalks contiguous to school property, parking lots, athletic fields, courtyards and other campus grounds.

212. Academic Dishonesty: A student shall not engage in, participate in, nor knowingly provide another student with the opportunity to engage in academic dishonesty related to examinations, as well as laboratory, homework and other projects and assignments, whether done during or outside of school hours. Academic dishonesty shall include, but not be limited to, all forms of cheating, plagiarism, pre-exam access to test forms, representing someone else’s work as their own, and the unauthorized use of aids during examinations, projects and assignments. Unauthorized aids include but are not limited to electronic/telecommunication devices.

213. Harassment (inclusive of racial, ethnic, gender, disability, or sexual harassment): No student shall engage in harassment on the basis of known or perceived gender (including gender identity or expression), age, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity expression, national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, or political belief.

A student shall not engage in sexual harassment in violation of the District’s Prohibition of Bullying/ Harassment Policy, including but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

214. Misuse of Computers/Computer Networks/Electronic Device: A student shall not engage in any act that violates the District’s Network Usage and Safety Policy, any individual school computer use guidelines or mobile computing device program guidelines, including, but not limited to the following:
Non-school-related work
A. Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and offensive and inflammatory communications
B. Sexting or accessing obscene or pornographic materials
C. Transmission of sexually suggestive language or images
D. Loading or use of unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media
E. Destruction, modification or abuse of network hardware, software, or information
F. Impersonation of another user, anonymity and pseudonyms
G. Creation of links to other networks whose content or purpose would tend to violate the District’s Network Usage and Safety Policy
H. Videotaping fights or videotaping someone in a place where they have an expectation of privacy
I. Posting videos of inappropriate student conduct to a social media site that affects the school community or individuals within the school community in a negative manner

215. Undesirable Group Activity: The Board prohibits disruptive group activity associated with violence or the threat of violence. Disruption and/or intimidation caused by the following are prohibited:
A. The wearing of any type of clothing or jewelry associated with undesirable groups
B. The use of undesirable group language or the writing or gesturing of any sign or symbol identified or associated with undesirable groups
C. Confrontations identified or associated with undesirable groups or their activities

216. Fighting: Use of physical violence between two students, whereby it is unclear after an investigation is conducted, which student is the aggressor and which student is the victim. Administrators may use professional judgment in cases where the investigation yields a clear aggressor/initiator and may differentiate consequences accordingly.

217. Bullying/Cyberbullying: The Board prohibits all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying by students. 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, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the intent or effect of:
1. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's education; or
2. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student; or
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm; or
4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property

Bullying includes cyberbullying and/or bullying through electronic communication devices including but not limited to social networking, email, instant messages, text messages, tweets (via Twitter), blogs, photo and video sharing, chat rooms, dashboards, or websites. Cyberbullying may include acts that occur outside of school if certain criteria are met. The complete Prohibition of Bullying/Harassment Policy, complaint and investigation procedures are posted on the District website at www.pps.k12.pa.us/Page/481, and in every building and classroom.

218. Hazing: Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the District and are prohibited. Hazing occurs when a person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting, or affiliating a student with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to do any of the following:
1. Violate federal or state criminal law.
2. Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug or other substance which subjects the student to a risk of emotional or physical harm.
3. Endure brutality of a mental nature, including activity adversely affecting the mental health or dignity of the individual, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment.
4. Endure brutality of a sexual nature.
5. Endure any other activity that creates a reasonably likelihood of bodily injury to the student.

Any activity, as described above, shall be deemed a violation regardless of whether the consent of the student was sought or obtained.

219. Profanity and Vulgarity/ Verbal Altercation (Student): Swearing, cursing, making obscene gestures, using hate speech, or verbally abusive language toward another student.

220. Physical Aggression/Altercation: Threatened or actual use of violence by a student on another person when there is no major injury as determined by the school administrator. Administrators may use professional judgment in cases where the investigation yields a clear aggressor/initiator and may differentiate consequences accordingly.

221. Terroristic Threats or Conspiracies to Commit Violent Acts: No student shall commit a threat to commit violence. Threats in this infraction level pose a minimal risk to the victim and public safety. The threat is vague and indirect; the information contained within the thread is inconsistent, implausible or lacks detail; the threat lacks realism; and the content of the threat suggests the person is unlikely to carry it out.

