

# Pittsburgh Whittier K-5



Dear Whittier Families:

We welcome all students and parents to Pittsburgh Whittier K-5. At Pittsburgh Whittier, we stress academic achievement, appropriate behavior, and being NICE to others. Strong emphasis is placed on ensuring all students have a welcoming and safe school environment where they can achieve their goals.

We are committed to promoting a community of learners! Our staff is dedicated to providing every child with the opportunity to grow academically and emotionally through enriched activities and programs geared to promote thinking and learning.

We hope this handbook will provide you with the necessary information that you are looking for about the school.

We encourage parent participation in all phases of our school day as tutors, classroom volunteers, readers, etc. Please check our school calendar regularly to learn about what is going on at Whittier. Our existing Parent School Community Council (PSCC) and Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) members invite new members to join them in planning programs and activities for the new school year!

We strive to form strong partnerships with students, parents, and community stakeholders to ensure that all of our Whittier students receive an outstanding education. I look forward to getting to know you and working with you this school year. Together we can make sure our students reach their fullest potential.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any additional questions about the school or information in the handbook.

Sincerely,

Holly Ballard, Principal Whittier K-5

# Pittsburgh Whittier K-5

## Student Handbook

### Whittier Vision

All students will embrace learning, maximize their potential and be socially responsible.

### Whittier Mission

The mission of Pittsburgh Whittier K-5 is to ensure all students receive high quality instruction. Staff will collaborate in order to ensure students are provided with a variety of instructional methods in order to best meet the needs of all of our students. We strive for our children to grow and learn in a positive, nurturing, collaborative, and culturally diverse environment. All members of the school community will work together to enhance the unique learning experience for all of our students. All of our children will benefit from a safe and orderly learning environment in which all staff members share a belief that all children can develop and learn at high levels.

### Whittier Beliefs

- We believe all students can learn at high levels.
- We believe all students are unique individuals who should be provided with a variety of learning experiences in order to maximize their personal and academic potentials.
- We believe a variety of instructional approaches should be utilized to enable students to demonstrate understanding and mastery of basic skills and grade level benchmarks.
- We believe student progress should be monitored on a regular and continuous basis so that adjustments can be made when appropriate.
- We believe a safe and orderly environment is necessary for student growth, development, and learning.
- We believe all stakeholders; administrators, teachers, parents, and community members share the responsibility in ensuring Pittsburgh Whittier K-5 is living its mission.

# Pittsburgh Whittier K-5

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Bonnie Davis	Kindergarten Teacher	<a href="mailto:bdavis4@pghschools.org">bdavis4@pghschools.org</a>	103
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Stacy Seezox	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher	<a href="mailto:sseezox1@pghschools.org">sseezox1@pghschools.org</a>	115
Kathy Dragone	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher	<a href="mailto:kdragone1@pghschools.org">kdragone1@pghschools.org</a>	206
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Pam Harder	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher	<a href="mailto:pharder1@pghschools.org">pharder1@pghschools.org</a>	204
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Tacara Jackson	K-2 Autistic Classroom Assistant	<a href="mailto:tjackson2@pghschools.org">tjackson2@pghschools.org</a>	116
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Bryanna Brown	Sp. Ed. Paraprofessional	<a href="mailto:bbrown2@pghschools.org">bbrown2@pghschools.org</a>	105
Jasmine Strothers	Sp. Ed. Paraprofessional	<a href="mailto:jstrothers1@pghschools.org">jstrothers1@pghschools.org</a>	203
Terrie Seskey	EAI	<a href="mailto:tseskey1@pghschools.org">tseskey1@pghschools.org</a>	105
Brian Volchko	Science/Art Teacher	<a href="mailto:bvolchko1@pghschools.org">bvolchko1@pghschools.org</a>	207/205
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Louis Strobel	Instrumental Music		
Maggie Fertal	Library	<a href="mailto:mfertal1@pghschools.org">mfertal1@pghschools.org</a>	202
Nicholas Perella	Gym	<a href="mailto:nperella1@pghschools.org">nperella1@pghschools.org</a>	Gym
Jackie Trevisan	Literacy Coach	<a href="mailto:jtrevisan1@pghschools.org">jtrevisan1@pghschools.org</a>	207
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Lateesha Thomas	SDSS/Information Processor	<a href="mailto:lthomas4@pghschools.org">lthomas4@pghschools.org</a>	Main Office
Talona Snow	Secretary	<a href="mailto:tsnow1@pghschools.org">tsnow1@pghschools.org</a>	Main Office
Renee Valenti	Speech	<a href="mailto:rvalenti1@pghschools.org">rvalenti1@pghschools.org</a>	104
Relda Willey	Nurse	<a href="mailto:rwilley1@pghschools.org">rwilley1@pghschools.org</a>	113

