



Piedmont Community Charter School
Middle School Campus
Parent-Student Handbook

2023-2024

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Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year at Piedmont Community Charter School. The administrative team, faculty, and staff members are excited for the new school year and look forward to building on our school's established academic and fine arts excellence. Our ultimate goal is to provide a climate that is conducive to learning for all students and our entire staff look forward to collaborating with our stakeholders in making this academic year an outstanding experience for everyone.

At Piedmont Community Charter, we believe that education is a shared responsibility. The successful operation of this school depends on all stakeholders: students, parents, staff, and community members. Each one of us is responsible for contributing our part to enable the school to be a safe and productive environment where we can work and learn together.

Piedmont Community Charter has established procedures and guidelines to enhance teaching and learning in a safe and orderly environment during the instructional day. Our faculty and staff look forward to sharing their expertise in academics, special programs, and extracurricular activities with the students. We encourage you to get to know your school, its programs, guidelines, activities, and schedule to become an active participant in our school.

This parent-student handbook is an overview of our school's expectations, services, and guidelines. This handbook can serve as a reference for you throughout the school year. I look forward to collaborating with each family as we strive for excellence in your child's academic endeavors. On behalf of the faculty and staff at Piedmont Community Charter School, I welcome you to the 2023-2024 school year and look forward to making it a success!

Sincerely,

Mr. David M. Benfield

Middle School Director

PCCS Middle School Campus Administration

Head of School	Jennifer Killen
Middle School Director	David Benfield
Middle School Assistant Director	Janiqua Barnes
Middle School Assistant Director	Traci Melton
Registrar/PowerSchool	Anne Mallonee
Receptionist	Audrey Lanford
Administrative Assistant	Bobbie Mathieu
Counseling	Dana Crowder
Counseling	Kayla McIlwain
School Social Worker	Amber Morris
EC Coordinator	Elizabeth Berkebile
Technology Facilitator	Casey Reese
Middle School Athletic Director	Tommy Wease

Daily Schedule

The Middle School Campus opens for students at 7:15am. A warning bell will ring at 7:55am and all students must be in class by 8:00am. All students must be picked up by 3:30pm. Please respect the staff's time by ensuring your child is picked up on time.

Each student will spend 75 minutes a day in 3 Core Classes, 35 minutes a day in 2 elective classes, and 45 minutes in SWAG. SWAG (Students With A Goal) is our built-in enrichment, intervention, and/or remediation time during the school day to achieve academic goals. The purpose of SWAG is to fill educational gaps or push students with more complex content. It is not a study hall where students are able to complete current classwork. It is the expectation that homework is completed at home.

Dismissal

Students will be dismissed as follows:

2:45 - All Middle School students will be dismissed.

- 5th and 6th grade along with any older sibling, will leave from the right side of the MS campus building (New Hope Road side).
- 7th and 8th grade, along with students riding vans, will be dismissed on the left side of the MS campus building (Titman Road side).
 - 5th and 6th Grade Van riders will report to the back hallway near the Dance room and wait for their rides.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report Cards are issued each 9 weeks to all students grades 5-8. All report cards will be sent home using ParentSquare. Progress reports are issued at the 4.5 week of the grading period by teachers and will also be sent home through ParentSquare.

End of 9 weeks	Progress Reports
October 13, December 20, March 8, May 22	September 8, November 17, February 9, April 19

Lockers

Student safety is paramount at Piedmont Community Charter School. To this end, students will not carry backpacks into classrooms during the school day. All students at PCCS will be issued lockers and a school-issued lock. All backpacks must be stored in a locker before the school day begins and can be removed from the locker upon dismissal. All students will be required to pay a \$5.00 locker fee for the use of the locker and the school-provided lock. Locks will be returned to PCCS at the end of the school year.

Lunch

All PCCS students must provide their own lunch each day. Parents are encouraged to bring lunch to a student if necessary; deliveries from restaurants will not be accepted nor will any delivery system (Uber eats, Doordash, etc.). In case of emergency, we do keep a small stash of food available in the office for students who forget their lunches and parents can't drop off. We do keep track of students who need food and will contact families when students come to the office for food. Students in all grades will eat in the commons for lunch.

Medication

Students who take medication during the school day must keep the medicine in the front office. This includes prescription and non-prescription medicine. A medication form must be filed with Mrs. Thompson in the front office for us to be able to administer medication of any kind to students.

Cell Phone/Bluetooth Headphones/Smart Watches Guidelines and Consequences

Cell phones should be turned off and kept in the student's locked locker during the instructional day. This also applies to bluetooth headphones. Students are allowed to wear smart watches. If a student is using the watch as a phone (accepting calls, texting, etc.), the following consequences do apply.