222. Sexual Act/Misconduct: Exposing or touching one’s own genitals, breast, or buttocks, or those sexual parts of another person.

223. Inciting A Disturbance or Melee: Causing a serious disruption or fight amongst a group of individuals, which leads to a major commotion resulting in the involvement of multiple school staff members to quell the disturbance.

226. Theft, Burglary, or Robbery of School Property: A student shall not steal or attempt to steal or burglarize school property.

227. Theft, Burglary, or Robbery of Student or Private Property: A student shall not steal or attempt to steal from a student or burglarize private property. Valuable property should not be brought to school. A student shall not rob or attempt to rob another student.

228. Repeated Level 1 or Level 2 Infraction: If a Level 1 or 2 corrective strategy is used to address the same behavior more than three times, an administrator may exercise professional judgment based on the severity of the offense and move to the next leveled response, resulting in a possible out-of-school suspension (1–3 days). A parent/guardian should be made aware of the repeated behaviors and partner with the school on a plan to successfully address the behavior. Evidence of intervention or corrective strategy must be documented.
Examples of Guidance Interventions/Continuum of Approaches

- Student/teacher conference
- Parent or guardian/teacher conference
- Reteach/model expectations
- Student/administrator conference
- Intervention by counseling staff/guidance conference
- Written reflection assignment
- Develop, review, or revise individual student planning tools (e.g., Behavior Support Plan)
- Change in schedule or class (with parent/guardian notification)
- Individual/group counseling
- Referral to Student Assistance Program (SAP) for prevention (e.g. social emotional skills instruction groups like anger management, aggression replacement, organizational skills) and/or intervention (e.g. behavioral health counseling) services
- Referral to mentoring program
- Referral to District-approved Community-Based Organization (CBO)
- Community service (with parent consent)
- Use of Restorative Practices (i.e. affective statements, restorative questions, circles, small impromptu conferences, formal restorative conference, etc.)
- Refer to in-school conflict resolution programs (e.g. peer mediation, restorative conferencing)

Examples of Recommended Disciplinary Actions in Addition to Guidance Interventions Used

- Detention
- In-school suspension or other appropriate alternatives to out of school suspension
- Suspension of field trips, assemblies, or other special privileges
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities
- Suspension of transportation privileges
- Exclusion from special events or promotion exercises
- Referral for criminal prosecution (for serious assaults, drugs, and other serious offenses)
- Short-term out-of-school suspension (1–3 days)

Need more information?
Contact Student Support Services at 412-529-3950 or studentservices@pghschools.org. For a full copy of the Code of Student Conduct, please visit pghschools.org/codeofconduct.
Level 2 Infractions: Offenses that may lead to out-of-school suspension.

LEVEL 2 INFRACTIONS are those of a serious nature that may pose a threat to the health, safety or property of any person. School staff must notify an administrator when a Level 2 infraction occurs. The notification should normally take the form of a discipline referral or statement describing the incident. The administrator must complete an investigation of the incident and gather written statements from all witnesses. The administrator must notify the student and parent/guardian of all charges, consequences and applicable due process rights during the disciplinary process.

Out-of-School Suspensions shall not be assigned to students in grades K through 2 for the following nonviolent, minor Level 2 infractions, which are denoted below by an asterisk (*):

- Unauthorized presence of students during school hours (school or private property)
- Possession or use of tobacco or electronic smoking devices
- Academic dishonesty
- Misuse of computers/electronic device
- Undesirable group activity
- Profanity & vulgarity/verbal altercation (to student)
- Profanity & vulgarity/verbal altercation (to staff)
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- Repeated Level 1 or 2 non-violent infractions
- Terroristic threats or conspiracy to commit violent acts

202. Damage, Destruction, or Vandalism of School Property: A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause damage to school property or steal or attempt to steal school property.

203. Damage, Destruction, or Vandalism of Private Property: A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause substantial damage to private property or steal or attempt to steal private property. Valuable private property should not be brought to school. The District assumes no responsibility for the loss or theft of such property.

209. Unauthorized Presence of Students During School Hours
   A. On School Grounds: A student shall not be on any portion of the school grounds where his/her presence is unauthorized, nor remain after having been either ordered or requested to leave by any school employee possessing apparent authority over student conduct.

