



# **PIONEER VALLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL**

Bernardston      Leyden      Northfield      Warwick

97 F. Sumner Turner Road

Northfield, MA 01360

## **2021 - 2022 STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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<https://pvrs.pvrsdk12.org/>

Revised: 7/11/19

The Pioneer Valley Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, housing status, or disability in admission to, access to, employment in, or treatment in its programs and activities.

# Pioneer Valley Regional School



## Core Values

**Universal Respect**  
**Personal Responsibility**  
**Academic Excellence**

## Expectations for Building and Applying Lifelong Skills

- E1. Actively read and listen**
- E2. Work collaboratively**
- E3. Set goals, make priorities, and manage progress**
- E4. Use technology effectively**
- E5. Understand how individual parts make up a system**
- E6. Analyze the impact of people on society**
- E7. Articulate and defend ideas**
- E8. Solve problems and make informed decisions**
- E9. Create and innovate**
- E10. Contribute to a just and sustainable future**

Pioneer Valley Regional School

Core Values and Expectations for Building and Applying Lifelong Skills



## Pioneer Valley Regional School Mission

The Pioneer community is committed to creating a learning environment that fosters universal respect, personal responsibility, and academic excellence. Pioneer recognizes that to meet the challenges of the 21st century we must critically and creatively engage in real world tasks, adapt to new situations and technologies, and collaboratively problem solve. By designing equal opportunities and multiple approaches to growth in a heterogeneous setting, we will facilitate the success of our students in a rapidly evolving, diverse global society.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PVRS ADMINISTRATION

Welcome to Pioneer Valley Regional School! We hope that you will find your middle and high school years with us to be academically and personally rewarding. We look forward to supporting each and every student academically, socially and emotionally as you strive to reach your individual goals. As a school community we enjoy a great deal of support from the townspeople of Northfield, Bernardston, Leyden and Warwick. We have a beautiful facility and a skilled, talented, caring staff.

As educators we are charged with the responsibility of seeing to it that all students have the opportunity to learn. This can best be accomplished if all students abide by the common sense rules printed in the handbook. It is expected that members of our school community will exercise self-discipline and responsible behavior at all times. We ask that all students and their parents/guardians become familiar with this Student Handbook as well as the Athletic Handbook, and Electronic Acceptable Use Policy located at [www.pvrs.pvrsdk12.org](http://www.pvrs.pvrsdk12.org) (If for any reason you cannot access this information on-line, hard copies are available in our main office). Take advantage of the many opportunities for involvement here at Pioneer, both through the excellent course offerings and the wide variety of extra-curricular activities offered. These are exciting years, a time for you to acquire new skills and to explore new and different avenues. Good Luck... We wish you well!

## NOTICE

The Pioneer Valley Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, housing status, or disability in admission to, access to, employment in, or treatment in its programs and activities. If you have questions or concerns please contact Chris Maguire, who is the District's Coordinator for Title VI, Title IX and Section 504:

**Christie Fontaine**  
97 F Sumner Turner Rd.  
Northfield, MA 01360  
(413) 498-2911 x612

## PARENTAL APPEAL PROCESS

Many times conflicts at school arise out of some form of miscommunication. Therefore, we urge you to contact us. If you, as parent or guardian, have a question or wish to resolve a problem regarding your child, we encourage you to follow the sequence below whenever possible:

1. Begin by speaking with the individual (teacher, coach or other staff member) who is most directly involved in the situation  
If no satisfactory solution is found then speak with:
2. School Counselor, Athletic Director, Dean of Students or Principal as appropriate
3. Superintendent
4. Curriculum/Personnel sub-committee
5. Full School Committee

This will help to expedite the procedure in that the individual(s) closest to the situation are those most likely to help with the resolution. A child's School Counselor, acting as the student's advocate, can help with guiding a parent through the process.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

School is compulsory for students under the age of sixteen. A student may be considered truant and court proceedings initiated when the student accumulates more than seven unexcused absences in a six-month period. (See MGL CH. 76, S. 2 and S. 5)

The importance of regular class attendance cannot be overemphasized. What happens in the classroom is essential to the educational process. Time lost from the class can never be regained. Regular, prompt, attendance enhances learning by exposing students to a greater amount of academic content, instruction, and time to apply new concepts and skills. It allows for teacher explanation and the interaction between students and between teacher and student. Since the classroom is the primary area of learning, it is apparent that attendance is a valid reasonable requirement. Teachers cannot teach students who are not present. Therefore, parents are strongly urged to assist the school by supporting its attendance policy.

**Health officials estimate that a normal absentee rate should be no more than seven to nine days for any student for the school year.**

### **ATTENDANCE IMPACT ON MCAS APPEALS**

Beginning in September 2004, to qualify for the appeals process students must meet the attendance rate established by the Board of Education. Students must meet the state attendance rate of 95% (or not more than 9 days absent-excused and unexcused combined) to be considered for an MCAS performance or portfolio appeal.

### **WHAT IS NOT COUNTED AS AN ABSENCE**

Co-curricular activities (such as field trips, club conferences, athletic competitions, etc.) will not be considered as an absence provided the student has the *Co-Curricular Activity Permission Slip Form* signed by his/her teachers prior to the activity day. This form notifies the teacher that the student will not be in class that day and allows the student to find out what work he/she will be missing that day.

### **WHAT IS COUNTED AS AN EXCUSED ABSENCE**

From time to time, absence from school is unavoidable and legitimate. The following are the only acceptable excuses for absences:

1. Personal illness lasting more than 3 consecutive days that is accompanied by a doctor's note.
2. Serious illness or death in the family
3. Religious holidays
4. Medical appointments that cannot be made at a time other than during school hours
5. College or school visitations with advance notice to the Principal and teachers; documented through a planned absence sheet
6. Severe storm or impassable roads
7. Court appearance
8. Other absences accepted in advance by the Principal and/or Dean of Students.

### **WHAT IS COUNTED AS AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE**

Any other reason for absence from school such as routine illnesses, family trips, driver's education classes, hunting, hair appointments, etc., will be considered unexcused. A pattern of unexcused absences may be treated as truancy.

## **TARDY POLICY**

Student drivers who have four (4) unexcused tardies in a marking period will lose driving privileges for the remainder of the marking period. If a student driver receives a 5<sup>th</sup> tardy in a marking period he/she will lose driving privileges for the remainder of the year.

Students must be present for a full day of school (unless tardiness is accompanied by a note that renders it an excused absence) in order to participate in after school activities on that day, including athletics.

