



# **Community Handbook**

## **2021-2022**

Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School

15 Mulligan Drive, South Hadley, MA 01075

413-552-1580 - [www.pvpa.org](http://www.pvpa.org)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

[WELCOME TO PVPA](#)

[SCHOOL MAIN OFFICE HOURS](#)

[2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR](#)

[2021-2022 MASTER SCHEDULE](#)

[HOW CAN WE BE HELPFUL?](#)

[Administrative and Student Services Staff](#)

[Senior Administrative Team](#)

[Department Leaders](#)

[PVPA ORGANIZATION](#)

[HISTORY](#)

[MISSION AND VISION](#)

[CHARTER PRIORITIES](#)

[BOARD OF TRUSTEES](#)

[Board Committees](#)

[THE FRIENDS OF PVPA CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL \(FUNDRAISING\)](#)

[STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2016-2021](#)

[Values Outlined in the 2016-21 Strategic Action Plan](#)

[MASSACHUSETTS CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL ASSOCIATION](#)

[MASSACHUSETTS DESE CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE](#)

[GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES](#)

[ASBESTOS REPORT](#)

[BOOK LOANING](#)

[CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE](#)

[DRUG FREE ENVIRONMENT POLICY](#)

[EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MANAGEMENT SAFETY PLAN](#)

[FIELD TRIP/OFF-SITE ACTIVITY POLICY](#)

[FOOD SERVICES](#)

[School Breakfast and Lunch](#)

[Food Delivery](#)

[FUNDRAISING AND TABLING FOR STUDENT ACTIVITIES](#)

[ILLEGAL ACTS](#)

[ITEMS DISRUPTIVE TO SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT](#)

[LOST & FOUND](#)

[NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT](#)

[PERMISSIONS](#)

[RESTRAINT PREVENTION AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT POLICY](#)

[SCHOOL CLOSINGS](#)

[2-Hour Delayed Start](#)

[SIBLING ADMISSIONS STATUS](#)

[SMOKING AND VAPING](#)

[STUDENT ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL AND IN CLASS](#)

[Attendance Procedures During Remote Learning Periods](#)

[Attendance Procedures During In-person Learning Periods](#)

[Approved Late Arrival/Early Dismissal](#)

[After-school Activity and Performance Participation](#)

[Repeated Absence from Class](#)

[Repeated Absence from School](#)

[STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION](#)

[STUDENT RECORDS POLICY](#)

[NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS ACCESS TO SCHOOL RECORDS](#)

[STUDENT SUPERVISION OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS](#)

[Early Arrival](#)

[Late Pick-up](#)

[After-school Activities](#)

[STUDENT TRANSPORTATION](#)

[Bus Transportation](#)

[Carpooling](#)

[Drop-off and Pick-up](#)

[Event Transportation \(e.g., Field Trips, Athletics, Off-site Activities\)](#)

[TECHNOLOGY: ACCEPTABLE USE](#)

[VALUABLES](#)

[VISITORS](#)

[ENROLLMENT, COURSE SCHEDULES, TRANSCRIPTS](#)

[AUDITIONS](#)

[COURSE AUDITING](#)

[COURSE REQUESTS AND REGISTRATION](#)

[COURSE WITHDRAWAL](#)

[INDEPENDENT STUDY](#)

[Independent Study Guidelines](#)

[Additional Guidelines for Independent Study in World Language](#)

[Paideia Independent Study](#)

[MINIMUM CREDIT ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS](#)

[OFF-SITE COURSES, DUAL ENROLLMENT \(COLLEGE/HIGH SCHOOL\)](#)

[Off-site Courses \(e.g., College Courses, Dual Enrollment, Accredited High School Courses\)](#)

[VHS Collaborative Online Courses](#)

[SCHEDULE CHANGES](#)

[TRANSCRIPT REQUEST](#)

[TRANSFERRING CREDITS](#)

[WITHDRAWAL FROM PVPA](#)

[CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, REQUIREMENTS](#)

[ACADEMICS AND ARTS COURSES](#)

[CURRICULUM MAPS](#)

[COURSE REPORTS: PROGRESS AND FINAL](#)

[Reporting Schedule](#)

[DISTRICT CURRICULUM ACCOMMODATION PLAN \(DCAP\)](#)

[EARLY GRADUATION](#)

[GRADING SYSTEM OVERVIEW](#)

[Student proficiency with each course objective is reported on using the following system:](#)

[Grades and Credit](#)

[Honors Credit](#)

[Habits of Work and Learning \(HoWLs\)](#)

[ENGLISH LEARNER EDUCATION](#)

[Mission](#)

[Vision](#)

[Goals](#)

[GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS](#)

[Arts Concentrations](#)

[Typical High School Course Pathways](#)

[GRADE RETENTION](#)

[Timeline](#)

[HONORS CREDIT POLICY](#)

[Eligibility](#)

[Criteria for Honors Work](#)

[Honors Grading](#)

[Implication for Transcripts](#)

[INCOMPLETES](#)

[INTERNSHIP AND SERVICE REQUIREMENTS \(HIGH SCHOOL\)](#)

[LIBRARY](#)

[MASSACHUSETTS COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM \(MCAS\)](#)

[Absence on Testing Days](#)

[MCAS-Related Awards](#)

[MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM - GRADES 7 & 8](#)

[7/8 Promotion Requirements](#)

[Sample 2-year Middle School Course Pathway](#)

[WORLD LANGUAGE COURSE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR 8TH GRADERS](#)

[PHYSICAL EDUCATION CREDIT](#)

[PAIDEIA](#)

[PLACEMENT ASSESSMENTS AND ACCELERATED ACADEMIC PATHWAYS](#)

[PRODUCTION LEADERSHIP AND TECHNICAL ROLES FOR STUDENTS](#)

[TEACHING ASSISTANTS](#)

[TITLE I POLICIES \(en Español\)](#)

[PVPA District/School Family Engagement Policy](#)

[School-Family-Student Compact](#)

[WORK COMPLETION, DEADLINES, AND EXTENSIONS](#)

[STUDENT SERVICES AND SUPPORT](#)

[AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT \(ADA\)](#)

[SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT](#)

[SPECIAL EDUCATION - IDEA 2004](#)

[MENTAL HEALTH TEAM](#)

[SCHOOL COUNSELING](#)

[Confidentiality](#)

[School Counseling Caseloads](#)

[Contacting Your School Counselor](#)

[Appointment Request](#)

[Students Seeking Support During the School Day](#)

[School Counseling Referrals](#)

#### [SCHOOL NURSE](#)

[Medication](#)

#### [SUPPORT CLASSES AND STUDY BLOCKS](#)

[Homework Support](#)

[Math Support](#)

[Reading Workshop](#)

[Self-directed Study](#)

[Study Skills](#)

[Writing Support](#)

#### [SCHOOL CULTURE AND DISCIPLINE](#)

##### [STUDENT LEADERSHIP, GROUPS, AND ACTIVITIES](#)

##### [COMMUNITY EVENTS](#)

[Community Day](#)

[Octoberfest](#)

[Open House](#)

[Unity Day/Field Day](#)

##### [RESTORATIVE PRACTICE](#)

[PVPA's Restorative Practice GUIDING PRINCIPLES](#)

[PVPA's Restorative Practice FRAMEWORKS](#)

##### [SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS \(SWPBS\)](#)

[PVPA C.A.R.E.S.](#)

##### [CODE OF CONDUCT](#)

[PVPA C.A.R.E.S. BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS](#)

##### [NON-NEGOTIABLE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS & DEFINITIONS](#)

[ACADEMIC INTEGRITY](#)

[BULLYING](#)

[PVPA's Anti-Bullying Rules](#)

[DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP](#)

[FIREARMS AND WEAPONS](#)

[ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES](#)

[HATE ACTION/SPEECH](#)

[HAZING](#)

[Section 17: Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined](#)

[Section 18: Failure to report hazing](#)

[Section 19: Copy of Secs. 17 to 19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report](#)

[PHYSICAL CONTACT](#)

[SEX DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT](#)

[COMPLAINT AND RESOLUTION PROCESS](#)

[DISCIPLINARY POLICIES](#)

[ACADEMIC INTEGRITY](#)

[BULLYING](#)

[HARASSMENT](#)

[HAZING](#)

[Section 17: Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined](#)

[Section 18: Failure to report hazing](#)

[Section 19: Copy of Secs. 17 to 19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report](#)

[BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN](#)

[Bullying Prevention and Intervention Statement](#)

[Definitions](#)

[Relationship To Other Laws](#)

[Leadership Oversight and Accountability](#)

[Training and Professional Development](#)

[Bullying Related To Students With Disabilities](#)

[Parent/Guardian Partnership and Access to Resources and Services](#)

[Student Partnership and Curriculum](#)

[Procedures For Reporting Suspected Bullying](#)

[Anonymous Reporting for Bullying and/or Retaliation](#)

[Investigation Procedures](#)

[Follow-Up Procedures in Incident of Bullying/Retaliation Finding](#)

[Incidents of Retaliation](#)

[Consequences for False Reporting](#)

[Notification of Parent/Guardian of a Target and Aggressor](#)

[Procedures for Restoring a Sense of Safety for a Target](#)

[Corrective Action and Strategies for Identified Aggressor](#)

[Protection of Others](#)

[Protection of Reporter/Witness/Bystander](#)

[Counseling and Referral for Target, Aggressors, and Others](#)

[Disciplinary Consequences](#)

## [STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES](#)

[Restorative Circles and Processes](#)

[Verbal Warnings](#)

[Written Warnings](#)

[Suspensions](#)

[Notice of Suspensions and Hearings except as provided in 603 CMR 53.07 \(EMERGENCY REMOVAL\):](#)

[In-school Suspension](#)

[Short Term Suspension Hearing Requirements \(10 Days Or Fewer\)](#)

[Long-term Suspension Hearing Requirements \(10 Days or Longer\)](#)

[Long-Term Suspension Appeal Process](#)

[Discipline Hearings and Expulsions](#)

[Discipline for Students Identified as Having Special Needs](#)

[Discipline for Students Identified as Having a Disability and Provided with a 504 Plan](#)

## [RESTORATIVE JUSTICE](#)

### [R.O.O.T.S. PEER FACILITATION \(Restorative Outlook & Outreach for Teachers & Students\)](#)

[ROOTS Peer Facilitators](#)

[WHO IS INVOLVED IN A PEER ROOTS SESSION?](#)

[WHEN IS IT APPROPRIATE TO HOLD A PEER RJ INTERVENTION?](#)

## [HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION](#)

### [COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES](#)

[Effective Communication Methods](#)

### [COMMUNITY BULLETIN](#)

### [SOCIAL MEDIA](#)

### [SCHOOL WEBSITE](#)

### [PARENT/GUARDIAN-TEACHER CONFERENCES](#)

### [STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES](#)

### [STUDENT/PARENT PORTAL](#)

[Portal Access](#)

## [APPENDIX A](#)

### [ARTS CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE LISTINGS](#)



[Dance Concentration Courses](#)

[Music Concentration Courses](#)

[Theater Concentration Courses](#)

[Visual Arts and Technical Theater Concentration Courses](#)

[Musical Theater Concentration Courses](#)

[Film Concentration Courses](#)

# WELCOME TO PVPA

**Dear PVPA students and families,**

This Community Handbook is designed to communicate information, resources, values, and expectations of our school. First and foremost, PVPA is a place that is based on respect and responsibility. We begin with the premise that everyone is worthy of trust.

At PVPA, each member of the school community is expected to treat others with compassion and respect. By taking responsibility for one's actions, we support others to make good decisions, and build a greater sense of individual and collective well-being. Students are strongly encouraged to take positive risks, volunteer, treat the school building with care, and explore their academic and artistic talents.

The Community Handbook is a reference guide for students and parents/guardians to learn about the programs, policies, processes, and procedures that we follow each day throughout the school year. Setting time aside at the very start of the school year to read the Community Handbook will help you navigate the school and create conversations at home with your children about charting a clear pathway to graduation and beyond.

Wishing you success and happiness in the year ahead!

*PVPA Faculty, Staff, and Administration*

## SCHOOL MAIN OFFICE HOURS

School Year	Monday - Friday; 7:30am - 4:00pm
Summer	Monday - Friday; 8:30am - 3:30pm

*Please see "Student Supervision" section for additional information.*



## 2021-2022 School Year Calendar

AUGUST 2021						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	2	3	4	5	6	
	9	10	11	12	13	
	16	17	18	19	20	
	23	24	25	26	27	
	30	31				

- 23, 24 New Staff Orientation
- 25, 26, 27, 30 Faculty Work Days
- 31 First Day of School/New Student Orientation

SEPTEMBER 2021						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	
	6	7	8	9	10	
	13	14	15	16	17	
	20	21	22	23	24	
	27	28	29	30		

- 6 Labor Day (No School)
- 30 Open House (evening)

OCTOBER 2021						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	
	4	5	6	7	8	
	11	12	13	14	15	
	18	19	20	21	22	
	25	26	27	28	29	

- 11 Indigenous Peoples' Day (No School)
- 12 Curriculum Day (No School)
- 29 Octoberfest
- 29 Mid-sem. Grades Close

NOVEMBER 2021						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	
	8	9	10	11	12	
	15	16	17	18	19	
	22	23	24	25	26	
	29	30				

- 11 Veterans' Day (No School)
- 18, 19 Parent/Guardian - Teacher Conferences (Half-Days)
- 24-26 THANKSGIVING BREAK

DECEMBER 2021						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	
	6	7	8	9	10	
	13	14	15	16	17	
	20	21	22	23	24	
	27	28	29	30	31	

- 3 Late Notice grades close
- 22 Curriculum Day (No School)
- 23-31 HOLIDAY BREAK

- 14 Fall Semester Ends
- 17 MLK, Jr. Day (No School)
- 18-31 Paideia

JANUARY 2022						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	3	4	5	6	7	
	10	11	12	13	14	
	17	18	19	20	21	
	24	25	26	27	28	
	31					

- 1-3 Paideia
- 4 Curriculum Day (No School)
- 7 Spring Semester Begins
- 21 Presidents' Day (No School)
- 21-25 FEBRUARY BREAK

FEBRUARY 2022						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	
	7	8	9	10	11	
	14	15	16	17	18	
	21	22	23	24	25	
	28					

MARCH 2022						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	
	7	8	9	10	11	
	14	15	16	17	18	
	21	22	23	24	25	
	28	29	30	31		

APRIL 2022						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	
	4	5	6	7	8	
	11	12	13	14	15	
	18	19	20	21	22	
	25	26	27	28	29	

MAY 2022						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	2	3	4	5	6	
	9	10	11	12	13	
	16	17	18	19	20	
	23	24	25	26	27	
	30	31				

JUNE 2022						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	
	6	7	8	9	10	
	13	14	15	16	17	
	20	21	22	23	24	
	27	28	29	30		

- 2 Graduation
- 17 Last Day of School (0 Snow Days)
- 20 Juneteenth (No School)
- 21 Faculty Work Day (0 Snow Days)
- 27 Last Day of School (5 Snow Days)
- 28 Faculty Work Day (5 Snow Days)

# 2021-2022 MASTER SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:30-9:40	<b>A</b> MS Arts	<b>B</b> MS Academics	<b>A</b> MS Arts	<b>B</b> MS Academics	<b>A</b> MS Arts
9:45-10:55	<b>B</b> MS Academics	<b>C</b> MS Academics	<b>C</b> MS Academics	<b>D</b> 8 - Arts 7 - Academics	<b>C</b> MS Academics
11:00-1st lunch 11:40-2nd lunch 12:15-3rd lunch	<b>D</b> 8 - Arts 7 - Academics	<b>E</b> 7 - Arts 8 - Academics	<b>D</b> 8 - Arts 7 - Academics	<b>E</b> 7 - Arts Core 8 - Academics	<b>E</b> 7 - Arts Core 8 - Academics
12:50 -2:00	<b>H</b> MS Arts	<b>F</b> MS Academics	<b>F</b> MS Academics	<b>G</b> MS Adv/Support	<b>F</b> MS Academics
2:05-3:15	<b>G</b> MS Adv/Support	<b>H</b> MS Arts	<b>G</b> MS Adv/Support	<b>H</b> MS Arts	<b>Community Time</b>
3:15-4:15 Monday or Friday	(School ends for students at 3:15 every day)				<b>Collaborative Time</b>

STUDENT DROP OFF: Between 7:50 and 8:20

BREAKFAST: Begins at 7:50am

# HOW CAN WE BE HELPFUL?

Updated August 2020

## Administrative Support

<b><u>Main Office Administrative Assistant</u></b> <b>Daphne Correa</b> dcorrea@pvpa.org, ext 110	General School Information Field Trips/Off-site Activity Coord.	Parent-Teacher Conference Coord. PTO Advisor
<b><u>Main Office Administrative Assistant</u></b> <b>Jennifer Santerre</b> jsanterre@pvpa.org, ext 114	General School Information Student Attendance School Lunch Program	School Google Calendar Parent Volunteer Management
<b><u>Student Information System Data Manager</u></b> <b>Lisa Clark</b> lclark@pvpa.org, ext 300	Transcripts/Grade Reports Student Biographical and Academic Records Staff Information	Course Registration/Scheduling State Reporting Paideia Coordination
<b><u>Community Outreach &amp; Alumni Dir.</u></b> <b>Chris Fournier</b> cfournier@pvpa.org, ext 132	Alumni Engagement	Community Partner Programs
<b><u>Library Media Specialist</u></b> <b>Austin Clark</b> austinclark@pvpa.org, ext 301	Library Collections Oversight Self-directed Study Supervision	Student Research Support
<b><u>Accounting &amp; Human Resources Assistant</u></b> <b>Leandra Thompson</b> lthompson@pvpa.org, ext 122	Bus Contract Billing Deposits/Banking Purchase Requests Student Fundraising Substitute Coordination	Benefits Information Supply Orders Payroll Processing Staff Attendance
<b><u>School Nurse</u></b> <b>Mary Colwell</b> mcolwell@pvpa.org, ext 120	Student Health Concerns Student Health Records	School Health News
<b><u>Restorative Practice Coordinator</u></b> <b>TBD</b>	School Culture Peer Restorative Justice/Mediation Bullying Prevention Restorative Practice faculty support Positive Behavior Support	Club & Group Leadership Oversight Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Family Liaison Student Input and Feedback All-school Community Events
<b><u>Enrollment &amp; Communications Dir.</u></b> <b>Sandy Courtney</b> scourtney@pvpa.org, ext 134	Enrollment Social Media Facebook page	Media liaison PTO liaison
<b><u>Assistant to Dir. of Student Services</u></b> <b>Beth Crosby</b> bcrosby@pvpa.org, ext 503	Special Education Section 504 SEPAC	IEP/504 Meeting Scheduling
<b><u>Assessment Coordinator</u></b> <b>Jackie Haley</b> jhaley@pvpa.org, ext 505	Testing Coordination: MCAS, FastBridge, ACCESS for ELLs, AP	

## Senior Administrative Team

<b><u>Executive Director</u></b> <b>Brent Nielsen</b> bnielsen@pvpa.org , ext 118	General Advice and Support Family Concerns Strategic Plan Implementation Student Welfare Contractual Concerns Athletics Program Fundraising/Donations Production Oversight	Board of Trustees Issues Liaison to the Friends of PVPA Policies and Practices School and Community Partnerships Suspension Appeals Title IX Appeals Hiring Practices
<b><u>Director of Curriculum and Instruction</u></b> <b>Alyson Miller</b> amiller@pvpa.org, ext 419	Academics Teacher Supervision and Evaluation Curriculum and Instruction Grading and Assessment Progress and Final Grade Reporting Home-School Communication	Course Catalog and Scheduling Course Credits/Student Progress Parent-Teacher Conferences Faculty/Staff Professional Learning Standardized Testing Title I, II, IVA
<b><u>Dean of Students</u></b> <b>Kendrick Roundtree</b> kroundtree@pvpa.org, ext 116	Student discipline Reports of Bullying and Harassment Student Attendance and Truancy Title IX Investigator	
<b><u>Director of Student Services</u></b> <b>Loris Bjorkman-Joslyn</b> lbjorkman@pvpa.org, ext 302	Special Education Section 504 Student Mental Health Oversight Homeless and Foster Student Liaison Title IX Coordinator	Supervision and Evaluation of: Academic Support Teachers, Adjustment Counselors School Psychologist, School Counselors, Speech and Language Pathologist, Instructional Supt. Professionals, Paraprofessionals
<b><u>Director of Arts</u></b> <b>Frank Newton</b> fnewton@pvpa.org, ext 421	Arts Teacher Supervision and Evaluation Arts Faculty Mentoring and Coaching Oversight of Production management	Arts Faculty Professional Development Instructional Oversight Arts Student Teacher Practicum Oversight
<b><u>Technology Coordinator</u></b> <b>Thom Vreeland</b> tvreeland@pvpa.org, ext 306	School Website Oversight PowerSchool Portal Access GoogleSuite Administration	Wireless Network Administration Assistive Technology Technology Support and Training Long-Term Technology Planning
<b><u>Facilities Manager</u></b> <b>John Kulas</b> jkulas@pvpa.org, ext 125	Building Use Requests/Reservation Facility and Equipment Maintenance Fire and Life Safety Code and Traffic Enforcement	Grounds and Custodial Building Security Shipping & Receiving Phone and Access Control Systems
<b><u>Chief Financial Officer</u></b> <b>Marcy Conner</b> mconner@pvpa.org, ext 124	Billing/Accounts Receivable Expense Reimbursements Employment Contracts Budgeting and Financial Reporting Grants Management Title IX Decision Maker	Bus Registration and Transportation Human Resources Purchasing/Procurement Accounts Payable Payroll Management Benefits Administration

## Department Leaders

<b><u>Dance</u></b> Felice Santorelli fsantorelli@pvpa.org, ext 106	Department curriculum and programming oversight	Department materials and purchasing Production input and assistance
<b><u>English Language Arts</u></b> Roxane Marini rmarini@pvpa.org, ext 128	Department curriculum and programming oversight	Department materials and purchasing
<b><u>History and Social Science</u></b> Gary Huggett ghuggett@pvpa.org, ext 209	Department curriculum and programming oversight	Department materials and purchasing
<b><u>Mathematics</u></b> Joey Grabowski jgrabowski@pvpa.org, ext 223	Department curriculum and programming oversight	Department materials and purchasing
<b><u>Music</u></b> Rahul Roy rroy@pvpa.org, ext 510	Department curriculum and programming oversight	Department materials and purchasing Production input and assistance
<b><u>School Counseling</u></b> Kate Allen kallen@pvpa.org, ext 243	School Counseling Curriculum Career and College Planning Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Support Oversight Academic Advising Graduation Requirement Tracking	Off-site Courses/VHS Courses Independent Study College Admissions, Financial Aid PSAT/SAT/ACT Testing Community Resource Referral Oversight
<b><u>Science</u></b> John McCarthy jmccarthy@pvpa.org, ext 424	Department curriculum and programming oversight	Department materials and purchasing
<b><u>Theater</u></b> TBD	Department curriculum and programming oversight	Department materials and purchasing Production input and assistance
<b><u>Visual Arts and Technical Theater</u></b> Martin Bridge mbridge@pvpa.org, ext 139	Department curriculum and programming oversight	Department materials and purchasing Production input and assistance
<b><u>World Languages</u></b> David Duran dduran@pvpa.org, ext 214	Department curriculum and programming oversight	Department materials and purchasing

# PVPA ORGANIZATION

## HISTORY

PVPA Charter Public High School (originally grades 9-12) was founded in 1996 as part of the Massachusetts Educational Reform movement. As a charter school, we were mandated to identify and facilitate innovations in educational methods that could impact positively on student learning, and to disseminate these practices to other public schools in the Commonwealth.

