

Putnam County High School

-Handbook Changes-

2025-2026

- I. Dates and Calendars (Throughout)
- II. Update Board Members (Page 7)
- III. Change "Susan McNelis" to Jodi Peterson under sex equity (Page 9)
- IV. Update "Fundraising" to reflect appropriate concession stand assignments (Page 9)
- V. Update Grading Periods (Page 14)
- VI. Under "Education of Homeless Children" Add "The district's homeless liaison is Jodi Peterson, Director of Student Services. If you need to contact Mrs. Peterson please email [petersonj@pcschoools535.org](mailto:petersonj@pcschoools535.org) or call 815.882.2800." (Page 21)
- VII. Under "absences" Remove "If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the student will be required to submit a signed note from the parent/guardian explaining the reason for the absence." (Page 35-36)
- VIII. Under "prearranged absences" remove "The student must bring a written request from home at least three (3) days in advance, the student must notify all his/her teachers." Also remove "These dates must be prearranged with the Guidance Counselor at least (3) three days in advance with written notification from the college, recruitment office, or interviewer as well as written documentation of the visit provided upon the student's return to school. Noncompliance with these stipulations will be cause for the absence to be unexcused" (Page 37)
- IX. Under "Standardized Testing" change "P/SAT" to "P/ACT" and remove "ISA" (Page 41)
- X. Under "Prohibited Student Conduct" remove #6 (Page 51-52)
- XI. Under "Acceptable Use Policy for Internet Use (Page 57) add the following:
  - a. Our School District has the ability to enhance a child's education through the use of its electronic networks, including the Internet. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. All use of the electronic networks shall be consistent with the District's goal of promoting educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. The failure of any user to follow the terms of the *PC #535 Device Policies and User Agreement* will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action. See the *PC #535 Device Policies and User Agreement* for more information on device use and network access.
- XII. Change "Susan McNelis" to Jodi Peterson under Title IX Coordinator (Page 63)
- XIII. Cellular Communication Devices (Page 66-67)
  - a. Change wording to:

Per Board of Education Policy 7:190 (Student Behavior), students are prohibited from using or possessing a cellular telephone, electronic signaling device, two-way radio, video recording device, and/or other telecommunication device, unless authorized and approved by the building Principal.

In accordance with this policy, students may **not** possess a cellular device, including phones, smart watches, or other devices connected to cellular service, during the school day (including smart watches

or any other communication or electronic device). Devices covered in this policy are to be turned off and kept in the student's locker. ~~but it must be turned off and out of sight, except during their lunch period and passing periods.~~ Students who use a cellular device or other personal technology during the school day **will be considered non-compliant with this policy.** ~~and or fail to keep it concealed, except during their lunch period or passing period, may have the device confiscated and returned at the end of the day.~~ Any student found to be non-compliant with this policy will be issued progressive discipline. ~~will be issued in the following manner for failure to follow cellular device & personal technology expectations:~~

- 1<sup>st</sup> Violation – The device is confiscated by administration and returned to a parent/guardian at the end of the school day. The student will be provided one after school detention. ~~The device is confiscated by administration and returned to the student at the end of the school day. Parent/guardian will be provided notification.~~
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Violation – The device is confiscated by administration and returned to a parent/guardian at the end of the school day. ~~The student will be provided one after school detention for each violation.~~ **The student will be provided a four-hour in-school suspension and will be required to check-in the cell phone/personal technology in the office prior to the start of school each day for the remainder of the semester.**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> or More Violation – The device is confiscated by administration and returned to the parent at the end of the school day. The student will be provided a four-hour in-school suspension ~~for each violation.~~ Students who have three or more violations will be required to have a meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s) and administration to determine future expectations and discipline.

Student violations will accrue on a semester basis.

