

2023-2024
ARSENAL 6-8
STUDENT/ FAMILY
HANDBOOK



PITTSBURGH ARSENAL 6-8
220 40TH STREET
PITTSBURGH, PA 15201
(412) 529-5740
MR. ANTHONY VARLOTTA, PRINCIPAL

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PPS BOARD OF EDUCATION

To view the scheduled District School Board meeting dates for the 2023-24 school year please visit [Board of Directors / Board of Directors Homepage \(pghschools.org\)](http://pghschools.org). Meeting dates are subject to change. The Pittsburgh Public School District does not discriminate because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, and disability or any other reason not related to the student’s individual capabilities.

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Dear Arsenal 6-8 Students, Families, and Community:

Welcome to Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8 where we are excited to form an educational partnership with all students and their families. Each stakeholder of our school community plays an important role in ensuring our scholars are fully equipped for their middle school years and every bright dream they have for their future. We value your perspectives and your contributions to our collaborative efforts in providing an exemplary education for your child.

First and foremost, we are committed to a safe and caring environment for our children. Integrity is a core value in our district and our staff continuously teach and reinforce clear and consistent high expectations for student behavior. We work with students to understand the importance of exhibiting integrity in all our actions. The guidelines in the Arsenal 6-8 Student/Family Handbook are designed to communicate behavior expectations, school rules, safety procedures, and student rights and responsibilities. Please join us in our collective commitment to a positive learning culture where we all share responsibility for upholding the expectations for the safety of students and staff.

Our commitment to academic excellence is at the core of our daily classroom work where high expectations are established while providing enrichment and academic support. At Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8, and throughout the Pittsburgh Public School District, we have a vision to cultivate curious, creative, problem solvers prepared for tomorrow. Our curriculum is designed to challenge learners and individualize learning to equitably meet each child's needs. Throughout the handbook, links have been provided as an added means of support for our students and families. Through staff supports, we are hopeful that a foundation is created where student learning and growth can flourish.

Please have family conversations about the value of education, the importance of safety, and how our focus supports your child's goals and dreams for the future. Our staff looks forward to an outstanding school year and genuine partnership with our Arsenal 6-8 scholars and families.

All the best,

Mr. Anthony Varlotta, Principal

ARSENAL 6-8 COMMITMENTS

MISSION

Arsenal 6-8 is committed to growing all students socially, emotionally, and academically regardless of performance level, while also increasing the number of students who are proficient and advanced in math, reading, and science.

VISION

Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8 believes that all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, or English language proficiency have the ability to learn and grow with appropriate supports.

GOALS

Pittsburgh Public Schools and Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8 are committed to

- Increasing proficiency in literacy for all students
- Increasing proficiency in mathematics for all students
- Ensuring all students are equipped with skills to succeed in college, career, & life
- Eliminating racial disparity in achievement levels of African-American students

COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

PPS recognizes that antiracism requires a commitment to lifelong learning. At PPS, resources are provided to support and sustain the development of a racial and equity consciousness for central administration, school-based educators and leaders, parents and family, and students — offering links to articles, videos, webinars, guides, podcasts, and comprehensive web sites for you to access on your own or with a learning community. We invite each individual to enter at whatever developmental stage—new to antiracism, deep in self-reflection and self-interrogation, working to better understand antiracist practice, or actively working against racism. Resources for self-exploration are available at [On Track to Equity / Racial Equity Learning Resources \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/OnTracktoEquity).

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Arsenal strives to maintain close communication with parents. Occasionally families have a question, concern or suggestion to make. Please be assured that it is always Arsenal's intention to be of service to you and resolve any concerns you have. First, call your child's teacher. Email is also available, and email addresses can be found on the school website. The school's website can be found at [Discover PPS](#).

Should you need to contact the school or staff for any reason, please call the main office at (412) 529-5740 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Teachers can receive messages as they do spend the majority of the school day instructing students and completing their assigned duties. When available, teachers will return phone calls.

If you do not feel that your question was answered to your complete satisfaction, please call the school office to make an appointment to talk with the principal. If you are still not satisfied, using the Let's Talk app on the District website can assist you in receiving the support you need from District personnel. Please follow this chain of command so that your issues will be resolved in a timely manner.