The middle school program (grades 7-8) began in September 2004 and recognizes the unique developmental needs of younger adolescents in preparing them for transition into the PVPA high school program. As such, they will emerge with a greater sense of self-esteem, direction for their individual creativity, responsibility for their own learning, time management and organization, and the ability to successfully meet challenges as learners.

## MISSION AND VISION

The Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School (PVPA) offers its students intensive exposure to the performing arts within the context of an excellent college preparatory curriculum.

PVPA's vision is simple and dramatic. We seek to rediscover the synergies between creativity and critical thinking - between rhyme and reason, expression and inquiry, passion and knowledge - synergies that inspire our students to feel excitement, curiosity, engagement, self-confidence, and a true love of learning.

## CHARTER PRIORITIES

- **College Preparation:** PVPA is committed to the highest level of student achievement, and seeks to prepare all students for college. Our graduation requirements are aligned with common admission requirements for four-year colleges.
- **Academic Competence:** All students in grades 7-12 must show evidence of at least “Developing” level skills and understanding on all course objectives in order to earn credit for each course. Students must also work toward developing habits of work and learning, such as meeting deadlines. Students are encouraged to edit work and retake assessments so they may reach their highest level of proficiency.
- **Intensive Performing Arts Programs:** Students have access to course offerings each semester in theater, dance, music (vocal and instrumental), and visual arts/technical theater (stage design, lighting design, costuming, and fine arts). PVPA provides students with an extensive array of performance venues, and all students are expected to actively participate in the arts programs.
- **Individualized Attention:** PVPA makes every effort to meet the individualized needs of each student. Our small class size, use of multiple learning styles, and variety of assessment tools all support students in reaching their highest potential.
- **Integration of Creative and Critical Thinking:** The arts inform classroom teaching throughout the school. Integration of arts and academic disciplines supports the pursuit of excellence, both by increasing student interest and enthusiasm, and by providing novel entries into intellectual realms that often remain untapped.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The PVPA Board of Trustees is the school's governing authority and is legally and ethically responsible for the school. Specifically, the Board is responsible for ensuring the school's faithfulness to its charter by:

- Establishing and reviewing policy
- Strategic planning
- Financial oversight



- Hiring and evaluating the Executive Director
- Being accountable to the public
- Adhering to all laws and regulations governing Commonwealth Charter School

### **Board Committees**

The Finance Committee plays the critical role of developing the school's annual budget and the capital budget. The committee advises and assists the Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer.

The Governance Committee generally oversees the health of the Board of Trustees. It guides the Board and monitors goals and strategic plans, assesses needs for personnel and skills on the Board, performs an annual review of Board performance, helps with the agenda and long-term goals, plans and executes the annual orientation and Board retreat, and maintains by-laws and Board handbook.

## **THE FRIENDS OF PVPA CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL (FUNDRAISING)**

The Friends of PVPA is an independent, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization created to support and advance the mission and programs of the Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School. It achieves these goals through fundraising activities, public outreach, and by mobilizing resources from the PVPA community of families and alumni.

As a 501(c)(3) organization, all donations to The Friends are deductible as charitable donations for federal income tax purposes. You can make an immediate gift by cash, check, or credit card (Visa or MasterCard). The Friends also accepts gifts of publicly traded stock, corporate matching gifts from your employer, and grants from private/family foundations. All donors to The Friends become members of The Backstage Club, PVPA's individual donor society or Community Producers, our corporate sponsors. For additional information or assistance with your contribution, please contact Brent Nielsen, PVPA Executive Director.

## **STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2021-2026**

The 2021-2026 Strategic Action Plan builds on the foundation set by the previous plan. In continuing the school's growth and progress, we see three primary areas of focus: re-calibrating our practices; broadening our understanding and implementation of inclusivity; and committing to more transparency across our community.

Our first objective is in the spirit of offering PVPA an opportunity to recalibrate by focusing attention to the areas that need it most. A robust commitment to education and students has led to the creation of a number of quality programs and initiatives that have been started, and not yet fully realized. We now have the opportunity to refocus and intentionally embed these programs into our school culture.

Our second objective—centering equity and inclusivity—aims to expand resources and initiatives in support of all members of the PVPA community. Through these goals and objectives, we will make an intentional effort to uphold diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of our mission. By committing to these practices, we will be poised to better serve marginalized populations and ensure that all students are empowered to create a path to success.

Our last objective seeks to address an area of growth within the PVPA community, transparency of leadership. During times of change, trusting and understanding structures of leadership is key in maintaining a healthy school environment. In this Strategic Action Plan we aim to outline both broad goals and specific strategies to accomplish transparency and build clearer structures of leadership within PVPA at all levels. The onus of responsibility for implementing and creating success with the plan rests with the head of school, the administrative team, and the Board of Trustees.

To learn more, read [PVPA's 2021-2026 Strategic Action Plan](#).

### **Values Outlined in the 2021-2026 Strategic Action Plan**

During the time of writing the 2011-2016 Strategic Action Plan, the committee members attempted to capture the intangible aspects of the school treasured by the community. These values continue to be alive in the PVPA community in 2021, at the time of drafting this Strategic Action Plan; we keep them in this current plan because we hope they will continue to hold a central place in our school.

–**Critical and Higher Order Thinking Skills**: These include searching for and evaluating sources, holistic analysis, the ability to ask appropriate questions, the capacity to evaluate and judge, and openness to outliers of thought and minority opinions. We value rigorous thinking and approaches to learning such as the recognition of connections between one’s own life and the larger society, willingness to embrace paradox and ambiguity without rushing to conclusions, and an ability to recognize multiple perspectives—all of which are foundations for students’ future education.

–**Creative Thinking**: We value experimentation, risk-taking and mistake-making, interdisciplinary approaches, collaboration between co-creators, divergent as well as convergent thinking, and the ability to draw from oneself the material for creating and for making new and essential connections.

–**A Passion for Inquiry and Self-Reflection**: We value the right to question assumptions and to demonstrate knowledge in a variety of forms. This passion is modeled by the outstanding educators at PVPA—teachers who, in their fields of expertise, are enthusiastic facilitators of student learning. Passion and learning go hand-in-hand and are compatible with rigorous standards and expectations.

–**A Loving Community**: Students, faculty, families, administrators, Board members, people from various social classes, ethnicities, life experiences, and with a variety of learning styles are respected. We value all voices being heard when important decisions are made and expect community members to support the school’s mission and values. PVPA aspires to be a safe environment for students and encourages them to develop their own ideas and opinions.

–**School as One Part of a Larger Learning Community**: We believe that education goes on all the time and everywhere. We value our essential connections with the broader community and with artists in various disciplines. PVPA is committed to being part of a community of artistic organizations, where our approaches to education are shared, where our students present arts performances, where we both receive and give. We seek to enhance our visibility in the communities where our students reside and in other public schools.

## **MASSACHUSETTS CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

The Massachusetts Charter Public School Association (MCPSA) is a membership organization that serves as the voice of one of the nation’s highest-performing charter sectors. Since the Association’s founding in 2001, MCPSA has played a critical role in advocating for and creating community among the growing network of charter schools across the Commonwealth through public policy advocacy, sharing of best practices, and providing resources and services to schools. The MCPSA’s website has information for teachers, parents and administrators at [www.masscharterschools.org](http://www.masscharterschools.org).

## **MASSACHUSETTS DESE CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE**

Information regarding charter school legislation may be obtained from the Massachusetts DESE Charter School Office located at 75 Pleasant Street, 5th floor, Malden, MA 02148 or by calling 781.338.3227 or faxing 781.338.3220. You may also go to the website: [www.doe.mass.edu/charter](http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter), or email [charterschools@doe.mass.edu](mailto:charterschools@doe.mass.edu).

# GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

## ASBESTOS REPORT

The Asbestos Report, as required by AHERA (Asbestos Hazard Response Act), is on file at PVPA.

## BOOK LOANING

We value our books and want to make the most recent copies available to all our students. Except for workbooks that are individually purchased, all books must be returned at the end of each course, or within the specified library loaning period. Replacement costs will be charged for books not returned by June 30. If books are returned after replacements have been purchased, students may be reimbursed.

## CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

If they so choose, students may engage in acts of student-driven civil disobedience. Faculty members are required to keep a neutral stance on any issues, encourage students to think for themselves about how they feel about the issue at hand, and ensure students are aware that the act of civil disobedience is student-driven and not a school-sponsored activity. Teachers continue to maintain their classes during any act of civil disobedience unless all students choose to participate.

## DRUG FREE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

PVPA does not tolerate the use, possession, or distribution of any drugs (other than those prescribed by a physician); non-prescribed drug use constitutes a violation of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71 section 37H.

PVPA will discipline students in a tiered response with regard to illegal substances depending on whether a student is under the influence, in possession, in possession with intent to distribute and or a combination of two or more of the above. Responses may range from a short term suspension to expulsion.

The school will provide assistance to any student voluntarily seeking treatment or advice for a drug related problem. All PVPA employees are mandated reporters and will disclose information shared by students about drug use with the appropriate administration and counselors, to enable the student to receive needed help.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MANAGEMENT SAFETY PLAN

Developed in collaboration with the South Hadley Police and Fire Departments as well as the Massachusetts State Police, the PVPA Emergency Preparedness Management Safety Plan outlines a response for a range of potential emergency incidents. The plan is posted in each classroom and office throughout the building, and may be viewed in person on school grounds. PVPA carries out Fire, Lock Down, and Safety drills throughout the school year as required by state and local regulations.

## FIELD TRIP/OFF-SITE ACTIVITY POLICY

Experiences related to the curriculum outside of the school environment are beneficial to all courses of study and help PVPA students connect to the wider community. PVPA seeks to ensure all students are able to participate equitably in field trips and off-site activities ("trips"). Priorities for funding include trips that are critical to a course's curricular experiences, and promote the unique mission of PVPA.

All teachers and staff members are required to follow the Field Trip/Off-site Activity Procedures for any occasion in which students are engaged in school-sponsored activities outside of the PVPA campus. These procedures establish guidelines that ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for the health, safety, and welfare of participants, to minimize disruption to the educational program for participating and non-participating students, and to streamline administrative tasks.

The Executive Director must give final approval for all trips prior to any teacher communicating to students or families, and/or reserving or purchasing any tickets, facilities, and/or materials. This includes informal trips (e.g., McCray's Farm).

The following components apply to all school-sponsored trips:

- **PRE-APPROVAL:** Trip leaders pre-approve all trips using the [Field Trip/Off-Site Activity Request Form](#) prior to communicating about the trip to students/families, and prior to engaging in fundraising. Student-proposed and managed trips (e.g., senior trip) must have a PVPA faculty or staff member who acts as the Trip Leader.
- **STUDENT PERMISSION:** No student under the age of 18 may participate in any trip without prior parent/guardian permission as confirmed by a signed, trip-specific form (please use this [template](#)).
- **CHAPERONES:** All trips must be properly supervised by teachers, staff, and/or volunteers who have received appropriate background checks and clearance (CORI/SORI), and have been advised as to appropriate safety precautions to be observed. Please consult with the Business Office. All trips must have a MINIMUM of 1 authorized adult supervisor/chaperone per 10 students. All chaperones who are not PVPA staff members must have a current (this school year) CORI/SORI on file prior to the trip.
- **STUDENT RECORD REVIEW:** The trip leader must review the student records of all students participating in the trip to ensure any accommodations or modifications are available in order for all students to participate in and have equal access, and to ensure any and all medical needs are met.
- **TRANSPORTATION:** Trip leaders, in collaboration with the Director of Arts, Director of Academics, or Acting Director of Student Services, arrange transportation as defined in the 2021-22 Community Handbook (See "Student Transportation => "Event Transportation").
- **DISCIPLINE:** A student may only be excluded from a trip if the date(s) of a suspension from school coincides with the scheduled date(s) of the trip, or if the Executive Director determines that a student's current behavior poses a substantial risk to the health, safety, and welfare of the student, other participating students, staff members, and/or chaperones.
- **FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY:** Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for any damage done to any personal or real property that they are found to have caused during the course of the trip.
- **FUNDRAISING:** All fundraising activities follow the PVPA Fundraising Guidelines outlined in the Staff Handbook, and shall be reasonable and commensurate with students' obligations for homework, after-school activities, jobs, and other responsibilities. Group fundraising activities are preferred. Students shall not be assigned individual fundraising targets. No student will be excluded from participation due to a lack of sufficient funds.
- **SOLICITATION:** School employees are prohibited from soliciting privately run trips through the school.

The following additional components apply to overnight/late night and out-of-state trips:

- Advance approval by the Board of Trustees or designee is required for any student trip involving late night or overnight travel. Late night travel is defined as any travel that occurs between the hours of midnight and 6:00 am. Requests for approval shall be presented to the Board of Trustees by the requesting trip leader after initial approval by the Executive Director.
- Whenever possible, overnight trips shall be scheduled on weekends or during school vacations to minimize lost classroom time.
- Overnight accommodations shall be made in advance with student safety and security in mind.
- Trip itineraries shall leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense, and account for the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.

## FOOD SERVICES

### School Breakfast and Lunch

PVPA partners with the South Hadley Public Schools' Food Service Department to offer breakfast and lunches for all our students. Meals are prepared at South Hadley High School, and brought to PVPA daily. Students must sign up ahead of time. For the 2021-22 school year, all students are eligible to participate in the Federal Breakfast and Lunch Program at no cost. Families who meet the income requirements for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program may still be eligible for other benefits and should complete the Free & Reduced Lunch Application found at the Main Office or at [PVPA's website](#) under "[Lunch](#)" in the "For Parents" or "For Students" tab.

The monthly Lunch Menu is available in the Main Office, posted on our website, and included in Weekly Communication. Students wanting lunch (including those with free and reduced status) must fill out a menu and return it to the Main Office (with payment if not approved for free lunch) before the date stated on the Menu. It can be dropped off in the main office or scan it and email it to the Business Office, [lunch@pvpa.org](mailto:lunch@pvpa.org), or drop it off in the Main Office. Lunch will NOT be automatically ordered for any students as PVPA pays for the lunches and will order only the amounts requested by students. Invoices will be sent to families at the beginning of each month and should be paid in a timely manner. For more information about the free and reduced lunch program and the application, contact Jenn Santerre at 413.552.1580, ext. 114, or go to [PVPA's website](#) under "[Lunch](#)" in the "For Parents" or "For Students" tab.

**Lunch cancellation policy:** If a family cancels a student lunch before 4:00 p.m. the day prior (4 p.m. Friday for a Monday lunch), then the student account will not be charged. We cannot issue credits for student lunches that were not canceled in a timely manner, as PVPA is required to pay for all lunches ordered, regardless of whether the lunch is received by the student.

### Food Delivery

Students are not allowed to order food or have food delivered to the school during normal school hours.

## FUNDRAISING AND TABLING FOR STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Any student group that would like to set up a table to support a specific activity (e.g., information sharing, fundraising) first must receive permission from the main office staff, who then will schedule it on the Calendar. Any student activities that involve a desire to fundraise would additionally need to be approved by the Executive Director\*.

\*Teacher/Staff advisors to student groups that intend to engage in fundraising activities must complete a Fundraising Permit and submit this to the Executive Director for approval. You can find this form on the [Staff Website](#), on the *Request Forms* page.

Following approval, the Business Office will notify the Faculty/Staff advisor and arrange for a cash box for the activity. After each event, the Advisor must ensure that students return the cash box to the Business Office. Additionally, at least every two weeks during fundraising events the staff Advisor needs to report to the Business Office to prepare deposits, including rolling coins if needed.

If a fundraising event takes place during a weekend or a time when school is not in session, it is the responsibility of the teacher/staff member to complete a Deposit Form (found on the Staff Website, on the *Request Forms* page) and bring the form and all money to the Business Office on the first Monday following the event. It is also the responsibility of the teacher/staff member to communicate this policy to students and parent volunteers who may be participating in the fundraising event.

## ILLEGAL ACTS

Illegal infractions may involve notification of the police or other governmental agencies. Infractions include bullying, hate speech, vandalism, larceny, sexual harassment, assault, hazing (as an organizer, participant, or observer), possession and/or use of alcohol or drugs, possession of dangerous objects including knives and firearms, setting false alarms, bomb threats, unauthorized use of computer networking systems, tampering with computer equipment or resident programs

and files, and any other illegal acts. Disciplinary action for illegal acts may include actions up to and including expulsion from school.

## **ITEMS DISRUPTIVE TO SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

Any objects which interfere with the daily implementation of the school's mission, create an unsafe learning environment, or endanger the health and safety of others are not permitted on school grounds at any time. These items include, but are not limited to: laser pointers, Heelys (sneakers with wheels), personal speakers, skateboards, and razor scooters.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

Per MA General Laws, Chapter 76: Section 5, PVPA is open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, citizenship status, national origin, creed, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, mental, or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language, or academic achievement.

Since PVPA is committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination and sexual harassment, it shall be a violation for any student, teacher, and school personnel to engage in sexual or bias-related harassment or to violate the civil rights of any student, teacher, or other school personnel. PVPA will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, of sexual or bias-related harassment or violations of civil rights and will take the appropriate action against any student, teacher, or school personnel who is found in violation of this statement.

## **PERMISSIONS**

In order for teachers to show R-rated movies, videotape, photograph or record students, or use students in a research project, they must get permission from guardians in order to do so.

## **RESTRAINT PREVENTION AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT POLICY**

PVPA abides by state regulations concerning responses to student behavior as outlined in 603 CMR 46.00. (see link [here](#))

## **SCENTS AND FRAGRANCES POLICY**

Out of respect to members of our community who are sensitive to fragrances, students and staff are asked not to wear fragrances or perfumes in school.

## **PVPA is a Nut Free and Aloe Free School**

Students should not bring any food or other items containing nuts or aloe. Please check the ingredients of any food item, lotion, or sanitizer to be sure it is nut and aloe free.

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

In the case of school cancellation or delayed opening due to weather or other emergencies that occur before the start of the school day, our AutoCall system sends school cancellation or delayed opening information to PVPA families and staff. The information is also found on the PVPA website, and is broadcast over local television and radio stations. Decisions on school cancellation or delay will usually be made by 6:15am, if not earlier.

Given the wide geographical area over which students travel to PVPA, and because we do not provide bus service for most students, the school does not follow a policy of closing early unless necessary in case of emergency. We do, however, allow students who have been dismissed by their parents/guardians to leave early due to weather or other emergencies. Staff members are expected to stay on duty until they are dismissed by the administration.

## **2-Hour Delayed Start**

A decision may be made to delay the start of school by two hours due to weather (a one-hour delay is not a planned scenario). In this circumstance, school begins at 10:30 am, and uses the following adjusted morning schedule:

<b>2-Hour Delay on Mon-Thurs</b>	<b>2-Hour Delay on Friday (No Community Time)</b>
<b>10:30 - 11:15</b> (1st period of day)	<b>10:30 - 11:30</b> (A-Block)
<b>11:20 - 12:05</b> (2nd period of day)	<b>11:35 - 1:15</b> (E-Block) <b>1st Lunch:</b> 11:35 - 12:05, class 12:10 - 1:15 <b>2nd Lunch:</b> 12:10 - 12:40, class 11:35-12:05 & 12:45-1:15 <b>3rd Lunch:</b> 12:45 - 1:15, class 11:35-12:40
<b>12:10 - 1:40</b> (3rd period & lunch) <b>1st Lunch:</b> 12:10 - 12:40, class 12:45 - 1:40 <b>2nd Lunch:</b> 12:40 - 1:10, class 12:10-12:40 & 1:15-1:40 <b>3rd Lunch:</b> 1:10 - 1:40, class 12:10-1:05	<b>1:20 - 2:10</b> (C-Block)
<b>1:45 - 2:25</b> (4th period of day)	<b>2:15 - 3:15</b> (F-Block)
<b>2:30 - 3:15</b> (5th period of day)	

## **SIBLING ADMISSIONS STATUS**

Students who are siblings of currently enrolled PVPA students are given preference in the state-mandated lottery admissions process. If there are more sibling applicants than openings, a separate lottery is done among sibling applicants. Per MA charter school regulations, a “sibling” is defined as sharing a common parent, either biologically or legally through adoption. Sibling applicants must meet all application deadlines and requirements. Contact [admissions@pvpa.org](mailto:admissions@pvpa.org) for more information about the admissions process.

## **SMOKING AND VAPING**

In compliance with and according to Massachusetts General Law, PVPA is a smoke-free campus. In addition, smoking and vaping products are also prohibited. Non-students who are found smoking or using vaping products will be asked to stop or leave. Student violations of this policy can span the range of a written warning to a suspension depending on the circumstances and the frequency of the infraction. Student possession of any form of tobacco, smoking products, or vaping products is prohibited.

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL AND IN CLASS**

### **Attendance Procedures**

School attendance is taken daily. A parent/guardian must call the main office at 413.552.1580 to report or confirm an excused absence no later than 8:30 am. Teachers will be taking attendance at the beginning of the first period, and students will be marked as Absent if we have not heard from a parent/guardian by phone (413-552-1580) or email ([attendance@pvpa.org](mailto:attendance@pvpa.org)) by then. If the parent/guardian is unable to confirm the absence with the main office, the student’s absence will be recorded as “unexcused” for the day. Any student who arrives late without signing in at the main office is presumed to be absent. If a student is going to be late or dismissed early, parents/guardians must check in at the main office, or call to report the expected arrival or dismissal time.



