

2024-2025 PJHS Proposed Handbook Changes

The handbook committee met on May 7, 2024, to review and discuss proposed changes to the PJHS Student Handbook in accordance with the IPA Model Handbook and updates to adopted board policies. Changes are highlighted.

General School Information

Visitors

Visitors must sign in, identifying their name, the date and time of arrival, and the classroom or location they are visiting. Approved visitors must take a tag identifying themselves as a guest and place the tag **on to** their outer clothing in a clearly visible location. Visitors are required to proceed immediately to their location in a quiet manner. All visitors must return to the main office and sign out before leaving the school.

No person on school property or at a school event shall perform any of the following acts:

16. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the district or a school function.

a. Any person who engages in prohibited conduct may be ejected from or denied admission to school property in accordance with State law. The person may also be subject to being denied admission to school athletic or extracurricular events for up to one calendar year.

Parent/Guardian Communication

PJHS utilizes a variety of parent/guardian communication tools including email, web based programs, phone, apps, and ~~social media including Apptegy, Lumen Portal, Facebook, and Twitter~~ Apptegy (which connects to social media platforms). Teachers are easily available to communicate regarding a student's performance via email or phone. Email addresses can be found on the school website.

It is recommended that parents/guardians sign up for access to the Lumen Parent Portal. This allows family access to academic and behavioral information as well as lunch account and absence information. Students are also given access to the Lumen Student Portal and can show parents. Parents/guardians should keep valid contact information up-to-date with the school office. This includes physical addresses, mailing addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses.

Although agenda books are not provided, students are encouraged to purchase one for use on their own or to use their chromebooks to track assignments. Google Keep **and Google Calendar are** available on a student's chromebook and **are** user friendly. In addition, students should be in the habit of checking email daily. Parents and families are encouraged to accept invitations to Google Classrooms to aid in monitoring student work completion.

Attendance

Student Absences

- EXCUSED ABSENCE or EXCUSED TARDY
 - Students who are excused from school will be given a reasonable timeframe to make up ~~missed homework and classwork~~ assignments. **If a student is absent for one day, teachers will get the student caught up when they return. Class assignments will not be collected from teachers to be picked up in the office.**

Regional Attendance Program (RAP)

State law provides that school districts are encouraged to provide a system of support to students who are at risk of reaching or exceeding chronic absence levels with strategies and are also encouraged to make resources available to families such as those available through the *State Board of Education's Family Engagement Framework* to support and engage students and their families to encourage heightened school engagement and improved daily school attendance.

Students who have ~~seven (7) or more unexcused absences~~ will 5-10 questionable absences may be referred to the *Regional Attendance Program* through the *Regional Office of Education*. *If RAP interventions are not successful, students may be referred to* the truant officer, and any possible court action may follow. Students who have been referred to *RAP/Truancy* must have a doctor's note to excuse every absence.

A student who is absent from school for more than one-fourth of the year (45 days) will severely jeopardize his/her chances of advancing in grade level.

Academics

Homework Classroom Assignments

Students are expected to fully complete assigned work at a proficient level. A serious effort will be made to see that the student completes the work. Mandatory after school homework completion sessions, parent conferences and/or other means may be used to ensure that student work is completed. Completion or incompleteness of make-up work a student has missed due to their absence(s), as well as the general completion or incompleteness of work assigned in all classes, can be a factor in determining promotion/retention to the next grade level. It is vital for the school, parents/guardians, and students to actively work together to ensure work is completed to achieve student success.

Student grades will be monitored each week and parents/guardians and students are encouraged to check the *Lumen Student Portal* weekly. Students who are failing or have several incomplete assignments are subject to consequences including, but not limited to, lunch detention, after school detention, loss of attendance privilege at extracurricular activities, etc.

Make-Up Work Policies

- **Excused Absence:** The number of days that the student misses is the number of days the student will be allowed to make-up the work for full-credit. If the absence is known prior to missing school, every effort should be made to collect and complete the work prior to the absence. Students should complete an Anticipated Absence form which is located in the office.
- **Unexcused absence, but not Out-of School Suspension:** If a student misses school and the school has not suspended the student and/or the school is not made aware of the nature of the absence through normal reporting measures as outlined earlier in this handbook, all work assigned during the day(s) of the unexcused absence(s) is expected to be turned in the day the student returns to school and they will receive full credit for the work. **Missing work due to an unexcused absence will be marked as a zero.**
- **In-School Suspension (AES):** It is the responsibility of the student to collect and complete all work they will miss during the time of this suspension. Students shall receive full credit for their work as long as the work is completed and turned in at the conclusion of the day of this suspension.
- **Alternative to Suspension (ATS):** If a student is placed at a different location for suspension, they are responsible for completing all assignments provided during the suspension. Students shall receive full credit for their work as long as the work is completed and turned in the following day of their suspension.
- **Out-of-School Suspension:** If a student is suspended out of school it is the responsibility of the student to collect and complete the work he or she is missing during the time of the suspension. The number of days of the suspension will be the maximum days allowed to return the completed work. If a student completes the work in the designated time period, he or she will receive full credit for their work.