# Pittsburgh Whittier K-5

## Pittsburgh Whittier Bell schedule

Bell Schedule	Starts	Ends
Homeroom	8:20	8:30
Intervention	8:30	9:00
First Period	9:00	9:45
Second Period	9:45	10:30
Third Period	10:30	11:15
Fourth Period	11:15	12:00
Fifth Period	12:00	12:45
Sixth Period	12:45	1:30
Seventh Period	1:30	2:15
Eighth Period	2:15	3:00
Homeroom PM	3:00	3:05
Bus/Walker Dismissal	3:00	3:05

BREAKFAST/LUNCH	START	ROTATE	ENDS
<b>BREAKFAST</b>	8:00		8:20
<b>LUNCH</b>	12:00	12:23	12:45

**E.S.E.P 7:41-8:20**

**Secretary-7:45-3:45**

**SDSS-8:00-4:00**

**Teachers-7:41-3:05**

**Paraprofessional-8:00-3:15**

# Pittsburgh Whittier K-5

## School Procedures

### Arrival Procedures

Walkers and bus students enter the school through the main entrance.  
Cell phones must be off while in school.  
Students will enter school, get breakfast, and report to their Homeroom

### Dismissal Procedures

Teachers will escort walkers and pick up students through the back doors by the parking lot.  
Students will be escorted to the buses by an assigned staff member.  
If your child will not be taking the bus home or will be picked up by an adult not on their emergency care form, you must send a letter to school with your child or call the Main Office.

### Dress Code for Whittier K-5

**We do not have uniforms at Whittier. We follow PPS Dress Code.**

### PPS 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. Revealing attire that permits the exposure of undergarments or private body parts is prohibited. This prohibition shall be in effect during regular school hours and at any school-sponsored event whether on or off school premises.

### Cell Phones

Cell phones are allowed but must be turned off while in school.

### Lunch/Breakfast

Breakfast is served daily from 8:00 until 8:20. Students should report directly to the cafeteria after entering the building or in COVID times get breakfast and report to their homeroom. Lunch is served to students daily. The school has one lunch period. Students in grades K-2 eat first from 12:00-12:23 and students in grades 3-5 eat second from 12:23 – 12:45. All students can eat both breakfast and lunch for free. Students that do not want to eat the lunch provided by the school can pack their lunch. School menus are sent home monthly.

### Recess

Students will have 22 minutes of recess daily. Students will go outside for recess (weather dependent). When students are unable to go outside for recess, they will have indoor recess.

# Pittsburgh Whittier K-5

## **Transportation**

Students that live at least 1.5 miles from Pittsburgh Whittier will receive transportation. Transportation information is mailed to families by the district transportation office. Information is usually mailed by mid-August.

## **Bus Safety**

**It is important for students to follow the rules on the school bus in order to ensure the safety of all students.** If riding the bus, follow these rules:

- Follow the directions of the bus driver.
- Remain in your seat. Do not change seats.
- Keep your head, hands, and body inside the bus.
- Refrain from throwing objects inside or outside of the bus.
- Talk with an inside voice. No screaming/yelling.
- Keep hands and unkind words to yourself.

## **School Departments and Programs**

### **Course Offerings**

Pittsburgh Whittier K-5 students who are eligible for special education services are supported through the Program for Students with Exceptionalities.

- An Autistic Support classroom is available for primary students in grades K-2.
- Speech and Language services are available for eligible students in grades K-5.
- Students in grades K-5 attend self-contained classes.
- Art, Music, Gym, and Library are available for all students.
- All students will receive a laptop (grades 1-5)/iPad (kindergarten).
- Instrumental music is integrated into the curriculum for grades 3.
- Students can sign up for instrumental in grades 4 and 5.

### **Student Schedule**

Students will receive a copy of their homeroom schedule at the beginning of the school year. Pittsburgh Whittier follows a six (6) day schedule. The school calendar always indicates the rotation day number on the calendar.

### **Bell Schedule**

On Page 6 of the student handbook you will find a copy of the bell schedule.

### **School Calendar**

A monthly school calendar is sent home to families. The calendar lists special activities, parent meetings, and other important information. The school calendar is also posted on the school webpage.