Students in grade 12 who are enrolled in an off-site course (e.g., dual-enrollment college course, or online VHS course) or independent study may be enrolled in “Off-site Study” during blocks where they are not enrolled in PVPA courses, whether or not the blocks align with the days and times of their off-site course. Each block represents five PVPA credits; therefore, students who are enrolled in a college-level course worth 10 PVPA credits may include two “Off-site Study” blocks in their schedule.

### **Attendance Procedures For Quarantining/Remote Students**

Students who have been asked by the school to quarantine due to a positive case of COVID-19 may have access to remote learning opportunities and should contact their individual teachers for instructions to access remote learning while out of school. Remote students need to attend at least 50% of their classes for the day to be considered 'Remote Present'. If your student is unable to attend classes for the day, please contact the main office as detailed in the above 'Attendance Procedures' section.. If your student is having trouble accessing a virtual class, send the teacher an email to let them know.

### **School Sign-in/Sign-out**

Students arriving late to school or leaving early must sign in or out in the main office. This can be done by using the kiosk on the office counter, or by asking a main office staff person to do so for you. Any student under the age of eighteen must be signed out by a parent/guardian in the main office.

### **Approved Late Arrival/Early Dismissal**

Students in grades 9-12 who have an approved late arrival in their schedule can arrive after the start of school without incident. In order to get approval, these students must fill out the Early Dismissal/Late Arrival Permission Form (found on the [school's website](#) under “Documents and Forms” on the “For Students” and “For Parents” tab), have a parent/guardian sign it, and return it to the Executive Director. Students still must sign in at the main office when they arrive, and get a late pass if necessary.

- Only students who are 18 years old and **who live independently from their parent/guardian(s)** may dismiss themselves from school due to illness after being examined by the school nurse.
- Students who are 18 years old may sign themselves out for lunch, after a check-in with the Dean of Students.

### **Dismissal Before the Scheduled End of School Day**

Parents/guardians must authorize in writing any departure before the regular dismissal time to the main office at the beginning of the school day. In case of an emergency, a parent/guardian may dismiss the student by phone by speaking with an office staff member. A note must be brought in when the student returns to school.

**Please note:** Students who need to go home sick must be seen by the nurse before contacting their parent/guardian. The nurse will call the parent/guardian to pick up their student.

### **After-school Activity and Performance Participation**

Students who are absent for more than half of the school day may not participate in any after-school activity or performance unless they have received permission from a PVPA administrator.

### **Class Attendance Expectations and Class Time Breaks**

Student participation in class is an essential component of student learning. Within classroom expectations set by each teacher, one student at a time may sign out for one short break (5 minutes or less) per period if needed to use the bathroom, retrieve a personal item, get a drink, or simply take a short walk to reset. Students are expected to take a break pass with them (located in each classroom). If a student is away for more than 10 minutes, the teacher will contact the main office for administrator support in locating the student. Any student in grades 7, 8, and 9 who accrues three or more unexcused absences, unexcused tardies, and/or “missings” in a one-week period may be assigned to a Supervised Lunch Circle (SLC) led by staff member trained in restorative justice practices. In the SLC students will be asked to reflect on the impact of their tardiness and potential factors and solutions.

### **Repeated Absence from Class**

Class absences are indicated on quarterly progress and final grade reports. If a student is absent from class for more than 10% of the scheduled time in a semester (approximately five periods), administrators will notify the student and



parents/guardians that this may affect the student's ability to earn credit in the course. This applies to all excused and unexcused absences. If a student misses more than half of the scheduled time during a period, the teacher is expected to mark this as a full-class absence.

If at all possible, the student and teacher are expected to work out a plan for the student to make up for the missed instruction and participation in alternate ways. If the student continues to be behind on work, the teacher may create a "Back-on-Track Agreement" for the student and cc'ed to the student's parent/guardian.

### **Repeated Absence from School**

Students who accumulate more than seven (7) unexcused absences during the school year are considered truant under MA state law. According to state guidelines, a student is considered absent if not present for at least half the hours that school is in session on a given day. Administrators review student absences regularly, and will contact parents/guardians after 5 unexcused absences to address concerns and offer support. When a student accumulates 7 unexcused absences, OR if a student has missed more than 4 consecutive days of school without parent/guardian communication, administrators will request to meet with parents/guardians to develop an attendance plan. Inability to meet may result in a truancy report to DCF. Also see "Repeated Absence from Class" section below.

## **STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

In accordance with 603 CMR 23.07 (4) (a) of the Commonwealth's Education Laws and Regulations, PVPA may only release 'Directory Information' to third parties without the written consent of the student or parent:

A parent or student may request that they be excluded from the release of Directory Information by sending such notice to the Student Information System Data Manager at [student\\_records@pvpa.org](mailto:student_records@pvpa.org).

## **STUDENT LOCKERS**

PVPA has no student lockers. Students are advised to leave valuable items at home. PVPA is not responsible for theft or loss. Students should keep all personal belongings in their care at all times.

## **STUDENT RECORDS POLICY**

603 CMR 23.00 Student Records Regulations ensures parents' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records. These rights belong to the parents when the student is under age 14 and has not entered the 9th grade. The rights are shared by the parents and student when the child is 14 - 17 years of age or upon entering grade 9. At age 18, the rights belong to the student alone. For a student receiving special education services, the student can be their own guardian, share educational decision making with the parent, or the parent may be designated as the sole decision maker for the student.

The Executive Director is responsible for the privacy and security of all student records maintained by the school. Records cannot be destroyed without providing notice to parents and/or students age 14 and older. 603 CMR 23.07 (4) (g) states that PVPA can provide student record access to another school, without family permission, if the student is transferring to that school.

The student record consists of the transcript and the temporary record, including all information in any form that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in any manner that the student can be individually identified. The transcript contains the student's name, address, and birth date; the name, address and telephone number of parents or guardians; course titles; grades (or the equivalent when grades are not applicable); grade level completed and the grade completed. The temporary record consists of all the information in the student record, which is not contained in the transcript. This information may include your standardized test scores, extracurricular activities in which the student took part and evaluations by teachers, counselors, or other school staff. A school health record is included. The temporary record shall not contain any anonymous information and will be destroyed after graduation.

Student Records shall be provided as soon as practicable and within ten days after the initial request. Upon request, copies of any information contained in the student record shall be furnished to the eligible student or the parent/legal guardian. A reasonable fee, not to exceed the cost of reproduction, may be charged. However, a fee may not be charged

if to do so would effectively prevent the parents/legal guardians or eligible student from exercising their right, under federal law, to inspect and review the records.

After a student graduates or withdraws from PVPA, the parent/guardian is responsible to pick up permanent records or they will be destroyed after 7 years.

The Regulations Pertaining to Student Records were developed by the Massachusetts State Board of Education to ensure parents, students and former students of their rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records. The regulations have the force of law. A copy of the regulations is available upon request.

### **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS ACCESS TO SCHOOL RECORDS**

Per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (or FERPA), non-custodial parents retain full rights of access to their children's student records unless the school has been provided with evidence that these rights have been specifically revoked. Non-custodial refers to physical custody, not legal. A non-custodial parent may have access to the student record after a written request is submitted. The school must immediately notify the custodial parent of the request by certified and first class mail. The custodial parent has 21 days to respond that the non-custodial parent cannot have access due to denial of legal custody, order of supervised or denied visits, restrictions under protective orders, or order of a probate and family court judge prohibiting the distribution of the record. No response from the custodial parent allows release of records to the non-custodial parent with the following condition: All records provided to the non-custodial parent must have deleted information regarding the address, phone number (home and work of custodial parent), and must be marked to indicate that the records cannot be used for enrollment in another school

## **STUDENT SUPERVISION OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS**

### **Early Arrival**

Students should not be dropped off before 7:50 am. Between 7:50 am and 8:25 am they must wait outside within the designated areas of the campus or in the assigned area for their grade level.

### **Late Pick-up**

Students must be picked up at dismissal time unless participating in a supervised, school-sanctioned activity that begins immediately after school ends (see "After-school Activities" below). In the event of unforeseeable transportation problems, students must wait in the main lobby area.

### **After-school Activities**

Students who are participating in a school sanctioned activity that does not start immediately after school are required to leave school grounds at scheduled school dismissal times, and to return at the scheduled activity start time. The only exception is when families have been notified that staff supervision will be provided during this time. Other students who are not part of the after-school activity (e.g., siblings, carpool participants) are expected to be picked up at normal dismissal time unless prior arrangements are made with PVPA staff members. PVPA does not assume responsibility for students outside of supervised, school-sanctioned activity time.

## **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**

### **Bus Transportation**

Bus transportation is available to students via north and south routes on a fee-for-service basis in order to accommodate families. PVPA does not receive transportation funding from the state, therefore, it is not possible to provide transportation at no cost to our entire student body.

Students may purchase regular, ongoing bus transportation to and from school. The fee is set annually as part of the school's budgeting process, and there is no bus fee for students who qualify for the federal free and reduced-price lunch program. You can find the [Bus Schedule](#), Bus Application, and other information and documents on PVPA's website under "Transportation" in the "For Parents" tab. It's important to submit the bus contract as soon as possible to ensure your student's transportation to and from school. Parents are invoiced monthly for bus contracts, and accounts should be settled prior to the last day of each school year.

### **Carpooling**

Many families rely on carpools to transport their students to and from school. To assist families in connecting with other PVPA families in their area, we have created a form available on [PVPA's website](#) under "[Transportation](#)" in the Parent section. After filling out the form with what you are looking for/can offer, you will be shared a link to a spreadsheet. In the spreadsheet you can see the information for all other families who have filled out the form as well, and you can edit your information if necessary.

### **Drop-off and Pick-up**

Students are to be dropped off and picked up outside the main entrance area between 7:50 and 8:20 am. The traffic flow around the school and through the parking lot is one-way and designed to keep students safe at all times, and to keep traffic moving quickly and efficiently. Accessible parking spaces, student pick-up spaces, and throughway areas are clearly marked and must be followed at all times. **PARKING ON THE WEST SIDE (Right side as you are pulling into the school) OF THE MAIN ENTRANCE DRIVEWAY OR ON ANY PART OF THE GRASS IS NOT ALLOWED AT ANY TIME.** These areas must be kept clear for traffic flow and to allow access for emergency vehicles. This rule is in effect before, during, and after school hours. Traffic and bus monitors are generally in place during pick up times as able. Please adhere to all rules and any directions made by the monitors. For a detailed map and more information about traffic flow and Drop-off / Pick-up policies & procedures, please go to the [Documents and Forms](#) page on the '[For Parents](#)' section of the [school website](#), or stop into the main office and request a hard copy.

### **Event Transportation (e.g., Field Trips, Athletics, Off-site Activities)**

School buses, public transportation, or transportation by a common carrier that is licensed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to provide charter services and is licensed for passenger transport by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration should be used when feasible for the transportation of students participating in athletic events, academic team events, co-curricular or extracurricular activities, and must be used for overnight travel and student travel that is scheduled between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m.

However, when such methods of transportation are not available or are not a reasonable means of transportation due to either the cost, number of students needing transport, and/or other reasons, private vehicles may be permitted to transport students to and from athletic events, co-curricular or extracurricular activities that fall within the academic day or extend the school day and that do not include overnight travel or travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. provided all of the following conditions have been met:

- The activity has been approved by the Executive Director
- The driver of the vehicle being used to transport the students completes the [Voluntary Use of Personal Vehicle Form](#), and it is reviewed and approved by the PVPA business office prior to transport
- The driver of the vehicle being used to transport the students (including PVPA staff):
  - Assents to a CORI checks in accordance with the Board of Trustees' Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) policy
  - Submits evidence of current liability insurance with minimum coverage limits of \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 aggregate
  - Submits a signed statement certifying that he/she is twenty-one (21) years of age or older, the vehicle is in good working order, properly licensed, and that he/she holds and possesses a valid drivers' license that has not been revoked or suspended, will follow state laws, and represents and warrants that he/she will indemnify and hold harmless PVPA and the PVPA Board of Trustees from all liability, loss, damage costs, claims and/or causes of action arising out of or related to his/her transportation of students in his/her vehicle and the owner of the vehicle agrees to assume all liability for any injury a student sustains while in the vehicle
  - Provides a copy of the driver's license is provided to PVPA.

- Parents/guardians of students must sign an [Authorization for Student Transportation in Privately Owned Vehicle](#) form indicating consent

No school staff will be required to utilize a private vehicle to transport students to and from athletic events, academic team events, co-curricular or extracurricular activities. All reasonable efforts will be made to facilitate student participation and access to an athletic team event, academic team event, co-curricular or extracurricular activity if their parent/guardian does not consent to having their child transported in the private vehicle of another parent/guardian.

Students may drive themselves to athletic events, academic team events, co-curricular or extracurricular activities if they are 18 year of age, or under 18 with written parent permission. They may not drive other students with them except for siblings except with the written parent permission

## **TECHNOLOGY: ACCEPTABLE USE**

PVPA maintains a network of computers for in-school use by students, staff, and guests. These are to be used only for legitimate academic or school business purposes. Each student is issued an individual account for computer use at the school, which includes an email and online document storage account (parents of children under the age of 13 may opt out of online accounts). Students are expected to keep their passwords strictly secret. Students may not use or tamper with another person's account or password.

Students may bring personal laptop computers and other portable devices (iPods, 'smartphones', etc.) for use in school. Their use is subject to the discretion of faculty and staff, and students must still adhere to the guidelines laid out in the School Culture section under the heading [Internet Access](#).

In accordance with our legal obligations under the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), PVPA maintains a content filtering system to block obscene, pornographic, or otherwise inappropriate content on all network devices, including students' personal devices while they are connected to the school wireless network. Anyone who deliberately attempts to connect to inappropriate sites, whether explicitly blocked or not, or who otherwise uses PVPA's computer and network resources in a manner that violates the Code of Conduct, will be subject to disciplinary action.

At the discretion of staff, PVPA may lend laptops to students when appropriate. Any student using a loaner laptop from PVPA will be subject to all the above restrictions at all times, whether connected to PVPA's network or elsewhere.

# **ENROLLMENT, COURSE SCHEDULES, TRANSCRIPTS**

## **AUDITIONS**

Some PVPA courses require auditions or other prerequisite processes (e.g., interview, portfolio review), and these are sometimes associated with additional activities outside of class time, such as a dance company, or a theater production. Overall, auditions are considered important learning opportunities for all students, as well as relatively safe spaces in which to take risks. Audition schedules and requirements are posted well in advance to give students time to prepare. Specifics depend on the particular group or activity, but all auditions include clear expectations, criteria, and opportunities to receive feedback.

## **COURSE AUDITING**

Students in grades 9-12 may elect to audit any course prior to October 1 each year for fall and full-year courses, or prior to February 1 each year for spring courses. Course auditing status is reported to the state, and may not be changed after these deadlines (e.g., a student cannot decide to audit a for-credit course late in the semester, nor earn credit for a course designated as an audit).

## COURSE REQUESTS AND REGISTRATION

Each spring, students request courses with the help of their parents/guardians and school counselors for the following school year. A sample of the current year's Course Catalog and registration materials can be found at [www.pvpa.org](http://www.pvpa.org) under "Our Program". All possible steps are taken to schedule students for their top choices. In the event a course is overenrolled, a lottery occurs with preference given to students by grade and credit requirements.

## COURSE WITHDRAWAL

Students who drop a course prior to the withdrawal date window will have no record of the course on their transcript. Students who drop a course during the withdrawal date window will receive a grade of "Withdraw" for that course. "Withdraw" grades appear on high school transcripts. If a student drops a course after the withdrawal date, the student will receive a grade of "Attempted" for that course. "Attempted" grades appear on high school transcripts.

Withdrawal date windows correspond to the "grades close" date for mid-semester reports and late notices.

2020-2021 Course Withdrawal Date Windows:

- Fall courses: October 29, 2020 – December 3, 2020 (mid-semester – late notice)
- Full-year courses: October 29, 2020 – May 11, 2021 (fall mid-semester – spring late notice)
- Spring courses: April 5, 2021 – May 11, 2021 (spring mid-semester – spring late notice)

## INDEPENDENT STUDY

Any independent study coursework requires a documentation and approval process through the Independent Study Contract. If the course is provided through an accredited high school or college institution (e.g., VHS, HCC, STCC, GCC), please use the Off-Site Course Contract (see "Off-site Courses" below). These forms are located at [pvpa.org](http://pvpa.org) by clicking on the "Students" button, then "Docs/Forms" in the left menu. **Courses must be pre-arranged no later than the first week of a semester.** Based on Massachusetts reporting requirements, forms submitted after this deadline may be ineligible for credit. Independent study courses are not part of a student's daily schedule, even if the work occurs during school.

### Independent Study Guidelines

- Goals outline new learning for the student.
- This option is available only if PVPA does not offer the course (media, genre, level, etc.) and/or if it is impossible for the student to schedule the course.
- Courses must be taught/advised by a qualified adult facilitator. PVPA administrators may assess qualifications by requesting a resume and/or a telephone interview. In addition, each course must identify a PVPA supervising teacher (unless the adult facilitator is a PVPA teacher).
- The quality and quantity of measurable evidence resulting from independent study is held to the same or higher expectations as other courses at PVPA.
- The PVPA supervising teacher is responsible to do a final evaluation of independent work with regard to the contract.
- When assigning credits, a PVPA administrator does an assessment of the expected workload (1 credit = 16 hours minimum). Generally, courses are not eligible for more than 5 credits per semester (a full-block course).
- Regular reports are entered into the school's database, on the same schedule as regular PVPA courses (mid-semester, final grade, etc.). The student is responsible to ensure this written feedback is provided to the PVPA supervisor by set deadlines.

### Additional Guidelines for Independent Study in World Language

- Students enrolled in and/or auditing a course at an accredited institution must use the Off-site Course Contract

- Students who are studying in a tutoring situation must be working with a certified instructor of the language who provides documentation of course content and methodology.
- Students must arrange for the study of two consecutive years of the same language.
- All language learning must include written, oral and auditory components.

### **Paideia Independent Study**

Paideia Independent study is an option for students in good academic standing in grades 11-12. Students who receive a Late Notice in any class during the fall semester are NOT eligible (this requirement may be waived by administration due to extenuating circumstances). Paideia independent study projects must be prearranged and approved by the Paideia Independent Study Review Board that includes the Director of Arts and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

**To apply, use the Paideia Independent Study Application form, which will be shared with all students in grades 11 and 12 on or around November 1. Completed forms are due no later than November 15 each year for consideration. Students who are not approved will participate in the general Paideia registration process in December.**

All independent study projects occur off-site. It is not possible to supervise students at PVPA when they are doing independent projects. As with all independent study projects, Paideia independent study goals outline new learning for the student. Paideia independent study projects must be taught and/or advised by a Project Supervisor who is a qualified adult facilitator, and MAY NOT be a family member. If this person has not had a prior connection with the school in this capacity, we may conduct a telephone interview or request a resume to assess qualifications. The Project Supervisor must complete regular check-ins with the student during Paideia. If a student is planning on traveling outside of western MA, there must be documentation that an independent organization is facilitating the program (i.e., it is not a family trip).

To earn credit, students must produce an “end-product,” and share it with PVPA community members as appropriate. This could be a performance, artwork, portfolio, journal, photo album, slide show, presentation, or anything else that makes sense for your project. In addition, students submit a 1-2 page, typed personal reflection about the project as part of the evaluation, and the Project Supervisor completes a final narrative evaluation and recommends credit for the independent study work. The student is responsible to arrange for this written feedback. These three requirements are due no later than February 1 to Alyson Miller, Director of Curriculum and Instruction in order to earn credit.

## **MINIMUM CREDIT ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS**

(Revised fall 2020) High school students who are on track to meet their graduation requirements are required to be enrolled in at least 30 credits per semester with the following exceptions:

- Student has more than two blocks of supported study (e.g., Academic Support, Math Support, Study Skills, Homework Support). Self-directed study blocks are not considered “supported study.”
- Student has at least one block of supported study AND must have early dismissal for a paid work position or recurring medical appointment.
- Spring semester seniors who are on track to graduate must enroll in at least 25 credits

Course credits each semester may include PVPA courses, independent study credits, Virtual High School credits, and/or off-site course credits. Students must be enrolled in three (3) courses on-site at PVPA. Any exceptions to these requirements are subject to administrative approval. Regardless of the source, students who do not have documentation of enrollment in at least 15 credits per semester must be withdrawn from PVPA.

## **OFF-SITE COURSES, DUAL ENROLLMENT (COLLEGE/HIGH SCHOOL)**

Students who wish to study a subject that is not regularly offered at PVPA—or take a course similar to one offered at PVPA when it does not fit within a student’s schedule—may choose to pursue an alternate option. Any off-site coursework requires a documentation and approval process. Required forms are linked below, and must be finalized with signatures no later than the first week of each semester. Other due dates apply.



### **Off-site Courses (e.g., College Courses, Dual Enrollment, Accredited High School Courses)**

Students may elect to take online or in-person courses through accredited educational institutions. Use the [Off-Site Course Contract](#) to document courses no later than the first week of a semester. Course descriptions and/or syllabi are required to ensure courses meet PVPA requirements.

Off-site Course Guidelines:

- The course must fit into one of the existing PVPA academics or arts departments (ELA, History/Social Science, Mathematics, Science, World Language, Dance, Music, Theater, Visual Arts/Technical Theater)
- Students may not miss PVPA class time or change full-year courses mid-way through the year to accommodate off-site courses. Students participating in off-site courses are allowed to leave the school for their classes and return afterwards in amendment of the attendance policies.
- A standard one-semester college-level course generally translates into 10 PVPA credits. A standard one-semester high school-level course generally translates into 5 PVPA credits.
- Course grades appear on PVPA transcripts as indicated on transcripts/grade reports (e.g., "B+"), do not follow the PVPA grading system, and are not averaged into the student's Grade Point Average.

### **VHS Collaborative Online Courses**

PVPA awards credit for completion of online academic classes through the Virtual High School Collaborative (arts classes are not eligible). VHS courses follow a set academic calendar, but students can complete their work online at any time, day or night, as long as they meet their VHS teachers' specified due dates.

Before enrolling in a VHS course, students should consider whether the online VHS format is appropriate for them. Interested students should discuss this option with their school counselor. Students who are successful in VHS courses typically have the following skills and attributes:

- Ability to meet firm deadlines
- Designate time at least five days per week to complete VHS coursework
- Strong organization skills
- High motivation and ability to complete school work independently

Students who would like to enroll in a VHS course at their own expense and receive PVPA credit may register for the course through the [VHS website](#), and then complete the Off-site Course Contract (see above) no later than June 1 (for fall courses) or December 1 (for spring courses).

Any student may elect to pay the fee to enroll in a VHS course. PVPA will pay the VHS fee ONLY if the student enrolls in a VHS course that is beyond the scope and sequence of courses available at PVPA (e.g., AP course, higher-level sequential math course), and/or if the student is a senior with an unresolvable scheduling conflict that prevents taking a required course at PVPA.