   B. On Private or Public Property: During school hours students must be in school unless they have an approved reason for absence. Students who are habitually truant from school as described in the Code of Student Conduct may be charged with truancy.

210. Smoking & Tobacco Use*: A student shall not use tobacco or any electronic smoking device in school buildings, school buses, or on any property owned by, leased by or under the control of the Board of Public Education. This property includes, but is not limited to, sidewalks contiguous to school property, parking lots, athletic fields, courtyards and other campus grounds.

212. Academic Dishonesty*: A student shall not engage in, participate in, nor knowingly provide another student with the opportunity to engage in academic dishonesty related to examinations, as well as laboratory, homework and other projects and assignments, whether done during or outside of school hours. Academic dishonesty shall include, but not be limited to, all forms of cheating, plagiarism, pre-exam access to test forms, representing someone else’s work as their own, and the unauthorized use of aids during examinations, projects and assignments. Unauthorized aids include but are not limited to electronic/telecommunication devices.
213. Harassment (inclusive of racial, ethnic, gender, disability, or sexual harassment): No student shall engage in harassment on the basis of known or perceived gender (including gender identity or expression), age, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity expression, national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, or political belief. A student shall not engage in any act that violates the District’s Prohibition of Bullying/Harassment Policy, including but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. A Bullying/Harassment Investigation Report, sometimes referred to as a “packet,” must be submitted for sexual harassment as well as ChildLine reporting (depending on the circumstances).

214. Misuse of Computers/Computer Networks/Electronic Device*: A student shall not engage in any act that violates the District’s Network Usage and Safety Policy, any individual school computer use guidelines or mobile computing device program guidelines, including, but not limited to the following:

   Non-school-related work
   A. Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and offensive and inflammatory communications
   B. Sexting or accessing obscene or pornographic materials
   C. Transmission of sexually suggestive language or images
   D. Loading or use of unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media
   E. Destruction, modification or abuse of network hardware, software, or information
   F. Impersonation of another user, anonymity and pseudonyms
   G. Creation of links to other networks whose content or purpose would tend to violate the District’s Network Usage and Safety Policy
   H. Videotaping fights or videotaping someone in a place where they have an expectation of privacy
   I. Posting videos of inappropriate student conduct to a social media site that affects the school community or individuals within the school community in a negative manner.

215. Undesirable Group Activity*: The Board prohibits disruptive group activity associated with violence or the threat of violence. Disruption and/or intimidation caused by the following are prohibited:

   A. The wearing of any type of clothing or jewelry associated with undesirable groups
   B. The use of undesirable group language or the writing or gesturing of any sign or symbol identified or associated with undesirable groups
   C. Confrontations identified or associated with undesirable groups or their activities

216. Fighting: Use of physical violence between two students, whereby it is unclear after an investigation is conducted, which student is the aggressor and which student is the victim. Administrators may use professional judgment in cases where the investigation yields a clear aggressor/ initiator and may differentiate consequences accordingly.

217. Bullying/Cyberbullying: The Board prohibits all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying by students. 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, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the intent or effect of:

   1. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s education; or
   2. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student; or
   3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm; or
   4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property

Bullying includes cyberbullying and/or bullying through electronic communication devices including but not limited to social networking, email, instant messages, text messages, tweets (via Twitter), blogs, photo and video sharing, chat rooms, dash boards, or websites.
Cyberbullying may include acts that occur outside of school if certain criteria are met. The complete Prohibition of Bullying/Harassment Policy, complaint and investigation procedures are posted on the District website at www.pps.k12.pa.us/Page/481, and in every building and classroom.

218. Hazing: Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the District and are prohibited. Hazing occurs when a person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting, or affiliating a student with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to do any of the following:

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

Any activity, as described above, shall be deemed a violation regardless of whether the consent of the student was sought or obtained.

219. Profanity and Vulgarity/Verbal Altercation (Student)*: Swearing, cursing, making obscene gestures, using hate speech, or verbally abusive language toward another student.

220. Physical Aggression/Altercation: Threatened or actual use of violence by a student on another person when there is no major injury as determined by the school administrator. Administrators may use professional judgment in cases where the investigation yields a clear aggressor/initiator and may differentiate consequences accordingly.