## **NOTIFICATION**

Parents and students are reminded that the number of school absences is reported on the end of the quarter Report Card. In addition to this, when a student has **5 unexcused absences** from school in a semester (part day or full day) a parent will be asked to come to meet with a school representative and form an action plan for improved attendance.

## **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE**

- A. First block teachers will take attendance each morning and record the names of those absent electronically or call the main office.
- B. All students are expected to be seated in their first block class before the 7:50 a.m. bell has rung. If a bus is late, the office will announce that fact and ask teachers to admit the students involved.
- C. Any student entering a classroom after the 7:50 a.m. bell is late and needs a pass from whoever detained him/her. Any student entering the building after 7:50 must report to the Main Office prior to going to their class.
- D. Tardiness/Lateness. In order for a student to have an excused tardiness/lateness, they must present to the office upon arrival to school, a note from their parent explaining the reason for being late and the expected or actual time of arrival. The only reasons considered valid for an excused tardy are the same reasons for an excused absence. (See Excused Absences).

## **ABSENCE PROCEDURE**

On the day a student is absent, a parent/guardian is expected to call the school before 8:30 a.m. at 498-2931 (then press 1). On the day the student returns to school, a written excuse note from the parent stating the date and reason for absence is required and must be turned in to the main office upon arrival.

If a student wishes to request homework after having been absent from school for more than one day, the School Office may be called at 498-2931 (then press 3). Twenty-four hour notice is requested. You may request another student to bring it home, or you may arrange to have a parent/guardian pick it up. It is also very effective to e-mail teachers directly.

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Individual teacher may make class attendance a requirement that is linked to a student's grade. In such cases the attendance policy for the course will be clearly stated in the course syllabus that is distributed to students at the beginning of the course.

## **ABSENCE FROM MIDTERMS OR FINAL EXAMS**

- A. Once the exam schedule has been finalized, no one will be allowed to take the exam earlier than scheduled without the express written consent of the Principal. Permission will be granted only under extreme hardship cases such as medical reasons or family emergencies, which take the student from the area for the summer. (Summer jobs do not fall within this definition.)

**Exception:** Students participating in school sponsored or school approved activities.

B. Students wishing to take exams other than at the scheduled time must make up the exam within ten (10) business days following the scheduled date or receive a failing grade for the exam. Only those students who have received prior permission from the administration or who happen to be ill on the day of the exam may exercise this option.

### PLANNED ABSENCES

By June the School Committee establishes the specific dates for school to be in session for the following academic year in order to allow parents and students adequate time to schedule trips and family vacations to coincide with periods in which school is not in session. By doing so, the Committee recognizes the importance of students' consistent and prompt attendance to school.

Under unique or unusual circumstances, a student may request to leave school prior to the completion of the marking period or for a period of time during the marking period for reasons not covered under acceptable reasons for school absence. **Parents/students must make such requests in writing to the Principal (using the *Planned Absence Request Form*), with reasons stated, at least two weeks prior to the departure date.** The Principal will respond in writing (using that form) to all such requests. If a student fails to notify and receive approval by the school, the absence will be treated as truancy and if the student is under 16 years of age, it could also involve court action and legal fines. Approval does not erase the absences; they are still part of the student's total absences for the semester/year. **If the request is approved:**

1. Students should meet with individual teachers to discuss how they will complete the work covered during their absence.
2. Homework will be given in advance if possible.

### DISMISSALS

1. Students being excused must present a written note from their parents before school begins at 7:50 a.m. These notes should have time leaving, return, and reason for dismissal. The only legitimate excuses for dismissal are the same as the reasons for excused absence. (See Excused Absence). All unexcused dismissals will be treated as a class cut. Frequent dismissals for appointments may require a note from the doctor or dentist. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should make every attempt to **avoid scheduling appointments during the school day.**
2. In the event of an emergency, a student may be excused from school via a telephone call from a parent, or a parent may come to the school office and directly request dismissal. A waiver for extra-curricular activities will only be granted in the case of an unusual situation, emergency, or documented medical appointments.
3. **In all instances, the student must sign out with a secretary in the Main Office.**
4. Under no circumstance should a teacher send a student on an errand that requires the leaving of the building. The Main Office must have direct contact with a parent for permission to leave.

### ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL

When a student, regardless of the student's age or the number of credits obtained, has exceeded the absence limit of 10 consecutive days, they, along with their parents/guardians, will be invited to attend an Exit Intervention Interview with the school's Exit Intervention Team. The student and his/her parent/guardian will be provided written notice of the invitation to attend the exit interview within five (5) days of the tenth consecutive absence. The purpose of the exit interview is to learn more about the student's needs, to develop an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), and, ultimately, to prevent the student from dropping out. If the student decides to leave school prior to graduation, despite having an Exit Intervention Interview and being offered appropriate resources and supports, then an exit survey is conducted.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

### Requirements for Graduation:

One hundred twenty (120) credits are required for graduation. All required courses must be passed as a condition of graduation and to participate in graduation activities.

Students must demonstrate proficiency of each of the school's learning expectations as described in the Core Values and Expectations for Building and Applying Lifelong Skills by completing and presenting a digital portfolio of work.

In compliance with The Massachusetts Board of Education, Competency Determination in both English Language Arts and Mathematics is required for graduation. To earn a Competency Determination a student must score "Proficient" (240 or better) or score "Needs Improvement" (between 220 and 238) and complete an Educational Proficiency Plan during 11th and 12th grade. In addition, students must achieve a minimum score of "Needs Improvement" (220 or better) on an MCAS tests in science.

To receive a diploma from Pioneer Valley Regional School, a student must be enrolled and in attendance at PVRs for his/her senior year (grade 12) for a minimum of one semester. Students who have attended PVRs for more than two semesters prior to their senior year may be eligible for early graduation, full time enrollment at GCC or other approved alternative programs.

### Exceptions to Graduation Requirements

#### Waivers of Graduation Requirements

1. Exception to the specific PVRs graduation requirements will be considered only upon written petition to the Principal.
2. The student shall submit substantial evidence of meeting the intent of the specific requirement to be modified or waived, or of an inability to meet a specific requirement because of a documented disability. The Principal shall to the satisfaction of a committee review such evidence. Such committee shall include, but not be limited to, a representative of the School Department, the subject area department chairperson (as relevant), and the student and/or his/her parents.
3. Early graduation/release in and of itself shall not be considered a valid reason for exception from the specific PVRs graduation requirement.
4. Course work completed at other accredited secondary schools and colleges prior to entry into PVRs shall be credited toward meeting the specific PVRs graduation requirements.
5. Course work completed at other secondary schools and colleges after entry into PVRs will be evaluated for its appropriateness in meeting the intent of specific PVRs graduation requirements. The committee appointed by the Principal in #2 above will make such evaluation. It is strongly recommended that a student, who plans to take course work to meet the specifications outlined above, obtain written approval prior to taking the course to insure its applicability to PVRs' specific graduation requirements.