Anytime a student has their cell phone out/bluetooth headphones in their ears during class, lunch, or in the hallways, it is to be taken up by a staff member and brought to the office. It is to be given to the receptionist with the student's name. The receptionist will be keeping track of the frequency on a spreadsheet.

- **1st time personal technology is taken - Warning & student may pick up at the end of the day.**
- **2nd time personal technology is taken - Warning and parent is required to pick-up cell phone.**
- **3rd time personal technology is taken - 30 minutes ASD and parent is required to pick up.**
- **4th time personal technology is taken - 1 hour ASD and parent is required to pick up.**
- **5th time personal technology is taken - 1 day ISS and parent is required to pick up.**

Attendance Policy

Attendance in school is necessary for educational success and is legally required for all children between the ages of seven and sixteen, and for all children under the age of seven who are enrolled in a public school like PCCS. Failure to attend school as required may result in a referral to truancy court or state child protective services.

All students are required to arrive at school on time unless they have a legitimate excuse for being tardy. Students and parents should allow adequate time for travel to school. Remember that possible traffic problems, weather conditions, transition time, and other factors may affect travel times. Students who are not in their classrooms at the time the school bell rings are considered tardy.

Tardiness and Early Withdrawals

Students who are not in their classrooms by the time the school bell rings are considered tardy. An early withdrawal occurs when students are checked out of school before the end of the academic day. The administration recognizes that there are occasions when a student may arrive late to school or must leave early for legitimate reasons. Students who arrive late are required to sign in at the front office and receive a tardy slip before proceeding to class. For an excused tardy the student's parent/guardian should accompany them to the office to provide a reason for the late arrival. If students are bringing in a note, it must be presented ***on the day of the tardy*** to be considered excused. If it is due to an appointment from a healthcare provider, a note from the provider is to be turned into the office and it must have been for the student, not a sibling or parent, etc. Parents should come to the office to check out students early.

Tardiness and Early Withdrawals can be excused for the following reasons:

- a. Illness or injury *of the student*
- b. Medical, Dental, or other appointment with a health care provider *for the student*
- c. Necessary religious observances
- d. Involvement in traffic or other accident
- e. Death of an immediate family member

Tardiness both deprives the student of valuable instruction and causes a disruption to the learning environment. In order to curb unnecessary late arrivals to school and late arrivals to individual classes, the following disciplinary actions will take place: After the 5th violation, the student will begin again with the 2nd consequence of 30 minutes ASD and so on; there are only 1 warning per 9 weeks. Tardies reset after each 9 weeks.

- **1st Tardy - Warning**
- **2nd Tardy -30 Minutes ASD**
- **3rd Tardy - 1 hour ASD**
- **4th Tardy - ½ Day ISS**
- **5th Tardy - 1 Day ISS**

Attendance

Absences:

An absence may be excused for the following reasons if the parent or legal guardian sends in a note within **three (3) days** of the absence.

- a. Illness or injury of the student
- b. Isolation ordered by state or local health officials
- c. Death of an immediate family member
- d. Medical, dental, or other appointment with a health care provider *for the student*
- e. The student is a party to or under subpoena as a witness before a court or administrative tribunal
- f. Religious observance, as required by the religion of the student or the student's parents

g. Participation in a valid and important educational opportunity with prior approval of the Academic Director

Academic Absence Policy for Grades K – 8:

Attendance:

Only **twenty (20) absences**, including excused and unexcused absences, are permitted each school year. The attendance committee regarding promotion/retention will review students who exceed 20 absences. A report may be filed for truancy after the 20th missed day of school.

Excuse Notes:

Parents will have **three (3) days to send in a note to have an absence excused**. A phone call or email may be substituted for a handwritten note. Parents may write an excuse note for illness up to 10 times during a single school year. After 10, a doctor's note is required or absences will remain unexcused.

Make-Up Work:

Students will be given an opportunity to make up work or tests missed for those periods where an absence occurred. **Upon the student's return to school, arrangements for make-up work shall be made within three (3) school days. Work is also assigned on Google Classroom and may be submitted online.** Arrangements for make-up work are the responsibility of the student.

Reporting Absences:

Daily Absences – both excused and unexcused – will be reported to the parent by the way of a computer generated telephone message. The Director or their designee shall inform the parent/guardian by mail when cumulative unexcused absences reach 3, 6, and 10.