If you have issues or concerns with your child's transportation, please contact the Parent Hotline 412-529-HELP(4357)

You can also access other Transportation contacts using the information found on the district website at [Transportation / Contact \(pghschools.org\)](#).

Students will not be called to the front office to take phone calls. Should there be information that needs to be relayed to your child, please provide the details to the available office staff and they will call the necessary teacher to provide the information to your child. Changes to student dismissal procedures need to be provided to the school in writing to ensure student safety protocols.

Arsenal 6-8 Staff Information

Principal: Anthony Varlotta 412-529-5746 avarlotta1@pghschools.org
School Social Worker: Cassandra Rosser 412-529-5730 crosser1@pghschools.org
School Nurse: Cassandra Brown 412-529-5764 cbrown6@pghschools.org
Security: Officer Lowery

Main Office

Secretary: Ashley Byrd 412-529-5740
SDSS: Deanna Mitchell 412-529-5740 dmitchell2@pghschools.org

Special Education

6-8 grade Math: Jessica Smersky
6-8 grade ELA: Jennifer Stolarz
LSS 6-8 Classroom Teacher: Marnie O'Connor
LSS 6-8 Classroom Paraprofessional: Tonya Baldwin
ES 6-8 Classroom Teacher: Megan McCarthy
ES 6-8 Classroom Paraprofessional: Brenda Marks

6th grade

Math: David Saylor
ELA: Shelby Outten
Science & Social Studies: Olivia Buirge

7th grade

Math: Steve James
ELA: Kathleen McGuire
Science: Tara Maddex
Social Studies: Julian D'Angelo

8th grade

Math: Katie White
ELA: Amber Scalise
Science: Tara Maddex
Social Studies: Julian D'Angelo

English as a Second Language

6-8 grade ESL ELA: Bethany Derbis
6-8 grade ESL Math: Roxanne Martini
6-8 grade ESL Paraprofessional/interpreter: Victor Marcelo

Specials Teachers

Gym: John Leemhuis
Music: Angela Abadilla
Library: Elizabeth Peel
Art: Katherine Shimko

ARSENAL BELL SCHEDULES

CLASS	TARDY BELL	DISMISSAL BELL
HOMEROOM	8:40	8:50
Intervention	8:50	9:20
1 ST PERIOD	9:22	10:06
2 ND PERIOD	10:08	10:52
3 RD PERIOD	10:54	11:38
4 TH PERIOD	11:40	12:24
5 TH PERIOD	12:26	1:10
Lunch	1:12	1:42
6 TH PERIOD	1:44	2:28
7 TH PERIOD	2:30	3:15
STUDENT DISMISSAL	3:15	3:25
TEACHER DISMISSAL	3:30	

ARSENAL STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have a responsibility to themselves, their families, and our school community to maintain behaviors that represent a respect for Arsenal's focus on academics and growing all student learners. There is an expectation for academic integrity that requires students to demonstrate cognitive engagement in the learning led by their teachers, taking part in discussions relative to their learning, and completing assignments provided for them to demonstrate their understanding.

Discipline is one of the most important components of a student's education. While it does not appear as a subject, discipline underlies the whole educational structure. It is the training that develops self-control, character, orderliness, safety, and efficiency. It is the key to good conduct and proper consideration for other people. It must be based on mutual respect between students and school staff.

Arsenal students move within our Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) components of P.O.W.E.R. It is an expectation that Arsenal scholars demonstrate these components throughout their learning day. Students earn POWER Points that students can then use for entry into school-wide rewards and events. All students have the opportunity to earn these rewards.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Pittsburgh Public Schools is committed to providing every student with the opportunity to attend school in an environment that is safe, free of violence and drugs, and conducive to learning. This goal is of the highest priority because excellence in education cannot be achieved unless schools and classrooms are safe and orderly. Students must demonstrate an understanding for rules and protocols.

The Code of Student Conduct was developed so that all students, staff and parents of the District fully understand the expectations for student behavior while in attendance in our schools, while attending school sponsored activities or while riding on transportation systems serving our school district.