#### Alternative Pathways to Graduation

The Principal shall establish, alternative pathways to graduation for students for whom the traditional pathway to graduation is not reasonably feasible. These pathways will include demonstration of the competencies expected of a high school graduate in literacy, math, and science, as determined by the faculty.



The entry of a student into an alternative pathway will be decided by a majority vote of the school's Student Intervention Team (comprised of building administration, guidance and counseling staff).

#### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Students are expected to uphold standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism (presenting the words or ideas of another as one's own) and cheating are unacceptable. This means that students must submit assignments that reflect their own intellectual work; that they will accurately acknowledge sources used for research papers; and that they will demonstrate their own learning by avoiding cheating in all forms. A first offense will result in loss of credit (grade of 0) for the assignment, a conference with the instructor, parent contact, a report to the principal, and notice to the NHS/NJHS advisor (if applicable). Repeat offenses may also result in a parent conference and disciplinary consequences including suspension as well as disqualification from honor roll consideration. Consequences up to and including a failing grade in the course, will be imposed for violation of this policy.

#### **COURSE WITHDRAWAL**

A student who withdraws from a course within the first 5 days will not have a grade recorded for that course. After 5 school days, a student must gain the Principal's permission to withdraw from a course. (Acceptable reasons for withdrawal may include course work beyond the skill or ability of students; need for student to devote more attention to other subjects, course load in excess of minimum required credits (9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> grade: 30 credits and 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> grade: 30 credits) or other reasons as determined by the administration). Once the Principal's permission has been obtained, a grade of "W", "W/P" or "W/F" will be recorded, depending on the academic standing in that class at the time of withdrawal. The teacher will submit the mark to be assigned, stating the reason(s) for it, and any other information for review by the Principal. A "W" indicates that the student withdrew from the course before a grade was assigned in the course. A grade of "W/P" indicates that the student was passing the course at the time of withdrawal. A grade of "W/F" indicates that the student was failing the course at the time of withdrawal. A W/F affects a student's eligibility and may be given at any time during the year. In all cases of withdrawal from a course, the teacher will submit the mark to be assigned stating the reason(s) for it and any other information for review by the Principal. The channels in the decision-making will be teacher – School Counselor – Principal. The Principal will make a final decision.

#### **GRADE MARKING SYSTEM**

##### **A. Criteria**

Five (5) basic categories of letter grades are used: A-B-C-D-F or 4-3-2-1-0 for Honor Roll tabulations. This five-scale system reflects both uniformity and consistency for all students.

The following are criteria for our grading systems:

1. An A+ designates achievement beyond the expectations of the course and is awarded at teacher discretion.
2. A mark of "A" (90-100) – indicates the student has a thorough grasp of the subject matter, makes contributions to the work of the class, and does more work and better quality than is required.
3. A mark of "B" (80-89) – indicates the student has a clear and accurate grasp of the subject matter; shows a tendency to improve the quality of his/her work, and is well versed in the course material.
4. A mark of "C" (70-79) – indicates the student demonstrates an average knowledge of the subject matter and tries to develop good study habits.
5. A mark of "D" (60-69) – indicates the student does not demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the subject matter and completes required assignments at minimum standards.
6. A mark of "F" (0-59) – indicates the student has not met minimum course standards and has not completed required assignments.

7. Pass/Fail – Successful completion of course requirements/unsatisfactory work.
8. INC – incomplete work due to unavoidable circumstance.
9. W – Withdrawal from a course with passing status
10. W/F – Withdrawal from a course with failure status, affects eligibility.
11. Med – excused from course for medical reasons, physician’s written documentation required.

#### **B. Absences**

If a student has an excused absence, the student has 10 days to make up missing work. For prolonged absences, other arrangements can be made.

#### **C. Incomplete Marks**

1. It is the responsibility of the student to request a time extension at the end of the marking period.
2. Such extensions are to be granted only to those students who have been unable to complete course requirements within the time allotted due to either personal illness or other unavoidable circumstances.
3. Extensions will begin at the close of a quarter and will terminate not later than 10 school days from the date the student was informed by the teacher.
4. Ten (10) school days from the marking period closing date, the School secretary will review the grades and change any incomplete still remaining to an “F”. This change will be noted and a copy of the corrected report card will be mailed home.
5. Students who have “incompletes” on their report cards will be included on the ineligible list until the grade is complete. Seniors will also lose privileges until the incomplete grade is amended.

#### **D. Grade Conversion Chart**

Numerical Range	Letter Grade	GPA
Above Expectations	A+	<b>4.00</b> <b>( &amp; Teacher Discretion)</b>
93 – 100	A	<b>4.00</b>
90 – 92	A-	<b>3.67</b>
87 – 89	B+	<b>3.33</b>
83 – 86	B	<b>3.00</b>
80 – 82	B-	<b>2.67</b>
77 – 79	C+	<b>2.33</b>
73 – 76	C	<b>2.00</b>
70 – 72	C-	<b>1.67</b>
67 – 69	D+	<b>1.33</b>
63 – 66	D	<b>1.00</b>
60 – 62	D-	<b>0.67</b>
00 – 59	F	<b>0.00</b>

For the purposes of determining Valedictorian and Salutatorian, one extra grade point is awarded to the successful completion of each AP course.

#### **E. Determination of Final Grades**

The responsibility for grading rests exclusively with the classroom teacher within the following guidelines:

- A. For full year courses, the 4 marking periods each weigh 20% and each exam (mid-year and final) weighs 10%. In the case of semester courses, the 2 marking periods each weigh 40% and the exam weighs 20%

of the final grade. In order to receive credit for a course, the final exam or final project must be completed. Not receiving credit may mean having to take the course again regardless of the grade.

- B. The teacher may use numerical averages to determine a student's letter grade for each marking period and for the final grade. Except for final exams, no quarterly average less than 50% will be used.
- C. Final grades will be calculated automatically by the gradebook. Teachers may manually adjust the grade.