# Pittsburgh Whittier K-5

## After School Programs

There are opportunities for students to participate in after school programs. Pittsburgh Whittier currently offers the following programs:

- **Intramurals-** Students in grades 4-5 can participate in intramurals after school with the physical education teacher.
- **Strong Women, Strong Girls** - Local University students offer a mentoring program for girls in grades 4 and 5.

Please check the list for updated after school program offerings.

## School Expectations

The administration and staff of Pittsburgh Whittier K-5 have developed three universal expectations for all students in Grades K-5. Classroom teachers may also utilize supplemental rules while in their classroom at their own discretion.

- Be Safe
  - Be Respectful
  - Be Responsible
- JUST BE NICE!

## PBIS

Pittsburgh Whittier utilizes a Positive Behavioral Intervention System (PBIS) to recognize positive student behavior. The goal of our PBIS Program is to create a learning environment where students can learn and grow. The PBIS behavior matrix is uploaded on the school website.

Every month students learn about a character trait to support our PBIS. Students are recognized monthly for demonstrating positive student behavior.

## Student Code of Conduct

A copy of the student code of conduct is mailed to families at the beginning of the school year. The code of conduct is also posted on the school webpage

## Parental Involvement Opportunities

Pittsburgh Whittier has numerous opportunities for families to be engaged in their child's learning. Below are just a few of the opportunities available to families.

- **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)** - Pittsburgh Whittier K-5 has a strong, active, and diverse PTO which encompasses many families. The PTO conducts numerous fundraising activities, special award recognition ceremonies, and field trips for the students.
- **Parent School Community Council (PSCC)** – We provides numerous opportunities for the parents to participate in parenting workshops, computer education, curriculum instruction and understanding, and community engagement and outreach. The PSCC meets monthly. Please call the school for more information or watch for the monthly calendar.

# Pittsburgh Whittier K-5

- **Volunteering Opportunities Within the School** –Please contact the school if you are interested in finding out how you can volunteer at the school. There are certain criteria that have to be met prior to volunteering at the school.

## Student Discipline

Code of Student 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 can't be achieved unless schools and classrooms are safe and orderly.

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.

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

- [Code of Conduct](#)

### Safe2Say

Safe2Say Something is a Youth Violence Prevention Program run by the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General. The program teaches youth and adults how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, from individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others and to “say something” BEFORE it is too late. With Safe2Say Something, it is easy and confidential to report safety concerns to help prevent violence and tragedies.

Here is how it works:

- Submit an anonymous tip report through the Safe2SaySomething system <https://www.safe2saypa.org/> or by calling – 1-844-723-2729
- Crisis center reviews, assesses and processes all submissions
- Crisis center sends all submissions to school administration and/or law enforcement for intervention
- If needed, crisis center may contact tipster anonymously through the app

### PBIS – Positive Behavior Intervention Supports

Whittier uses PBIS to reduce or eliminate poor behavior school wide through the encouragement of positive behaviors. PBIS decreases office discipline referrals, increases instructional time, and improves student achievement. This intentional focus on positive reinforcement is creating and maintaining a positive school climate for the students and teachers.



# Pittsburgh Whittier K-5

## Policy 102 – Non-Discrimination in School and Classroom Practices

Board Policy 102 states in part:

The Board declares it to be 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.

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](#)

Please click on the link below for Special Education information

- [PSE \(Special Education\) / Child Find Annual Notice \(pghschools.org\)](#)

# Pittsburgh Whittier K-5

## Community Resource Guide

### Family Resources

**Alliance for Community Respite Care** - 1(888) 954-2424

A collaborative network of families, providers, community members and advocates who work to ensure the availability of quality respite care.

[www.classcommunity.org/how-we-help/alliance-community-respite-care](http://www.classcommunity.org/how-we-help/alliance-community-respite-care)

**Allegheny Family Network (AFN)** - 1(888) 273-2361

Supports and partners with families raising children with emotional and mental health needs to improve their quality of life.

[www.alleghenyfamilynetwork.cfsites.org](http://www.alleghenyfamilynetwork.cfsites.org)

**Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh** - (412) 622-3114

The Carnegie library has multiple branch locations offering special services such as job career and educational centers.

[www.clpgh.org](http://www.clpgh.org)

**Child Care Information Services - CCIS of Allegheny County** – (412) 261-2273 or 1(800) 392-3131 CCIS serves as a primary resource to assist families with child care referrals, emergency childcare, subsidized care for qualifying families, and promotes quality child care by offering training in subjects such as early literacy.

