



Student Handbook 2023-2024

Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12

111 Ninth Street

Pittsburgh, Pa 15222

Phone: 412.529.6101

Fax: 412.338.6143

www.pghschools.org/capa



WELCOME

Greetings Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12 Community:

Welcome to Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12, where academics and the arts fuse together to create one of the most prestigious public schools in the region.

Here at CAPA, students work together in a state-of-the-art facility and follow a unified and stimulating curriculum while learning their art-based craft from skilled professionals. The school prepares students with an outstanding artistic and academic education for college and career readiness. CAPA 6-12 participates in several national cultural organizations and partnerships that enhance the learning experience for students, their teachers, and their families.

The purpose of this school handbook is to give all members of our CAPA community a general understanding of school policies and procedures. We ask that you review this handbook familiarize yourself with the new procedures and information.

As we experience another school year together, we will be asking for the help and support of all members of our school community. As our community continues to grow, it will become stronger, more powerful and more of a force in the cultural arts community, in the district and in the region; we are honored and proud to be sharing this great adventure with all of you!

Sincerely,

The CAPA Administration Team



Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12 is ranked #517 in the National Rankings. Schools are ranked on their performance on state-required tests, graduation and how well they prepare students for college.

#517 in National Rankings

#12 in Pennsylvania High Schools

#2 in Greater Pittsburgh Metro Area

#1 in Pittsburgh Public Schools

CAPA VISION

Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12 is a Creative and Performing Arts Magnet school located in the heart of Pittsburgh's downtown cultural district. In 2009, CAPA was awarded the Blue Ribbon as a school of Distinction by the Department of Education.

The mission of Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12 is to provide every student in grades 6-12 with a comprehensive academic program rooted in a superior quality arts education experience that encourages excellence and success in their personal development as artists and cultural leaders. CAPA 6-12 offers a challenging and integrated curriculum that equally provides world-class preparation for college and university study, and conservatory level preparation for artistic careers.

The environment at CAPA 6-12 is enhanced by partnerships and collaborations with local and national cultural organizations and universities that provide opportunities in which to explore the relationships between school, family and work. In 2023, US News and World Report named CAPA in the Top 10 of Best High Schools in Pennsylvania.

CAPA FAST FACTS

CAPA opened in September 1979 with 35 students, housed in Baxter Elementary School in the Homewood neighborhood. While in Homewood, CAPA only housed grades 9-12, while arts students in grades 6-8 were at Rogers Middle School. The school moved into its current space at Ninth Street and Fort Duquesne Boulevard at the beginning of the 2003–2004 school year.

The 11-story, 175,000-square-foot includes a 400-seat auditorium, a black box theater, a cabaret theater, an art gallery, media arts center, television studio, fitness center, computer labs, and rehearsal spaces for the departments. This location allows students to study their craft in the hub of Pittsburgh's cultural center and to collaborate with artists from all over. Our mascot is the unicorn and our colors are black and white. Pittsburgh CAPA has become one of four 6–12 schools in Downtown Pittsburgh. Today, CAPA is the home to 879 students and 125 staff.

PPS AND CAPA DISTRICT POLICIES

Please click on the link below to learn more about our District's Code of Conduct

- [Code of Conduct](#)

Please click on the link below to learn more about our District's Non-Discrimination Policy

- [Non-Discrimination Policy](#)

Please click on the link below for information about Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

- [Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#)

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Assignments & Homework Procedures for Students:

At Pittsburgh CAPA, we believe that time reflects our values. Students and staff spend time on what we know is important and meaningful to the artistic and academic success of our students. Specifically, our goal is to cultivate a culture of academic and artistic accountability. Hence, students and staff will reflect the ability to manage time effectively to best prepare for the completion of assignments, assessments, projects, performances, productions, recitals, presentations, events, and other relevant content specific processes.