Students who meet criteria for taking a PVPA-funded VHS course must—by June 1 (for the following fall) or December 1 (for the following spring)—meet with their school counselor to discuss how the VHS course fits with their learning preferences, high school and post-secondary plans, and progress toward graduation. During the meeting, the student and school counselor fill out the PVPA Off-site Course form, which the school counselor submits to the Director of Arts and Academics for approval and VHS course registration. Registration is confirmed via email with the student, parent/guardian, and school counselor.

## **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Students' schedules for each school year (fall, spring, and full-year courses) are available at the start of school, and are based on requests from the prior spring for returning students. Limited schedule changes may occur during approximately the first week of the school year by signing up for a meeting with a school counselor. Detailed procedures are available at the start of school.

Changes to student schedules in all grades occur ONLY for the following reasons:

- Administrator recommendation (e.g., for IEP or 504 plan)
- Problems related to requirements (e.g., no PE, no ELA class). Priority to students in grades closest to graduation/promotion.
- Students in grades 9 through 12 wishing to adjust their schedules to reflect post-PVPA plans, or to meet post-secondary admissions requirements
- Adding a Teaching Assistantship approved by the teacher (form required)
- Adding an approved Independent Study or Off-Site Course (forms required)
- New audition results

## TRANSCRIPT REQUEST

Please complete this online [Transcript Request](#) for each official transcript you need at least one week before the transcript is needed. A Transcript Request is not necessary for colleges that use the Common Application. For more questions, please contact our Student Information Systems Data Manager, at [transcript\\_request@pvpa.org](mailto:transcript_request@pvpa.org).

## TRANSFERRING CREDITS

Course credits earned at other schools prior to enrollment at PVPA may be eligible for transfer. In most cases, standard high school level academic courses meet PVPA graduation requirements. Decisions are made by PVPA administrators, and are based on course syllabi and curricula. Courses taken prior to 9th grade do not meet PVPA graduation requirements, except for world language courses taken in 8th grade that cover material that matches PVPA course content. Arts credits are not transferable. PVPA waives the arts requirement proportionately for semesters not enrolled at PVPA (10 credits per semester). Physical Education credits from other schools can be applied toward PVPA requirements.

If a student was home-schooled prior to attending PVPA, families are required to submit documentation from their sending district that demonstrates the student's grade level readiness for their accepted grade.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM PVPA

If a student plans to withdraw from PVPA, the student's parent/guardian must notify our Student Information Systems Data Manager, at [withdrawal@pvpa.org](mailto:withdrawal@pvpa.org), or by calling the main office. A withdrawal form signed by the parent/guardian is required to release student records. Records, including general records, health records, and special education records, if applicable, are then made available to parents for pick-up in the main office.

# CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, REQUIREMENTS

## ACADEMICS AND ARTS COURSES

PVPA departments include: English Language Arts, Dance, History/Social Studies, Mathematics, Music, Science and Technology, Theater, Visual Arts and Technical Theater, and World Languages. Course curricula in each department are based on the [Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks](#) (which are based on the Common Core State Standards), or the [National Core Arts Standards](#).

Most classes are grouped heterogeneously (mixed levels), and teachers individualize instruction to the extent possible for students at all levels within each class. Students in any high school course may also elect to earn Honors Credit by contracting early in the semester/year with the teacher to complete additional assignments (see "Honors Credit" for



more information). Some performing arts classes require an audition.

## CURRICULUM MAPS

A Curriculum Map for each current PVPA course will be available on the school website on October 1 each year. Curriculum Maps list PVPA course objectives and their relationship to state and local standards, and provides an overview of course content and learning activities, associated course objectives, and primary assessments. These are intended to provide a basic overview. More detailed information is available from teachers.

## COURSE REPORTS: PROGRESS AND FINAL

Reports are shared with parents/guardians on a regular schedule throughout the school year to communicate student achievement and/or to indicate areas of concern. In addition, teachers are expected to communicate concerns individually to parents/guardians and students when concerns arise (e.g., a pattern of missing assignments). Parents/guardians and students are also strongly encouraged to reach out to teachers at any time to discuss student progress. The PARENT PORTAL is the most effective way to track students' progress throughout the year.

Progress reports only include information about standards that have been addressed to date, and for which assignments and classwork have provided opportunities for a body of student work that can act as direct evidence of the student's progress. For ongoing course objectives (e.g., those that are active throughout a yearlong course), teachers indicate progress that corresponds to what the teacher expects at that point in the year, even if additional progress toward the course objective is expected later.

### Reporting Schedule

Date (estimate)	Code	Report	Students
Late October	M1	Mid-Semester Progress Reports	All students
Early December	L1	Fall Late Notices	ONLY students not currently on track to earn credit
Mid January	S1	Final Grade Reports (fall semester courses) and Mid-Year Progress Report (full-year courses)	All students
Late March	M2	Mid-Semester Progress Reports	All students
Mid May	L2	Spring Late Notices	ONLY students not currently on track to earn credit
Mid June	S2	Final Grade Reports	Seniors
Late June	S2	Final Grade Reports	All students in grades 7-11

## DISTRICT CURRICULUM ACCOMMODATION PLAN (DCAP)

Each school district is required to have on record a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 38P). PVPA's DCAP is represented in the "[Restorative Approach to Developing Habits of Work and Learning](#)" document.

**PVPA teachers are expected to provide the following supports in all classes for all students:**

- Explicitly teach and regularly review the three school-wide HoWLs:
  - **PREPARATION:** I am prepared for class and arrive on time with organized materials and any needed attire.

- **PARTICIPATION:** I participate in my learning by engaging actively, contributing productively, and collaborating respectfully and safely.
  - **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY:** I manage my school work by monitoring my assignment completion, meeting deadlines for assigned work and revisions, and/or successfully navigating the extension process if necessary.
- Post and verbally review the class period agenda each day, and ensure it is accessible to all students. Include all lesson components, including routines like homework review.
  - Post written instructions for all assignments and corresponding due dates in class as well as online (e.g., PowerSchool Portal, class website, Google classroom, etc.), verbally review them with students, and provide routine class time each period for students to record assignments.
  - Provide criteria for success—such as a checklist or rubric—for all assessments.
  - Provide written feedback on student work that identifies areas of success as well as of needed improvement related to learning objectives.
  - Provide study materials that support students’ preparation for all major assessments.
  - “Chunk” projects and multi-step assignments into manageable steps, each with clear, written due dates and criteria for success. Each step may be assessed separately.
  - Allow students to propose reasonable due date extensions with minimum one-day notice (i.e., not on the due date), and if the extension is granted, clearly identify new due dates in writing. Short-term extensions of one or two days are strongly suggested.
  - When appropriate, provide students opportunities for revisions, re-takes, or alternate assessments for assignments that are completed in a timely fashion. Identify due dates for revisions/reassessments in writing. No more than a two-week window from receipt of feedback is strongly suggested.
  - Maintain accurate and up-to-date records of student work and progress in the PowerSchool Portal that may be easily accessed by students, their parents/guardians, and support staff.

## EARLY GRADUATION

Students applying for early graduation must do so no later than September 15 of their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year. Applicants must meet all PVPA graduation requirements, and are only applying for permission to meet those requirements in a three-year time period. Applicants are required to submit a written proposal to the Executive Director, which must be accompanied by support letters from two academic teachers, one arts teacher, and one school counselor. These letters should indicate that the student is being recommended for an early graduation and should specifically comment on the student’s ability to complete all the material in the three-year time period. Students under 18 years of age must accompany their application with expressed written permission from a custodial parent/guardian. Finally, the student must schedule a meeting to make an oral defense of the application. Please see a school counselor for more information.

## GRADING SYSTEM OVERVIEW

PVPA uses a standards-based grading and assessment system in which student learning is measured using evidence related to set Course Objectives (sometimes called “learning targets”) that indicate what students know and are able to do by the end of the course. Students are required to show evidence of skills and understanding related to each and every course objective to earn credit. Teachers indicate achievement levels for each objective on progress reports and final grade reports. A final grade point synthesizes student proficiency across all objectives in a course.

**Student proficiency with each course objective is reported on using the following system:**

Exemplary	Student provided a body of evidence, which went beyond expectations for accomplishing the objective
Accomplished	Student provided a body of evidence, which met the objective
Developing	Student provided a body of evidence, which is approaching the objective
Beginning	Student provided some evidence related to the objective
Missing Evidence	Student did not provide enough evidence related to the objective

### **Grades and Credit**

In order to earn credit, student evidence must be “developing,” “accomplished,” or “exemplary” on each and every course objective. Reports are based on a wide variety of evidence provided by each student, and involve teacher professional judgment. There is no overarching mathematical formula such as averaging that determines a student’s grade. Later evidence is often weighted more heavily within each objective. Grade points are designed to match the commonly used Grade Point Average (GPA) system for easy translation to schools and institutions outside of PVPA. They synthesize student proficiency across all objectives based on relative importance using the following system:

GRADE	DESCRIPTION
4.0	Student provided “exemplary” evidence on many or all objectives
3.6	Student provided a mix of mostly “exemplary” and “accomplished” evidence on many or all objectives
3.2	Student provided “accomplished” evidence on many or all objectives
2.8	Student provided a mix of mostly “accomplished” and “developing” evidence on many or all objectives
2.4	Student provided “developing” evidence on many or all objectives
PASS	Student earned credit for a course graded on a credit/no credit basis
INCOMPLETE	Student has an agreed-upon extension to provide additional evidence related to course objectives
AUDIT	Student participated in the course on a not-for-credit basis
WITHDRAW	Student chose to drop the course prior to the withdrawal deadline (appears on transcript)
ATTEMPTED	Student provided “beginning” evidence or was missing evidence on some objectives and did not earn credit in the course (appears on transcript)
HONORS	Graduates of the class of 2020 and beyond may receive a grade of 3.2H, 3.6H, or 4.0H. The “H” designates Honors. The 3.2, 3.6, and 4.0 designate the student’s grade for the course separate from the honors work.

### **Honors Credit**

Students at PVPA earn Honors credit in 9-12 Arts and Academics courses when they have successfully completed an honors project and engaged in at least 20 hours of independent honors-level learning during a semester or 40 hours of

independent honors-level learning during a year. Students are expected to earn a course grade of 3.2 or above in order to also earn Honors credit. PVPA offers some 11/12 courses that are designated as Honors in the course title. College admissions personnel automatically scale the grades from these courses, so there is no “H” designation on the student’s grade. (See Honors Credit below for more detailed information.)

**Habits of Work and Learning (HoWLs)**

In addition to content-based course objectives, teachers also report on the same three Habits of Work and Learning (HoWLs) for each course to articulate school-wide expectations for all students. HoWLs are not used to determine a student’s final course grade (e.g., 3.2, 4.0, P, ATT), but are used to determine a variety of needed supports so that students can succeed in learning.

PREPARATION: I am prepared for class and arrive on time with organized materials and any needed attire.

This means:

- Student arrives to class on time.
- Student has organized materials for class each day, and follows start-of-class routines.

PARTICIPATION: I participate in my learning by engaging actively, contributing productively, and collaborating respectfully and safely. This means:

- Student focuses on learning/classwork and does not disrupt others’ learning.
- Student practices active collaboration and engages in positive communication with classmates to further everyone’s learning.
- Student remains present in class throughout the period (with occasional short breaks, as needed, or pre-arranged breaks as determined with school administrators).
- Student requests teacher permission before accessing electronics during class time.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY: I manage my school work by monitoring my assignment completion, meeting deadlines for assigned work and revisions, and/or successfully navigating the extension process if necessary. This means:

- Student plans ahead with any large assignment/projects to manage time so that work/practice is not put off until the last minute.
- Student plans ahead to ensure that all due dates/work for performances are prepared on time. Students request extensions in writing in advance of the due date (more than one day before an assignment is due).
- Student communicates with teachers regarding overdue work and revisions, including checking in when deadlines are missed or clarification is needed about expectations.
- Student utilizes available resources to support their success (e.g.,online resources, teacher materials, librarian Homework Support teachers, etc.)

HoWLs are reported on using the following system:

Always	Usually	Occasionally	Rarely/Never
Student consistently demonstrates this HoWL every day.	Student demonstrates this HoWL most of the time/almost always.	Student struggles with this HoWL on occasion or needs extra reminders to improve this habit from time to time.	Student does not demonstrate this HoWL consistently and needs frequent reminders and additional support to succeed in this habit.

## ENGLISH LEARNER EDUCATION

### Mission

The Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School seeks to ensure all of our English learners (ELs) and former English learners (FELs) are provided the opportunity to participate meaningfully in our general education program, which is focused on intensive exposure to the performing arts within the context of an excellent college preparatory curriculum. We accomplish this by providing access to the same academic and arts courses as all other students in inclusive settings. Through this participation, ELs will develop social and academic English proficiency, and develop habits of work and learning that promote lifelong learning.

### Vision

PVPA's vision for ELs mirrors that for all students and community members. We seek to rediscover the synergies between creativity and critical thinking—between rhyme and reason, expression and inquiry, passion and knowledge—synergies that inspire our students to feel excitement, curiosity, engagement, self-confidence, and a true love of learning. This process of discovery manifests in celebration and affirmation of the cultural and linguistic diversity of our community, and by recognizing the unique perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds of our English learners and their families.

### Goals

PVPA's goals for its English learner education program include:

- All incoming students who speak a language other than English at home are enrolled, if applicable, in core academic courses that are taught by SEI-endorsed teachers, and provided ESL instruction as needed. Student needs are based on results from WIDA screener assessments in listening, speaking, reading and writing that are administered within 30 days of enrollment.
- Each EL student continually improves English language proficiency, which is assessed yearly through the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 test. Student proficiency growth is measured by comparing overall and domain scores year-to-year, and through data tracked by DESE.
- All EL students have equal access to all district programs and intervention services. These include the full complement of arts and academic courses, Special Education services, Title I services, math, reading, and writing support classes, access to advanced courses, etc. ELs' access is ensured through the course request and scheduling process overseen by the Director of Arts and Academics and managed by school counselors.
- All EL and FEL students' master the content in core academic classes, and make academic progress as evidenced by course grades and MCAS scores
- All PVPA parents/guardians identified as having language needs have meaningful and timely access to information about all of PVPA's programs, services, and activities, and EL students' families feel connected to the school community, as evidenced by results from a yearly survey.
- The cultural and linguistic diversity of the PVPA community is intentionally affirmed and celebrated through culturally-responsive curriculum and instruction, community events (e.g., Unity Day), and arts performances.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

PVPA graduation requirements are aligned with the state's [MassCore framework](#) for college and career readiness. All students are required to meet the graduation requirements outlined below, plus meet state competency determinations (i.e., MCAS requirements) to earn a diploma from PVPA. Please contact a school counselor if you have any questions.

At PVPA, a one-semester course counts as 5 credits, and a full-year course counts as 10 credits. Independent study and off-site course options are also available. Please consult the PVPA Community Handbook and your school counselor prior to the start of each semester.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (40 credits)	Four-year requirement typically includes 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> grade ELA and four one-semester ELA electives in grades 11 and 12.
HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES (30 credits)	Three-year requirement typically includes 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> grade United States history, and history/social studies electives in grades 11 and 12. Two semesters total of U.S. history or American studies are required.
MATHEMATICS (40 credits)	Four-year requirement typically includes Algebra, Geometry, and Algebra 2. Students interested in accelerating by taking two classes in one year or placing out of a class should speak with the Math department leader and a school counselor. Credit is not earned for skipped levels.
SCIENCE (30 credits laboratory science)	Three-year requirement must include Biology AND either Chemistry OR Physics.
WORLD LANGUAGE (20 credits)	Two-year requirement must include courses in the same language. Independent study options taught by approved providers are acceptable for languages outside of those offered at PVPA.
ARTS (80 credits, including 30 credits in chosen area of CONCENTRATION)	See "Arts Concentrations" (below) for details. Non-typical pathways may be designed by speaking with the Director of Arts and Academics.
PAIDEIA (each year)	Four-year requirement may include two half-day Paideia courses, or one full-day Paideia course each year.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION (10 credits)	<b>REVISED BEGINNING IN THE 2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR</b> Two-semester requirement may include dance or PE courses at PVPA, and/or full participation on a PVPA athletics team (one season = one semester).
ARTS INTERNSHIP (1 x 16 hours)	One project outside of school.
COMMUNITY SERVICE (1 x 16 hours)	One project outside of school.
SCHOOL SERVICE (1 x 16 hours)	One project in school.
INTERNSHIP/SERVICE (1 x 16 hours)	One additional project of the student's choice (see above).
COURSES TAKEN IN GRADE 8	World Language courses taken at PVPA in grade 8 are eligible for high school graduation credit. No other courses are eligible.

### **Arts Concentrations**

Central to the mission of PVPA is exposure to an intensive arts education. The high school arts concentration requirement offers students the opportunity to choose a specific arts discipline on which to focus, while still providing plenty of flexibility to experience a range of arts disciplines. Students are required to focus their study in one discipline by taking six courses in the concentration, including three in specific categories. Students should confirm their arts concentration with their school counselor by the end of 10th grade. The arts concentration requirement is waived for students who enter PVPA in 11th grade.

In order to fulfill the arts concentration requirements, students are required to take at least one course within each sub-category of their chosen concentration as listed below, as well as additional elective courses in the concentration

area. The course catalog contains relevant information each year about specific courses, and school counselors also have up-to-date information.

Dance	Creative	Performance	History/Connections	3 Electives
Music	Theory/ Technology	Performance	Culture/Technique	3 Electives
Theater	Creative	Performance	Critique	3 Electives
Visual Arts & Technical Theater	Design	Costuming x2 OR Scenic x2 OR Lighting x2		3 Electives
Musical Theater	Vocal Music	Dance	History/Connections	1 Theater Elective + 2 Electives
Film	Design	Production	Critique	3 Electives

Students interested in designing an alternative interdisciplinary arts concentration should contact the Director of Arts and Academics, Laura Davis, at [ldavis@pvpa.org](mailto:ldavis@pvpa.org). See Appendix A for a list of arts courses related to concentrations.

### Typical High School Course Pathways

Department	9 <sup>th</sup> grade	10 <sup>th</sup> grade	11 <sup>th</sup> grade	12 <sup>th</sup> grade
<b>English Language Arts (ELA)</b>	ELA 9 (all 9 <sup>th</sup> graders take this)	ELA 10 (all 10 <sup>th</sup> graders take this)	2 semesters ELA humanities electives	2 semesters ELA humanities electives
<b>History/Social Science (SS)</b>	U.S. History 1 (fall) & 2 (spring)	U.S. History 3 (fall) & 4 (spring)	1 or 2 semesters History/SS electives	1 or 2 semesters History/SS electives
<b>Mathematics</b>	Algebra 1	Geometry (Students may elect to take Geometry and Algebra 2 concurrently to accelerate in math)	Algebra 2	Applied Math OR Pre-Calculus
<b>Accelerated Math (8<sup>th</sup> gr. Algebra 1)</b>	<i>Geometry</i>	<i>Algebra 2</i>	<i>Pre-Calculus</i>	<i>Calculus</i>
<b>Science</b>	Environmental Science (all 9 <sup>th</sup> graders enrolled)	Biology (all 10 <sup>th</sup> graders enrolled)	Science Electives (Chemistry OR Physics required - may be taken in any order, but <u>prior</u> credit in Algebra 2 required for Physics)	Science Electives (Chemistry OR Physics required - may be taken in any order, but <u>prior</u> credit in Algebra 2 required for Physics)
<b>World Language (Level 1 option in 8<sup>th</sup>)</b>	Level 1, 2, or 3 as appropriate	Level 1, 2, or 3 as appropriate	Level 1, 2, 3, or Intensive as appropriate	Level 2, 3, or Intensive as appropriate
<b>Arts</b>	2 courses/semester (consider concentration)	2 courses/semester (consider concentration)	2 courses/semester (consider concentration)	2 courses/semester (consider concentration)
<b>Paideia</b>	4 credits	4 credits	4 credits	4 credits
<b>Physical Education</b>	One course	One course	One course	One course
<b>Internship/Service</b>	16-hour project requires paperwork	16-hour project requires paperwork	16-hour project requires paperwork	16-hour project requires paperwork

## **GRADE RETENTION**

We hope to avoid full grade retention, and this option is primarily considered for current eighth and ninth graders. A retention conversation is warranted if a student is not on track to earn credit in three or more yearlong core academic courses at the Late Notice point in the spring semester (note: 8th grade Humanities encompasses two academic classes - ELA and history/SS). Retention conversations are facilitated by the Director of Arts and Academics, and typically include classroom teachers, the school counselor, other administrators, and support faculty/staff. This group discusses the student's academic progress and achievement to date, behavior, social and emotional skills, and potential effects of retention (sometimes using elements from Light's Retention Scale as a guide). Parents/guardians are informed about the potential for grade retention, preferably in person, after spring Late Notice reports are released.

### **Timeline**

- Late May - The Director of Arts and Academics identifies students not on track to earn credit in three or more core academic courses, informs parents/guardians of concerns in writing, and arranges in-person meeting (if possible) to discuss them, preferably with teachers and the student present. The meeting includes discussion of strategies to support the student at school and at home during the final weeks of school.
- Late June - The Director of Arts and Academics identifies students who are likely not to earn credit—based on teacher input—in three or more core academic courses, and informs parents/guardians that administrators and faculty members will be meeting to discuss potential grade retention.
- End of June - The Director of Arts and Academics informs parents/guardians about retention decisions, and next steps for the following school year.

## **HONORS CREDIT POLICY**

PVPA's honors policy changed in June 2016. The revised policy strengthens students' experiences in accessing honors opportunities as they move from class to class and from grade to grade. It allows for a clearer indication of an honors grade and offers honors-level learning opportunities to more students.

Students at PVPA earn Honors credit in 9-12 Arts and Academic classes when they have successfully completed an honors project and engaged in at least 20 hours of independent honors-level learning during a semester, or 40 hours of independent honors-level learning during a year.

### **Eligibility**

Students are expected to earn a course grade of 3.2 or above in order to also earn Honors credit. A grade of 3.2 or above indicates that a student provided "accomplished" evidence on many or all objectives, per PVPA's grading policy.

### **Criteria for Honors Work**

- The body of work shows evidence of a higher caliber of learning such as:
  - broad, deep and complex learning,
  - critical perspectives and theoretical lenses,
  - sophisticated application of prior knowledge,
  - independent research,
  - creative design and/or art making,
  - use of advanced art techniques,
  - analysis and synthesis of complex ideas,
  - extended thinking which requires an investigation,
  - emphasis of quality versus quantity, and
  - any Honors level criteria as specified by each department.



