

Executive Summary of Updates to the 2023-2024 Parent/Student Handbook January 25, 2023

Recommended revisions submitted by:

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The Pleasantdale School District #107 Parent/Student Handbook is a very comprehensive document. It is clear that many hours have been spent reflecting on the practices, expectations, and legal mandates required in a Parent/School Handbook and aligning these to school board policy. Previous administrators and school boards should be commended for their work on this document.

Over the past several years, we have been reviewing and updating the document to reflect our current practices, policies, and laws. As you will see in the changes reflected in the proposed 2023-2024 Parent/Student Handbook, they continue to be very minor in nature. The recommended changes are a result of the Illinois Principals' Association (IPA) model handbook. These changes meet new legal requirements and have been vetted by the IPA legal team.

Updating the Parent/Student Handbook involved a three-step process:

1. The current handbook was read by current administrators, staff, and select parents.
2. A meeting occurred to discuss any needed changes or lack of clarity in the language. This meeting occurred on Monday, January 23, 2023. Thank you to our review committee this year who consisted of Lindsay Hosanna, PTO Board Member, Kara Mulder, Kindergarten teacher, Kathleen Tomei, Pleasantdale Elementary Principal, and Jeanine Arundel, Pleasantdale Middle School Principal.
3. Ms. Tomei and Dr. Arundel worked together to propose the final document.

The proposed changes to the Parent/Student Handbook generally fell into three categories outlined below:

1. The majority of the recommended updates come from the Illinois Principals' Association (IPA) Model Student Handbook (MSH) in which the IPA provides legal updates and suggestions based upon the laws enacted within the State of Illinois over the past year. This Model Student Handbook verbiage also aligns with the PRESS board policy recommended updates.
2. The second category of updates continues the process of cleaning up the handbook and aligning it with changing practices.

3. The final category of updates are simply cosmetic changes aligning colors and fonts.

Specific changes to the Parent/Student Handbook:

1. The most meaningful changes included the addition of new language. These new sections help protect students and better outline standards for staff.
 - a. 1.180 - Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse, Grooming Behaviors and Boundary Violations
 - b. 1.185 - Employee Conduct Standards
 - c. 1.190 - Prevention of Anaphylaxis
 - d. 7.27 - Access to Non-School Sponsored Publications
 - e. 12.80 - Pesticide Application Notice
2. Language was added to existing sections to reflect current mandates or laws. Some examples of these changes are included below.
 - a. middle school students are permitted one day-long excused absence per school year for the purpose of attending a civic event.
 - b. Students who are absent from school for a valid cause (an excused absence) may make up missed homework in a reasonable timeframe.
 - c. The district allows a student to modify his or her athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of his or her religion or his or her cultural values or modesty preferences. A student is not required to receive the prior approval of the school board for such modification.