**F. Report Cards**

- 1. The formal report card is issued four times each year – November, February, April and June.
- 2. Mid-marking period reports are issued so that parents and students will know about the progress between report cards, thus enabling the student to improve his/her work before report cards are issued. Lack of the issuance of mid-marking period report does not guarantee that the student will get a passing mark at the time of the issue of the report cards since much can happen in the succeeding five weeks.
- 3. At any time a student's grade drops significantly or there are concerns that a student is in danger of failing, every effort will be made to contact the parents immediately.
- 4. Cumulative Record. All students' academic records are filed separately from discipline records for that student. Persons, other than administrators, student's teachers, counselors, and staff may have access to the discipline records only if the student and/or his parents grant permission. Students' records are available to them and their parents/guardians with 48-hour notice.

**G. Honor Roll Selection Criteria**

- 1. No student with an incomplete grade in any course is eligible.
- 2. Only students with grades of A, B, or C are eligible.
- 3. All courses will be counted.
- 4. Honors listing requires a minimum grade point average of 3.00
- 5. High Honors selection requires a minimum grade point average of 3.50
- 6. Highest Honors requires a minimum grade point average of 3.80
- 7. Students who have violated the Academic Honesty policy may lose the privilege of being considered for the honor roll.

**H. Alternative To a Final Exam**

Alternative projects may be substituted for the final examination with prior approval of course teacher, department head and Principal by December 1 or May 1 of each year. Students failing to make acceptable progress by prescribed dates will be required to take the final examination.

**I. Course of Study Middle School Program**

Students in grade seven and eight have a prescribed course of study. It includes the subjects of English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, and Physical Education. Seventh and eighth grade students may take Band or Chorus. In addition, a Communications Technology course is taken in both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades to build students' computer technology skills. The middle school students will, on a rotating basis, take exploratory courses. These may include: Family and Consumer Sciences (Foods), Art, Material Technology Education (Woods, Drafting), Health, Theater and Music.

<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL CONFERENCES</b>
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During the afternoons of the mid-year exam period, the Middle School will hold student-led conferences. The purpose of these conferences is to provide a more complete picture of how students are progressing in school than a simple letter grade can provide. Each student will guide his/her parent/guardian through examples of work in a variety of classes, identify strengths and weaknesses, and set goals for the remainder of the year. Teachers will be available during the conferences to support students and answer questions. Middle school teachers and students will use the double blocks during the high school exams for curricular opportunities that

are not always possible in 47 minutes rather than giving 90 minute exams. We will have exams in the middle school at the end of the year as a way to help students prepare for high school.

#### **ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION PROCESS**

The following outline describes the process of identifying and intervening when a student is struggling in his/her courses and when regular interventions have not succeeded in addressing the issue. At each step of the process teachers and school support staff will be developing and testing strategies that might help the student re-engage with school and become successful. The range of possible interventions include: student-teacher conferences, peer tutoring, parent-teacher-School conferences, increased school-home communication, targeted use of classroom accommodations, increase guidance counselor support, Student Intervention Team conferences, referrals for evaluation to determine if a student has a disability that is interfering with his/her academic progress.

If a student continues to have difficulty making effective progress:

- A warning letter of possible retention will be mailed to parents/guardians prior to the completion of the third quarter if there has not been adequate progress in the areas of concern. Additional interventions will be identified.
- An additional parent meeting during the fourth quarter will address the options for the student.
- If the intervention process outlined has not been successful and a student fails **two** core academic subjects, there will be an administrative review to decide whether a student should be retained, or enter into a hybrid schedule the following year to repeat courses in which he/she has not achieved a satisfactory level of mastery of the course material.

#### **EXTRA HELP FROM TEACHERS**

The teachers are here to help you. Ask questions. Teachers will be glad to answer them. If you need additional help, ask your teacher at the end of the period for after school help. Remember, the responsibility is yours. You are the first to know if you need help. Your teacher may ask you to stay for extra help, even though you do not request it; you are required to stay for such obligations. Teachers will stay after school to give extra help to a student, if the student requests it. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to make it up. Each teacher reserves one afternoon a week after school to provide extra help for his/her students. The teacher will announce the day to all classes and encourage students to take advantage of the opportunity. Students are expected to work appropriately toward completing assignments and behave in a manner conducive to learning.

#### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Students or parents who would like a copy of a booklet explaining Chapter 766 or who have questions about the program should contact the Special Education Administrator at Pioneer Valley Regional School (648-5450).

#### **NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY**

Membership in the National Honor Society is based upon scholarship, service, leadership, and character and is open to students in grades 10-12. There is also a National Junior Honor Society to which students in grades 8 and 9 may belong. Complete information can be found on the school website listed under Student Groups: NHS. Further information can be obtained from the school administration, the National Honor Society Advisor, or the National Junior Honor Society Advisor.

#### **INDIVIDUALIZED STUDY FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS**

Students desiring to engage in Individualized Study of Special Projects for credit should initiate a request with a faculty member. The credit awarded will be comparable to that awarded for regular classes, in accord with equivalent academic merit. Individualized Study Projects may not be taken in lieu of required courses, unless

deemed appropriate by school administration for reasons such as irresolvable scheduling conflicts. Individualized Study for credit is open to students in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. Information regarding Individualized Study, Work Study, or Dual Enrollment and required deadlines can be found in the Program of Studies or by contacting your School Counselor.

#### **NOTIFICATION**

The school will make every effort to notify parents/guardians as soon as possible anytime a student's safety is of concern. For example, during or after a lock-down procedure or when a student has been injured in school, a school official will contact parents/guardians as soon as possible.

## EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR

### PVRS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Every group must have certain rules by which it exists. The majority of students at PVRS are here to participate in the process of education as they grow intellectually, socially, and physically to mature, well-rounded citizens. So that PVRS can properly encourage this growth, a set of rules and regulations has been established. They are not meant to be restrictive but are designed to foster good citizenship and to allow the student body the opportunity to achieve its educational goals.

Student behavior in or outside of school (e.g. bullying or assault which may include but is not limited to email, text messages, Facebook pages) which has the effect of disrupting the learning environment for one or more students may result in school consequences. School rules apply at school and all school-related activities and functions such as dances, field trips, etc.

Unfortunately, there are students who indulge in anti-social and disruptive conduct which may hinder their own education and infringe upon the educational rights of their classmates. In the interest of maintaining good order and fostering respect, responsibility, and academic excellence, such conduct will not be tolerated. Cases of unacceptable conduct will be judged, as far as possible, on individual merits. Habitual offenders run the risk of such penalties as loss of privileges, including social suspension, detentions, suspensions, probationary status, prosecution in court, and expulsion. A student can incur penalties for impeding a disciplinary investigation. The noncompliance of several rules may result in suspension instead of additional detentions. The Principal has the discretion to determine whether traditional discipline, or the restorative process outlined will be used based on the individual merits of each situation.