- **Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12 students will** complete ALL assignments in their academic and art classes on or before due dates – meaning work must be completed on time.
- **For all students in grades 6-12 in academic and art classes:** Teachers must ensure that all student assignment grades are either 50% above or a no-effort zero. Any student who refuses to complete an assignment or opts to not complete a assignment may receive a no-effort zero on that assignment. However, any student putting forth a legitimate effort (legitimate = on-time) but whose actual earned percentage is less than 50% should have the assignment or graded task recorded as a 50%.

Academic Integrity

At CAPA, we promote academic integrity and will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating during examinations or on lab, homework and other assignments; plagiarism; pre-exam access to test forms; and unauthorized use of aids during examinations and assignments.

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 your own, and the unauthorized use of aids during examinations, projects and assignments.

Students who are found in violation of the academic integrity information outlined above will follow the following progressive system:

- 1st Occurrence – Parent/Student/Teacher Conference (new assignment is given for half credit). Teacher recommends after-school tutoring or tutor.com
- 2nd Occurrence – Parent/Student/Teacher/Administrator Conference (new assignment is given for half credit) Teacher recommends after-school tutoring or tutor.com
- 3rd Occurrence - Parent/Student/Teacher/Administrator Conference (in-school intervention is assigned). Teacher recommends after-school tutoring or tutor.com

Audience/Performance Expectations

As students in a school for the creative and performing arts, you are called upon to perform on a regular basis. An equally important part of your participation in this school is being part of an audience. There are certain expectations for being a good audience and performer that students must follow. All performances are live performances and as such they must be given the proper respect and treatment that they deserve.

Remember, both inside and outside of Pittsburgh CAPA, you are accountable for your behavior, both on and off stage. Additionally, all teachers are considered to be your teachers and are to be respected as such.

Audience Expectations:

- Cell phones are to be turned off and put away during all performances, matinee and evening.
- Enter and exit the theater in a quiet and orderly fashion and remain in assigned seats for the duration of the performance.
- Show respect for all performances, regardless of style.

- Refrain from bringing food or beverage into the theater.
- Remain silent and offer appropriate applause during performances.
- Be attentive during the performance—stay awake, sit up straight, keep feet on the floor.
- Show courtesy and respect to the artist and other guests at all times. The audience is made up of parents, guardians, friends and visitors.

Performer Expectations:

- Work and prepare to the best of your ability.
- Dress properly and carry yourself with pride. Performance clothing should be appropriate for the stage.
- Arrive early.
- Remain with your teacher/conductor.
- Follow all directions immediately.
- Model the characteristics of a professional artist--explore, discover, interpret, perceive, and respond appropriately.

Attendance:

Compulsory attendance laws mandate that all children ages 8 to 17 must attend school unless legally excused. Student and parents will face legal consequences if unexcused absences surpass a total of three for the year.

- 1st and 2nd unexcused absences are followed by a legal notice
- 3rd unexcused absence will require a parent conference
- 4th absence will be considered truant and a citation will be written for you to appear in front of the local magistrate

You cannot accumulate more than 10 absence per year (excused or unexcused).

Automated phone calls are sent out daily to any student absent or tardy to school.

- You have 3 school days to turn in an excuse:
 - capahs@pghschool.org
 - Wooden box on the front desk

Special circumstances that require your absence from school should be pre-approved with the **Request for Approved Absence form**. (Main Office) Students are required to make up any work missed when absent from school and should communicate with a teacher and/or counselor if struggling to complete any assignments.

Ten or more absences per year: After ten days of absence per school year (excused or unexcused) the student will need to provide documentation from someone other than the parent (doctor's note, court documentation) that an absence was legal; otherwise, the absences will be marked unexcused. Funerals, court obligations, medical absences, and religious absences (verified by notes), will not count toward the 10 day limit.