<http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/findfacilsandlocs/childcareinformationservices/>

**Children’s Health Insurance Program - CHIP** - 1(800) 986-5437

Pennsylvania’s program to provide health insurance to all uninsured children and teens who are not eligible for or enrolled in Medical Assistance.

[www.chipcoverspakids.com](http://www.chipcoverspakids.com)

**Family Resources** - (412) 363-1702

Family Resources offers many services to help parents and children improve their relationship along with youth enrichment activities at its centers.

[www.familyresourcesofpa.org](http://www.familyresourcesofpa.org)

**The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania** - (412) 281-2535

Helps mentoring programs by providing training, recruiting, quality assistance, and support to increase the number of mentors in the community.

[www.mentoringpittsburgh.org](http://www.mentoringpittsburgh.org)

**Parent Education & Advocacy Leadership (PEAL) Center** - (412) 281-4404

The PEAL Center is an organization of parents of children with disabilities reaching out to assist other parents and professionals.

[www.pealcenter.org](http://www.pealcenter.org)

**Pittsburgh Public Schools** - (412) 529-4357 (Parent Hotline)

The Pittsburgh Public Schools believes in regular, two-way, meaningful communication connecting student academic learning and other school activities; to this end the Parent Hotline is one of a number of resources to assist parents and families in engagement.

[www.pps.k12.pa.us](http://www.pps.k12.pa.us)

# Pittsburgh Whittier K-5

## **Right to Education Task Force – (412) 529-2300**

The Local Task Force provides opportunities for parents, guardians and community members to ask questions about special education services as well as address concerns that affect students with disabilities in the Pittsburgh Public School District.

Program for Students with Exceptionalities PSE/Oliver

2323 Brighton Rd.

Pittsburgh, Pa. 15212

lft2pgh@gmail.com

<http://on.fb.me/1vtwvYK>

## **United Way of Allegheny County - 211 (HelpLine), (412) 261-6010**

United Way of Allegheny County provides information to families through their online resource Help Connections; agency funding, planning, and community problem solving for health and human services agencies operating with in Allegheny County.

[www.unitedwaypittsburgh.org](http://www.unitedwaypittsburgh.org)

## **Children's Services**

### **Achieva - (412) 995-5000**

A world-renowned leader in the field of disabilities, known for its innovative programs, and dedication to children with disabilities and their families.

[www.achieva.info](http://www.achieva.info)

### **Alliance for Infants and Toddlers - (412) 885-6000**

This program provides service coordination, screenings, assessments, family support services, and early intervention service coordination to families with children between the ages of birth to three years of age.

[www.afit.org](http://www.afit.org)

### **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Pittsburgh - (412) 363-6100**

Big Brothers Big Sisters increases the self-confidence of children and the probability that they will become fully integrated members of society, leading productive and rewarding lives through mentoring and enrichment programs.

[www.bbbspittsburgh.org](http://www.bbbspittsburgh.org)

### **Boys and Girls Clubs - (412) 782-5710**

The BGC is a unique organization consisting of 8 Club facilities, a Charter H.S., Outlet Connection retail venture, Campfire USA, and extension programs. Our goal is to provide every child with the essential tools needed for a successful & bright future.

[www.bgcwpa.org](http://www.bgcwpa.org)

### **Catholic Charities, Child Care Support Services - (412) 456-6999**

Catholic Charities provides counseling, refugee resettlement, respite care, utility assistance, emergency relief, tangible assistance services and makes referrals for clients. In 2007 it expanded services by opening a Free HealthCare Center.

[www.ccpgh.org](http://www.ccpgh.org)

### **Children's Institute - (412) 420-2400**

The Children's Institute is a nonprofit pediatric rehabilitation facility which provides education services for children ages two to 21 with cognitive or physical disabilities with in-home services for children and families with special needs.

[www.amazingkids.org](http://www.amazingkids.org)

### **Girl Scouts - Trillium Council - (412) 566-2570 or 1(800) 248-3355**

The Girl Scouts inspires girls with the highest ideals of character, conduct, patriotism, and service that they may become happy and resourceful citizens.

[www.gswpa.org](http://www.gswpa.org)

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## **Greater Pittsburgh Council Boy Scouts of America - (412) 471-2927**

The Boy Scouts trains young people in citizenship, service, and physical fitness through the Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Venturing programs, & more.