Students at Pioneer are to conduct themselves as respectable people and with respect towards individuals and property at all times. Desirable qualities are honesty, cooperativeness, friendliness and diligence. Because of the need for teachers and school officials to administer discipline swiftly and informally and to maintain order and safety in schools, searches of students and his/her property will happen when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or school rules. Refusal to cooperate with administrators will be treated seriously. The consequence of such a decision may result in police involvement and/or suspension.

Students at PVRS will have the opportunity and support to grow intellectually, socially, and physically into mature, well-rounded citizens. So that PVRS can properly encourage this growth, PVRS has established a set of behavioral expectations to foster good citizenship and to afford students the opportunity to achieve their educational goals.

There are four core behavioral expectations all members of the Pioneer community are expected to practice:

1. Personal and school safety
2. Universal respect
3. Personal responsibility
4. Kindness and empathy

Members of the Pioneer community will practice meeting these expectations during school and after school, in the building and on school grounds, and at any school-sponsored events including field trips, athletic games and other events off- campus. Members of the Pioneer community will also uphold these expectations in on-line interactions among members of the school community, including communication through social media.

## GENERAL DISCIPLINARY EXPECTATIONS

- A. Items not directly associated with the educational program (i.e., water guns, skateboards, yo-yos, water balloons, pets, stuffed animals, etc.) are not to be brought to school. Students found in possession of such items will have the items confiscated and will be subject to disciplinary action.
- B. Weapons are strictly prohibited from school grounds. Any student in possession of a dangerous weapon is subject to discipline leading up to and including expulsion.
- C. During class periods, students may not leave their assigned room without their teacher's permission. Students must legibly sign the sign-out sheet in the classroom indicating their destination.
- D. Students asked by a teacher to leave the classroom for disciplinary reasons must report directly to the Main Office.
- E. During school hours the parking lot is off-limits. For persons who drive to school, their vehicles are off-limits from the time they arrive at school until the time when they leave school.
- F. At no time are students to open or go into any other student's locker or desk without permission of the other student.
- G. Students are not to open teachers' desks, file cabinets, or storage cabinets. Students are not allowed in the faculty lounge, the main office, and prep areas, or any private office without a faculty member accompanying them.
- H. Students are expected to pass from class to class in an orderly manner. Students shall refrain from running, shouting, loitering or horseplay.
- I. The same code of behavior is expected of students toward substitute teachers as applies with their regular teachers.
- J. Acceptable Use Policy of computers violation may result in loss of computer privileges, project pass and/or suspension from school.

## MEETING BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

By keeping in mind the four core behavioral expectations, everyone in our school community can make good choices about his/her/their behavior. However, some specific examples can help us all put these four basic expectations into practice. The list below includes some but not all of the behaviors that are expected.

### 1. PVRs students and staff will practice PERSONAL AND SCHOOL SAFETY

- Move in a calm and orderly manner
- Respect the personal space and property of others
- Avoid unhealthy and or dangerous practices (for examples see Appendix F: Unhealthy and Unsafe Behavior)
- Be active in protecting the dignity and worth of others (see Appendix A: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy)

### 2. PVRs students and staff will practice UNIVERSAL RESPECT

- Share ideas and opinions using a respectful tone
- Listen to the ideas of others with the intent to understand their perspective
- Be aware of body language and facial expressions as communication
- Use school-appropriate language
- Take care of property, equipment and supplies belonging to individuals or the community
- Dress appropriately for school (see Appendix E: Dress Code)
- Respond positively to adult requests

### 3. PVRs community members will be RESPONSIBLE

- Make your best effort
- Be on time

- Come prepared
- Be honest
- Present your own work and ideas
- Work together to keep the school and grounds clean
- Use technology and cell phones appropriately (see Appendix B: Acceptable Use of Electronic Devices)
- Ask questions to clarify expectations
- Seek help for yourself or others when necessary

#### **4. PVRs community members will be KIND and EMPATHETIC**

- Look for the positive in each other and in situations
- Use words, tone of voice to help not to hurt ( just because you can say it, doesn't mean you should say it)
- Help each other learn, understand, and grow
- Find ways, small and large, to reach out and support community members
- Appreciate diversity in our community
- Be courteous to everyone

### **RESTORATIVE PRACTICES**

When a student is unable, on occasion, to meet these behavioral expectations, Pioneer's focus is on helping the student take responsibility for his/her/their actions, work with the student on a plan to make amends, and together restore the relationships of mutual trust and respect that are the foundation of the Pioneer community.

Restorative practice is an approach the Principal has the discretion to use rather than traditional discipline practices. It is both a philosophy and a set of tools to help emphasize learning from mistakes and community building over punishment for actions that do not meet Pioneer's behavioral expectations. It is an alternative to traditional approaches to student discipline.

We recognize that members of our school community bring with them a variety of cultural backgrounds, values, interests and abilities. This diversity can help us build a vibrant school community when we all value and respect one another. Restorative practices help build this strong community and support students in their growth as citizens, community members and humans, with the understanding that mistakes or missteps are a part of the learning process.

The restorative process approaches inappropriate behavior by asking the following set of questions:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking or feeling at the time?
- Who was harmed or affected by what happened?
- What needs to be done to make things right?
- How can you or others behave differently in the future?

These questions address the roles of everyone involved in the situation: students, staff, administration, and sometimes families. All of us must play a role in understanding inappropriate behavior, why it occurred, and how we can use it as an opportunity to create a stronger and more resilient community moving forward.



## RESTORATIVE RESPONSES

There are a variety of restorative responses that are used when inappropriate behavior has occurred. At Pioneer, we will be working toward utilizing this full range of restorative practices.

These restorative responses can happen during the school day, after school, or on the weekend at the discretion of the teacher or administrator.

Community Circles	Used in classrooms or advisory to build relationships, establish understanding and trust, and build a sense of community, or address larger issues affecting the school community.
Resolution Circles	Used in classrooms or advisory as a place for intervention to prevent the escalation of conflicts or address inappropriate behavior when it has occurred.
Peer Mediation	Students who have been trained as mediators facilitate a negotiation between conflicting parties to come to a mutually acceptable resolution. Mediation is not used where an individual has been victimized.
Restorative Conversations	Typically a conference between an administrator or staff member and a student to determine what happened and why, who has been harmed, and what can be done to make it right.
Restorative Conferences	A conference facilitated by a trained educator that brings together the harm-doer and the harmed to understand each other's perspectives and repair the harm to the extent possible. Both parties must engage willingly in a formal restorative conference.