Appropriate behaviors are expected of all Arsenal students. Appropriate interventions and supports have been reviewed with staff. Should students not abide by the Code of Student Conduct, families will be notified and an office referral is possible. Safety is our priority. If students demonstrate that they are unable to follow the expectations of behavior, student participation in activities outside of the classroom may be limited. To review the Code of Student Conduct please access [Code of Conduct / Conduct Homepage \(pghschools.org\)](http://pghschools.org).

ARSENAL STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOR SYSTEM: P.O.W.E.R.

Our school-wide behavior system is based on POWER. POWER is everywhere! You must demonstrate POWER in classrooms, auditorium, cafeteria, hallways, restrooms, and on field trips. If you demonstrate POWER you will earn points. Students can earn one point per class period, up to 7 points per day. In a five-day week, a maximum of 35 points can be earned. Students can track their points on the Live School app that can be accessed through Clever. These points will be used for anything “extra” the school does, like field trips, shopping in the school store, and other incentives. What is POWER P.O.W.E.R. stands for:

P = Prepared O = On time W = Working Hard E = Engaged R = Respectful

Every classroom teacher will review their POWER expectations with you. Here are some examples of what POWER looks like in the classroom:

Prepared: student has binder, homework, class materials, appropriate gym clothes

On time: student is in class when late bell rings

Working hard: student completes assignments, remains on task, head up, and responsible for making up missed class work and homework

Engaged: academic talk, participating (written/verbal) (on task computer and group work)

Respectful: use appropriate language, respect classmates, teachers, and school property, display appropriate behavior in regard to classroom procedures/expectations

ARSENAL STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

TRANSPORTATION RULES

In the Pittsburgh Public Schools, the safety of our students is a top priority. School buses and public transportation remain the safest mode of transportation for students to and from school. Whether your child rides a yellow bus or takes Port Authority transportation, it is important to us that it is a safe ride to and from school for everyone. Bus safety tips can be accessed at [Transportation / Bus Safety \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/Transportation/BusSafety). Please access this link with your student to review transportation expectations. Students who do not follow the expectations for behavior on District transportation can lose their transportation privileges.

Arsenal students should follow these rules while on District transportation:

- Obey the bus driver and exhibit orderly conduct.
- Be courteous and respectful of people and property.
- Remain seated at all times.
- Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Use of profane language, eating, drinking, smoking, throwing objects, unsafe objects or weapons and vandalism may result in disciplinary action. Criminal conduct may be referred to law enforcement.

CELL PHONES

Student cell phones will be collected each morning and secured in the school safe. This is necessary to reduce disruptions to the learning environment. Cell phones are returned to students when they enter their dismissal locations at the close of the school day. Arsenal would advise families to discuss with their students the appropriate use of social media. For additional information and resources to discuss with your child related to Cyber Safety, please visit [Cyber Safety / Cyber Safety \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/CyberSafety).

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Pittsburgh Public Schools has an exclusionary dress code. No student shall wear any apparel or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures or any combination thereof appearing on said clothing or jewelry advocates or promotes sexual activity or violence, or the use of alcohol or drugs, or demeans or degrades another because of race, sex, religious persuasion, national origin, handicap or disability.

Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing at all times while at school. Clothing must not be of any style, length or fit that is of a provocative nature. Shorts or skirts shorter than 3 inches above the knee are not permitted. Revealing attire that permits the exposure of undergarments or private body parts is prohibited. This includes midriff tops, net shirts, halters, underwear T- shirts, spaghetti strap tank tops, oversized revealing tank tops (no skin showing – unless a sleeved shirt is underneath) or other types of revealing shirts. This prohibition shall be in effect during regular school hours and at any school-sponsored event whether on or off school premises. Should a student wear clothing that is deemed questionable, an alternative will be provided which could include clothing being provided from the home.

ARSENAL ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

The District recognizes that the responsibility for school attendance rests with families and students, with the school assisting them to fulfill that responsibility. Prompt, regular attendance is not only required by law, it is the key to student success and progress in school programs. For students to learn and progress as expected, students must consistently attend school. When students miss school, learning is disrupted and learning gaps occur that can cause student's difficulty in keeping up with grade level expectations.