221. Terroristic Threats or Conspiracies To Commit Violent Acts*: No student shall commit a threat to commit violence communicated with the intent to terrorize another; to cause evacuation of a building; or to cause serious public inconvenience, in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience.

222. Inappropriate Sexual Behavior*: Exposing or touching one's own genitals, breast, or buttocks, or those sexual parts of another person. May also involve engaging in intercourse, oral sex, or simulated sex on school grounds.

223. Inciting a Disturbance or Melee: Causing a serious disruption or fight amongst a group of individuals, which leads to a major commotion resulting in the involvement of multiple school staff members to quell the disturbance.

224. Profanity and Vulgarity/Verbal Altercation Involving Staff: Swearing, cursing, making obscene gestures or using hate speech toward staff.

226. Theft, Burglary, or Robbery of School Property: A student shall not steal or attempt to steal or burglarize school property.

227. Theft, Burglary, or Robbery of Student or Private Property: A student shall not steal or attempt to steal from a student or burglarize private property. Valuable property should not be brought to school. A student shall not rob or attempt to rob another student.

228. Repeated Level 1 or Level 2 Infraction*: If a Level 1 or 2 corrective strategy is used to address the same behavior more than three times, an administrator may exercise professional judgment based on the severity of the offense and move to the next leveled response, as authorized by Board policy. A parent/guardian should be made aware of the repeated behaviors and partner with the school on a plan to successfully address the behavior. Evidence of intervention or corrective strategy must be documented.
Examples of Guidance Interventions/Continuum of Approaches

- Student/Teacher conference
- Parent or guardian/Teacher conference
- Student/Administrator conference
- Intervention by counseling staff/ guidance conference
- Written reflection assignment
- Develop, review, or revise individual student planning tools (e.g., Behavior Support Plan)
- Change in schedule or class (with parent/guardian notification)
- Individual/Group counseling
- Referral to Student Assistance Program (SAP) for prevention (e.g. social emotional skills instruction groups like anger management, aggression replacement, organizational skills) and/or intervention (e.g. behavioral health counseling) services
- Referral to mentoring program
- Referral to District-approved Community-Based Organization (CBO)
- Community service (with parent consent)
- Use of Restorative Practices (i.e. affective statements, restorative questions, circles, small impromptu conferences, formal restorative conference, etc.)
- Refer to in-school conflict resolution programs (e.g. peer mediation, restorative conferencing

Examples of Recommended Disciplinary Actions in Addition to Guidance Interventions Used

- Detention
- In-school suspension or other appropriate alternatives to out of school suspension
- Suspension of field trips, assemblies, or other special privileges
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities
- Suspension of transportation privileges
- Exclusion from special events or promotion exercises
- Referral for criminal prosecution (for serious assaults, drugs, and other serious offenses)
- Short-term out-of-school suspension (1–3 days) for violent offenses, if student is enrolled in grade three or above. Violent offenses include: damage, destruction or vandalism of property, harassment, fighting, bullying/cyberbullying, hazing, and physical aggression/altercation – theft/robbery.

Need more information?
Contact Student Support Services at 412-529-3950 or studentservices@pghschools.org. For a full copy of the Code of Student Conduct, please visit pghschools.org/codeofconduct.
Level 3 Infractions: Offenses that can lead to an out-of-school suspension.

LEVEL THREE INFRACTIONS are those of a serious nature that pose a threat to the health, safety or property of any person. School staff must notify an administrator when a Level 3 infraction occurs. The notification shall normally take the form of a discipline referral or statement describing the incident. The administrator must complete an investigation of the incident, gather written statements from all witnesses and complete appropriate documentation for discipline which may be recommended, such as referral for an out of school suspension of 4–10 days.

302. Damage, Destruction, or Vandalism of School Property: A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause damage to school property, or steal or attempt to steal school property. Damage, destruction, or theft in this infraction level exceeds one hundred dollars ($100).

303. Damage, Destruction, or Vandalism of Private Property: A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause substantial damage to private property, or steal or attempt to steal private property. Valuable private property should not be brought to school. The District assumes no responsibility for the loss or theft of such property. Damage, destruction, or theft in this infraction level exceeds one hundred dollars ($100).