EXAMPLES OF EXCUSE ABSENCE REASONS

- Special/unusual circumstances surrounding incapacitation due to illness or injury
- Illness that necessitates home recuperation which must be verified in writing by the parent/guardian or physician
- Weather emergency, impassable roads, school transportation related absence
- Religious holidays
- Bereavement and/or to attend the funeral of a family member
- Hospitalization
- Principal approved reasons for absence from school or class, (i.e. field trips, assemblies, counseling, mentoring, school activities, support groups)
- Involuntary exclusions from school or class such as suspensions or as mandated by legal or medical professionals

Early Dismissals:

Early dismissals will be granted for justifiable reasons approved by school authorities. Parents should email capahs@pghschools.org to submit early dismissal requests. The email should include:

- Student name, grade, HR number, HR teacher name, major, time for dismissal and reason for dismissal.
- Without an email, a parent/guardian must come into the building to sign out the student.

Students will receive their early dismissal slips during homeroom. These notices must be turned in to the security officer prior to leaving the building.

Dismissal is a busy and critical time of our day. Additionally, downtown parking is not available around the school at the time of dismissal. We take the safety of our students very seriously and appreciate your support in this matter.

Cafeteria:

The Pittsburgh Board of Education provides cafeteria service to all students. Breakfast and lunch are served free to all CAPA 6-12 students.

Breakfast

Breakfast is served free to all CAPA 6-12 students. Breakfast will be served in the 4th floor cafeteria before students proceed to Block A /1st period.

High School breakfast is served until 7:35AM. Middle school breakfast begins at 7:45am and ends with the start of 1st period at 8:05am. No food may be eaten or taken outside of the cafeteria area.

Lunch

- Students will eat lunch during the time designated on their schedule.
- HS and 8th grade lunch is held in the 4th floor cafeteria. MS (6th – 7th) grade lunch is held in the 1st floor Cabaret.
- All students must report to their assigned lunch period.
- Students may only be dismissed with written permission by a staff member.
- No food may be eaten or taken out of the cafeteria area.
- Each student is responsible for cleaning and depositing his/her trash in the appropriate refuse containers.
- MS recess will be held outside, weather (32° and above, no rain/snow)

Dress Code:

No student shall wear any apparel or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures or any combination thereof appearing on 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. This prohibition shall be in effect during regular school hours and at any school-sponsored event whether on or off school premises.

Classroom Circles:

The CAPA community engages in restorative practices and welcomes student voice. As such, circles will often be used in the classroom setting. To maintain an environment of respect, the following norms will be adhered to:

- Respect everyone's opinion.
- Use "I" statements.
- Be accountable and adhere to the process of the circle.
- Be present and engaged.
- Be flexible and open-minded.
- Focus on the whole, not the individual.
- Be solution-driven.
- Accept non-closure.
- Every voice is important—be vocal and present.

Intervention

Intervention Hours are assigned for repeated level 2 infractions as part of progressive discipline that does not warrant an out of school suspension.

Students will be required to engage asynchronously with the classes they are not attending in-person. During Intervention Hours, students will complete an online reflection assignment that will help provide additional support for students if needed.

During Intervention Hours (during the school day), students must adhere to the following:

- Upon arrival, report to the main office and place cell phone in a secured area with main office staff.
- Spend Intervention Hours in the 4th Floor Library.
- Check PPS email account and Schoology to review assignments and classwork for the day.
- Complete individual student reflection sheet.
- Students will engage asynchronously with required classwork.
- Computers are to be used for: completing schoolwork, emailing teachers, credit recovery, and Schoology.
- Students found doing things other than listed items will be given one warning and then asked to meet with the principal.

Our goal is to support students to make positive choices while in school and adhere to CAPA's expectations for managing positive student behaviors.

Extracurricular Activities:

High School clubs meet from 3:15–4:20pm and Middle School clubs meet from 3:25-4:20pm. Middle school students must have a signed permission slip on file to participate in after-school clubs.

A full list of available clubs will be posted below and on bulletin boards around the school. Students can submit a request to create a club or after-school activity through the Activities Director in room 127. All extracurricular activities must have a staff sponsor.