Middle School Dress Code

Students are expected to be in dress code upon arrival at school and stay in dress code throughout the day. Administrators & Teachers reserve the right to determine the appropriateness of dress in cases not covered by the dress code. All clothing should be clean, neat and free of holes or stains with no cut or torn necklines, hemlines, sleeves, sides, etc. Students deemed out of dress code will be asked to contact a parent/guardian for appropriate attire and wait in ISS until they are dressed accordingly.

I. Tops:

- Solid Color Polo Shirts
- Solid Color Dress Shirts with a collar (can be a button down)
- Solid Color Sweaters
- Solid Color Pullover Sweatshirts
- Solid Color Dresses/Skirts (must be knee length)

- PCCS approved “spirit wear” may be worn in lieu of a polo shirt/dress shirt. This includes the PCCS pullover sweatshirts and t-shirts.
- Solid undershirts can be worn under a polo or dress shirt.
- No logo bigger than 2” in diameter, no piping, no printing, no stripes
- Shirts do not have to be tucked in, but must cover the student’s midsection at all times.
- Untucked shirts may not be longer than the front pocket line (hip length).
- Knit shirts/t-shirts without a collar can NOT be worn unless they are approved “spirit wear”.
- Items that are not from school-approved vendors or homemade items are not considered dress code.

II. Coats/Jackets/Cardigan Sweaters:

- A jacket has a zipper and may have a hood.
- Students may wear a coat or jacket of their choosing to and from school.
- In the building, solid color jackets, pullover sweatshirts, and cardigan sweaters can be worn.
- No logo bigger than 2” in diameter, no piping, no printing, no stripes

III. Bottoms:

- Approved colors are: Solid Khaki, Navy Blue, Black, Grey or Black Denim(free of holes, rips, tears, embellishments,etc.)
- Pants should be worn at waist level at all times and should not drag on the floor.
- Shorts can be worn only if they fall all the way to the knee – this will mean bermudas, capris or cargo shorts only.
- Girls may wear solid color skirts or dresses only if they fall all the way to the knee.
- Pants, Skirts or Shorts or Dresses may not be tight or form fitted.
- No blue jeans, No jeggings, No leggings, No sweat or athletic pants, No yoga pants, No gym shorts

IV. Shoes/Socks/Tights:

- Shoes must have enclosed toes – no sandals, no flip flops, no bedroom shoes.
- Socks and footed-tights must be solid colors – no patterns or stripes.

V. Hair:

- All students are to have well groomed, clean hair.
- No unnatural hair colors or accessories will be allowed.
- Hair should be out of the eyes at all times.
- Facial hair must be neatly groomed.

VI. Jewelry:

- One necklace, one bracelet, one watch, two rings and two pairs of earrings will be allowed for all students.
- No other visible body or facial piercings or visible tattoos will be allowed with the exception of one nose piercing stud of 2mm or less in diameter.

VII. Other:

- No hats, head coverings or hoods, including bandanas, will be allowed during school hours unless required for a specific approved reason. Bandana print headbands are not allowed.
- Students are to be clean and free of offensive odor.

Discipline Policy

The following chart outlines violation of conduct and the potential consequences for such actions. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of infractions. To view the complete policy, please reference [300 Series Policy: Students, Parents and the Community](#) and [500 Series Policy: Technology](#) on the PCCS website at <https://pccharter.teamcfa.school/about/board-of-directors/>.

VIOLATIONS	POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES
<p>I. Acts of Violence</p> <p>Fighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual fighting between two students. • Attacking another person. • Seriously injuring another person except for necessary self-defense. <p>Threatening to cause physical harm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directed at other non-personnel on school grounds or at school functions. • Directed at school personnel on school grounds or at school functions 	<p>Consequences for infractions of this nature may include, but are not limited to, parent notification, suspension ranging in duration from 1 to 10 days, report to law enforcement, and recommendation for long-term suspension.</p>
<p>II. Weapons and Dangerous Objects</p> <p>Possessing a weapon (e.g., knife, gun, sharp object, pin, club, look-alike weapon, or any object which could inflict serious injury). An instrument resembling a weapon, if used in a threatening way, is considered a weapon.</p> <p>Using a weapon in a fight.</p> <p>Possessing, using, and/or selling explosives or fireworks.</p> <p>Possessing, selling, and/or otherwise furnishing a firearm.</p> <p>Brandishing a knife</p>	<p>Consequences for infractions of this nature include, but are not limited to, parent notification, suspension ranging in duration from 3 to 10 days, report to law enforcement, and recommendation for long-term suspension.</p>
<p>III. Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, E-Cigarettes and "Look-ALikes"</p> <p>Possessing, using, selling, or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage on school grounds or at school functions.</p> <p>Possessing, using, or selling any form of e-cigarette paraphernalia items on school grounds and/or at school functions.</p> <p>Possessing, using, selling, or being under the influence of a drug on school grounds and/or at school functions.</p> <p>Possessing, using, or selling tobacco in any form on school grounds, and/or at school functions.</p> <p>Offering, arranging, negotiating to sell, delivering or furnishing alcohol or drugs, and/or substituting a lookalike substance intended to represent illegal alcohol or drugs.</p> <p>Unlawfully selling a drug.</p>	<p>Consequences for infractions of this nature include, but are not limited to, parent notification, a suspension ranging in duration from 3 to 10 days, report to law enforcement, referral to the county health department or other applicable agency, and recommendation for long-term suspension.</p>
<p>IV. Drug Paraphernalia</p> <p>Possessing drug paraphernalia.</p> <p>Offering, arranging, or negotiating to sell any drug paraphernalia.</p>	<p>Consequences for infractions of this nature include, but are not limited to, parent notification, suspension ranging in duration from 3 to 10 days, report to law enforcement, referral to a relevant county agency, and recommendation for long-term suspension.</p>
<p>V. Robbery, Extortion, Theft</p> <p>Robbing or extorting on school grounds or during school functions.</p> <p>Attempting or stealing school or private property.</p>	<p>Consequences for infractions of this nature include, but are not limited to, parent notification, a suspension ranging in duration from 3 to 10 days, restitution, report to law enforcement, and recommendation for long-term suspension.</p>