## IN-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS

The building principal has the discretion to engage students who fall short of the District's behavioral expectations either through the restorative process outlined above, or through more traditional means of discipline including detention, and in-school and out-of-school suspensions. (See Appendix C: Due Process Guidelines for Suspension and Expulsion and Appendix D: Discipline of Students with Disabilities under Special Education/504 Laws).

After a period of suspension or other discipline, restorative responses can be used to reintegrate and re-engage the student and restore balance to the Pioneer Community.

## TRANSPORTATION

All students riding school buses within the Districts served by F.M. Kuzmeskus, Inc. are expected to follow a few basic guidelines while riding the bus. These guidelines are put in place to assist the school bus driver with the safest possible transportation to and from school each day. All students are expected to follow "school rules" whenever they are on the bus.

In addition, the following simple rules must be adhered to:

- Students must remain seated, facing forward, while the bus is in motion.

- Students must keep their hands to themselves.

- Students must use "inside voices" meaning yelling and screaming must be avoided.

- Students' personal belongings must be kept inside their book bag or knapsack.

- Weapons of any sort may not be transported on the school bus.

Vandalism of vehicle or its contents is not permitted.

Students will not tamper with or try to operate either the service door or the emergency door; this is the responsibility of the bus operator.

Students loading the bus on a street where the bus passes in both directions are to wait until the bus passes on their side so they will not have to cross the road.

Students having to cross the road when loading and discharging **are to cross in front** of the bus, not the rear, **upon the driver's signal**. All pupils are advised to use extreme caution by looking at traffic both ways before crossing.

A student who desires to ride a bus other than the one assigned must obtain special written permission from the Main Office.

#### CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATION OF TRANSPORTATION EXPECTATIONS

Any student found in violation of the above Safety Rules will receive Bus Conduct Reports with the following consequences:

**1<sup>st</sup> Report** – School official meets with the student to discuss the inappropriate behavior. Notations Regarding meeting are made on the Conduct Report and it is signed by the student and parent/guardian and Returned to the bus driver.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Report** – Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must meet with the School Official to discuss the inappropriate behavior. Notations Regarding the meeting are made on the conduct Report and it is signed by the student and parent/guardian and Returned to the bus driver.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Report** – Student bus privileges are suspended for a minimum of two school days. Parent/Guardian must meet with the School Official prior to students bus privileges being reinstated. Notations regarding the meeting are made on the Conduct Report and it is signed by the student and parent/guardian and returned to the bus driver.

**Subsequent infractions may result in long term or permanent suspension from the school bus.**

**\*Additionally, severe violations may result in immediate disciplinary action/suspension from the bus regardless of the number of bus reports previously issued.**

#### LATE BUSES

There will be no late busses during the 2019 - 2020 school year. Students should be picked up by parents, guardians or persons authorized by the parents/guardians at the end of any after-school activity.

#### DRIVING AND PARKING REGULATIONS

1. Student drivers must register their cars with the Main Office at the start of each school year and receive a sticker or permit for each vehicle that will be parked on school grounds (up to two). Students who fail to obtain permission prior to driving to school are subject to disciplinary action and having the vehicle towed from the premises.
2. Only the person registered with the school may drive the vehicle.
3. Parking permits must be visible in driver's side rear window.
4. Park only in the area designated by the permit: student parking is in the front (South) lot in spaces marked by white lines. Seniors will occupy those student spots closest to the school. (Staff parking is marked by yellow lines)
5. Leave the vehicle immediately upon arrival at school, and **do not return to it** during the school day.
6. While on school property, you must abide by the speed limit of 15 m. p. h.

7. You must yield to pedestrians and school buses.
8. Do not pass any moving vehicle on school property.
9. Drive in a mature manner and stay on the roadways.
10. Stay off school grounds after being excused unless attending a co-curricular activity or school social function.
11. Do not transport unauthorized persons on-or-off campus in your vehicle.
- 12. Student drivers who are tardy five (5) times in a marking period will lose driving privileges.**

### SCHOOL AND COUNSELING SERVICES

**School Counselors** assist all students as they develop their personal attitudes, values, and academic and social skills, both individually and in groups. Consultation and coordination of information are also functions of counselors who serve as a resource to students, parents, and faculty.

Students are urged to get to know and work with their School counselors. All concerns of a personal, social, academic, or career nature can be discussed with assurance of confidentiality. Usually counseling enables students to arrive at their own best solutions to problems. Appointments are preferable, but needs of immediate concern can be handled on a drop-in basis.

College and Career Exploration – provision of college and career information and exploration continues throughout high school. Ample resources, workshops and one-to-one communication allow students a systematic and thorough search in cooperation with their parents and counselors. *Planning for Beyond High School* packets are available from your School Counselor. These packets include information like step-by-step instructions on what you need to do and when to do it in applying to colleges, facts about financial aid, scholarships, etc.

**Student Adjustment Counselor** provides in-house counseling, alcohol and drug abuse intervention, anger management training, and runs groups that focus on coping skill, decision-making skills, and substance abuse.

**School Psychologist** performs testing and provides in-house counseling (individual, group and/or family) support to students and families regarding psychological testing and school-related issues.

### OFF-SITE COURSES

Students who have exhausted all PVRs courses in field of study currently being offered may request approval to take (specified) courses at accredited, prior approved educational institutions in the area.

A dual enrollment opportunity is available for qualified PVRs juniors and seniors at Massachusetts' colleges and universities. Additional information can be obtained in the School Counseling Office.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

Students planning on further education should investigate all sources of financial aid. There is a long list of federal, state, and local organizations that provide scholarships to PVRs students. Sources and more information can be obtained in the School Counseling Office.

### SCHOOL RECORDS

Copies of the Massachusetts Student Record Regulations (603 CMR 23.00) are available to parents upon request. Some of the important points of those regulations are:

- a) Unless blocked by a court order, parents have the right to inspect their child's records regardless of the child's age.
- b) Pioneer may release to third parties without prior consent the following information: student name, address, telephone, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, and participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans. This includes release of information to the Armed Services as authorized by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. If a student or parent does not want this information released without prior consent, you must notify the School Office.

- c) When a student transfers to a new school, Pioneer may forward the student's records without prior written consent.
- d) All temporary records are kept for a period of one year after the student leaves PVRs. The permanent record card will be kept on file for **60** years. Special Education records are kept for five years after student leaves. Parents or students who want to claim temporary records should request them before the destroy date.