Athletics for Students in Grades 6 – 8

Fall Sports:	Co-ed Flag Football, Co-ed Cross Country
Winter Sports:	Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball
Spring:	Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Asian Student Union | • Green Team |
| • Black Student Union | • Latino Student Union |
| • Book Club | • Magic the Gathering Club |
| • Ceramics Club | • Mock Trial |
| • Children of Steel | • Stand Together |
| • Creator Community | • Student Council |
| • Feminist Student Union | • Ultimate Frisbee |
| • Gender Sexuality Student Union | • Volleyball Club |

Food and Beverage Expectations:

For the safety of students and cleanliness of the school building, the following food and beverage policy will be in effect:

<i>CAN bring to school:</i>	<i>CANNOT bring to school:</i>
A <i>sealed</i> , unopened bottle of water.	Hot/cold beverages in an unsealed, open container.
An <i>empty</i> , sealed travel mug that is spill-proof.	Food that is not wrapped or sealed inside of bag.
Lunch—wrapped and sealed inside of bag.	Drinks in glass bottles.
Snacks—stored inside of bag.	Large amounts of baked goods.

*Medical documentation can be submitted for students in need of any accommodations related to food and beverage.

Hall Passes:

Students should only be excused from class when absolutely necessary. Students should have a corridor pass or restroom pass at all times. ***Homeroom is a closed period.***

Lockers:

Each student is assigned one locker so that he/she can store books and personal items.

- ***Students should not write or put stickers on the lockers.***
- Please exercise good judgment about what you bring to school and store in your locker.
- High school students will need to obtain a lock on their own and ensure that it is in working order.
- Middle school students will receive a lock at the beginning of the year. Replacement locks are available from administration and will incur a \$5 fee. Only these locks will be permitted to be used on middle school lockers.

Pittsburgh CAPA is not responsible for lost or stolen items and but will do our best to investigate. Students should always properly secure items and not leave personal belongings unattended.

Please Note: Lockers and locks are the property of the School District of Pittsburgh. They are on loan to students. The school reserves the right to open and inspect any locker deemed to be used inappropriately by students.

Lost & Found:

All lost articles should be taken to the main office. Reclamation of all lost instructional materials and payment for lost or damaged texts may be taken care of in the office from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM. The lost and found storage is located behind the main theatre on the first floor. Items left in the lost and found will be donated at the end of each quarter.

School Activities—Attendance and Participation:

Any student, who is found to have not been in attendance the entire school day, will not be permitted to participate in practices, performances or other school activities without submitting a an absence note or completed request for approved absence form.

Please note that homeroom attendance is the school District's official determination of absence or presence in school. A student marked absent from homeroom is considered officially absent and those marked present are officially present. Attendance for the Pittsburgh Promise is captured during homeroom attendance. This also applies to students who enter school late or have early dismissals for doctor appointments, etc. and is at the discretion of the principal regarding attendance.

Student Code of Conduct:

The Pittsburgh Public Schools have adopted a district-wide [Code of Student Conduct](#), which outlines behavior infractions and the resulting disciplinary action.

Student Identification Badge (ID's):

Students will be issued a picture identification card that will be used by students as they enter the building during arrival to capture their attendance. This badge will also be used to monitor tardies to school. It is expected that students will use their ID on a daily basis. Replacement IDs can be purchased for \$5. Students should see the Student Services Assistant for replacements or issues with IDs.

Student Safety:

Students are required to enter the school through metal detectors and we ask that student belongings be searched. In addition to what is listed in the [Student Code of Conduct](#), students are not permitted to bring any one of the following: scissors, glass bottles, open containers of any liquid, coffee, tea or any hot/cold beverages, purchased food items from any fast food or restaurant that is not sealed or stored for lunch.

Deliveries of fast/ordered food, from a restaurant or dropped off by another party, will not be permitted. This includes UberEats, Door Dash, etc. Students should contact an administrator regarding any items that they wish to bring to school (art supplies, knitting needles, props, etc.) that may be a concern.