ATTENDANCE NOTIFICATION

When a student is marked unexcused, the parent/guardian will be notified by a robocall of the unexcused absence on the day of the absence.

PROCEDURES

If a student is absent for any reason, an excuse should be provided to the school within 3 days of the absence. Excuse notes are available from the school for the family to use, if needed. A student who is absent more than 10 days in one school year (excused or unexcused absences) will be required to submit verification that the absence was caused by illness, injury or hospitalization, impassable roads, a religious observance, or bereavement. If the student has more than 10 days absent within the school year, handwritten notes from home cannot be accepted.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Any absence due to illness, accident, medical, bereavement, religious observance, or other circumstance with prior approval of school administration, will be excused provided written notification is presented to the homeroom teacher within 3 days of the absence. Academic grades may suffer as a result of excessive absences whether or not they are excused.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

An unexcused absence is an absence in which a student has not submitted a note from home, doctor, hospital, funeral home, religious organization, or courts within 3 days of the absence. A parent/guardian shall receive legal notice after each instance of Unlawful and Unexcused Absence. The legal notice shall be issued after the first unlawful absence and should include the legal penalties established by law for violation of compulsory attendance laws and the name and contact person for the school contact person. The legal notice issued after the second unlawful absence shall contain the same information. The legal notice issued after the 3rd unlawful absence should contain the same information and additionally shall provide that if the parent/guardian violates the compulsory school law again the parent will be liable without further notice. The school social worker will attempt to schedule a parent/guardian meeting after the 3rd unlawful absence to create a Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP). Any subsequent unlawful absence can result in official notice being filed with the local magistrate.

ARSENAL ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

TRUANCY

A child is "truant" if the child is subject to compulsory school laws and has incurred three or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year. A child is "habitually truant" if the child is subject to compulsory school laws and has incurred six or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year. Habitual truancy negatively impacts a child's school performance and increases the likelihood of juvenile delinquency. As a result, an intensive and timely response to truancy is critical.

MAKE-UP WORK

When students are absent, it is their responsibility to talk with their teachers or obtain missed assignments. Students should get missed assignments completed and turned in to the teacher immediately. Students are allowed time equal to their period of absence to submit missing assignments, i.e., one day absent equals one day for make-up. Parents of students absent for two or more days may call the school on the third day absent and pick up assignments at school. Homework for absences less than three days in duration will be handled by the teacher and student upon the student's return. Homework requests require a 24- hour notice in order to properly prepare all necessary materials.

EARLY DISMISSAL

It is the expectation that student appointments are made outside of school hours as much as possible so that the learning of students is not disrupted. In the event an early dismissal is necessary, a written notification must be submitted to the school. This allows for the proper notification of staff that a student may be leaving early. We request that all early dismissals occur prior to 3:00 p.m. so dismissal procedures are not disrupted. After that time, please wait for your child outside. This policy is necessary in order to be able to keep track of all students at dismissal time. After 3:00 p.m., it is imperative that all students follow the school- wide dismissal procedures.

TARDIES

A student is considered tardy when he/she arrives late for school and/or class. The parent/student shares the responsibility to assure promptness in arriving at school and to class on time. Chronic tardy (excused or unexcused) will result in possible disciplinary action. Tardiness to school will be excused only when accompanied with written/verbal notification from the parent/guardian or doctor. All other tardy days will be classified as unexcused. Students arriving after the final morning bell must receive a late pass from the security desk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE

It is important for the school to be able to contact you to discuss your student's progress both academically and behaviorally. Arsenal also needs to be able to communicate with student families in the event of an emergency. Any changes to contact information should be provided to the school in a timely manner. Please call the main office at (412) 529-5740 and ask to speak to the SDSS.

ARSENAL SCHOOL SAFETY

VISITORS POLICY

All visitors are required to enter through the doors on 40th Street and must be checked by school security. All visitors must travel through the metal detectors. Visitors must then check-in with the front office to sign our school visitor log. Permission to visit a classroom must be granted in advance of any visit. An escort will be provided.