- The body of work is created by self-directed, self-motivated, student-initiated learning experiences (e.g., not enrollment in outside paid programming) that occur throughout the course. The work may result in a written work, performance, showcase, or portfolio. The work may involve the use of advanced level materials (e.g., higher grade-level, college-level, or professional-level resources).
- The Honors work is EITHER based on deeper extended learning linked to Course Objectives OR new in-depth learning related to the course content.

### **Honors Grading**

Students who earn Honors credit may receive a grade of 3.2H, 3.6H, or 4.0H. The “H” designates Honors. The 3.2, 3.6, and 4.0 designate the student’s grade for the course separate from the honors work. Courses with “Honors” in the title are designed to meet honors criteria, and are NOT graded using the “H” designation.

### **Implication for Transcripts**

College admissions offices translate the “H” designation based on PVPA’s School Profile. Many colleges will calculate an additional .5 “bump” in a final grade for that course.

## **INCOMPLETES**

In the event a student does not complete course requirements by the last day of a course, a teacher may decide to designate the final grade as “Incomplete.” The teacher is required to outline all required work/evidence in the final report and/or in a separate written contract. The student is responsible to complete these requirements and submit them to the teacher by set deadlines. Upon completion and satisfactory assessment, the teacher will officially change the final grade for the course. If a student does not complete the work by the deadline, the final grade may be changed to “Attempted” unless other arrangements are made with the Director of Arts and Academics. **Due to state reporting requirements, all fall semester course incompletes must be resolved by February 1. All spring semester and full-year course incompletes must be resolved by July 10.**

## **INTERNSHIP AND SERVICE REQUIREMENTS (HIGH SCHOOL)**

All students attending PVPA from grades 9 through 12 are expected to complete four projects with a minimum of 16 hours per activity. Students should make every effort to fulfill all 16 hours of each project at the same site or activity. Students attending PVPA for fewer than four years may speak to their school counselor for modifications to this requirement. Students must complete the [Internship & Service Credit Record](#) for each requirement, and submit it to their school counselor no later than June 1 each year.

ALL students who attend PVPA for four years are required to complete (in no particular order):

- One (1) on- or off-site ARTS INTERNSHIP with a minimum of 16 hours working with an arts professional or organization.
- One (1) PVPA SCHOOL SERVICE PROJECT with a minimum of 16 unpaid hours. This may be in the form of providing support in school productions (e.g., tech, props, pit band, etc.), recycling assistance, tutoring, teaching assistantships, working as school lunch server, or helping in the main office. Course credit requirements cannot be used for school service credit.
- One (1) off-site COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT with a minimum of 16 unpaid hours. A list of suggested community service organizations is available from school counselors.
- One (1) additional ARTS INTERNSHIP, PVPA SCHOOL SERVICE PROJECT, or COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT.

## **LIBRARY**

The mission of the PVPA library is to help students become productive citizens and participants in a rapidly changing global society. We can do this through:

- Maintaining a facility that is conducive to both formal and informal learning.

- Developing a diverse collection of materials in various media that support the curricular and personal needs of students, faculty, and staff.
- Developing users who are information- and technology-literate, who are effective users of information, who are independent learners and critical thinkers, and who exhibit social responsibility.
- Fostering a life-long love of reading. The PVPA library offers students space and resources to work independently and collaboratively on academic and personal learning.

Computers in the library give students the ability to conduct online research and access the full array Google Programs such as Classroom, Documents, and Slides. A variety of content-specific databases available through the school website allows twenty-four hour access to scholarly articles. The print collection is constantly evolving to provide reliable research materials and high-interest fiction. Additionally, students can request and checkout books through interlibrary loan (ILL), giving them access to a wide range of print and visual materials.

The library is open from 8:30a to 4:00p Monday through Thursdays and 8:30a to 3:00p Fridays. Students may check out books and other media for three weeks. Overdue books do not accumulate fines, but a student may not check out additional materials if they have overdue items. Students must pay to replace lost or damaged items.

## **MASSACHUSETTS COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (MCAS)**

PVPA is a public school and is required to follow all state regulations and procedures regarding standardized testing. We believe that there are many important ways to assess student learning and achievement in addition to the MCAS tests. Students are expected to be in attendance at school on testing days, and the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) holds all public schools accountable to ensure high participation rates.

MCAS test dates are published each year on the school's website to allow families to plan ahead. DESE provides extensive, up-to-date information about MCAS and related topics on their website [HERE](#). Also see their parent/guardian information page [HERE](#), and detailed information about graduation requirements [HERE](#).

To graduate from high school:

- Students in the graduating classes of 2021 and 2022 must satisfy one of the following two conditions in both English language arts and mathematics to earn a "competency determination":
  - Meet or exceed the scaled score threshold on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests administered in 2019 or later that has been determined by the Commissioner to be comparable to the scaled score threshold of 240 on the grade 10 MCAS tests administered before 2019
  - Meet or exceed the scaled score threshold on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests administered in 2019 or later that has been determined by the Commissioner to be comparable to the scaled score threshold of 220 on the grade 10 MCAS tests administered before 2019 and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan
- Students in the graduating classes of 2010 through 2022 shall meet or exceed the Needs Improvement threshold scaled score of 220 on a discipline-specific high school Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS test (PVPA students typically take the Biology MCAS exam)
- These requirements may be adjusted by DESE based on constraints posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Absence on Testing Days**

If a student is absent on the scheduled day of testing, make-up testing must occur during the state's testing window. If the student is not present in school during this testing window, and therefore does not take the test, the school is required to obtain medical documentation of the absence, note this reason in the student's test booklet, and keep this medical excuse document on file for three years. (There is a separate regulation 105 CMR 201.010 that pertains to students with a concussion and the fact that they may be excused from testing only if it is determined that participation would impede the student's recovery.)

### **MCAS-Related Awards**

Two scholarships are available based in part on student performance on the MCAS English Language Arts and Mathematics tests:

- [The John and Abigail Adams Scholarship](#)
- [Stanley Z. Koplik Certificate of Mastery with Distinction Award](#)

Students must take the regularly-scheduled Grade 10 MCAS tests to be eligible for these awards (i.e., not the re-tests). Students who qualify will receive award letters and further information in the fall of their senior year.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM - GRADES 7 & 8

In the PVPA middle school program, core academic classes and advisories are organized by grade. Support classes and arts classes mix seventh and eighth grade students. Students mix with older students during lunch, community activities, open mic, and potentially elective courses. All 7-8 academic and arts classes are graded on a Pass/Attempted basis (see “Grading System Overview” above). Specific teacher feedback is provided on all course objectives to communicate student learning and achievement. Teachers, administrators, and school counselors are committed to working in collaboration to support the artistic, intellectual, emotional, and social development of students. They meet regularly to discuss student performance, curriculum, assessment, instruction, and community.

Students in grades 7 and 8 typically enroll in two or three arts classes each semester, and are required to experience each of the four major arts disciplines prior to entering the ninth grade through (students who begin at PVPA in grade 8 are exempt from this requirement). Beginning in 2019-20, this requirement is accomplished through a yearlong foundational arts class called “ArtsCore” in which all seventh graders are automatically enrolled. All other arts classes are electives.

All 7-8 students are assigned to an advisory group, as well as a supported study. Advisory follows a curriculum that includes opportunities for community building, personal reflection, and future planning, as well as information and resources on how to navigate PVPA systems and resources, key principles of restorative practice, and media literacy/online awareness. Supported study includes general Homework Support, as well as Math Support or Reading Workshop for students who need to build skills in these areas. Students in grade 8 may enroll in high school level world language classes and begin earning graduation credit. See below for a sample 7-8 course pathway.

### 7/8 Promotion Requirements

HUMANITIES (2 blocks/year)	Study occurs in separate grade 7 and grade 8 formats, and includes English language arts and social studies/history. All 7-8 students must earn a final grade of “Pass.”
MATHEMATICS (1 block/year)	Study occurs in separate grade 7 and grade 8 formats. An accelerated track is available for students with demonstrated achievement from prior coursework and/or placement assessments. All 7-8 students must earn a final grade of “Pass.”
SCIENCE (1 block/year)	Study occurs in separate grade 7 and grade 8 formats. All 7-8 students must earn a final grade of “Pass.”
ELECTIVES (4 blocks/year)	Students enroll in up to six blocks of electives per year, and must earn a final grade of “Pass” in at least four of them. Students in grade 8 may enroll in one block of world language as an elective. Arts requirements (below) are included in this category.
ARTS REQUIREMENTS	All students must earn a final grade of “Pass” in at least one semester-long or Paideia course each in the four major arts disciplines (dance, music, theater, visual arts/technical theater). This requirement is waived for students who

	enroll at PVPA in the 8th grade. <b>Beginning in 2019-20, this requirement is accomplished for all seventh graders through a yearlong foundational arts class called “ArtsCore” in which they are automatically enrolled.</b>
PAIDEIA (each year)	Paideia is PVPA’s January intersession program, and all students must earn a final grade of “Pass.”
PHYSICAL EDUCATION (1 sem.)	Beginning in 2019-20, all seventh graders meet this requirement by earning a final grade of “Pass” in the full-year “ArtsCore” foundational arts course. Students in grade 8 who did not earn PE credit in 2018-19 must do so in their eighth grade year through a PVPA dance or PE course (including Paideia), or full participation on a PVPA athletics team for one season.
HIGH SCHOOL CREDITS IN GRADE 8	World language courses taken at PVPA in grade 8 are eligible for high school graduation credit. No other courses are eligible. Courses taken in grade 7 do not count toward high school graduation credits, as they are not acknowledged by Massachusetts state colleges and universities. See below for application info.

### **Sample 2-year Middle School Course Pathway**

<b>Area</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> grade</b>
English Language Arts	Humanities 7	Humanities 8
History/Social Studies	Humanities 7	Humanities 8
Mathematics	Math 7 OR Accelerated Math 7	Math 8 OR Algebra 1
Science (rotation)	Life Science OR Physical Science	Life Science OR Physical Science
ArtsCore (7th grade)	Yearlong course that includes dance, music, theater, visual arts	N/A
Electives (arts, world language)	2 courses per semester	3 courses per semester
Supported study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homework Support</li> <li>Math Support</li> <li>Reading Workshop</li> </ul>	Assignments based on student needs determined by holistic review of “MAP” benchmark test scores, prior coursework, and teacher assessment	Assignments based on student needs determined by holistic review of “MAP” benchmark test scores, prior coursework, and teacher assessment
Academic Support	Based on IEP services, if applicable	Based on IEP services, if applicable

### **WORLD LANGUAGE COURSE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR 8TH GRADERS**

Students in grade 8 may enroll in a high school world language course for high school credit **on a space-available basis**; however, they must be recommended by the World Language department leader after participating in a short interview. The interview will assess students' HoWLs (Habits of Work and Learning) in the areas of participation, preparation, and personal responsibility. The World Language department leader will also seek input from students' current academic teachers about their HoWLs.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION CREDIT**

- All students in grades 9-12 are required to earn credit in two semester-long PVPA PE courses prior to graduation. These may include dance or PE courses, one full-day or two half-day Paideia courses, and/or full participation on a PVPA athletics team (one season = one semester).

- All students in grades 7 and 8 are required to earn credit in one semester-long PVPA PE course prior to grade 9. All seventh graders meet this requirement by earning a final grade of “Pass” in the required “ArtsCore” foundational arts course, which includes a dance component.

## PAIDEIA

At PVPA “Paideia” refers to a mid-year intersession offering students in all grades opportunities for unique learning experiences. Students and teachers develop Paideia programs that facilitate personal growth and development. Students select and focus on one full-day or two half-day Paideia courses from a variety of choices that are presented in the fall. For each year that a high school student attends PVPA, successful completion of a Paideia activity is a credit requirement. This entails attendance at minimum 85% of the class meetings and successful completion of all goals and products as set by the teacher. Students in grades 7 and 8 engage in core academic classes each morning, and Paideia electives each afternoon. **Students in grades 11 and 12 - see “Independent Study” above for Paideia requirements.**

## PLACEMENT ASSESSMENTS AND ACCELERATED ACADEMIC PATHWAYS

Incoming and currently enrolled students may demonstrate required skills and knowledge to waive standard prerequisites as indicated in the course catalog.

- **WORLD LANGUAGE:** Students seeking to accelerate in world language must take a placement assessment that includes reading, writing, speaking, and listening components to determine a student’s current level of fluency.
- **MATHEMATICS:** Incoming 7th and 8th graders who believe they are ready for Algebra 1 or Geometry must take a placement assessment. (Note: High school credit in math does not begin until 9th grade.)
- **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/HISTORY:** Students are not eligible to place out of the standard 9th and 10th grade courses prior to the 11th grade.
- **SCIENCE:** Students are generally not eligible to waive prerequisites in science.
- **ARTS:** All students must participate in an audition/interview process for courses with this prerequisite

## PRODUCTION LEADERSHIP AND TECHNICAL ROLES FOR STUDENTS

Students are encouraged to support PVPA productions on- and off-site by taking on a variety of leadership positions and support roles. Stage Managers, Assistant Directors, and Choreographers may be expected to attend the course associated with the production, and earn PVPA course credits. Students in technical support positions (e.g., light board operator, stagehand, assistant stage manager, wardrobe, soundboard and projections operator, props master, etc.) are expected to participate in all technical rehearsals, performances, and strike, and may use this experience to earn school service credit, honors credit, or to help meet learning targets in a current technical theater course.

## REPEATING COURSES AFTER EARNING CREDIT

It is often appropriate for a student to take the same arts course more than once and receive credit for those courses. Teachers ensure that students demonstrate increased skill and independence over time. Students may not repeat an academic course for credit.

## TEACHING ASSISTANTS

High school students may earn school service credit as teaching assistants in an academic course for which they have already earned credit, or arts credit as teaching assistants in 7/8 arts classes. Students indicate interest in being a Teaching Assistant during the course enrollment process. Teachers may accept Teaching Assistants at their discretion. High school students may arrange to act as a teaching assistant in any high school arts course, and are enrolled in and earn credit in that course. The course teacher may treat this as an opportunity to earn honors credit.

## **TITLE I POLICIES ([en Español](#))**

PVPA is a Title I school. The following *District/School Family Engagement Policy* and *School-Family-Student Compact* are required for districts and schools that receive federal Title I funds.

### **PVPA District/School Family Engagement Policy**

PVPA commits to do the following:

- Involve families, faculty and staff, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, and other appropriate school personnel as applicable in the joint development of Title I, Title IIA, and Title IV portions of the ESSA consolidated grant application, including schoolwide program plans, and/or targeted or comprehensive support and improvement plans
- Build school capacity in implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance
- Build school capacity for effective family engagement by:
  - helping families understand state academic standards, local and state assessments, the requirements of Title I, and how to monitor their student's academic progress by working with educators;
  - providing families with materials to help improve their student's academic achievement;
  - educating all school staff on the value of family engagement and how to work with families as equal partners;
  - coordinating and integrating Title I family engagement strategies with other family engagement strategies
- Conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and families, an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the family engagement policy in improving PVPA's academic quality by identifying:
  - barriers to greater participation by families;
  - what families need to assist with students' learning, including how families engage with teachers and staff; and
  - strategies to support successful school and family interactions
- Design evidence-based strategies for more effective family engagement based on the findings of the annual evaluation
- Revise the family engagement policy, if needed, based on the annual evaluation
- Involve families in school activities

PVPA will:

- Convene at least one meeting of families of participating children annually at the fall Open House in order to inform families of the school's participation in Title I and the requirements of Title I, including family engagement requirements
- Involve families in the planning, implementation, and review of Title I programs, and describe how to do so through the weekly Friday Notes newsletter
- Provide to families of participating children:
  - Timely information about programs under Title I
  - An explanation of the curriculum and academic assessments used at the school, as well as the proficiency levels students are expected to meet based on state academic standards

- If requested by families, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any suggestions as soon as practicably possible

### **School-Family-Student Compact**

This compact outlines how PVPA staff, families, and students share responsibility for improved student academic achievement, and the means by which the school and families will work cooperatively and collaboratively to help students achieve the high standards set by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). This compact is in effect during the 2021-2022 school year.

### **Community Responsibilities**

All PVPA community members will strive to enact the values outlined in the 2021-26 Strategic Action Plan:

- **Critical and Higher Order Thinking Skills:** These include searching for and evaluating sources, holistic analysis, the ability to ask appropriate questions, the capacity to evaluate and judge, and openness to outliers of thought and minority opinions. We value rigorous thinking and approaches to learning such as the recognition of connections between one's own life and the larger society, willingness to embrace paradox and ambiguity without rushing to conclusions, and an ability to recognize multiple perspectives—all of which are foundations for students' future education.
- **Creative Thinking:** We value experimentation, risk-taking and mistake-making ("Do not fear mistakes. There are none." Miles Davis) out-of-box and interdisciplinary approaches, collaboration with co-creators, divergent as well as convergent thinking, the ability to draw from oneself material for creating and to make new and essential connections. Such skills are what many employers are seeking.
- **A Passion for Inquiry and Self-Reflection:** We value the right to question assumptions and to demonstrate knowledge in a variety of forms. This passion is modeled by the outstanding educators at PVPA—teachers who, in their fields of expertise, are enthusiastic facilitators of student learning. Passion and learning go hand-in-hand and are compatible with rigorous standards and expectations of students.
- **A Loving Community:** Students, faculty, families, administrators, board, people from various social classes, ethnicities, life experiences, and with a variety of learning styles are respected. We value all voices being heard when important decisions are made and expect community members to support the school's mission and values. PVPA aspires to be a safe environment for students and encourages them to develop their own ideas and opinions.
- **The Concept of School as One Part of a Larger Learning Community:** We believe that education goes on all the time and everywhere. We value our essential connections with the broader community and with artists in various disciplines. PVPA is committed to being part of a community of artistic organizations, where our approaches to education are shared, where our students present arts performances, where we both receive and give. We seek to enhance our visibility in the communities where our students reside and in other public schools.

### **School Responsibilities**

PVPA administrators, staff, and faculty will support student learning and achievement by:

1. Providing high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating students to meet the state's student academic achievement standards as follows:
  - a. Offer courses in the areas of English Language Arts, Dance, History/Social Studies, Mathematics, Music, Science and Technology, Theater, Visual Arts and Technical Theater, and World Languages with curricula based on the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks and National Core Arts Standards
  - b. Individualize instruction to the extent possible for students at all levels
  - c. Support students' Habits of Work and Learning (HoWLs), especially the school-wide focus HoWLs of preparation, participation, and personal responsibility

- d. Deliver academic supports through:
  - i. Tier 2 Math Support classes (7-10) and Reading Workshop classes (7-8)
  - ii. Generalized support for assignment completion and organization in Homework Support and Study Skills classes
  - iii. In-class support teachers and/or co-teachers
  - iv. Specialized instruction for students with IEPs in Academic Support classes and/or other settings
2. Communicating about PVPA's participation in Title I and its requirements by:
  - a. Convening a meeting annually at the fall Open House to discuss these topics
  - b. Providing opportunities to discuss this compact available twice per year at parent/guardian-teacher conferences (typically November and April) as it relates to individual student achievement
3. Communicating student progress and achievement by:
  - a. Providing reports on all students' progress in all courses at fall mid-semester, mid-year, and spring mid-semester
  - b. Providing Late Notice reports between mid-semester and end-of-semester for students who are not yet on track to earn credit in a course
  - c. Providing final reports on all students' achievement at the end of each course
  - d. Expecting teachers to communicate concerns individually to students and parents/guardians as they arise
4. Providing families meaningful access to administrators, staff, and faculty members via email, telephone, and in-person meetings by appointment
5. Providing families opportunities to volunteer and participate in school programs such as productions, field trips, and classroom events/activities with prior arrangement

#### Family Responsibilities

Parents, guardians, and other caregivers will support their students' learning and achievement by:

1. Monitoring and ensuring school attendance
2. Monitoring academic and arts progress through the PowerSchool Portal
3. Engaging in two-way communication with faculty and staff members about student progress
4. Participating in decisions relating to their students' education
5. Serving, to the extent possible, on advisory or policy groups such as the PVPA Board of Trustees and/or Board committees or task forces

#### Student Responsibilities

Students will support their own learning and achievement by:

- Practicing Habits of Work and Learning (HoWLs) that include:
  - PREPARATION (being prepared for class and arriving on time with organized materials and any needed attire)
  - PARTICIPATION (participating in learning by engaging actively, contributing productively, and collaborating respectfully and safely)



- PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (managing school work by monitoring assignment completion, meeting deadlines for assigned work and revisions, and/or successfully navigating the extension process if necessary)
- Putting effort into assignments, and actively preparing for all assessments
- Communicating with teachers and other school staff members by clarifying expectations, asking questions, and self-advocating
- Contributing positively to a safe and supportive school environment by following the PVPA Code of Conduct

## **WORK COMPLETION, DEADLINES, AND EXTENSIONS**

The ability to complete work in a timely manner, to plan ahead when additional time is necessary, and to advocate for one's needs are essential skills for students to develop. PVPA teachers encourage—and at times require—students to revise their work toward higher levels of achievement based on PVPA's standards-based grading system.

**PVPA students are expected to support their own learning and achievement by:**

- Practicing the three school-wide Habits of Work and Learning (HoWLs): preparation, participation, and personal responsibility (see “HoWLs” above)
- Putting effort into assignments, and actively preparing for all assessments
- Communicating with teachers and other school staff members by clarifying expectations, asking questions, and self-advocating
- Contributing positively to a safe and supportive school environment by following the PVPA Code of Conduct

**PVPA teachers are expected to provide the following supports in all classes for all students:**

- Explicitly teach and regularly review the three school-wide HoWLs (see “HoWLs” above)
- Post and verbally review the class period agenda each day, and ensure it is accessible to all students. Include all lesson components, including routines like homework review.
- Post written instructions for all assignments and corresponding due dates in class as well as online (e.g., PowerSchool Portal, class website, Google classroom, etc.), verbally review them with students, and provide routine class time each period for students to record assignments.
- Provide criteria for success—such as a checklist or rubric—for all assessments.
- Provide written feedback on student work that identifies areas of success as well as of needed improvement related to learning objectives.
- Provide study materials that support students' preparation for all major assessments.
- “Chunk” projects and multi-step assignments into manageable steps, each with clear, written due dates and criteria for success. Each step may be assessed separately.
- Allow students to propose reasonable due date extensions with minimum one-day notice (i.e., not on the due date), and if the extension is granted, clearly identify new due dates in writing. Short-term extensions of one or two days are strongly suggested.
- When appropriate, provide students opportunities for revisions, re-takes, or alternate assessments for assignments that are completed in a timely fashion. Identify due dates for revisions/reassessments in writing. No more than a two-week window from receipt of feedback is strongly suggested.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date records of student work and progress in the PowerSchool Portal that may be easily accessed by students, their parents/guardians, and support staff.