307. Drugs Including Less Serious Offenses of Marijuana, Paraphernalia, and Alcohol: Drugs and alcohol are strictly prohibited on school grounds, at all school activities, functions, or events, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and school-sponsored events. Please note that use of a drug as authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician for the student for whom it is prescribed shall not be considered a violation of this rule, but may be a violation of the District’s Use of Medications policy. Failure to comply with the Use of Medications policy may also result in school discipline.

309. Disorderly Conduct: A student shall not, with intent to cause public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm, or recklessly creating a risk thereof:
   1. Engage in fighting or threatening, or in violent or tumultuous behavior;
   2. Make unreasonable noise;
   3. Use obscene language, or make an obscene gesture; or
   4. Create a hazardous or physically offensive condition by any act which serves no legitimate purpose.

Violation of this rule, including fighting, may result in criminal disorderly conduct charges being filed with the local magistrate.

313. Harassment (inclusive of racial, ethnic, gender, disability, or sexual harassment): No student shall engage in harassment on the basis of known or perceived gender (including gender identity or expression), age, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity expression, national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, or political belief. A student shall not engage in any act that violates the District’s Prohibition of Bullying/Harassment Policy, including but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

For more information or for a copy of the District policy prohibiting harassment, please visit the District’s website or contact your school principal. Complaints may be filed directly with your school principal or designee, or with the District’s Title IX/Section 504 Compliance Officer’s Designee, Director of Student Support at 412-529-3918.

For copies of the policy prohibiting harassment in languages other than English, please contact the English as a Second Language (ESL) Department at 412-529-3516 or the Nine Line at 412-529-6463.

For incidents of bullying or harassment, appropriate Bullying and/or Harassment Forms must be completed. The administrator must notify the student and parent of all applicable charges, consequences and due process rights during the disciplinary and investigative process.
314. Misuse of Computers/Computer Networks/Electronic Device: A student shall not engage in any act that violates the District’s Network Usage and Safety Policy, any individual school computer use guidelines or mobile computing device program guidelines, including, but not limited to the following:

**Non-school-related work**

A. Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and offensive and inflammatory communications
B. Sexting or accessing obscene or pornographic materials
C. Transmission of sexually suggestive language or images
D. Loading or use of unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media
E. Destruction, modification or abuse of network hardware, software, or information
F. Impersonation of another user, anonymity and pseudonyms
G. Creation of links to other networks whose content or purpose would tend to violate the District’s Network Usage and Safety Policy
H. Videotaping fights or videotaping someone in a place where they have an expectation of privacy
I. Posting videos of inappropriate student conduct to a social media site that affects the school community or individuals within the school community in a negative manner.

Misuse of computers/electronic device in this infraction level involves multiple or severe misuses of any of the above guidelines for computer/electronic device use.

309. Bullying/Cyberbullying: The Board prohibits all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying by students. 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, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the intent or effect of:

1. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s education; or
2. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student; or
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm; or
4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property

Bullying includes cyberbullying and/or bullying through electronic communication devices including but not limited to social networking, email, instant messages, text messages, tweets (via Twitter), blogs, photo and video sharing, chat rooms, dash boards, or websites. Cyberbullying may include acts that occur outside of school if certain criteria are met. The complete Prohibition of Bullying/Harassment Policy, complaint and investigation procedures are posted on the District website at www.pps.k12.pa.us/Page/481, and in every building and classroom.

For copies of the bullying policy and procedures in languages other than English, please contact the English as a Second Language (ESL) Department at 412-529-3516 or the Nine Line at 412-529-6463. Bullying and/or cyberbullying in this infraction level includes more than one incident of bullying, multiple victims targeted by the student, and/or the severity of the circumstances mandates the involvement of law enforcement. A bullying and harassment report must be completed.
318. **Hazing:** Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the District and are prohibited. Hazing occurs when a person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting, or affiliating a student with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to do any of the following:

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

Any activity, as described above, shall be deemed a violation regardless of whether the consent of the student was sought or obtained. Hazing in this infraction level includes more than one incident of hazing and/or the severity of the circumstances mandates the involvement of law enforcement.