The following also apply to this procedure:

- Headphones and earbuds are considered personal technology and subject to this procedure.
- ~~• Classroom teachers may allow students to use cellular devices or other personal technology during instructional times if needed for learning purposes.~~
- Cellular devices or other personal technology are not permitted during study halls with the exception of head phones. Students may receive approval from the study hall supervisor to use head phones.
- Students with an IEP and/or 504 plans that include an accommodation for the use of cellular devices or other personal technology will be provided use as detailed in those plans.
- Videotaping or taking pictures without consent is considered a violation of this policy. Depending on the context of the behavior, this act may also be considered bullying or harassment with discipline issued in accordance with those policies and procedures.
- When a device is being confiscated, students are required to take the device to the main office by direction of the teacher. Failure to provide the device is insubordination and may result in an out-of-school suspension.
- Smart watches may be worn throughout the school day as long as they are not disruptive to the learning environment or used for telecommunication purposes. Discipline will be provided in accordance with this procedure for inappropriate use.
- Students using their cellular device or personal technology while in the hallways, during lunch, or other public areas during class periods are subject to discipline.

- See “Access to Student Social Networking Passwords and Websites” in regard to school officials’ investigations of student accounts. Failure to comply in the school officials’ investigation into a situation is considered insubordination and is subject to discipline.

XIV. Headphones (Page 67)

- a. Change wording to:

All headphones, earbuds, and any other personal audio listening devices must be managed in the same manner as cellular devices - turned off and **kept in the students locker.** ~~out of sight except during allowable times.~~ Students may possess and use headphones ~~said devices in classes or~~ in study halls when provided with approval by the ~~classroom teacher or~~ study hall supervisor. Violations of this procedure will result in discipline aligned with the "Cellular Communication Devices and Electronic Paging Devices" policy.

XV. New – Add the “Use of Artificial Intelligence” before “Copying” (Page 73)

- a. See attached

XVI. Under Tardy Policy” (Page 73) change the tardy discipline to:

Verbal warning (parent contact made on all offenses after the third)  
Lunch detention  
Afterschool detention and/or social probation  
~~Two after school detentions~~  
In-school suspension and/or social probation  
Parent/student meeting and attendance contract to outline further tardy-related discipline

\*Administration will look for patterns of tardies when a student has five or more.

\*Administration has the final say on discipline.

\*Administration reserves the right to implement discipline that is different than and equitable to the discipline listed above.

XVII. Update “Passes (Page 74)

- a. During a class period a student must utilize the online pass system (SmartPass) ~~have an official pass or a student planner~~ in order to be in the halls. ~~The pass must have the~~

~~student's name, date, time, and an authentic teacher's signature. Students are required to show their passes to a teacher when asked.~~ Each room has a SmartPass kiosk station. Students who wish to use a pass must first get permission from the teacher before creating their pass. All SmartPass passes are timed. Students who are out of class longer than the time given may be marked truant for the class period and would be subject to school discipline. Students who are in the halls without authorization or a pass are subject to disciplinary measures outlined in this handbook. Students who are chronically wandering may lose their pass privileges, in addition to other discipline. Students who wish to leave the school building (i.e., to go to their car or to any other restricted area) must be escorted from the office by the Principal or designee.

XVIII. Add "PUNS" after "Section 504" (Page 79)

- a. New requirements for Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Service (PUNS) were effective January 1, 2024. PUNS is a statewide database that records information about individuals with developmental disabilities who are planning for or seeking services through the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Division of Developmental Disabilities. At each annual review for a student with a disability, the IEP (Individualized Education Program) team must determine if the student is registered for PUNS and, if not, refer the family to a designated employee who has completed the PUNS training. For information on PUNS, please contact one of the following trained employees:

Jodi Peterson  
Director of Student Services  
(185)882-2800  
[petersonj@pcschoools535.org](mailto:petersonj@pcschoools535.org)

XIX. Update "Classroom Passes" to SmartPass Digital Student Pass Software (Page 84)

### SmartPass Digital Student Pass System

We utilize the SmartPass digital pass system to ensure a safe and organized environment for all students during the school day. All students are expected to use SmartPass when leaving the classroom for any reason. Please be aware of the following guidelines:

- **Limited Number of Passes:** Students are allotted a limited number of passes per day for leaving the classroom.
- **Timed Passes:** Each pass is timed. Students are expected to return to class promptly within the designated time frame.
- **Truancy and Discipline:** If a student exceeds their allotted pass time they may be marked truant. Excessive tardiness/truants or misuse of the system will be subject to school disciplinary action.

We appreciate your cooperation in following these guidelines to help maintain a positive and productive learning environment.