**Student Accountability:**

- Teachers may decline to accept student work after set due dates. This decreases the amount of evidence of student learning, which may negatively affect the final grade.
- Students who lack sufficient evidence of meeting all relevant course objectives at a “developing” level or higher will be assigned a final grade of Attempted, and not earn credit for the course.

[CLICK HERE](#) to see how these expectations align with PVPA’s restorative practice approach.

# STUDENT SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The Office of Student Services at PVPA conducts evaluations to determine eligibility for Special Education Services and is responsible for the implementation of Section 504 Accommodations Plans and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students who are determined eligible for special education services. Special Education staff work in collaboration with general educators to ensure that students with disabilities are provided with the appropriate accommodations and modifications necessary to access the general curriculum. Specially designed instruction is provided by Special Education teachers in a highly structured, small group environment for eligible students. Related services such as speech and language therapy, counseling, occupational therapy and physical therapy are provided by the appropriate staff or contracted service providers

Please address questions about Special Education services to our Director of Student Services, Loris Bjorkman-Joslyn ([lbjorkman@pvpa.org](mailto:lbjorkman@pvpa.org)).

## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

A disability is defined as:

- A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- Has a record of such an impairment
- Is regarded as having such impairment

A disability prohibits private employers, state and local governments, and labor unions from discriminating against students and qualified individuals with disabilities. For benefits or services provided to be “equally effective,” they must afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity to obtain the same result, gain the same benefit, or reach the same level of achievement as other students.

For more information go to: <http://www.eeoc.gov/types/ada.html> or <http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/ADAREgs2010.htm>

## SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT

Charter school students with disabilities, including current and prospective charter school students with disabilities, have the same rights under Section 504 as other current and prospective public school students with disabilities at the elementary and secondary school level. Students with a qualifying disability are provided reasonable accommodations in order to access school activities in a manner equal to their non-disabled peers. A Section 504 Plan is used to document the support and accommodations necessary for students who are determined to be eligible.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION - IDEA 2004

IDEA 2004 provides special education services to children, ages 3 - 22, who are found eligible due to an educational disability that affects their ability to make effective progress without specialized instruction and/or related services. It entitles eligible students with disabilities to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Each student in special education has an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) that is a legally binding contract between the families and the school district. All decisions are made by the student's Team that includes special and general education teachers, service providers, and parents. Students are invited to participate in the Team process beginning at age 14.

## MENTAL HEALTH TEAM

- The Mental Health Team includes the school psychologist, social worker, adjustment counselor, and school counselors.
  - The Mental Health Team works collaboratively with the Director of Students Services, School Nurse and others as needed to provide social-emotional, behavioral and mental health support to all students at PVPA. The Mental Health Team actively creates and revises systems to proactively address student

mental health concerns and effectively and efficiently respond to students' significant emotional distress and crisis events.

## **SCHOOL COUNSELING**

PVPA's School Counseling Team supports and guides all PVPA students in achieving academic success, career and college readiness, and social and emotional well-being. In order to do this, the School Counseling team offers a program tailored to each grade, including classroom lessons, individual or small group meetings, and other events and activities.

PVPA's School Counseling team believes that all students have the right to be respected, to be treated with dignity, and to access a school counseling program which advocates for equity and the well-being of all students. Counselors are committed to working with all students in a way that affirms their identities and validates their experiences, and to collaborating with families, teachers, and other providers in support of students.

### **Confidentiality**

School counselors do not discuss information shared during meetings with students without the student's permission, except if the student is at risk for serious and foreseeable harm. In those cases, school counselors take immediate action to ensure the student's safety, and that may include sharing information with others. School counselors do not disclose disciplinary history or criminal history information during college admissions processes.

For more details about confidentiality and safety during videoconference meetings, please visit the School Counseling page of the PVPA website.

### **School Counseling Caseloads**

PVPA has two school counselors. Students are assigned to a school counselor based on year of graduation, and continue to work with the same school counselor throughout middle and high school.

### **Contacting Your School Counselor**

School counselors are available in person, by email, and by phone.

### **Appointment Request**

Students who need to discuss a confidential issue or who need an in-depth conversation with a school counselor should request an appointment. Whenever possible, students are expected to attend appointments during studies, support blocks, breaks, or lunches. Students are expected to get teacher permission before missing class time for a counseling appointment.

Students may request an appointment by

1. Filling out an online Appointment Request form.
2. Emailing their school counselor. Students should write "Appointment Request" in the subject line of any email appointment request.

Appointment Request Email Template:

Subject line: Appointment Request

Body of email:

Hi (Counselor's Name),

I'd like to schedule an appointment with you to talk about (brief description of topic).

I am available this week during (support block, study, lunch, break, and days of the week).

Thank you,

(Student's name)

Counselors make every effort to respond to appointment requests within one school day. School counselors respond to appointment requests by email. Students who request an appointment with a school counselor should check their email for a response.

### **Students Seeking Support During the School Day**

Students who are experiencing emotional distress and need support are encouraged to seek help from the school counselor. Students who feel they need urgent help during class time should speak to their teacher. The teacher will contact the appropriate person to ensure the student receives support.

When in the school building, students are expected to follow sign-out procedures when leaving class to go to the School Counseling Office. If a student with an urgent concern arrives at the School Counseling Office and the school counselor is not available, the student should go to the Main Office and let the Main Office know that they need to speak with a student support person, or ask their teacher to contact the Main Office to request support for the student.

Any student who feels at risk for harming self or others, who is at risk for being harmed, should seek help from a faculty or staff member immediately.

Any student who believes that another student is at risk for harming self or others, or is at risk for being harmed, should seek help from a faculty or staff member immediately.

### **School Counseling Referrals**

Parents and guardians concerned about their student's academic, social, or emotional well-being are encouraged to contact the student's school counselor by phone or email. The school counselor works with the student and family to determine the appropriate response or next steps to address the concern.

## **SCHOOL NURSE**

### **Medication**

Students are not allowed to carry medication in school unless arranged with the school nurse. Certain non-prescription medication is available with written parental permission. If a student needs to take any medication at school, a Medication Order, which can be obtained from the nurse, must be completed. For more information, you can contact the school nurse Mary Colwell, at her extension 120 or by email [mcolwell@pvpa.org](mailto:mcolwell@pvpa.org).

## **SUPPORT CLASSES AND STUDY BLOCKS**

### **Homework Support**

Students in Homework Support are provided time during the school day to complete classwork and homework. The students work in a structured classroom setting with a teacher present. Students use this time to complete homework or revisions both individually or in small group settings. Students are able to access support from the teacher in the classroom with regard to curriculum, organization, communication with curriculum teachers, and other issues.

### **Math Support**

Students at PVPA enrolled in Math 7, Math 8, Algebra, or Geometry who show evidence of significant gaps in prior knowledge or skills in mathematics will be scheduled for a structured intervention program tailored to the mathematics content. All students in 7th and 8th grade complete screening assessments in mathematics to help determine if these intervention services will best support their needs.

### **Reading Workshop**

Students in grades 7 or 8 whose reading skills are below grade level will be prioritized for a formal reading intervention program called Reading Workshop that occurs during the 7-8 support block. All students in 7th and 8th grade complete screening assessments in reading to help determine if these intervention services will best support their needs.

### **Self-directed Study**

Self-directed Study is available to students in grades 11 and 12, and is supervised by a teacher who is available to answer questions if needed. Students are expected to arrive on time in the library, and remain there unless they coordinate with the teacher to attend an approved meeting or activity elsewhere.

### **Study Skills**

Study Skills is designed to help students learn how to manage their time and complete their school work on schedule. Students learn how the brain operates when it comes to learning new material, how to utilize a planner properly, and

how to develop study skills to prepare for assessments. They also engage in self-regulation exercises designed to build emotional control and develop executive function strategies. All students in grade 9 are automatically enrolled in a section of Study Skills.

### **Writing Support**

Students in grades 9 and 10 who show evidence that they would benefit from structured support in writing are scheduled for Writing Support. Intervention service determinations are made collaboratively by teachers, department leaders, the Director of Arts and Academics, and the director of student services (if applicable).

## **SCHOOL CULTURE AND DISCIPLINE**

### **STUDENT LEADERSHIP, GROUPS, AND ACTIVITIES**

Students have multiple opportunities to be deeply engaged in the PVPA school community beyond their classroom-based experiences, including participation in Student Council, National Honor Society, Affinity Groups, and Student Clubs.

#### **Student Council**

The Student Council is made up of three representatives from each grade. Grades 8-12 hold elections in the spring and grade 7 holds elections the first week of school. Student Council serves as a critical student advisory for school policy and procedure, administrative decisions, and school culture. Student Council representatives plan community projects, grade projects, Spirit Week, all-school events, school dances and leads fundraising for class events/trips. Student Council representatives grades 9-12 send 1 rep to sit on the Board of Trustees; Board student reps who are 18-years-old hold full membership on the Board.

#### **National Honor Society**

The PVPA chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) is first and foremost a community service organization comprised of students who embody the qualities of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. As an NHS member, students work with peers and a council of teachers to make a positive impact on the PVPA community and the world. Students are encouraged to apply once a year to become a member of the PVPA chapter of the National Honor Society; membership is restricted to PVPA juniors and seniors.

#### **Affinity Groups**

PVPA has four affinity groups: Asian Student Union, Black Student Union, Gender and Sexuality Diversity (GSD), and Latinx Student Union. The purpose of these affinity groups is to educate, celebrate and support both within and outside these identities. Affinity groups host an all-school mic during their affinity month and provide other events to celebrate, educate and support.

#### **Student Clubs**

PVPA has many different student clubs that meet based on student interest. Some ongoing clubs include PeaceJam, an international organization whose mission statement is "to create young leaders committed to positive change in themselves, their communities, and the world through the inspiration of Nobel Peace Laureates who pass on the spirit, skills, and wisdom they embody". PeaceJam leads action projects throughout the year to meet this mission. Feminist Coalition supports the positive growth of women and girls. Headgear Comedy Troupe is a student-led improv comedy group. The Sustainability Club focuses on environmental awareness. There are often different visual arts clubs throughout the year.

### **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

#### **Community Day**

This event happens in the fall semester and is one of two student-led workshop days. All students are invited to create and lead morning workshops for the student body that offer education, recognition and support of different ethnic and

social identities. The afternoon includes an all-school open mic, games and activities. Community Day is a celebration of the many diverse backgrounds and experiences of the entire PVPA community.

**Octoberfest**

A day around the end of October - students and staff members are invited to dress in costume. There is an afternoon festival with games, activities, food, etc.

**Open House**

An annual open house for parents/guardians is held in the early fall. This is an opportunity for parents/guardians to meet their students’ teachers and get basic information about curriculum. If parents/guardians have more specific questions or concerns, please contact teachers directly to set up time to talk another day. You can call the Main Office, 413-552-1580 ext. 112, or you can visit our website for more information.

**Unity Day/Field Day**

This event typically occurs in June. The morning of this day is one of two student-led workshop days and focuses on Unity. All students are invited to create and lead workshops that offer positive, fun opportunities to meet and spend time with different students and teachers. The afternoon focuses on fun Field Day activities and includes a cookout/potluck, games, etc.

**RESTORATIVE PRACTICE**

Restorative Practice is an umbrella collection of **guiding principles, frameworks, and structures** that provide opportunities to proactively build healthy and supportive relationships between members in a community, reduce unwanted behaviors and encourage healthy behaviors, and resolve conflict, repair harm and restore relationships.

**PVPA’s Restorative Practice GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

<p><b>1. Community Building:</b>  <i>Relationships and community help people be more creative, happy and engaged. When people have relationships they are more likely to have understanding and react less severely when conflict arises.</i></p>	<p><b>2. Harm and Impact:</b>  <i>RP focuses on harm and relationships rather than rules and laws. When we understand what people feel and identify what they need, it can lead to genuine conflict resolution and harm repair.</i></p>	<p><b>3. Support and Accountability:</b>  <i>RP provides support to meet expectations and holds people accountable to those expectations. Support and accountability keeps our community safe and predictable</i></p>
<p><b>4. Engagement &amp; Empowerment</b>  <i>RP makes space for all voices to be heard. Those involved in conflict or harm are involved in the peacemaking process and resolution.</i></p>	<p><b>5. Trauma-sensitive/informed</b>  <i>RP focuses on relationships, feelings, needs, choice and empowering those involved to be agents. Circle process is predictable, inclusive, and creates safe containers for difficult conversations</i></p>	<p><b>6. Developmental Rights</b>  <i>All children deserve positive childhood environments, where they can learn and develop social-emotional skills. Mistakes can be learning opportunities and guide future choices.</i></p>

adapted from McLaughlin and Motel 2016

### **PVPA's Restorative Practice FRAMEWORKS**

PVPA uses three frameworks to hold Restorative Practice. Each framework uses a multi-tiered system of support to serve the needs of all students.

	<b>School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS)</b>	<b>Trauma-sensitive Schools (TSS)</b>	<b>Restorative Justice (RJ)</b>
<b>Tier 1: Whole community</b>	All students taught behavior expectations using "PVPA C.A.R.E.S." framework  All staff understand expectations and recognize/reinforce positive behaviors	All staff understand the effects of trauma and needed supports  All students have access to mental health supports  Students learn and practice social-emotional skills	All students and staff use community building circles to learn circle process  All students and staff practice communication and conflict resolution skills
<b>Tier 2: Approximately 10-15% of students who need additional support</b>	Behavior expectations retaught and reinforced  Families included as partners in reinforcing expected behaviors	Support from Mental Health Team  Support from the Office of School Culture  Families included as partners in providing support	Class circles to address whole-class issues  Teachers use restorative dialogues to work through adult-student conflict  "ROOTS" Peer Restorative Justice used to resolve low-level peer-peer conflict  Opportunities provided to make amends and heal harm
<b>Tier 3: Approximately 5% of students with the highest need for support</b>	Individualized behavior plans  Daily behavioral goal check-in  Weekly-daily communication with families	Individualized plans developed	Restorative circles and conferences to address serious matters  Traditional discipline and restorative justice used in partnership

### **SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS (SWPBS)**

The main focus of SWPBS is to provide a clear system for all expected behaviors at PVPA. As PVPA's student body comes from almost 60 different towns and cities, the behavioral expectations learned from sending schools and home communities vary widely.

SWPBS is based on the idea that when students are taught clearly defined behavioral expectations and provided with predictable responses to their behavior, both positive and corrective, all students are more likely to meet those expectations. Through SWPBS, we work to create and maintain a productive, fair, safe environment in which all school community members have clear expectations and understanding of their role in the educational process.

#### **PVPA C.A.R.E.S.**

"PVPA C.A.R.E.S." references a set of school-wide values: Considerate, Accountable, Respectful, Empathetic, and Safe.



The PVPA C.A.R.E.S. framework is designed to define behavior expectations, intentionally teach and recognize/reinforce expected behaviors, and enact supports that prevent unexpected behaviors. PVPA C.A.R.E.S. is built on the evidence-based SWPBS framework proven to improve school climate, reduce challenging behavior, and increase instructional time in schools.

<b>Define Expectations</b>	<p><u>C</u>onsiderate, <u>A</u>ccountable, <u>R</u>espectful, <u>E</u>mpathetic, and <u>S</u>afe</p> <p>Through a few clear and positive words, behavior expectations are outlined across school settings in the School-wide Code of Conduct Matrix and more specific Behavior Expectations Matrix designed for various locations and contexts</p>
<b>Teach Expectations</b>	<p>All students are taught behavior expectations that are reinforced by all school adults in the moment. A series of seven lessons are taught in grades 7-9 using a variety of arts to explore and practice each expectation.</p>
<b>Acknowledge Expected Behaviors</b>	<p>School adults provide acknowledgement and positive reinforcement of expected and wanted behaviors through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Regular positive feedback (verbal and/or nonverbal) with a 5:1 positive to corrective ratio</li> <li>● Class acknowledgements/rewards for meeting class goals regarding expected behaviors</li> <li>● Raffle opportunities and positive shout-outs at community events</li> </ul>
<b>Respond to Unexpected Behaviors</b>	<p>...By reteaching the expected behavior</p> <p>...By offering opportunities to reflect on actions and make amends</p> <p>...By enlisting caregiver support in reinforcing expectations</p> <p>...By providing needed supports for students to be able to meet the expectations</p> <p>...By maintaining a safe and welcoming school through accountability to the expectations</p>

## CODE OF CONDUCT

# PVPA C.A.R.E.S. - School-wide Code of Conduct

Considerate	Accountable	Respectful	Empathetic	Safe
Be ready to learn	Be honest	Be polite	Be an ally	Be aware
Participate	On time and meet deadlines	Use "PG" language	Include others	Walk while inside
Do your work and let others do theirs	Acknowledge if you cause harm	Turn off and put away phones/devices in class	Be mindful of your impact on others	Stay substance-free
Minimize distractions and disruptions	Make amends when harm is done	Ask permission before taking videos or pictures	Speak kindly to and about others	Keep your hands and body to yourself
THINK before you speak and act	Communicate your needs and ask for help	Follow teacher and staff directions	Listen to and value the needs of others	Play safely (no roughhousing)
Ask permission before touching other people	Report bullying and unsafe behavior to an adult	Allow others to learn and participate	Expect differences and seek to understand	Follow emergency procedures
Share opinions thoughtfully	Submit original work and give credit to others	Use a quiet voice inside	Offer help to people in need	Sign in/sign out of school and class
Care for school materials and spaces	Be where you're supposed to be and ask permission before leaving	Wear clothing that is respectful to self & others	Keep an open mind	Pay attention to your own and others' movement
Stop rumors and gossip	Follow PVPA expectations for all school activities	Clean up and throw away any garbage you see	Save socializing for lunch and scheduled breaks	Keep traffic flowing
Maintain personal space for yourself and others	Communicate about and make up missed work	Recycle		Keep moving in stairwells

## PVPA C.A.R.E.S. BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

	Considerate	Accountable	Respectful	Empathetic	Safe
<b>Classroom:</b> At PVPA, we value learning and our teachers.	<p>Treat materials and property with care</p> <p>Let others do their work</p> <p>Say "Please" and "Thank you"</p> <p>Let others finish speaking, pause before responding</p> <p>Take turns</p>	<p>Be on time</p> <p>Be in class</p> <p>Get permission to leave for break</p> <p>Keep track of deadlines and meet them</p> <p>-Do your work and stay on task</p> <p>Use technology as directed</p> <p>Arrive prepared for class (clothing, materials)</p>	<p>Respect the right of others to learn</p> <p>Follow teacher instruction and direction</p> <p>Phones/devices off and away</p>	<p>Share opinions thoughtfully</p> <p>Speak kindly to and about others</p> <p>Give constructive feedback</p> <p>Expect differences and seek to understand</p> <p>Peaceful interactions</p>	<p>Follow classroom procedures and policies</p> <p>Ask for help if you need it</p> <p>Sign out/sign in and use classroom pass</p>
<b>Restroom:</b> At PVPA we value our cleaning crew and clean, safe bathrooms	<p>Clean up after yourself</p> <p>Stop rumors and gossip</p>	<p>Get changed within allotted time</p> <p>Use the restroom and return directly to class</p>	<p>Flush toilets &amp; wash hands</p> <p>Keep restrooms graffiti and vandalism free</p> <p>Only use during class time if unavoidable</p> <p>Follow phone policy and only use during lunch and scheduled breaks</p>	<p>Choose the bathroom that fits your gender identity and allow others to choose for themselves</p> <p>Support friends in a space designed for support</p>	<p>Ask for help if you need it</p> <p>During a drill or emergency situation, exit immediately to nearest classroom/stairwell</p>
<b>Hallways:</b> At PVPA we value our cleaning crew and clean, safe hallways	<p>Say "Please", "Thank you" and "Excuse me"</p> <p>Ask permission before touching others</p> <p>Clean up after yourself</p>	<p>Be prepared to show break pass</p> <p>Elevator use only with elevator pass</p> <p>Keep track of your own belongings and leave others' belongings alone</p>	<p>Use a quiet voice</p> <p>Follow phone policy and only use during lunch and breaks</p> <p>Music speakers used outside</p>	<p>Speak kindly to and about others</p> <p>Act kindly to self and others</p> <p>Peaceful interactions</p> <p>Greet others with friendly language</p>	<p>Walk directly to your destination</p> <p>Keep hands and body to self</p> <p>Keep traffic in halls and stairs open and moving</p> <p>Sports &amp; wheels outside</p>
<b>Library &amp; Computer Lab:</b> At PVPA we value our	<p>Share resources &amp; space</p>	<p>Get permission during class time</p>	<p>Voice only when needed to</p>	<p>Speak kindly to and about others</p>	<p>Ask for help if you need it</p>

library media specialist and teachers	<p>Let others do their work</p> <p>Treat materials and property with care</p> <p>Clean up after yourself</p>	<p>Use technology for school-related work</p> <p>Use social media responsibly</p> <p>Sign-out and return materials</p>	<p>complete school work</p> <p>Follow teacher and library media specialist's instruction and directions</p>	<p>Peaceful interactions</p> <p>Support friends in a space designed for support</p> <p>Expect differences and seek to understand</p>	<p>During a lockdown drill go into a room with a door that closes and locks</p>
<b>Theaters:</b> At PVPA we value artist-teacher, directors, and tech crews	<p>Share resources &amp; space</p> <p>Let others do their work</p> <p>Treat materials and property with care</p> <p>Clean up after yourself</p> <p>Ask permission before touching others</p>	<p>Be on time</p> <p>Food &amp; drink kept outside the theater</p> <p>Wear appropriate clothing for the space &amp; the task</p> <p>Keep track of deadlines and meet them</p> <p>Do your work and stay on task</p>	<p>Respect the right of others to learn</p> <p>Follow teacher instruction and direction</p> <p>Phones/devices off and away</p>	<p>Share opinions thoughtfully</p> <p>Speak kindly to and about others</p> <p>Give constructive feedback</p> <p>Expect differences and seek to understand</p>	<p>Follow procedures</p> <p>Only use tools/equipment and props/sets you have been trained on</p> <p>Use hands and body mindfully</p> <p>Only use room with an adult present</p> <p>Ask for help if you need it</p>
<b>Music Studios:</b> At PVPA we value artist-teacher, directors, and tech crews	<p>Share resources &amp; space</p> <p>Let others do their work</p> <p>Treat materials and property with care</p> <p>Clean up after yourself</p> <p>Ask permission before touching others</p>	<p>Be on time</p> <p>Food &amp; drink kept away from equipment</p> <p>Keep track of deadlines and meet them</p> <p>Do your work and stay on task</p>	<p>Respect the right of others to learn</p> <p>Follow teacher instruction and direction</p> <p>Phones/devices off and away</p>	<p>Share opinions thoughtfully</p> <p>Speak kindly to and about others</p> <p>Give constructive feedback</p> <p>Expect differences and seek to understand</p>	<p>Follow procedures</p> <p>Only use instruments/equipment you have been trained on or have permission to use</p> <p>Use hands and body mindfully</p> <p>Only use room with an adult present</p> <p>Ask for help when you need it</p>
<b>Dance Studios:</b> At PVPA we value artist-teacher, directors, and tech crews	<p>Share resources &amp; space</p> <p>Let others do their work</p> <p>Treat materials and property with care</p> <p>Clean up after yourself</p>	<p>Be on time</p> <p>Food &amp; drink kept outside the room</p> <p>Wear appropriate clothing for the space &amp; the task</p> <p>Keep track of deadlines and meet them</p>	<p>Respect the right of others to learn</p> <p>Follow teacher instruction and direction</p> <p>Phones/devices off and away</p>	<p>Share opinions thoughtfully</p> <p>Speak kindly to and about others</p> <p>Give constructive feedback</p> <p>Expect differences and seek to understand</p>	<p>Follow procedures</p> <p>Only use tools/equipment you have been trained on</p> <p>Use hands and body mindfully</p> <p>Only use room with an adult present</p>