Technology:

Responsibilities & Safety:

- All PPS equipment is subject to random searches of Internet history by both the school and district.
- Certain offenses carried out through the Internet could result in the involvement of State or Federal authorities. PPS will cooperate fully with those authorities if necessary.
- District equipment use will be logged by PPS for all system functions—web histories, installed or attempted installed software and receipts of email/web correspondence.

What If...:

- Cannot login or forgot password?
 - See Señor Watson or Mr. Scheuering
- Cannot connect to the Internet?
 - Determine if you are the only student, or if this is a school issue. Ask teacher to notify the tech team.
- Drop device and there is visible damage—screen crack, spilled liquid on keyboard, keyboard damage, etc.?
 - Email a summary of the damage to Señor Watson or Mr. Scheuering
- Violate the Acceptable Use Policy?
 - Dependent upon the offense...1st incident—verbal warning; 2nd incident—parent contact; 3rd offense—office referral.
- Lost or stolen device?
 - Contact an administrator immediately.

Textbooks/Calculators:

Textbooks, calculators, library materials, and supplies issued to students become their responsibility. Students are expected to pay for items that are lost, damaged, or stolen. Students with unpaid balances will receive an annual notice and specific directions on how to remit the balance.

Visitor Policy:

Pittsburgh CAPA is committed to the safety of the whole school community. In order to avoid interruption of the instructional program and to promote the safety of students and staff, the following procedures have been adopted.

- All visitors must report to the main office.
- They will be required to pass through the metal detectors, sign a logbook, state the reason for their visit, wear a visitor pass when in the building and are expected to leave promptly when their business is completed.
- All visitors who wish to visit classrooms, observe aspects of the instructional program, or meet with staff members are expected to schedule those visits 24-hours in advance with the appropriate administrator.

- Teachers or other staff may not use instructional time to discuss non-educational matters with visitors. It is mandatory to make prior arrangements to speak with a faculty member concerning a specific issue or concern.
- Observations of teachers must have an educational purpose and cannot be excessive or obstructive.
- No more than two (2) parents/guardians at one time should be permitted to visit a classroom.
- Parents/guardians who are observing in the classroom shall not interrupt the lesson or “pull” their child out to talk with them privately.

Cell Phones

- Cell Phones are NOT to be used during class time – unless directed to do so by your teacher.
- Texting, make phone calls, posting on social media, etc. is not permitted during the school day and may lead to disciplinary action.
- Students may use cell phones to listen to music, play games, check grades, check Schoology, etc. during breakfast, lunch and during the change of classes.

CAPA Hallways

- You have four minutes to get to each class – it is possible! Sign out/in for RR. Use RR in your area.
- After 3 tardies to class, expect parent contact, student admin conf and possible intervention.
- Class cut – conference – intervention.
- Afternoon arts – stay in your area
- Be respectful and courteous to your peers, teachers and all staff. All teachers are your teachers. Respect any reasonable request by an adult.
- Our stairwells can be crowded. Remember to travel up on the left and down on the right.
- If you stop to see a teacher or other staff person, get a blue note so you are not late.

CAPA Character:

The CAPA community commits to promoting positive behavior and character development.



Cooperation

- Be polite, respectful and adhere to school and classroom expectations as a student and artist.
- Be willing to collaborate and work together.
- Help and support all members of the CAPA community.
- Cell phones and earbuds should not be visible in class.



Attendance

- Arrive to school ON TIME, scan your ID and report to your assigned area/class.
- Follow the bell schedule and be present and prepared in all classes.
- Have a hall pass when traveling outside the classroom during class time.
- Reach out for help if you are struggling with attendance.



Preparation

- Come to CAPA eager, ready, and willing to learn.
- Complete all required assignments, projects, and tasks.
- Remain dedicated to your artform and growing as an artist.
- Bring your charged MacBook to school daily.



Acceptance

- Respect and acknowledge all members of the CAPA community, staff and students alike.
- Show compassion and kindness towards myself and others.
- Use positive language that is inclusive and respectful.