STUDENT ENTRY

All students are required to enter through the doors on 40th Street and must have bags checked at the front tables. All students must walk through the metal detectors. Students are not permitted in the building until 8:20 a.m.

STUDENT DISMISSAL

All walkers, family pick-ups, and van students will be dismissed from the auditorium. Students with family pick-ups will exit the building with the walkers. Once students have exited the building they will not be permitted to reenter. All bus students will report to the cafeteria and sit in their assigned locations. Students will access their busses from the 39th Street exit.

LOCKDOWN/MODIFIED

In the event of a school lockdown, district procedures will be followed for the safety of students and staff. No visitors will be permitted in or out of the building for any reason. A robocall will alert families to any incident that required this measure so that families are informed. Please make certain contact information is up to date.

LOCKDOWN/REUNIFICATION

In the event that an incident requires the students to be moved to another location, information will be shared via a robocall. It is imperative that all directions received are followed to ensure the safety of all involved.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Communication between families and the school are crucial for the advancement of our students. For this reason, it is important for the school to be aware of any changes in contact information as soon as possible. Should you need to communicate with a specific staff member regarding a concern, please call the main office at (412) 529-5740 to leave a message so that the instruction of other students is not disrupted.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather that requires any modifications to the school schedule, an alert will be provided by the school district to local media outlets. A robocall is then provided to all families via the district through a robocall. Please make certain that all contact information is current.

SAFE TO SAY

Safe To Say is a program run by the PA Office of the Attorney General which allows others to report safety concerns to help prevent violence and tragedies. Anonymous tips can be provided to the crisis center by calling 1-844-SAF2SAY or accessing [Home - Safe2Say Something \(safe2saypa.org\)](https://www.safe2saypa.org). The crisis center reviews all submissions and submits reports to administration and /or law enforcement.

ARSENAL ACADEMICS

COURSE/PROGRAM GUIDE

Pittsburgh Public Schools has updated the Course Catalog for grades K-12 for the 2022-2023 school year. The Middle School Course Catalog can be found at [Course Catalogs / Course Catalogs \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/CourseCatalogs). Some offerings available in the catalog are specific to certain schools within the district. Should you have specific questions regarding the course offerings at Arsenal, please call the main office and ask to speak to the principal or school social worker.

GRADING GUIDELINES

All students at Arsenal receive instruction across contents. As students are practicing, mistakes may be made and feedback from the teacher is important in students growing their knowledge around a concept or skill. Students should actively and cognitively engage in the learning activities planned by the teacher. Students will then be expected to demonstrate their knowledge through the completion of class assignments and assessments deemed appropriate by the teacher.

Should teachers deem it necessary to provide students with additional practice, homework will be provided through both paper and digital assignments. Scholars are expected to follow the guidelines provided by the teacher regarding submission deadlines. Should students encounter an issue, students should advocate for themselves and respectfully speak to teachers regarding the assistance needed.

Students and families are able to access the Home Access Center (HAC) to view student grades. A progress report will be provided mid-way through a grading period to make families aware of a student's progress. Should you need to contact your student's teacher to discuss progress or concerns, please call the main office to leave a message for the teacher. A report card will be provided at the end of a grading period to alert families to student end of report progress.

Should you require additional information related to district grading guidelines, please visit [Grading Guidelines / Grading Guidelines \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/GradingGuidelines).

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

English as a Second Language (ESL) is an instructional program for students whose dominant language is not English. The purpose of the program is to increase the English language proficiency of eligible students while simultaneously providing important content knowledge. Arsenal celebrates the diversity of our student population and supports the growth of all. Arsenal ESL teachers support students in their ESL classrooms and fellow staff in addressing the diverse needs of our student population.

Further information can be found by visiting [English as Second Language \(ESL\) / English as a Second Language: ESL \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/English-as-a-Second-Language-ESL).

ARSENAL ACADEMICS

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SERVICES

Speech and language services are available to students who qualify following an individual screening. Therapy sessions are provided individually or in small groups.