	Ask permission before touching others	Do your work and stay on task			Ask for help when you need it
<b>Visual arts classrooms:</b> At PVPA we value artist-teacher, directors, and tech crews	Share resources & space Let others do their work Treat materials and property with care Clean up after yourself Ask permission before touching others	Be on time Food & drink kept outside the room Wear appropriate clothing for the space & the task Keep track of deadlines and meet them Do your work and stay on task	Respect the right of others to learn Follow teacher instruction and direction Phones/devices off and away during instruction time Hands-free devices for music only during project work time	Share opinions thoughtfully Speak kindly to and about others Give constructive feedback Expect differences and seek to understand	Follow procedures Only use tools/equipment you have been trained on Use hands and body mindfully Only use room with an adult present Ask for help when you need it
<b>Costume Shop:</b> At PVPA we value artist-teacher, directors, and tech crews	Share resources & space Let others do their work Treat materials and property with care Clean up after yourself Ask permission before touching others	Be on time Food & drink kept outside the room Wear appropriate clothing for the space & the task Keep track of deadlines and meet them Do your work and stay on task	Respect the right of others to learn Follow teacher instruction and direction Phones/devices off and away Hands-free devices for music only during project work time	Share opinions thoughtfully Speak kindly to and about others Give constructive feedback Expect differences and seek to understand	Follow procedures Only use tools/equipment you have been trained on Use hands and body mindfully Only use room with an adult present Ask for help when you need it
<b>Bus:</b> At PVPA, we value our bus drivers and safe transportation	Ask permission before touching other people Clean up after yourself Stop rumors and gossip	School rules start when you board the bus & end when you exit the bus Keep track of your own belongings and leave others' belongings alone	Follow driver instruction and direction	Speak kindly to & about others Peaceful interactions	Stay seated Keep hands & body to self Ask for help if needed
<b>Outdoors:</b> At PVPA we value our Earth and a clean, welcoming environment	Ask permission before touching others	Clean up after yourself & others Be back in class on time	Keep building graffiti and vandalism free "PG" language Follow directions of teachers and staff	Speak kindly to and about others Peaceful interactions Include others	Eat/socialize in approved locations Stay out of trees Stay within the posted boundaries of the PVPA campus

<b>Main Office:</b> At PVPA we value our office staff & a welcoming environment	Ask permission before touching others	Get permission during class time Do tasks quickly & return to class	Quiet or no voice Follow office staff directions	Greet visitors kindly and with friendly language	Socialize in other spaces Stay in front of the counter
<b>Open Mic &amp; Community Meeting:</b> At PVPA we value creativity and community	Think before you speak/act Active listening Refrain from talking Stay seated until breaks in performances	Follow rules & expectations	Phones/devices off and away Full attention on the stage or speaker Follow teacher and presenter/performer directions	Speak kindly to and about others Give encouraging applause	Pay attention to the movement of others Keep hands & body to self Ask for help if needed
<b>Drills/Shelter in Place/Emergency Situations:</b> At PVPA we value our crisis team and the health and safety of all		Use building facilities appropriately Use Health Office appropriately	Quiet or no voice Follow reminders and directions of teachers, staff and safety workers Phones/devices off and away	Minimize distractions Care about the needs of others	Walk to your destination purposefully Keep hands and body to self Follow safety procedures Ask for help if you need it
<b>Lunch &amp; Scheduled Breaks</b>	Help others clean up Check for allergies before sharing food Clean up after yourself	Remind others to clean up Get to class on time Follow directions when using microwaves	Quiet voice inside "PG" language Follow reminders and directions of teachers and staff Recycle and throw away garbage when you see it	Speak kindly to & about others Include others	Keep traffic in halls & stairs open and moving Eat/socialize in approved locations Sign in/sign out when going off-campus
<b>Other Breaks</b>	Enter & exit rooms quietly Let others do their work	Breaks are 5 minutes Use 0-1 breaks per class Use break pass Get permission	Quiet or no voice Follow directions of teachers/staff Phone stays off and away	Save socializing for lunch/scheduled breaks	Ask for help if you are not ok Sign in/sign out 1 person at a time

## NON-NEGOTIABLE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS & DEFINITIONS

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to maintain academic integrity. Plagiarism is the intentional and deliberate copying of another piece of work and submitting the work as one's own original work. Cheating represents a lack of academic integrity, and can include copying assignments, giving/receiving help on individual assessments, and/or sharing work in any way not

directly approved by teachers. Plagiarism can have very long-lasting, harmful consequences later in life. All instances of cheating and plagiarism are addressed by holding the student accountable, as well as supporting the student to understand the importance of academic integrity.

If a student is aware that another student has engaged in plagiarism or cheating, they are expected to notify their teacher or another PVPA faculty/staff member, who will communicate the information to the Dean of Students.

### **BULLYING**

Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school

All faculty and staff are mandated reporters, and PVPA will share the results of its investigations with the South Hadley Police Department if an act of bullying has occurred (see "Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan" below).

### **PVPA's Anti-Bullying Rules**

- We will not bully others.
- We will try to help students who are bullied.
- We will try to include students who are left out.
- If we know that someone is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

### **DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP**

PVPA students should act as good digital citizens in ways that are safe, legal and ethical, including:

- Cultivating and managing a digital identity and reputation, while being aware of the permanence of their actions in a digital world;
- Engaging in positive, safe, legal and ethical behavior when using technology, including social interactions online or when using networked devices;
- Demonstrating an understanding of and respect for the rights and obligations of using and sharing intellectual property;
- Managing their personal data to maintain digital privacy and security.

### **FIREARMS AND WEAPONS**

Community members may not possess weapons (both legal and defined as illegal by Massachusetts and Federal law) on school property, on school buses and vans, and at off-campus school-sponsored events.

### **ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES**

Community members may not, on school grounds (including the parking lot) or at school-related events:

- Possess, consume, and distribute illegal drugs or alcohol.
- Possess or distribute prescription drugs. (Any student requiring access to prescription drugs must have authorized approval from a parent/guardian/ physician and the school nurse. All authorized prescription drugs are secured in the school health center and administered by the school nurse).
- Smoke or vape.

Community members are responsible for removing themselves from any situation involving illegal substances including physically leaving the area if possible and reporting it to a trusted adult. (See "Drug Free Environment Policy")

### **HATE ACTION/SPEECH**

Community members may not make any hateful or derogatory action or speech regarding race, gender identity, gender expression, religion, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, appearance, and abilities.

Students that are found to have engaged in the delivery of disrespectful messages, offensive remarks, and/or gestures in any format (verbal, physical, electronic) related to gender, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity, race, religion, national origin, disability, physical features, or any other protected class are subject to disciplinary actions.

### **HAZING**

The following Massachusetts General Law, Part IV, Title 1 Chapter 269 Sections 17-19, make it clear that hazing is illegal. Each student as well as each member of a student group at PVPA is made aware of what hazing is and the disciplinary consequences for engagement in such an activity. All students are required to adhere to this Massachusetts General Law as follow:

#### **Section 17: Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined**

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which wilfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

#### **Section 18: Failure to report hazing**

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

#### **Section 19: Copy of Secs. 17 to 19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report**

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of



education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

### **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

Community members may not engage in physical roughhousing or fighting, or engage in sexual activity on campus.

### **SEX DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

It is the goal of the Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School to promote a community that is free of sex discrimination and sexual harassment. Sex discrimination and sexual harassment of staff and/or students occurring in the school or in other school-related settings is unlawful and will not be tolerated. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

**Sex Discrimination** = exclusion or denial of participation of benefits on the basis of sex.

**Sexual Harassment** = any sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission is either explicitly or implicitly a term of condition of employment or academic status
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is the basis for an employment decision or an academic decision affecting the person
- Such conduct substantially interferes with a person's work or academic performance or creates and intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment

Sexual Harassment is a form of sex discrimination and unlawful. Examples include:

- **Verbal Harassment** - Sexual innuendo or other suggestive comment, humor or jokes about sex or gender-specific traits, offensive written notes, name-calling/nicknames, sexual propositions, insults, threats, inquiries into one's sexual experiences, sexual comments about a person's body and/or discussion of one's sexual activities. Verbal abuse may constitute harassment. No student should feel that parts of the school campus or any school-sponsored events are off limits because he or she will be subject to verbal harassment either by reason of gender or sexual orientation. Verbal abuse will be treated as a disciplinary infraction and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.
- **Nonverbal Harassment** - Written notes or photographs of a sexual nature, whistling, making suggestive or insulting sounds and/or gestures, suggestive leering, unwelcome touching/massaging, displaying suggestive reading materials, obscene sexual noises, and/or rude comments about a person's gender or sexual preference.

### **COMPLAINT AND RESOLUTION PROCESS**

PVPA does not discriminate against any individual covered by inclusion under various federal laws, and specifically enumerated under Title I, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 1972 Educational Amendments. Should any complaints arise under the auspices of these federal requirements and informal resolution described elsewhere in this handbook fails, the following is the step-by-step process for resolution.

The District 504 and Student Civil Rights Coordinator is Loris Bjorkman-Joslyn, Director of Student Services, 15 Mulligan Drive, South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075 (413.552.1580) or [lbjorkman@pvpa.org](mailto:lbjorkman@pvpa.org).

The District Title I Coordinator is Alyson Miller, Director of Academics and the Title IX Coordinator is Loris Bjorkman, Acting Director of Student Services, 15 Mulligan Drive, South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075 (413.552.1580).

Any original complaints concerning any member of the Senior Administrative Team should be made to the Executive Director. Any original complaints concerning the Executive Director should be made to the Board of Trustees President.

Inquiries concerning PVPA's policies, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations, and complaints may be directed to the Business Office. Inquiries about the laws and about compliance may also be directed to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary or Secondary Education or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, US Department of Education.

Appeal of any final decisions should be made by contacting the Executive Director at the address listed above within 5 business days following notification of the decision.

To file a complaint directly with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary or Secondary Education, use the online [Problem Resolution System Intake Form \(PRSIF\)](#). The Problem Resolution System (PRS) is the Department's process for addressing complaints from the public about students' educational rights and the legal requirements for education. Some of the types of complaints that PRS handles include allegations that a student is not receiving educational services, or allegations that a student is not receiving the procedural protections that the law requires. PRS can assist you if a publicly funded education provider is not implementing the requirements of any federal or state education related law or regulation under our authority. PRS will investigate your complaint and make a finding in your case, in most cases, within 60 days of receipt. If your concerns are outside the authority of the Department to resolve, PRS staff will suggest next steps you can take or other resources you can access to resolve your issue.

Complaints can be filed against a school, school district, collaborative school, charter school, a Department-approved private special education school or in the case of special education, against the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education itself as the supervisory authority for special education in Massachusetts. Complaints may be filed on behalf of an individual student or a group of students.

The PRSIF should be submitted within 14 days of the occurrence of the incident preceding the complaint, or within 14 days of when the complainant should reasonably have been aware of the incident. Response in writing will occur within 5 business days of receipt of the PRSIF.

## **DISCIPLINARY POLICIES**

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

If plagiarism or cheating are suspected:

- 1) The teacher will first consult with the Dean of Students to discuss the incident, share evidence if available, and make a plan.
- 2) The teacher and/or administrator will carry out the plan, which will include meeting with the student(s) to discuss the incident, and informing their parent(s)/guardian(s) of the outcome of this meeting, including consequences (if any)
- 3) If a student is determined to have engaged in academic dishonesty, the work at hand will not be eligible for credit, and the student must complete it again, or an alternate assignment approved by the teacher.
- 4) The incident and outcomes are recorded for future reference.

If a student engages in academic dishonesty more than once, disciplinary consequences will be determined in consultation with the Executive Director.

### **BULLYING**

See the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan below.

### **HARASSMENT**

Students that are found to have engaged in the delivery of disrespectful messages, offensive remarks, and/or gestures in any format (verbal, physical, electronic) related to gender, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity, race, religion, national origin, disability, physical features, or any other protected class are subject to disciplinary actions.

**Investigation:** When a complaint is received, the school will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under

the circumstances. Our investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. We will also interview the person alleged to have committed sexual harassment before we have completed our investigation. We will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

**Disciplinary Action:** If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by one of our community members, we will take action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from counseling to termination from community membership or employment and may include such other forms of disciplinary action, as we deem appropriate under the circumstances.

### **HAZING**

The following Massachusetts General Law, Part IV, Title 1 Chapter 269 Sections 17-19, make it clear that hazing is illegal. Each student as well as each member of a student group at PVPA is made aware of what hazing is and the disciplinary consequences for engagement in such an activity. All students are required to adhere to this Massachusetts General Law as described above.

#### **Section 17: Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined**

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which wilfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

#### **Section 18: Failure to report hazing**

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

#### **Section 19: Copy of Secs. 17 to 19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report**

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN**

In May 2010, the Governor signed Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 into law which addresses Bullying in Schools. The law requires all schools and school systems to develop and implement a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The plan was developed and implemented in the fall of 2011.

### **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Statement**

PVPA is a public school and community that prohibits bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation against those reporting accurate and credible incidents. The Bullying Intervention Plan is an approach to addressing bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation. PVPA is committed to working with students, staff, families, and law enforcement and the community at large to prevent issues of violence and inequity through prevention, intervention, and education.

Any action within our community that creates an environment of continued harassment compromises the very fabric of our community. The PVPA learning community is among the most geographically diverse in the Bay State, with students, parents, faculty, staff, and Board members representative of 59 different towns and cities. Our diversity is an opportunity for all of us to learn from many different perspectives and join together around common goals. The responsibility rests with each member in our community to actively cultivate a community dedicated to inclusivity, equity, and the promotion of individual growth, with the goal of maximizing one's potential for educational growth. PVPA's efforts continue to be directed at purposely building community. PVPA looks forward to working with families to support these efforts.

In the spirit of preserving and strengthening the bridges in our community, PVPA adopted the following policy in accordance with the Massachusetts General Law Chapter 92 "An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools."

### **Definitions**

**Bullying** = the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- causes physical and/or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his or her own property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of school.

**Cyber-bullying** = bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication and includes:

- the creation of a Web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the above conditions noted under Bullying definition.

- the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons.

**Retaliation** = any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment by a current student or former student directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses, or has reliable information about bullying.

**Aggressor** = a student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

**Target** = a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

### **Relationship To Other Laws**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H1/2, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

### **Leadership Oversight and Accountability**

The PVPA leadership team plays an integral role in ensuring the safety of all PVPA students and community members. The Dean of Students, through working closely with the PVPA School Counseling Department team and faculty/staff, will report the total number of complaints, investigations, verified acts, and any trends of bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, and retaliation quarterly to the PVPA Board of Trustees.

### **Training and Professional Development**

All PVPA faculty and staff members shall engage in an annual fall training that includes an overview of school policy, procedures on reporting, identification, and intervention techniques. Each annual PVPA staff training will be developed with input from PVPA school counseling department, administration, and faculty/staff, informed by the latest research. It will further develop the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, respond, and report bullying incidents including but not limited to the following:

1. Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate effective interventions to stop bullying.
2. Information about the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among aggressor, target, and witnesses to bullying and the potential fluidity between target and aggressor status.
3. Research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment.
4. Information on types of incidents PVPA students have experienced.
5. Information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying.
6. Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.
7. Information on responding to, reporting on, and tracking incidents.

### **Bullying Related To Students With Disabilities**

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

### **Parent/Guardian Partnership and Access to Resources and Services**

PVPA shall make available on our website a range of materials relevant to bullying, cyber-bullying, and Internet safety. The materials will be collected from StopBullying.gov, the PVPA School Counseling department, and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The PVPA website resources will be updated annually to reflect the latest research and materials to further support families and students. Families will annually receive an overview of the bully prevention curriculum used at PVPA and materials guidance to further reinforce the bully prevention curriculum at home. The PVPA Student/Parent Handbook will include the PVPA Bully Prevention and Intervention Plan.

PVPA shall annually hold a parent education event that shall include but not be limited to the following topics:

- The dynamics of bullying
- Online safety and cyber-bullying
- An overview of the school policy and procedures on reporting, investigation, follow-up and guidelines on when to involve local law enforcement.
- An overview of bully prevention curriculum used by PVPA and specific direction in supporting and reinforcing in school efforts towards bully prevention.
- PVPA parents/guardians will be encouraged to access PVPA resources and the DESE resources to further support bully prevention efforts.
- PVPA parents/guardians will be reminded annually that PVPA's school counseling department serves as the primary resource in assisting families and students in identifying therapeutic and counseling services outside of school for students.

### **Student Partnership and Curriculum**

The PVPA student community will play a critical role in creating a safe environment for all students. Student voices will be represented in bullying prevention curriculum planning discussions to share input with administration and faculty on meaningful ways to integrate bullying prevention curriculum into the school. The program approach involves working with individuals, classrooms, the entire school, as well as parents and communities, to successfully address bullying prevention in schools.

Through working with the PVPA student council and the larger student body, the PVPA administration will gather qualitative data on students' experiences at PVPA and the intersection with bullying and harassment to analyze and track the current climate of the school. Included in our beginning of year orientation, students will be given an overview of the PVPA policy, procedures, reporting, and bullying prevention education. As we understand our needs better, we will identify and include programs that respond to student input.

### **Procedures For Reporting Suspected Bullying**

Each member of the PVPA community (students, staff, parents and guardians) is obligated to report any incident of bullying or retaliation. PVPA faculty and staff are required to report any incidents that may constitute bullying or retaliation. Students are strongly encouraged to share incidents with a report that may be made anonymously. It is important that any student who feels that he or she is being bullied and/or harassed should share this with a PVPA staff/faculty member immediately. Each PVPA staff and faculty member is trained to accept reporting forms. Please refer to the PVPA Incident Report Form which [is available in electronic form](#). PVPA is clear that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student or students solely based on an anonymous report. Matters of bullying and retaliation will be approached with particular attention to discretion and confidentiality.

Incidents should be reported to the Dean of Students immediately. Upon receipt of such a report the DOS shall promptly conduct and complete an investigation into the allegations within 1 to 5 school days. The DOS will track all reporting.

### **Anonymous Reporting for Bullying and/or Retaliation**

The anonymous reporting form is available [online](#), through PVPA school counselors, and in the PVPA main office. Persons submitting the form should make clear the first and last names, dates, place, and witnesses. This form when completed may be submitted electronically to the Dean of Students and/or brought to the main office directly where

the DOS will follow the investigation procedures. Students and caregivers are informed annually of the anonymous reporting protocol through the student handbook, open house, new student orientation and grade meetings.

### **Investigation Procedures**

Witnesses (students, bystanders, parents, teachers, staff) will be interviewed promptly after an allegation has been made to gather important information for a determination in the investigation. After the information has been gathered, the Dean of Students will make a decision as to whether or not bullying/retaliation has occurred and/or if it is harassment, misunderstanding, or false reporting.

- PVPA administration will be prompt and sensitive to confidentiality regarding the use of names and details.
- Procedures for the investigation, disciplinary action, support, and follow up will be gone over thoroughly with parents/guardians and the involved students.
- If the incident is determined to be an act of bullying all involved students (target, aggressor, reporter, bystanders) will be notified and parents/guardians of all parties will be called.
- Following the outcome, administrators and appropriate faculty/staff will monitor all those involved daily/weekly as deemed appropriate to make sure that no retaliation occurs.
- Administration will take appropriate disciplinary actions. (See below)

### **Follow-Up Procedures in Incident of Bullying/Retaliation Finding**

- Notification of the parent/guardian of a student's involvement in a bullying/retaliation incident and an outline of the consequence, follow-up, support, and/or further consequences for future incidents.
- Notification of the parent/guardian of the target, aggressor, and reporter identifying school response taken.
- If students involved in the incident are from more than one school district, PVPA will promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district(s) so that they may take appropriate action.
- Local law enforcement will be notified in cases of harassment, physical threats/assaults, violation of civil rights, or any behavior determined to be criminal.
- PVPA will inform parents/guardians of their right to pursue criminal charges when applicable.

### **Incidents of Retaliation**

Any retaliation will be investigated to determine if the behavior/incident is conflict, bullying, or harassment. If retaliation is found to have occurred school disciplinary protocols will be followed, the tiered response and formal reporting process will result. Appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken accordingly to support targeted student and corrective action for the aggressor.

### **Consequences for False Reporting**

Student(s) determined to have engaged in false reporting of an incidence of bullying and/or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action in a tiered response.

### **Notification of Parent/Guardian of a Target and Aggressor**

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Dean of Students (DOS) will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of the procedures for responding to it. The DOS will clearly state the steps that will be taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. The DOS will discuss details of disciplinary action with the caregivers of the student who, upon investigation it has been determined, has engaged in aggressive behavior. All other inquiries (teachers, caregivers of target, community members, board members) will only involve referring to, and further awareness of, the PVPA discipline protocol and follow-up.

### **Procedures for Restoring a Sense of Safety for a Target**

PVPA school counselors and the Restorative Practice Coordinator will meet with the target student to assess needs and make sure that appropriate faculty is aware and vigilant in supporting the student. The DOS in collaboration with other administrators will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. The target student will be monitored and supported through daily/weekly check-in, as

appropriate to ensure that student is safe and supported. PVPA will have an identified safe space in the school for the student. The DOS will stay in contact with the caregivers through a determined period of time to ascertain whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the DOS will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately. Students and caregivers are asked to notify the school immediately if there has been an incidence of retaliation.