<p>VI. Damage to Property</p> <p>Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property or to another's private property while on school grounds or at school.</p> <p>Arson</p>	<p>Consequences for infractions of this nature include, but are not limited to, parent notification, a suspension ranging in duration from 3 to 10 days, restitution, report to law enforcement, and recommendation for long-term suspension.</p>
<p>VII. Profane, Obscene, Vulgar, Derogatory, Demeaning, Abusive, Disrespectful or Harassing Statements, Acts, Behavior, Unacceptable Use of Technology</p> <p>Directed at school personnel and/or non-personnel on school grounds or at school functions.</p> <p>Students are prohibited, without proper authorization, from disclosing personal identifying information about themselves or others through the use of the School's or personal technology resources including videoing, photographing, etc.</p> <p>Students are prohibited from bypassing school technology security measures, etc.</p>	<p>Consequences for infractions of this nature include, but are not limited to, parent notification, confiscation, a suspension ranging in duration from 1 to 10 days, report to law enforcement, referral to guidance or another character education resource, and recommendation for long-term suspension.</p>
<p>VIII. Cheating, Plagiarizing, and Academic Dishonesty</p> <p>Knowingly receiving or giving help to another student or using aids without authorization for a class assignment or test.</p>	<p><i>1st offense:</i> parent notification, in-school or after-school detention referral, and a zero on the assignment. <i>2nd offense:</i> parent conference, in-school or after-school detention referral, and a zero on the assignment. <i>3rd offense and beyond:</i> parent conference, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension</p>
<p>IX. Willful Disobedience</p> <p>Refusing or failing to follow staff directives.</p> <p>Failing to comply with the dress code.</p> <p>Failing to follow conduct code when being transported on school activity bus.</p> <p>Being on campus while on Out-of-School Suspension.</p> <p>Gambling</p> <p>Skipping class or leaving school property/class without permission.</p> <p>Lying; forging or falsifying documents or information.</p> <p>Littering</p> <p>Possessing any electronic device without permission from school personnel or otherwise authorized and deemed to be a distraction: including cell phones, smart watches, headphones, earpods, etc.</p> <p>Horseplay Students must keep <i>hands, feet, and other objects</i> to themselves.</p> <p>Unacceptable behavior: Offensive or other physical displays of affection involving kissing or other romantically- or sexually related touching.</p> <p>Failing to demonstrate good citizenship, using culturally insensitive or improper language.</p> <p>Failing to follow classroom rules.</p> <p>Disrupting the classroom environment.</p>	<p>Consequences for infractions of this nature include, but are not limited to, parent notification, after-school detention, and confiscation, a suspension ranging in duration from 1 to 10 days, and recommendation for long-term suspension.</p>

iReady Testing

Students in middle school grades 5-8 will participate in iReady testing in the fall, winter and spring of the school year. iReady Diagnostic & Instruction is an online, interactive learning environment designed to assess students and then provide individualized instruction based on each student's unique needs. The exciting format and engaging content, as well as the StudyBuddies and other interesting, contemporary characters, draw in students right away. The i-Ready experience builds students' investment in their learning by giving them real-time feedback on their progress in each skill. i-Ready Diagnostic & Instruction also provides opportunities to learn both at school and at home.