LEARNING SUPPORT, THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT, & AUTISTIC SUPPORT

Pittsburgh Public School students will be meaningful members of our school communities. All students with disabilities will receive an equitable education that addresses individual needs in order to achieve their fullest potential academically, socially, emotionally, and vocationally. Students are expected to achieve and succeed so that they can be productive, self-motivated citizens.

Students in need of specific support services can receive them at Arsenal. Individually designed programs are implemented based upon each student's specific individual education plan. Support services are assigned after interventions are implemented, academic evidence has been collected, and testing and team recommendations have occurred.

Family resources and information related to PSE contacts can be found at [PSE \(Special Education\) / PSE \(Special Education\) \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/PSE).

GIFTED EDUCATION

The Gifted and Talented Education program at Pittsburgh Public Schools supports unique opportunities for students who are identified as high-achieving. The overall aim of the Gifted and Talented Education at Pittsburgh Public Schools is to provide educational opportunities and experiences to help students extend their learning, develop individual potential, enhance their self-concept and become life-long, independent learners. Pittsburgh Public Schools is committed to providing differentiated activities and opportunities through which students can discover and develop their unique and individual needs, interests, talents and abilities.

Students at Arsenal in need of enrichment and acceleration may be evaluated for Gifted Support services. The student must meet the criteria set by Pennsylvania regulations for Gifted Education, Chapter 16. Resources for families and contact information can be accessed at [Gifted and Talented / Gifted and Talented \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/Gifted).

ARSENAL STUDENT SUPPORTS

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT (MTSS)

MTSS is a framework for providing services that meet the needs of all students using data analysis and decision making to effectively address academic and behavioral needs for instruction and intervention. Instruction and intervention are represented through multiple tiers that increase in intensity based on student need. Should you feel that your child needs assistance, please reach out to your child's teachers and the school social worker for support.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

SAP is a systemic process using techniques to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. The core of the program is a professionally trained team that convene to identify problems and to determine whether the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school and to make recommendations to assist the student and the family. Should the problem lie beyond the scope of the school, the SAP Team will assist the family and student in accessing services within the community. Should you feel that your child needs assistance, please reach out to your child's teachers and the school social worker for support.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

Within PPS, it is the belief that SEL is the foundation on which academic learning takes place. As such, activities are in place to develop student self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. This is achieved through mentoring programs from PPS staff and community partners that assist in supporting students. Please access [Student Support Services / Overview \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/StudentSupportServices/Overview) for additional resources

BULLYING/HARASSMENT

Bullying is defined as intentional, aggressive behavior[s] that may be verbal, physical, written or electronic, aimed at another student or students, for the purpose of creating fear or intimidation by harming physically, mentally or emotionally. It may be direct or indirect, with face-to-face interactions or by spreading rumors, sharing inappropriate pictures or demeaning a student using social media.

Students and others who have been the victim of, or have information about, bullying or harassment are strongly encouraged to make a report to the school. A teacher, counselor, school social worker or school administrator will field complaints and ensure that they are properly addressed under the District's Bullying & Harassment Policy and administrative procedures. More information can be found on the PPS Website under the tab Student Supports where Quick Links for Students is located near the bottom of the page.

Policy 102 – Non-Discrimination in School and Classroom Practices

Board Policy 102 states in part: The Board declares that it is the policy of the District to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs and activities offered in the schools without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, gender (including gender identity or expression), sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or disability.

The District is committed to the maintenance of a safe, positive learning environment for all students that is free from discrimination by providing all students course offerings, counseling, assistance, services, employment, athletics and extracurricular activities without any form of discrimination, including Title IX sexual harassment. Discrimination is inconsistent with the rights of students and the educational and programmatic goals of the District and is prohibited at or, in the course of, District-sponsored programs or activities, including transportation to or from school or school-sponsored activities. Discrimination is also prohibited in any remote learning program or activity of the District. For the full text of Board Policy 102-Non-Discrimination in School and Classroom Practices, please visit: <https://www.pghschools.org/nondiscrimination-policy>

Title IX Procedures

For information about our Title IX procedures, please visit: <https://www.pghschools.org/titleIX>