## MISCELLANEOUS SCHOOL POLICIES

### STUDENT HEALTH

Any student who feels ill should obtain a pass from his/her classroom teacher and go directly to the Health Office. If the nurse is not available, he/she should report to the Main (front) Office. The Nurse will determine if the student needs to be sent home.

The nurse must first clear any student returning to school following a communicable illness.

**Exemptions from P.E.:** It is necessary to have a note from the physician, explaining the disability and the length of time such exemption is necessary. A new note is necessary each school year.

**Medication**—Students requiring medication during the day should inform the nurse of the type of medication required and leave it with her.

A doctor's written order and parents' written permission is required for all medication—including over-the-counter drugs such as but not limited to aspirin.

**Accidents**—every accident or injury occurring during school hours, and any athletic injury occurring during a school-sponsored event, must be reported immediately to the teacher in charge and to the School Health Office. Students who sustain a serious injury must have a doctor's permission to return to P.E./athletics participation.

**Physical Exams**—are required in grades 7 and 11 and for all students transferring in. In addition, immunization records must be in compliance with State Law Chapter 76, Section 15. In order to participate in sports, yearly physicals are required.

### LIBRARY

The library media center (LMC) is open from 7:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. every day. Upon entering the Library, students are required to sign in for attendance. If a student leaves the Library before the end of the period, he/she is required to put the time and their destination next to their name on the attendance sheet. A variety of activities can be carried on simultaneously in the LMC. It is a place where students can read, study, do research, use computers, learn the use of video equipment, and a variety of other activities. Purposeful talk and movement is tolerated.

Students may check out books from the stacks for a two week period; books may be renewed twice. Periodicals (magazines) may not be taken out of the Library. Food and drinks are not permitted in the Library.

### SCHOOL INSURANCE

School insurance is available to all students at a nominal cost. This insurance covers students in most types of accidents which occur during the time the student is at school, going to or from school, or while on a school-sponsored trip. For prompt action, the accident should be reported immediately after it occurs.

The school has no insurance coverage for the property that does not belong to the school. Personal property, whether it is lost or damaged as the result of a burglary, is not covered by school insurance. If money or valuables are stolen from a student's locker, etc., the school is not responsible for replacing them.

### BOOKS AND EQUIPMENT

All books, equipment, athletic supplies, or other supplies on loan to a student must be returned at the appropriate time and in good condition. Items not returned must be paid for. Assessment will be 10 percent less than the cost of replacement for each year the item has been in circulation. A minimum charge of 50 percent will be assessed at replacement cost of the item regardless of age. Hard-cover, flexi bind and permabind books will be charged full replacement cost unless their condition is recorded as poor in Text Inventory.

Paperbacks will be charged per condition at Head Teacher discretion. Supplemental books (those used for only a brief time during the year) that are lost will be replaced at full replacement cost. All textbooks issued to a student are to be covered immediately. Students will not be eligible to participate in co-curricular or athletic activities until all obligations are resolved.

### CAFETERIA-BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Students are expected to practice the general rules of good manners and courteous behavior. Some of these general rules are:

1. Leave the table and surrounding area clean and orderly.
2. Put trash in the proper containers.
3. Do not leave the cafeteria while eating or carrying food.
4. For health reasons, do not wear garments, which would be worn outside (such as coats) in the lunch line.
5. Be courteous to the cafeteria staff and treat them with respect.
6. Vending machines are turned off during lunch times.

### CHEMICAL SENSITIVITIES

Some persons have chemical sensitivities and can become ill from strong perfumes/scents. Use consideration in using fragrances, and if alerted that a member of the school community is affected, please refrain from using scents during the school day.

### EMERGENCY DRILLS

Directions for fire drills are posted in each room. Students should be thoroughly familiar with the fire drill directions in each room in which they have a class. Students are instructed to pass quickly as soon as the fire alarm buzzer sounds without directions from a teacher. Students are to remain outside standing quietly away from the building with their teacher until a signal is given to return inside.

**FALSE FIRE ALARMS** – according to Massachusetts State Law, anyone causing a false alarm shall be punished by a fine of not less than one hundred dollars or more than five hundred dollars, or by imprisonment in jail for not more than one year.

### LOCKERS

Lockers are school property and loaned to the student for the year. They must be kept clean and cared for at all times. Padlocks are available to all students. Students should not disclose their combinations to anyone.

**Student should not switch lockers with others unless given permission by the administration. If a locker does not function properly, the student should notify the Main Office.** Use school issued padlocks only – **personal locks will be cut off.**

The lockers are not intended for the storage of valuable personal items other than clothing and books. The school is not responsible for the loss of any item from the locker.

In order to maintain the integrity of the school environment and to protect other students, the school may randomly conduct systematic searches of the lockers for illegal items and/or items not allowed in school.

### LOST AND FOUND

Any items lost, which we recover, will be retained for a brief time. Please inquire at the front desk. Items are periodically displayed on a table in the hall in hopes of finding their rightful owners. Following this brief display period, unclaimed items are donated to a local charity.

### SCHOOL CANCELLATION OR DELAY ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the event of extremely bad weather, or when it becomes necessary to either call off school or to delay school opening an automated call will be made to all households. In addition, announcements of school closings will be made over WHYN (93.1 FM/560 AM), WHAI (98.3 FM/WHMQ 1240 AM), WCAT (99.9 FM), and WTSA (96.7 FM/1450 AM) stations and on television channels 22 and 40 beginning at 6:15 a.m.

### **PASS SYSTEM**

Students must sign out (legibly) to leave classes or study halls. A pass (such as to the nurse's office) only allows the student to be in the specific area designated and does not permit free roaming of the school.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

We begin the first day of each week by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence. Every student is expected to stand respectfully during this time. You may then choose whether to recite all, part or none of the Pledge. We are committed to respect as part of the Pioneer Core Values. Standing quietly, whether you choose to recite the pledge or not, shows respect for the decisions of others. Your choice whether to recite the Pledge or not is a personal one. Please respect each individual's decision.

### **POSTERS**

The Main Office must approve posters advertising any event. Posters advertising non-school sponsored activities will be allowed only on the designated bulletin board. No posters will be allowed for events which conflict with school sponsored activities.

### **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The Pioneer School Council, made up of faculty, parents, students, and community members, serves to advise the principal, who acts as chair, on matters of school policy. Created by the Education Reform Act of 1993, the Advisory Council's primary task is to draft a yearly school improvement plan. Meetings are open to the public and generally held once a month during the school year. Call the Main Office or visit the website for more information.