321. **Terroristic Threats or Conspiracies to Commit Violent Acts.** No student shall commit a threat to commit violence communicated with the intent to terrorize another; to cause evacuation of a building; or to cause serious public inconvenience, in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience.

322. **Sexual Act/Misconduct:** Sexual misconduct in this infraction level involves engaging in intercourse, oral sex, or simulated sex on school grounds.

323. **Inciting a Disturbance or Melee:** Causing a serious disruption or fight amongst a group of individuals, which leads to a major commotion or riot resulting in the involvement of multiple school staff members and school police to quell the disturbance.

324. **Profanity and Vulgarity/Verbal Altercation Involving Staff:** Swearing, cursing, making obscene gestures or using hate speech toward staff.

326. **Theft, Burglary, or Robbery of School Property:** A student shall not steal or attempt to steal or burglarize school property. Theft, burglary, or robbery in this infraction level exceeds $100.

327. **Theft, Burglary, or Robbery of Student or Private Property:** A student shall not steal or attempt to steal from a student or burglarize private property. Valuable property should not be brought to school. A student shall not rob or attempt to rob another student. Theft, burglary, or robbery in this infraction level exceeds $100.
Examples of Guidance Interventions/Continuum of Approaches

- Student/teacher conference
- Parent or guardian/teacher conference
- Reteach/model expectations
- Student/administrator conference
- Intervention by counseling staff/guidance conference
- Written reflection assignment
- Develop, review, or revise individual student planning tools (e.g., Behavior Support Plan)
- Change in schedule or class (with parent/guardian notification)
- Individual/group counseling
- Referral to Student Assistance Program (SAP) for prevention (e.g. social emotional skills instruction groups like anger management, aggression replacement, organizational skills) and/or intervention (e.g. behavioral health counseling) services
- Referral to mentoring program
- Referral to District-approved Community-Based Organization (CBO)
- Community service (with parent consent)
- Use of Restorative Practices (i.e. affective statements, restorative questions, circles, small impromptu conferences, formal restorative conference, etc.)
- Positive behavioral management support contract
- Refer to in-school conflict resolution programs (e.g. peer mediation, restorative conferencing)
- Alcohol/drug evaluation referral

Examples of Recommended Disciplinary Actions in Addition to Guidance Interventions Used

- Suspension of field trips, assemblies, or other special privileges
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities
- Suspension of transportation privileges
- Exclusion from special events or promotion exercises
- Referral and consultation with school police
- Out-of-school suspension (4–10 days)

Need more information?
Contact Student Support Services at 412-529-3950 or studentservices@pghschools.org. For a full copy of the Code of Student Conduct, please visit pghschools.org/codeofconduct.
Level 3 Infractions: Offenses that lead to an out-of-school suspension.

LEVEL THREE INFRACTIONS are those of a serious nature that pose a threat to the health, safety or property of any person. Staff persons must notify an administrator when a Level 3 infraction occurs. The notification shall normally take the form of a discipline referral or statement describing the incident. The administrator must complete an investigation of the incident, gather written statements from all witnesses and complete appropriate documentation for discipline which may be recommended, such as referral for an out of school suspension of 4–10 days. For incidents of bullying or harassment, appropriate Bullying and/or Harassment Forms must be completed. The administrator must notify the student and parent of all applicable charges, consequences and due process rights during the disciplinary and investigative process.

304. Assault on a School Employee: A student shall not assault a school employee. Assault of a school employee has occurred when a student (1) attempts to cause or intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causes bodily injury to a school employee without physical provocation; (2) negligently causes bodily injury to another with a deadly weapon; or (3) attempts by physical menace to put another in fear of imminent serious bodily injury. Assault on a school employee may result in a criminal conviction for aggravated assault.

305. Assault on a Student or Other Person not Employed by the School: A student shall not assault any person. An assault has occurred when a student (1) attempts to cause or intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causes bodily injury to another without physical provocation; (2) negligently causes bodily injury to another with a deadly weapon; or (3) attempts by physical menace to put another in fear of imminent serious bodily injury. Other physical conduct that does not meet the definition of assault may fall under the prohibition against fighting, bullying, harassment, and/or disorderly conduct.