Student Fees and Costs

Transportation and Parking

Bus Conduct

Students are expected to follow all school rules when riding the school bus.

1. Be aware of moving traffic and pay attention to your surroundings.
2. Dress properly for the weather. Make sure all drawstrings, ties, straps, etc. on all clothing, backpacks and other items, are shortened or removed to lessen the likelihood of them getting caught in bus doors, railings or aisles.
3. Arrive on time at the bus stop and stay away from the street while waiting for the bus.
4. Stay away from the bus until it stops completely and the driver signals you to board. Enter a single file without pushing. Always use the handrail.
5. Take a seat right away and remain seated facing forward. Keep your hands, arms, and head inside the bus.
6. Talk quietly on the bus. No shouting or creating loud noises that may distract the driver. Tablets, computers, smart phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices must be silenced on the bus unless a student uses headphones.
7. Help keep the bus neat and clean. Keep belongings out of the aisle and away from emergency exits. Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus.
8. Always listen to the driver's instructions. Be courteous to the driver and other students. Sit with your hands to yourself and avoid making noises that would distract the driver or bother other passengers.
9. Wait until the bus pulls to a complete stop before standing up. Use the handrail when exiting the bus.
10. Stay out of the danger zone next to the bus where the driver may have difficulty seeing you. Take at least five giant steps (10 feet) away from the bus and out of the danger zone, until you can see the driver and the driver sees you. Never crawl under a bus.
11. If you must cross the street after you get off the bus, wait for the driver's signal and then cross in front of the bus. Cross the street only after checking both ways for traffic, even after the driver's signal.
12. Never run back to the bus, even if you dropped or forgot something.

Student Drop-Off & Pick-Up

We encourage parents to use caution as they drop off or pick up their students from school. Student pick up is in front of the junior high school (8th Street) ~~or in back of the junior high school (south side)~~. Because of the number of vehicles, traffic around the junior high school becomes quite heavy before and after school and on many occasions, has caused a hazardous situation for both students and drivers. We ask that students look carefully and use good judgment as they are leaving transportation coming to school or getting into vehicles as they are leaving the premises for the day. When dropping off or picking up students at the school, we do ask that parents please recognize and be respectful of both traffic and parking lot markings. Please DO NOT park in the handicap areas unless warranted and do not park in the yellow-lined area at the east end of the parking lot.

Health and Safety

Student Discipline and Conduct

School Dress Code & Student Appearance

- No excessively baggy pants, pajama bottom or similar type pants, and no pants worn around the buttocks exposing undergarments.

Other Student Conduct Issues

❖ Food and Drinks in School

Gum and candy at school is not encouraged. Gum placed on school property will be considered an act of vandalism and the offending student may receive some form of punishment. Food purchased a la carte during lunch should remain in the cafeteria. Energy and soda drinks should not be brought to school. Students may carry bring a clear water bottle with them during the day as long as they are not causing a disruption to the learning environment to keep in their locker. Carrying Having a water bottle is a privilege. If student's can not use theirs appropriately, they will not be allowed to have one during the day.

❖ Refusing to Do Class Assignments

Homework Completing class assignments is a part of the District's instructional program and has the overarching goal of increasing student achievement. Homework is assigned to further a student's educational development and is an application or extension of a classroom experience. Students who refuse to do class work assigned by teachers are subject to disciplinary measures. In addition, a parent/guardian conference may be requested. The type of discipline applied will depend a great deal on how the student reacts to requests to complete his/her work. A belligerent attitude will likely increase the severity of the assigned discipline and will adversely affect a student's opportunity to complete the work. As a result, this may reduce the student's grade as well.

Disciplinary Measures

1. **Alternative to Suspension (ATS)** - Students can be placed at an alternative location for up to 10 days as an Alternative to Suspension out of school. Students will be provided with classroom assignments to complete during their ATS time. Full credit may be given if he/she completes the assignments for that day. If a student does not report to the alternative location, it will be counted as an unexcused absence.