Any student identified to have been a target will be assessed by a school counselor to determine if outside support and counseling is recommended. The school counselor will refer families to appropriate local agencies for therapeutic and counseling services.

### **Corrective Action and Strategies for Identified Aggressor**

The Dean of Students will follow discipline procedures as outlined in the PVPA Code of Conduct as the basis for consequences related to bullying. PVPA does not use Restorative Circles/Conferences as a response when there is a finding of bullying; however, under certain circumstances the aggressor student may be able to take restorative steps and make amends, when deemed appropriate and safe. The DOS will consider what adjustments, if any are needed to protect the safety of identified target, aggressor, and others as well. The aggressor student will be monitored and supported through daily, weekly check in, as appropriate to ensure that student has met the requirements of the corrective action. Any student identified to have engaged in the aggressor role will also be assessed by a school counselor to determine if outside support and counseling is recommended. The school counselor will refer families to appropriate local agencies for therapeutic and/or counseling services.

### **Protection of Others**

PVPA will maintain confidentiality for reporters, witnesses, targets, and aggressors. The names of any student involved will only be shared with appropriate staff/faculty. The names will not be shared with other teachers, parents, or community members.

### **Protection of Reporter/Witness/Bystander**

All names of students who report incidents will be kept confidential. The Dean of Students will follow up with the reporting student(s) who provide information during an investigation and student(s) who provide reliable information about an act of bullying and make sure he or she is supported through daily, weekly check in, as deemed appropriate to ensure that the student is safe and supported for a determined length of time. The DOS will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed to enhance the student's sense of safety and that of others as well. If adjustments are found necessary, the administration will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately. Students and parents are asked to notify the school immediately if there has been an incidence of retaliation. The DOS in collaboration with a school counselor will refer students and families to appropriate local agencies for therapeutic and/or counseling services if recommended by school or requested by family.

### **Counseling and Referral for Target, Aggressors, and Others**

PVPA's school counseling department will serve as the primary resource in determining when outside support services will be utilized and in assisting families and students in identifying therapeutic and counseling services outside of school.

### **Disciplinary Consequences**

PVPA will use the Discipline Procedures as outlined in the Community Handbook as the basis for consequences related to bullying with attention to balancing discipline with teaching appropriate behavior.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Restorative Circles and Processes**

The Dean of Students may refer disciplinary cases to the Restorative Practice Coordinator at any stage of the process in order to incorporate restorative dialogue using a "circle" format, and to repair relational harm that has occurred as a result of the behavior. Students in grades 7, 8, and 9 may be assigned "supervised lunch" as a restorative response for repeated concerning behaviors where they will engage in reflection and dialogue about how to avoid or prevent these behaviors in the future. Also see "Restorative Justice" below.



### **Verbal Warnings**

When problems first arise at PVPA pertaining to a student's behavior, such as tardiness to class, skipping class, using inappropriate language, speaking disrespectfully, etc., teachers and administrators will communicate directly with students to clarify expectations.

### **Written Warnings**

When unwanted behavior is overly disruptive to student learning or school culture, the Dean of Students will facilitate a meeting that includes relevant faculty/staff members, parents/guardians, and the student. The meeting will define the problem, identify possible solutions and come to agreement on one, and identify accountability measures if the student does not abide by the agreement. A written record of the agreement is maintained for future reference.

### **Suspensions**

Effective July 1, 2014, MA public school laws and procedures regarding student suspensions from school were changed in order to:

- limit the use of long-term suspension as a consequence for student misconduct until other consequences have been considered and tried as appropriate;
- promote engagement of a student's parent in discussion of the student's misconduct, and options for responding to it;
- assure that every student who is expelled or suspended, regardless of the reason for suspension or expulsion, has the opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion;
- keep schools safe and supportive for all students while ensuring fair and effective disciplinary practices.

### **Notice of Suspensions and Hearings except as provided in 603 CMR 53.07 (EMERGENCY REMOVAL):**

The principal or designee may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing.

The principal or designee shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language:

- A. the disciplinary offense;
- B. the basis for the charge;
- C. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- D. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal or designee concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- E. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- F. the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

The principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal or designee must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal or designee is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal or designee has sent written notice and has documented at least two attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal or designee and parent.

### **In-school Suspension**

The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offense.

The principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under 603 CMR 53.10, provided that the principal follows the process set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(3) through (5) and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as set forth in 603 CMR 53.13(1).

The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally as soon as possible of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

#### **Short Term Suspension Hearing Requirements (10 Days Or Fewer)**

The purpose of the hearing with the principal or designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal or designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal or designee should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05. The principal or designee shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal or designee should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal or designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The principal or designee shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

#### **Long-term Suspension Hearing Requirements (10 Days or Longer)**

At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights:

1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal or designee may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
3. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and

4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal or designee, and to receive a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal or designee shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

The principal or designee shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal or designee should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Based on the evidence, the principal or designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal or designee shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or other method of delivery agreed to by the principal or designee and the parent. If the principal or designee decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:

- 1) Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- 2) Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal or designee;
- 3) Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- 4) Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(4)(a);
- 5) Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal or designee's decision to the Executive Director but only if the principal or designee has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:
  - a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Executive Director an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven additional calendar days; and that
  - b) the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Executive Director decides to reverse the principal's or designee's determination on appeal.

#### **Long-Term Suspension Appeal Process**

- A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal or designee shall have the right to appeal the principal's or designee's decision to the Executive Director.
- The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Executive Director an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven additional calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the Executive Director may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.
- The Executive Director shall hold the hearing within three school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven additional calendar days, in which case the Executive Director shall grant the extension.
- The Executive Director shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Executive Director shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the

hearing that would allow the parent and Executive Director to participate. The Executive Director shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

- The Executive Director shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Executive Director shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Executive Director shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
- The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal or designee's hearing for long-term suspension under 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b).
- The Executive Director shall issue a written decision within five calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(d)1. through 4. If the Executive Director determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Executive Director may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal or designee, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal or designee's decision.
- The decision of the Executive Director shall be the final decision of the school district, charter school, or virtual school, with regard to the suspension.

### **Discipline Hearings and Expulsions**

#### **Massachusetts General Laws Related to Weapons and Controlled Substances Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Sections 37H and 37H1/2**

**Section 37H** - Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Executive Director..

Any student who assaults the Executive Director, administration, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Executive Director.

Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing the charges and the reasons and evidence for expulsion before the expulsion takes effect. The notice shall also notify students and families of students of the opportunity for a hearing, including date, time and location; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school at said hearing before the Dean of Students. After said hearing, they may, in their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Dean of Students to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

If the Dean of Students decides to expel the student after the hearing, he/she shall give written notification at the hearing to student and parent of student of the right to appeal, the process for appealing the expulsion and of the opportunity to receive educational services. The Dean of Students shall also inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing to receive education services at the time the student is expelled.

The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Executive Director in writing of his/her appeal. The Executive Director must hold the appeals hearing within 3 days of receipt of the appeal. The student has the right to have parents and counsel present, the right to present oral and written testimony and the right to confront witnesses presented at a hearing before the Executive Director. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section. The expulsion will remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing.

The Executive Director shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing to receive education services at the time the student is expelled. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the

specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a specific school district staff member to arrange services.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

**Section 37H1/2** - Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the administrator(s) determining disciplinary action of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said administrator if said administrator determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the administrator(s) determining disciplinary action of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such administrator determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The said student shall be notified in writing the charges and the reasons and evidence for expulsion before the expulsion takes effect. The notice shall also notify students and families of students of the opportunity for a hearing, including date, time and location; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school at said hearing before the administrator(s) determining disciplinary action. After said hearing, the administrator may, in their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the administrator.

If the administrator(s) determining disciplinary action decides to expel the student after the hearing, they shall give written notification at the hearing to the student and parent of the student of the right to appeal, the process for appealing the expulsion and of the opportunity to receive educational services. The administrator shall also inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing to receive education services at the time the student is expelled.

The expelled student shall have five days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Executive Director in writing of their appeal. The Executive Director must hold the appeals hearing within three (3) days of receipt of the appeal. The student has the right to have parents and counsel present, the right to present oral and written testimony and the right to confront witnesses presented at a hearing before the Executive Director. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section. The expulsion will remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing.

The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the administrator(s) determining disciplinary action, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the expulsion.

The Executive Director shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing to receive education services at the time the student is expelled. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a specific school district staff member to arrange services.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

### **Discipline for Students Identified as Having Special Needs**

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this Handbook. Chapter 71B of the Mass. General Laws, formerly known as Chapter 766, requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation TEAM to have special needs and whose individualized program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

- Students with Special Needs may be suspended for up to ten (10) consecutive days, and may also be suspended in excess of ten (10) cumulative days, as fully outlined under M.G.L.c. 71B, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Such suspensions may be carried out without any further or additional process.
- Suspensions or exclusions in excess of ten (10) consecutive days or ten (10) cumulative days may also occur, provided that the conduct for which the student is being disciplined is not a manifestation of his/her disability, and the District provides educational services which will allow the student to access the general curriculum and to make progress toward his/her goals.
- The IDEA and M.G.L. c. 71B allow school personnel to move a student with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days, if that student is in possession of a dangerous weapon at school or a school function or on school property, is in possession or uses a controlled substance or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function or on school property, or inflicts serious bodily injury on a person, including him/herself. The appropriate interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the IEP TEAM. The IDEA and M.G.L. c. 71B also allow school personnel the option of asking a hearing officer or a court to move children with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days, if they are substantially likely to injure themselves or others in their current placement.
- When a special needs student has been suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive or cumulative days in a school year, such that a substantial change in placement is occurring or will occur, the IEP TEAM will meet to conduct a manifestation determination. Relevant members of the TEAM meet for the manifestation determination, and they answer two questions, after reviewing relevant documents and the misconduct of the student:
  - Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the student's IEP?
  - Is the misconduct caused by, or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?
- A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the Parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review.
- If the TEAM finds that the misconduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student may be disciplined according to the discipline policy in this handbook. The student will receive educational services during this period of suspension or exclusion. If the TEAM finds that the misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, then the school may still be able to implement an IAES (see ## 2 and 3 above). If the IAES is not possible, then the student will remain in his/her current placement, and the TEAM will arrange for a functional behavioral assessment (if one has not been conducted on the student) and the development or modification of a behavior intervention plan.
- The Executive Director (or designee) will notify the Special Education Office of the suspendable offenses of a special needs student and a record will be kept of such notices.

### **Discipline for Students Identified as Having a Disability and Provided with a 504 Plan**

Students are expected to meet the expectations for behavior identified in this Handbook. A student on a Section 504 plan may be disciplined like any other non-disabled student. However, if the student is going to be suspended for ten (10) or more consecutive days, expelled or suspended for more than fifteen (15) cumulative days (and there is a change in placement as a result), then a manifestation determination review shall be conducted. The student's 504 team shall convene, and answer two questions, after reviewing relevant documents and the misconduct of the student:

- Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the student's 504 plan?
- Is the misconduct caused by, or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?

A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review.

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative Justice is an alternative to using punishment to manage unwanted behavior. Instead of looking at broken rules with a view to punishing the rule-breaker, Restorative Justice asks, "Who is affected and what needs to happen to heal the harm?" Restorative Justice at PVPA is a tiered behavior prevention and response framework, high on support (helping students reach expectations) and accountability (holding students to expectations).

Restorative Justice prioritizes time being spent in proactive community-building circles and teaching staff and students communication and conflict resolution skills, giving our community members the tools to resolve conflicts on their own. PVPA strives to follow a model of 80% preventative teaching and community-building and 20% harm response.

	Restorative Justice Menu of Response
<b>Tier 1:</b> <b>Whole community</b>	All students and staff use community building circles to learn circle process All students and staff practice communication and conflict resolution skills
<b>Tier 2:</b> <b>Approximately 10-15% of students who need additional support/accountability</b>	Class circles to address whole-class issues Teachers use restorative dialogues to work through adult-student conflict ROOTS Peer Restorative Justice used to resolve low-level peer-peer conflict Opportunities provided to make amends and heal harm
<b>Tier 3:</b> <b>Approximately 5% of students with the highest need for support/accountability</b>	Restorative circles and conferences to address serious matters Traditional discipline and restorative justice used in partnership

## R.O.O.T.S. PEER FACILITATION (Restorative Outlook & Outreach for Teachers & Students)

### ROOTS Peer Facilitators

ROOTS peer facilitators are a small group of students trained to listen to the case and assist the referred student to create an agreement to repair harm. Peer ROOTS Facilitators participate in a 32-hour training, leaving facilitation skills, circle process and are trained to be neutral, nonjudgmental, encouraging and to help the referred student to come up with their own solution instead of telling them what to do. Students can access the ROOTS referral/request form [HERE](#), on the student website or get a paper referral form in the Office of School Culture.

### WHO IS INVOLVED IN A PEER ROOTS SESSION?

- Referred student(s)
- Person(s) harmed only if the purpose of the ROOTS session is to mediate between individuals who have been in conflict.
- Peer ROOTS facilitator(s)
- Adult advisor present in the room as observer

### WHEN IS IT APPROPRIATE TO HOLD A PEER RJ INTERVENTION?

- May be used in response to persistent disruptive student behaviors

- May be used to address any peer-to-peer conflict that does not have an adult involved in the conflict, does not have a finding of bullying or does not have legal implications

## HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Direct communication between students, teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians is essential to student success at PVPA. Home-to-school communication is as important as school-to-home communication. This document outlines the most effective methods, and what to do if communication is not working. Students with specific accommodations stated in IEPs or 504 plans may have different or additional strategies.

### COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Teachers/staff members are expected to respond within two school days after the initial communication. Please inform the Director of Arts and Academics, Laura Davis, if you do not hear back within this timeframe from: ELA, Mathematics, Science, History, World Language, and Arts Teachers. Please inform the Director of Student Services, Brent Nielsen, if you do not hear back within this timeframe from: Academic Support Teachers, Instructional Support Personnel, School Counselors, Adjustment Counselors, School Psychologist, and School Nurse.

#### Effective Communication Methods

- E-MAIL is generally the most efficient means to communicate between home and school. We understand that some families (and teachers/staff members) do not have Internet access at home, and make every attempt to make accommodations. Most PVPA staff members have email addresses that follow this format: firstinitiallastname@pvpa.org (Example: jsmith@pvpa.org).
- TELEPHONE calls are also effective. The main office number is 413.552.1580, and community members may leave a voicemail message. Except for emergencies, it is not possible to speak directly with a teacher during class time.

### COMMUNITY BULLETIN

The Community Bulletin, our weekly newsletter, is every community member's source for timely information about upcoming events, reports on past events, helpful links, general news of the school, staff, and students, and links to other topics of interest. Friday Notes are sent via email to all families and we strongly encourage families to review them weekly. If you are not receiving Friday Notes by email or would like to submit material for inclusion in Friday Notes, please contact the main office.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

The PVPA Facebook page, [PVPA - Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School](#), is a means of communicating timely and general information, along with photo sharing. If you are a Facebook user, please take a moment to "like" PVPA's facebook page and join the conversation.

### SCHOOL WEBSITE

The PVPA website, [www.pvpa.org](http://www.pvpa.org), is our go-to source for navigating a school year at PVPA. In addition to school contact information, detailed calendar listings, archives of Friday Notes, community notices and information, Board of Trustees meeting agendas and minutes, we include course descriptions, forms for parents (e.g., bus contracts, independent study forms, etc.), transportation information, and so much more.

If you have questions or feedback about the website, please contact Sandra Courtney, Enrollment and Communications Coordinator at [scourtney@pvpa.org](mailto:scourtney@pvpa.org). Information should be relevant to the entire PVPA community.

### PARENT/GUARDIAN-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Twice during every school year, PVPA sets aside time for parents/guardians to schedule meetings with their student's teachers. These meetings provide opportunities to discuss successes and concerns, and make sure students are on track



to meet graduation/promotion requirements. In addition, parents are encouraged to request additional in-person or telephone conferences by contacting individual teachers or school counselors.

Sign-up for conferences happens through a third-party web application called “Pick-A-Time.” Instructions for the use of this system will accompany the notification email that the school sends out in advance of sign-ups. Any questions about technical difficulties with this system should be directed to the main office.

## STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES

As school approaches its end in June, students in grades 7 and 8 prepare and conduct their own student-led conferences as a reflection on and celebration of their learning over the course of the school year. Families are invited to schedule an appointment to participate in this event with their student. As with Parent/Guardian Conferences, sign-up happens digitally over a third-party web application called “Pick-A-Time,” and instructions will be provided when appropriate.

## STUDENT/PARENT PORTAL

The PVPA Student and Parent Portals are by far the most effective way to stay on top of a student’s progress on homework completion, missing work, and assignment results. The Portals allow students and parents/guardians to monitor work completion and academic progress on a weekly basis. *Note: The PowerSchool app that is available for mobile devices is only useful for real-time attendance notifications about your student. All other features are disabled due to our non-traditional assessment and grading practices. You must use a web browser to access our portal.*

### Portal Access

STUDENTS: To access the Portal you must log in with the Student Portal login information provided at the beginning of the year. You can access the [Portal](#) through [PVPA’s website](#) under the “Students” icon. Under the same tab you’ll also find the instructions on how to use the portal, including a new video tour. If you are having trouble accessing the portal, a school counselor, office staff, or the Technology Director ([admin@pvpa.org](mailto:admin@pvpa.org)), can help.

In the portal students can review:

- All course assignments
- Course objectives
- Report cards.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS: To access the Portal, you will be provided login information by our Technology Director ([admin@pvpa.org](mailto:admin@pvpa.org)). You can access the [Portal](#) through [PVPA’s website](#) under the “Parents” icon. Under the same tab you’ll also find the instructions to log in to the portal, including a new video tour. If you are having trouble accessing the portal, please email our Technology Director at [admin@pvpa.org](mailto:admin@pvpa.org).

Besides monitoring your student’s work, the parent portal can also be used to update the following information:

- Blanket permissions: This allows you to change the permission preferences for your student(s) (e.g. field trip permission, movies permission, etc.).
- Contact information: You can update your contact information, so we have the latest changes on record (e.g. change in address, telephone number, email address, etc.)
- Permission to pick up: You can tell us who is allowed to pick up your student(s) from school.

# APPENDIX A

## ARTS CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE LISTINGS

### Dance Concentration Courses

COURSE	CREATIVE	PERFORMANCE	HISTORY/CONNECTIONS
Choreography Lab	X		
Jazz Dance		X	X
Dance Technique 1 & 2		X	
African Dance		X	X
Hip Hop Dance 1 & 2		X	X
Latin Fusion Dance		X	
Funkadelic Dance Company (last offered 2018-19)	X	X	X
Catalyst Dance Company	X	X	
Wofa African Dance Company		X	X

*Note: Beginning in school year 2019-20, Yoga, and Body Conditioning and Cardio Jam are eligible for Physical Education credit only. Prior to school year 2019-20, Yoga, Body Conditioning, Body Weight and Conditioning, and Cardio Jam were eligible for elective credit (only) toward the dance concentration.*

### Music Concentration Courses

COURSE	THEORY/TECHNOLOGY	PERFORMANCE	CULTURE/TECHNIQUE
Music Mastery	X		
Vocal Technique	X		
Advanced Musical Theater singing	X		
PVPA Chorus		X	
Music of India	X (before SY19-20)		X
The Singer's Studio		X	X
Music Production and Recording	X		
The Art of Songwriting	X		X
1960s Arts and Culture (concentration only)			X
Latin American Arts and Culture (concentration only)			X
A Cappella Ensemble		X	
Jazz Ensemble/The Groovy Truth		X	
Pop R&B Ensemble		X	
Rock Ensemble/Earwürm		X	
Rock & Soul Revue		X	
MAPS (Music and Poetry Synchronized)		X	
Advanced Opera Performance (last offered 2019-20)		X	
PVPA Musical		X	
PVPA Orchestra/The Sound Collective Orchestra		X	X

NOTE:

\* Wofa African Drum and African Drum 1 are incorporated into corresponding Dance department courses beginning in 2020-21

### **Theater Concentration Courses**

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>CREATIVE</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>CRITIQUE</b>
Playwriting (concentration only if ELA credit)	X		
Directing	X		
Intro to Mock Trial	X		
Musical Theater Playwriting	X		
Screenwriting	X		
Short Film Production	X		
Filmmaking	X		
Mainstage Assistant Director	X		
Mainstage Stage Manager	X		
Mainstage Choreographer	X		
Improvisational Acting		X	
Mainstage Production		X	
Acting Technique		X	
Improvisational Acting		X	
PVPA Musical		X	
Musical Theater Performance		X	
Mock Trial Competition		X	
Devised Theatre		X	
Advanced Musical Theater Singing		X	
Theater Critique			X
Film Critique			X

*Note: All other Theater courses not listed above are eligible for Theater elective credit only.*

### **Visual Arts and Technical Theater Concentration Courses**

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>DESIGN</b>	<b>COSTUMING</b>	<b>SCENIC</b>	<b>LIGHTING</b>
Graphic Design & Publications (Yearbook Production)	X			
Digital Design	X			
Scenic Design	X		X	
Drafting, Design, and Modeling	X		X	
Scenic Painting			X	
Stagecraft 1 & 2			X	
Costuming 1 & 2		X		
Costume (& Garment) Production		X		
Mask Making		X		
Advanced Lighting Seminar				X

*Note: All other VATT courses not listed above are eligible for VATT elective credit only.*

### **Musical Theater Concentration Courses**

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>VOCAL MUSIC</b>	<b>THEATER</b>	<b>DANCE</b>	<b>HISTORY /CONNECTIONS</b>
Vocal Technique	X			
PVPA Musical	X	X		
Musical Theater Performance	X	X		
Mainstage Production		X		
Acting Technique		X		
Improvisational Acting		X		
Devised Theater		X		
Dance Technique 1 & 2			X	
Jazz Dance			X	
Catalyst Dance Company			X	
African Dance 1			X	X

Hip Hop Dance 1 & 2			X	X
Wofa African Dance Company			X	X
Theater Critique				X
Musical Theater Playwriting				X

#### **Film Concentration Courses**

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>DESIGN</b>	<b>PRODUCTION</b>	<b>CRITIQUE</b>
Graphic Design & Publications (Yearbook Production)	X		
Digital Design	X		
Scenic Design	X		
Film Critique			X
Filmmaking		X	
Short Film Production		X	