306. Weapons and Dangerous Instruments: A student shall not possess, handle or transmit a weapon while on any school property, while at any school-sponsored or approved activity or while walking or being transported in any manner to or from a school or school-sponsored or approved activity.

A. The term “weapon,” as used in this Code of Student Conduct shall include but shall not be limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, explosive, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon and/or any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. Mace or pepper spray, when discharged or threatened to be discharged, is considered a weapon. Schools shall consult with the Office of Student Support Services on any other item considered to be a tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury prior to issuing a disciplinary consequence for violation of this rule. When determining whether an object is weapon, schools must consider what the object is practically and functionally intended to do. The manner in which a student uses an object does not convert an otherwise non-weapon into a weapon.

B. Look-alike weapons are defined as any toy or model weapon that looks enough like an authentic weapon to be reasonably mistaken for one. Any student who presents a look-alike weapon to a staff member or another student as a real weapon and/or who uses it to intimidate, threaten, or harass someone will be treated as if they used a real weapon, according to state and federal laws.

C. In cases involving Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 5, the recommendation of the Hearing Officer will be to grant elementary clemency unless additional exclusion is warranted based on extenuating circumstances. Upon receiving clemency, the student will be immediately returned to the school they attended prior to the exclusion from school.

The Superintendent’s designee within the Office of Student Support Services must consider information provided by the student or parent prior to making a recommendation regarding discipline for a weapons violation. In the case of students with disabilities, the Superintendent’s designee shall take all steps necessary to comply with Section 504 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
307. Drugs Including, but not Limited to, Alcohol, Amphetamines, Barbiturates, any form of Cocaine, Hallucinogens, Designer Drugs, Marijuana and Narcotics: A student shall not possess, use, distribute, or be under the influence of any intoxicant of any kind. This is a drug free School District; any amount of an illegal drug is considered a violation of Board policy and this Code of Student Conduct. The possession of drug-related paraphernalia also constitutes a violation of this rule. Use of a drug as authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician for the student for whom it is prescribed shall not be considered a violation of this rule, but may be a violation of the Use of Medications policy. *Please note in accordance with IDEA, alcohol is not considered a drug that permits the unilateral removal of an eligible student under the IDEA to an interim alternative education placement.

308. Arson: To willfully and unlawfully, or while in the commission of any felony, by fire or explosion, damage or cause to be damaged: any dwelling, whether occupied or not, or its contents; any structure, or contents thereof, where persons are normally present; and any other structure that the person knew or had reasonable grounds to believe was occupied by a human being.

318. Aggravated Hazing: Occurs when a person commits an act of hazing as defined Rule 218 that results in serious bodily injury or death to a student and:

1. The student acts with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the victim student; or

2. The student causes, coerces or forces the consumption of an alcoholic liquid or drug by the victim student.

Examples of Guidance Interventions/Continuum of Approaches

- Student/teacher conference
- Parent or guardian/teacher conference
- Reteach/model expectations
- Student/administrator conference
- Intervention by counseling staff/guidance conference
- Written reflection assignment
- Develop, review, or revise individual student planning tools (e.g., Behavior Support Plan)
- Change in schedule or class (with parent/guardian notification)
- Individual/group counseling
- Referral to Student Assistance Program (SAP) for prevention (e.g. social emotional skills instruction groups like anger management, aggression replacement, organizational skills) and/or intervention (e.g. behavioral health counseling) services
- Referral to mentoring program
- Referral to District-approved Community-Based Organization (CBO)
- Community service (with parent consent)
- Use of Restorative Practices (i.e. affective statements, restorative questions, circles, small impromptu conferences, formal restorative conference, etc.)
- Positive behavioral management support contract
- Refer to in-school conflict resolution programs (e.g. peer mediation, restorative conferencing)
- Alcohol/drug evaluation referral
Examples of Recommended Disciplinary Actions in Addition to Guidance Interventions Used

- Suspension of field trips, assemblies, or other special privileges
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities
- Suspension of transportation privileges
- Exclusion from special events or promotion exercises
- Referral and consultation with school police
- Out-of-school suspension (4–10 days)

Need more information?
Contact Student Support Services at 412-529-3950 or studentservices@pghschools.org. For a full copy of the Code of Student Conduct, please visit pghschools.org/codeofconduct.
Level 4 Infractions: Offenses that can lead to an out-of-school suspension or exclusion/expulsion.