COUNSELING AT ARSENAL

OVERVIEW

Services provided include broad-based individual and group assessment, interventions, and referrals that attend to the mental, emotional, behavioral, and social health of students and staff. Services include those currently offered by the Office of Student Support Services, Program for Students with Exceptionalities, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and other school-based community resources, as well as appropriate enhancements that are or become available from various partners.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Methods and procedures through the Student Assistance Program (SAP) are used to help to identify students with social, emotional, and/or behavioral needs and make meaningful connections to appropriate support providers. Each member of the school community shall have timely and appropriate access to school social workers, school psychologists, and school-based behavioral health partners.

District staff shall collaborate with families, community partners, and school-based mental/behavioral health providers to engage in student assistance programming that is responsive to school-based needs. Should you be in need of support of behalf of your child, please contact the main office at (412) 529-5740 and ask for the school social worker.

NAVIANCE

Naviance is the leading college, career, and life readiness (CCLR) platform that enables students to discover their strengths and interests, build critical social emotional learning skills, create actionable goals, develop career and military plans, access regional and state-specific data, and find their best-fit path and career after high school. Students at Arsenal 6-8 have the opportunity to engage in career awareness activities through the Naviance Platform. More information regarding Naviance can be found at [College Resources / Naviance \(pghschools.org\)](https://pghschools.org/CollegeResources/Naviance).

RECORDS REQUEST

Should you be in need of student records, please contact the main office at (412) 529-5740 and ask for the school social worker. If your student is enrolling in another school, you will be asked to sign a request for records form that will be forwarded to the school. For more information, please access the following link: [College Resources / Transcripts \(pghschools.org\)](https://pghschools.org/CollegeResources/Transcripts).

PROSPECTIVE STUDENT VISITS

Should you be interested in becoming a member of our Arsenal family, please contact the main office so that we can support you and your student. Please know that we must follow PPS guidelines and protocols for student admission.

ARSENAL HEALTH SERVICES

OVERVIEW

At PPS and Arsenal 6-8, we strive to ensure that all students have equal access to quality health services, prevention education and early intervention and support to help them achieve academic success. Students receive school health physicals, screenings, and related services that support health and wellness.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS & FAMILIES

Please keep us informed of any telephone or address changes. Any changes to emergency contact information should be provided to the main office by calling (412) 529-5740. The school will always need a way to contact you in the event of an emergency. Nurse Brown can be reached at (412) 529-5764.

MEDICATIONS

If your student has any allergies or medical conditions that we need to be aware of or they need to have medication administered at school, please, let us know immediately. NO medication can be administered without your signature on the PPS parental consent form. Please do not send medication with your child to self-medicate within the school. This presents a safety concern for your child and others. A parent must bring the medication into the school and personally hand the medication to the school nurse.

Both the emergency contact form and all medical forms can be found on the health services page. <https://www.pghschools.org/Page/647>

WHEN TO STAY HOME

- Students should not come to school if they have a fever.
- Students should be fever free for 24 hours without any fever reducing medications.
- Students should stay home if they are vomiting or have diarrhea.
- If students are suffering from a bad cough and have accompanying respiratory concerns, please keep the child home and seek out advisement of the child's doctor.
- Follow your doctor's orders. If your child is told to stay home, keep him or her home.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information and guidance, please visit the PPS Health Services website at [Health Services / Health Services Home \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/Health_Services/Health_Services_Home).

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AT ARSENAL

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Every student in PPS will have access to the district computer network resources, electronic mail and the Internet. To use these resources, all students must sign and return the PPS Acceptable Use Policy. It is important that families read and complete this document carefully, review its contents with your son/daughter, and sign where appropriate. Any questions or concerns about this permission form, or any aspect of the computer network, should be referred to your school's administration.

The signature of a **parent/guardian is mandatory** before students will be allowed access to any PPS computer or technology-based resource. This form is required annually of all students in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. This document reflects the entire agreement and understanding of all parties. The Acceptable Use Policy can be accessed at [Forms / Home \(pghschools.org\)](#).