[www.gpc-bsa.org](http://www.gpc-bsa.org)

## **Junior Achievement of Southwest PA Inc. – (412) 208-4747**

JA's purpose is to educate and inspire young people to value free enterprise and understand business & economics to improve the quality of their lives.

<https://www.juniorachievement.org/web/ja-westernpa>

## **Parks and Recreation - (412) 255-2539**

Parks and Recreation offers a wide variety of recreational programs and facilities for use by Pittsburgh citizens.

<http://pittsburghpa.gov/citiparks/>

## **Pittsburgh Toy Lending Library - (412) 682-4430**

The Pittsburgh Toy Lending Library, a cooperative run by volunteers, is an indoor play-space for children, prekindergarten, and their caregivers.

[www.pghtoys.org](http://www.pghtoys.org)

## **Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh - (412) 227-4802**

The Urban League is the largest social and educational service provider and advocacy agency devoted to empowering African Americans to enter the economic and social mainstream community in Pittsburgh through its diverse programs.

[www.ulpgh.org](http://www.ulpgh.org)

## **YMCA- (412) 227-3800**

YMCAs serve America's children, families and communities by "building healthy spirit, mind and body for all."

[www.ymcaofpittsburgh.org](http://www.ymcaofpittsburgh.org)

## **Youth Places - (412) 434-0851**

Youth Places promotes the positive cognitive, social, physical, emotional and moral development of youth by providing a safe place for them to engage in a range of activities.

[www.youthplaces.org](http://www.youthplaces.org)

## **Youth Works Inc. - (412) 281-6629**

Youth Works builds a community solution to help young people whose potential might be overlooked to pursue employment and career development opportunities.

[www.youthworksinc.org](http://www.youthworksinc.org)

## **YWCA Greater Pittsburgh - (412) 391-5100**

YWCA works to improve our community by increasing the status of women, girls, families and advancing racial justice by tackling homelessness, childcare needs, unemployment, fair housing and civil rights issues.

[www.ywcapgh.org](http://www.ywcapgh.org)

## **Cultural Organizations**

### **The August Wilson Center - (412) 258-2700**

The August Wilson Center for African American Culture is a not-for-profit organization that presents performing, visual and education programs that celebrate the contributions of African Americans within the region and the impact of cultural expression from Africa to the African Diaspora.

<https://culturaldistrict.org/venues/august-wilson-center>

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**Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh** - (412) 622-3131 Natural History & Art, (412) 237-3400 Science Center, (412) 237-8300 Andy Warhol

A collection of four dynamic, distinctive museums, and the Pittsburgh region's home for great art and science exploration.

[www.carnegiemuseums.org](http://www.carnegiemuseums.org)

**Children's Museum of Pittsburgh** - (412) 322-5058

Children's Museum of Pittsburgh provides innovative museum experiences that inspire joy, creativity and curiosity.

[www.pittsburghkids.org](http://www.pittsburghkids.org)

**Fort Pitt Museum** - (412) 281-9284

Through exhibits and programs, the museum also addresses the important role of Fort Pitt during the American Revolution and the early development of the city of Pittsburgh.

<http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/fort-pitt/>

**The History Center** - (412) 454-6000

The Senator John Heinz History Center is an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the largest history museum in the state of Pennsylvania.

[www.heinzhistorycenter.org](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org)

**Manchester Craftsmen's Guild** - (412) 322-1773

Manchester Craftsmen's Guild is a multi-discipline, minority directed, center for arts and learning that employs the visual and performing arts to foster a sense of accomplishment and hope in the urban community.

[www.mcgyouthandarts.org](http://www.mcgyouthandarts.org)

**National Aviary** - (412) 323-7235

The National Aviary is America's only independent indoor nonprofit bird zoo. It is home to 600+ birds of more than 200 species.

[www.aviary.org](http://www.aviary.org)

**Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens** - (412) 622-6914

Encounter the wonders of the natural world. Tour through the jewel-like Conservatory and visit exotic lands and ancient worlds with vivid colors, natural oddities, and surprises around every corner of the botanical gardens.

[www.phipps.conservatory.org](http://www.phipps.conservatory.org)

**Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium** - (412) 665-3640

The Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG is a 77-acre facility that is home to thousands of animals representing hundreds of diverse species. The Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium is one of only six major zoo and aquarium combinations in the country.

[www.pittsburghzoo.org](http://www.pittsburghzoo.org)