LEVEL 4 INFRACTIONS are those of a serious nature that pose a threat to the health, safety or property of any person. School staff must notify an administrator when a Level 4 infraction occurs. The notification shall normally take the form of a discipline referral or statement describing the incident. The administrator must complete an investigation of the incident, gather written statements from all witnesses and complete appropriate documentation for discipline, which may be recommended, such as referral for out of school suspension of 4–10 days or expulsion. The administrator must notify the student and parent of all applicable charges, consequences and due process rights during the disciplinary and investigative process.

404. Assault on a School Employee: A student shall not assault a school employee. Assault of a school employee has occurred when a student (1) attempts to cause or intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causes bodily injury to a school employee without physical provocation; (2) negligently causes bodily injury to another with a deadly weapon; or (3) attempts by physical menace to put another in fear of imminent serious bodily injury. Assault on a school employee may result in a criminal conviction for aggravated assault. The school administrator shall consult with the Office of Student Support Services and consider the totality of the circumstances prior to charging a student with Assault.

405. Assault on a Student or Other Person not Employed by the School: A student shall not assault any person. An assault has occurred when a student (1) attempts to cause or intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causes bodily injury to another without physical provocation; (2) negligently causes bodily injury to another with a deadly weapon; or (3) attempts by physical menace to put another in fear of imminent serious bodily injury. Other physical conduct that does not meet the definition of assault may fall under the prohibition against fighting, bullying, harassment, and/or disorderly conduct. The school administrator shall take into the totality of the circumstances prior to charging a student with Assault.

406. Weapons and Dangerous Instruments: A student shall not possess, handle or transmit a weapon while on any school property, while at any school-sponsored or approved activity or while walking or being transported in any manner to or from a school or school-sponsored or approved activity.

A. The term “weapon,” as used in the Code of Student Conduct includes but is not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, explosive, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon and/or any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. Mace or pepper spray, when discharged or threatened to be discharged, is considered a weapon as a tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. Schools shall consult with the Office of Student Support Services on any other item considered to be a tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury prior to issuing a disciplinary consequence for violation of this rule. When determining whether an object is weapon, schools must consider what the object is practically and functionally intended to do. The manner in which a student uses an object does not convert an otherwise non-weapon into a weapon.

B. Look-alike weapons are defined as any toy or model weapon that looks enough like an authentic weapon to be reasonably mistaken for one. Any student who presents a look-alike weapon to a staff member or another student as a real weapon and/or who uses it to intimidate, threaten, or harass someone will be treated as if they used a real weapon, according to state and federal laws.

C. The Superintendent must consider information provided by the student or parent prior to making a recommendation. In the case of a student with disabilities, the Superintendent shall take all steps necessary to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
The Superintendent’s designee within the Office of Student Support Services must consider information provided by the student or parent prior to making a recommendation regarding discipline for a weapons violation. In the case of students with disabilities, the Superintendent’s designee shall take all steps necessary to comply with Section 504 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

**407. Drugs Including but Not Limited to Amphetamines, Barbiturates, Any Form of Cocaine, Hallucinogens, Designer Drugs, Narcotics and Serious Offenses of Marijuana, Paraphernalia, and Alcohol:** A student shall not possess, use, distribute, or be under the influence of any intoxicant of any kind. However, in an effort to minimize exclusionary discipline, a graduated response to the handling of drugs based on the severity of an offense is outlined according to drug offense categories listed in the Code of Student Conduct. This includes possession of all drugs; high quantities of drugs that meet the threshold of intent to distribute; quantities of marijuana over 5 grams and repeat offenses of marijuana and alcohol occurring in the same school year.

*Please note that use of a drug as authorized by a medical prescription from a registered health care professional for the student for whom it is prescribed shall not be considered a violation of this rule but may be a violation of the Use of Medications policy. Failure to comply with the Use of Medications policy may also result in school discipline.*

As a part of the District’s efforts to continue reforming the process for reducing exclusionary discipline, a tiered procedure for the administrative response to drug and alcohol violations has been adopted.

Please see associated Fact Sheet “Prohibition on Drugs and Alcohol (6-12) – Code of Conduct Rule 307 & 407 Violations.”