Students and their families must follow the guidelines established for appropriate care and use of all district technologies. Misuse of PPS equipment may result in the withdrawal of this privilege at the school's discretion. Intentional or neglectful disregard for equipment resulting in damage or loss will be the responsibility of the student and their family and will be handled on a case-by-case basis where financial penalty is only applied when mutually agreed upon by the district and family. Inappropriate use may result in cancellation of permission to use district equipment which could have academic repercussions. We ask that each student and family take the use of district equipment seriously as the benefits of a contemporary learning environment have a wide range of benefits for the learner, as well as the learner's family and school community.

DAMAGE AND REPAIRS

Should a student encounter difficulties with their device, the school tech liaison will provide the necessary advisement according to district policy which could include securing devices for repair and providing students a loaned device for use, if available.

ACCESS TO INSTRUCTION AND PROGRAMS

Students can access district instructional programs through Clever. Students work within this management system in many of their daily classes. Should students be required to work remotely, classes and instructional programs can be accessed through Clever. Students can access Clever through [Student Resources / Student Resources \(pghschools.org\)](#). Many program links are available for students to conduct additional work and practice outside of their regular school day.

ATHLETICS AT ARSENAL

ATHLETICS

Athletic participation provides healthy, supervised after-school activities for students in a safe and positive environment. Students who participate in athletics have been shown to have higher grade point averages, better attendance, lower dropout rates, fewer disciplinary problems and higher graduation rates. Participation in athletics teaches teamwork, goal setting, discipline, sportsmanship, leadership, and other valuable life-skills.

Arsenal 6-8 student athletes have an expectation to demonstrate the conduct fitting of a scholar athlete. Students must be able to adhere to expectations of a student through their daily academics while also demonstrating behavior worthy of a representative of Arsenal 6-8 through elements of sportsmanship. A Sportsmanship Contract will be provided and signed by scholar athletes and their families. This contract can be found on the Athletic website for the district.

Arsenal 6-8 has the following teams in place this school year: volleyball, flag football, basketball, swimming, track team, soccer and wrestling. Information related to athletics and forms needed can be accessed online at [Athletics / Athletics Homepage \(pghschools.org\)](https://pghschools.org/Athletics/). Please reach out to the school if you need assistance.

Scholar athletes will be transported to and from athletic events. Students are expected to follow student transportation guidelines. Information related to student transportation can be found at the following website: [Transportation / Homepage \(pghschools.org\)](https://pghschools.org/Transportation/).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

PARENT SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL (PSCC)

One way parents and families choose to participate at the school level is through the Parent School Community Council (PSCC). PSCC meetings are monthly opportunities for parents and families, the community, school staff and sometimes students to discuss important topics related to the school and provide advice to the leadership of the school. It is the responsibility of the FACE Coordinator to inform the school community of a PSCC Meeting at least one week prior to the event and minutes from the meeting should be posted one week after the meeting.

PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC)

The district-wide **Parent Advisory Council (PAC)** is the District's central mechanism for ensuring that parents are well informed about Pittsburgh Public Schools related matters, and that they have the opportunity to help develop District-level programming and policy and share information with District staff. It also gives parents the opportunity to assume leadership roles by serving as liaisons between parents at their school and District officials. The Council is comprised of **one to four parent or family representatives from each school**. Members meet with the Office of the Superintendent, Office of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement, and/or other District leadership to share the concerns of families and participate in shared decision-making. PAC meets on the first Thursday of the month at Sci-Tech.

ARSENAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Arsenal 6-8 school website can be accessed at [6-8 / Arsenal 6-8 \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/6-8/Arsenal-6-8). A variety of information related to the school, academics, social media page and supports are available here.

A family calendar will be created by the FACE Coordinator and provided to all students during the first week of the month so that events are clearly communicated. The FACE Coordinator will upload the calendar to the school website as another means of family access.

Should you be interested in volunteering at Arsenal 6-8, we welcome you! Please contact the main office to speak to the FACE Coordinator. Information regarding volunteering at Arsenal 6-8 or in other PPS Schools can be found at [Get Involved / Volunteering \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/Get-Involved/Volunteering).