Fall: September

Winter: January

Spring: March

North Carolina Check-ins

Students in grades 5-8 will be taking NC Check-ins each quarter in Reading and Math. Students in grades 5 and 8 will also take a Science NC Check-in. There are only two Math 1 check-ins for the 8th grade students taking this course.

North Carolina End of Grade (EOG) Testing

All students in middle school grades 6-8 are assessed by the North Carolina End of Grade (EOG) tests. Along with MAP, this test is the summative assessment to determine if a student has mastered the content for his/her grade level. EOG scores provide valuable information that is considered in promotion and retention decisions.

5th Grade: Math, English Language Arts, Science

6th Grade: Math, English Language Arts

7th Grade: Math, English Language Arts

8th Grade: Math, English Language Arts, Science

North Carolina End of Course (EOC) Testing

Any 8th grade students enrolled in Math I will take the North Carolina End of Course (EOC) test to earn course credit. This assessment is required by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. These students will not take the Grade 8 Math EOG.

Middle School Athletics

Boys and Girls Soccer

Boys and Girls Basketball

Cheerleading

CoEd Golf and XCountry

Girls Volleyball

Boys Baseball

Girls Softball

Admission to middle school athletic events is \$5.00 for adults and \$3.00 for students (K-12). There will be a \$15 max price for families.

Middle School Eligibility Requirements

Sixth grade students are eligible for Middle School Sports. A student entering the sixth grade is eligible for fall athletic teams upon entering the sixth grade.

Seventh and Eighth grade students must meet the following criteria:

Students must meet academic and attendance criteria. A student must be in attendance 85% of the school year from the following year to be eligible for the current year AND must have passed 4 of 6 subjects (English, math, social studies or science and one elective). Out of school suspensions are counted as absences for the purpose of athletic eligibility.

Physicals

To be eligible for practice and participation in interscholastic athletic contests, a player must receive a medical examination once every 365 days by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant.

Insurance

Supplemental insurance coverage is provided for all athletes in a sports policy under the "All Sports" Insurance plan purchased by Piedmont Community Charter Schools. This sports policy is supplemental insurance and is not meant to pay 100% of the bill, but is designed to assist the parent with expenses incurred after the primary insurance has paid.

Contact the Middle School Athletic Director for additional information.

Math Courses

High school math courses are designed and implemented in accordance with the standard course of study as defined by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Math I (8th grade only)

The purpose of the Math I course is to formalize and extend mathematics that students learned in the middle grades. The course deepens and extends understanding of the linear relationships, by contrasting them with exponential and quadratic phenomena, and by applying linear models to data that exhibit a linear trend. In addition to studying bivariate data, students also summarize, represent, and interpret data on a single count or measurement variable. Progressing from geometric experiences in the middle grades, students explore more complex geometric situations and deepen their understanding of geometric relationships, moving toward formal mathematical arguments. The standards for Mathematical Practice apply throughout each course and, together with the content standards, require that students experience mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations.

304.13 Harassment and Bullying

The School is committed to providing an environment that is conducive to learning and is free from harassment and bullying based on race, religion, gender, ethnicity, national origin, disability, or any other illegal conduct. Other forms of harassment and bullying are also prohibited, including those based on other distinguishing characteristics such as, but not limited to, physical, social, academic, emotional, and socio-economic status, or simply based on personal differences or conflicts. All conduct prohibited by this policy includes behavior that occurs, directly or indirectly, by personal or electronic communication or action.

North Carolina law (G.S. 115C-218.75(c)) encourages charter schools to adopt a policy against bullying or harassing behavior, including cyber bullying. Charter schools that do so shall, at the beginning of each school year, provide the policy to staff, students, and parents as defined in G.S. 115C-390.1(b)(8)

Harassment is an unwelcome, offensive verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive as to significantly affect one's employment or a student's learning conditions. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, abusive jokes, insults, slurs, name-calling, threats, bullying or intimidation, unwelcome sexual advances, or the exchanging benefits for performing sexual or other favors.

Harassment is prohibited at all levels—between students, employees and students, co-workers, supervisors and subordinates, non-employees and employees and/or students, and any other School representatives or members of the School community while at the School or involved in School activities.

In addition, no student or staff member shall retaliate against anyone who reports or seeks remedies against harassment or bullying or otherwise aids or supports someone who aids in enforcing this policy.

All staff members must report to a supervisor instances or reasonable suspicions of harassment and bullying and aid in investigations carrying out this policy. Appropriate School staff shall take any alleged harassment or bullying report seriously and respond to it fully and promptly. Students are also urged to report and assist in carrying out this policy.