Important School Personnel 2023-2024

Name	Position	Room	Number	Email Add pghschools.org
Ms. Dunn	Social Worker (11-12)	425	412-529-6115	Vdunn1
Mrs. Lane	Head School Secretary	117	412-529-6101	Clane1
Mr. Black	Instrumental Music Chair	310	412-529-6112	Bblack2
Mr. Coyne	Counselor (Last Names A-M))	512	412-529-6128	Bcoyne1
Mr. Pinizzotto	Assistant Principal (9-12)	327	412-529-6103	Gpinizzotto
Ms. Cregan	Literary Arts Department Chair	202	412-529-6131	Mcgregan1
Mr. Howard	Theater Manager	308	412-529-6109	Choward1
Mr. Carter	Head Custodian	119	412-529-6110	Jcarter1
Ms. Lowery	Cafeteria Manager	402	412-529-6118	Wlowery1
Ms. Stewart	Nurse	417	412-529-6119	Bstewart2
Mr. Murphy	Physical Education Office/Athletics	504	412-529-6126	Rmurphy1
Mr. Palermo	Social Worker (9&10)	426	412-529-6124	Jpalermo1
Dr. Pearlman	Principal	114	412-529-6104	Mpearlman1
Mr. Manning	Dance Department Chair	502	412-529-6125	Jmanning1
Ms. Pultz	Visual Arts Department Chair	612	412-529-6129	Spultz2
Mr. Fuller	Theater Department Chair	418	412-529-6121	Mfuller1
Ms. Kendeall	Vocal Music Chair	320	412-529-6113	Jkendeall1
Mr. DeLeone	Production Tech Workshop	B04	412-529-6135	Pdeleone1
Mrs. Velmire	Student Data System Specialist	Main Office	412-529-6116	Svelmire1
Ms. Humphreys	Middle School Assistant Principal	914	412-529-6134	Mhumphreys1
Mrs. Hustwit	Activities Directory	127	412-529-6130	EHustwit1
Ms. Thomas	Counselor (6-8)	822	412-529-6133	Jthomas2
Ms. Nedomys	Guidance Counselor (Last Names N-Z)	417A	412-529-6123	Aniedomys1
Ms. Watson	High School Learning Support	527	412-529-6127	Vwatson1
Ms Spitz Cohan	Middle School Learning Support	714	412-529-6101	Kspitzcohan1

CAPA Bell Schedule

TIME	MS PERIOD	MS CLASS	TIME	HS PERIOD/BLOCK	HS CLASS
7:40-8:00	Arrival/Breakfast Cabaret		7:10-7:35	Arrival/Breakfast 4 th floor Cafeteria	
8:05-8:50	1	MS Arts	7:40-9:00	A	HS Academics
8:50-9:35	2		9:05-10:25	B	HS Academics
9:35-10:15	3				
10:20-10:25	MS Homeroom and 6-12 Announcements (10:20)		10:30-10:35	HS Homeroom 6-12 Announcements	
10:25-11:05	4	MS Academics	10:38-12:28	C First Lunch 10:38-11:03	HS Academics
11:10-1:10	6 th grade	11:10-11:40 Lunch		C 2 nd Lunch 11:06-11:31	
		11:45-12:25 Period 6			
		12:30-1:10 Period 7			
	7 th grade	11:10-11:50 Period 5		C 3 rd Lunch 11:34 – 11:59	
		11:55-12:25 Lunch			
		12:30-1:10 Period 7			
	8 th grade	11:10-11:50 Period 5		C 4 th Lunch 12:03 – 12:28	
		11:55-12:35 Period 6			
	12:40-1:10 Lunch				
1:15-1:55	8	MS Academics			
2:00-2:40	9	MS Academics			
2:45-3:25	10	MS Academics	12:31-1:11	7	HS Arts
			1:11-1:51	8	
			1:51-2:31	9	
			2:31-3:09	10	
3:25	MS Dismissal		3:10	HS Dismissal	