Sexual Harassment & Teen Dating Violence Prohibited

Harassment Prohibited

No person, including a school or school district employee or agent, or student, shall harass, intimidate, or bully a student on the basis of actual or perceived: race; color; national origin; military status; unfavorable discharge status from military service; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity¹; gender-related identity or expression; ancestry; age; religion; physical or mental disability; order of protection status; status of being homeless; actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy; physical appearance socioeconomic status; academic status; association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics; or any other distinguishing characteristic. The District will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, sexual, or visual, that affects the tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important district and school goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge **discharge status from the military service**, sex, sexual orientation, **gender identity orientation**, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, **physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status**, order of protection status, **status of being homeless**, or actual or **potential marital status, or parental parenting** status, **including** pregnancy, **pregnancy status**, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is **prohibited** in each of the following situations:

Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color and National Origin Prohibited

Discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin negatively affects a student's ability to learn and an employee's ability to work. Providing an educational and workplace environment free from such discrimination and harassment is an important District and School goal. The District and School do not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, or national origin in any of its education programs or activities and comply with federal and State non-discrimination laws.

Examples of Prohibited Conduct

Examples of conduct that may constitute discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin include: disciplining students more harshly and frequently because of their race, color, or national origin; denying students access to high-rigor academic courses, extracurricular activities, or other educational opportunities based on their race, color, or national origin; denying language services or other educational opportunities to English learners; and assigning students special education services based on a student's race, color, or national origin.

Harassment is a form of prohibited discrimination. Examples of conduct that may constitute harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin include: the use of racial, ethnic or ancestral slurs or stereotypes; taunts; name-calling; offensive or derogatory remarks about a person's actual or perceived race, color, or national origin; the display of racially-offensive symbols; racially-motivated physical threats and attacks; or other hateful conduct.

Making a Report or Complaint

Students are encouraged to promptly report claims or incidences of bullying, intimidation, harassment, sexual harassment, or any other prohibited conduct to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the student is comfortable speaking. A student may choose to report to an employee of the student's same gender.

Reports and complaints of discrimination or harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the District's duty to investigate and maintain an educational environment that is productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to discipline.

Prevention and Response Program

The District maintains a prevention and response program to respond to complaints of discrimination based on race, color, and national origin, including harassment, and retaliation. The program includes procedures for responding to complaints which:

1. Reduce or remove, to the extent practicable, barriers to reporting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation;

2. Permit any person who reports or is the victim of an incident of alleged discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to be accompanied when making a report by a support individual of the person's choice who complies with the District's policies and rules;
3. Permit anonymous reporting, except that an anonymous report may not be the sole basis of any disciplinary action;
4. Offer remedial interventions or take such disciplinary action as may be appropriate on a case-by-case basis;
5. Offer, but do not require or unduly influence, a person who reports or is the victim of an incident of harassment or retaliation the option to resolve allegations directly with the accused; and
6. Protects a person who reports or is the victim of an incident of harassment or retaliation from suffering adverse consequences as a result of a report of, investigation of, or a response to the incident.

Enforcement

Any District employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Any District student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion, consistent with the student discipline information in this handbook.

Any third party who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the District, e.g., vendor, parent, invitee, etc. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action.

Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against any person for bringing complaints, participating in the complaint process, or otherwise providing information about discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin is prohibited.

Individuals should report allegations of retaliation to the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

Search and Seizure

ExtraCurricular and Athletic Activities

Special Education

Student Records and Privacy

Parent Right Notifications

PUNS (Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services) Database Information for Students and Parents or Guardians

The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) maintains a statewide database known as the PUNS database (Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services) that records information about individuals with intellectual disabilities or developmental disabilities who are potentially in need of services.

IDHS uses the data on PUNS to select individuals for services as funding becomes available, to develop proposals and materials for budgeting, and to plan for future needs. The PUNS database is available for children with intellectual disabilities or developmental disabilities with unmet service needs.

Registration to be included on the PUNS database is the first step toward receiving developmental disabilities services in this State. A child who is not on the PUNS database will not be in the queue for State developmental disabilities services.

For more information and to sign up for PUNS, see the Illinois Department of Human Services PUNS information page at <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=41131>.

Internet Usage Policy

Use of Artificial Intelligence

“Artificial intelligence” or “AI” is intelligence demonstrated by computers, as opposed to human intelligence. "Intelligence" encompasses the ability to learn, reason, generalize, and infer meaning. Examples of AI technology include ChatGPT and other chatbots and large language models.

AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers, or complete schoolwork without permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited. The use of AI for these purposes constitutes cheating or plagiarism.

In certain situations, AI may be used as a learning tool or a study aid. Students who wish to use AI for legitimate educational purposes must have permission from a teacher or an administrator. Students may use AI as authorized in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Students may not use AI, including AI image or voice generator technology, to violate school rules or school district policies.

In order to ensure academic integrity, tests, assignments, projects, papers, and other schoolwork may be checked by AI content detectors and/or plagiarism recognition software.