### **SENIOR PRIVILEGES**

#### **Eligibility**

To be eligible, seniors must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Have a passing grade in all classes and/or make honor roll in the previous marking period, and be currently enrolled as a full-time student.
2. Maintain excellent attendance, including being on time to school and for all classes.
3. Acquire parental permission.

#### **School Service**

1. In addition to fulfilling the above requirements, seniors will perform 2 hours of community service per month, under the supervision of a PVRs staff member.
2. Failure to meet community service requirements will result in a loss of privileges.

#### **Senior Privileges and Responsibility**

1. Seniors will have the use of a designated area for studying during their study halls. Students accept the responsibility of maintaining a clean space and monitoring the area. Seniors must observe study hall rules in the senior sections.
2. Seniors with study halls first or last blocks may come to school just prior to their first class and be able to leave early if they are unassigned during the last block. Parental permission is required and students must sign in and out in the Main Office.
3. Seniors who have earned privileges may leave campus during the school day when they have an open period. Students can only leave during their 30 minute lunch if they have an open period 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> block. This is a privilege and students must stay in good standing with all school rules. Students are required to sign-out in the main office when leaving and sign-in when returning. He/she must be in the building before the warning bell and must be in class before the second bell has rung. If a senior is late arriving back to school three (3) times he/she will lose the privilege to participate in open campus. This privilege begins after Homecoming every fall at the determination of the Administration and may be limited on specific days due to weather conditions or other special occasions which would make open campus unsafe or disruptive.

### Organization and Management of Senior Privileges

1. Seniors who abuse the privilege to arrive and leave during first and last period may lose his/her privileges.
2. A senior who is unruly or violates a rule will lose his/her privileges for two weeks. For a second offense they will lose their privileges for an additional amount of time. A third offense is the loss of the privileges for the remainder of the school year.

### STUDENT OFFICERS

To serve as a class officer, a student must be a member in good standing of the class, be academically eligible and in compliance with the school's code of conduct, and remain in good standing throughout his/her term in office.

### ADVISORY REPS

Each advisory elects one representative to serve as a member of the Middle School or High School Advisory Rep group. Each Advisory Reps group acts as a student leadership group charged with addressing issues of importance to students and staff to improve school climate and teaching and learning at Pioneer.

### SCHOOL DANCES

School dances are provided for the entertainment of the student body. Different organizations or classes take turns in sponsoring these dances. Students must observe dress and other regulations according to the type of dance. At dances and other social functions students may not leave and return. You must have attended school the day of the dance in order to attend the dance.

Senior High School (grades 9-12) – 8 p.m. – 11 p.m.

Middle School (grades 7-8) – 7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. (Only PVRs 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students may attend).

When guests are permitted, a guest at these dances must be sponsored and signed up by a Pioneer student, and must be registered, by completing a guest school dance form, in the school office before the dance. The guest will be expected to observe the above regulations. The guest will not be admitted to the dance without the sponsor. The sponsor will be held responsible for their guest's actions. The organization or class sponsoring the dance must complete the *Special Event Permission Slip*, which can be obtained at the office. No dance will be scheduled until all information on the *Special Event Permission Slip* is completed. All dances must be scheduled at least two (2) weeks ahead of time.

### TELEPHONES

A phone is available to students in the main office only for emergencies. Students and families should make plans ahead of time. **Students will not be called from classes to receive incoming phone calls;** instead, any necessary messages will be sent to students. See also **Cell Phone** policy.

### VISITORS

All doors remain locked during the school day. Visitors must enter through the main entrance and report to the Main Office upon entering the building and secure a visitor's pass. Adult visitors, particularly parents, are always welcome to visit school for the purpose of observing classes or consulting with teachers when they are not engaged in teaching classes. Please email the teacher to make arrangements ahead of time.

Students may bring visitors to school only under certain circumstances, when arrangements have been made in advance with the Principal.



## **HUMAN SEXUAL ISSUES**

Chapter 291 of the Acts of 1996, codified as General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, and referred to as the Parental Notification Law 32A requires each school to notify parents about any curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. At PVRs, those courses include grade 7 & 8 Health, Life Skills, Child Development, Health and Human Relations, Biology, Genetics, Bioethics, and Anatomy & Physiology. As a parent, you have the right to exempt your child from any portion of that curriculum without penalty. If you wish to do so, please notify the principal in writing. All program instruction materials for such curriculum are available to parents or guardians for inspection and review. If you would like to review these materials, please call and make an appointment. Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269

## ATHLETICS and EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A modern high school program makes available to its students a number of activities that appeal to them and that are educational, interesting and challenging. The number and variety of these activities is determined by the time available, the number of advisors or teachers and the abilities and interests of advisors and students. Over the years the following activities have been offered to PVRs students.

### Clubs/Student Activities

Advisory Reps (MS & HS)	Gay Straight Alliance	School Council
All School Musical	Helado Spanish Club	Spanish Honor Society
All School Play	Junior National Honor Society	Student Council (MS & HS)
As Schools Match Wits	Mock Trial	Technology Club
Blacksmithing	Model Congress	<b>Training Active Bystanders</b>
Class Officers	National Honor Society*	Ultimate Frisbee
Envirothon		Yearbook
French Club		

**\*NHS:** Membership in the National Honor Society is based upon scholarship, service, leadership, and character and is open to students in grades 11-12. There is also a National Junior Honor Society to which students in grades 9 and 10 may belong. Complete information can be found on the school website listed under Student Groups: NHS. Further information can be obtained from the school administration, the National Honor Society Advisor, or the National Junior Honor Society Advisor.

### Athletics

Fall	Winter	Spring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volleyball (girls) – varsity, junior varsity, middle school</li> <li>Soccer (boys and girls) – varsity, junior varsity, middle school</li> <li>Cross-Country</li> <li>Football – middle school PVRs, varsity PVRs/Turners Falls</li> <li>Field Hockey – varsity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basketball (boys and girls) – varsity, junior varsity, middle school</li> <li>Indoor Track</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Softball (girls) – varsity, junior varsity, middle school</li> <li>Baseball (boys) – varsity, junior varsity, middle school</li> <li>Track</li> </ul>

### ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY POLICY FOR ATHLETICS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The policy applies to members of sports teams, co-curricular activities, class officers, other representatives of the school. To be eligible to participate in sports or co-curricular activities, the student must be enrolled full-time and have passed 5 major subjects the marking period prior to the sport season or time of the co-curricular activity and receive no failures. Major subjects are courses that meet 5 days a week. Second quarter marks and not semester grades determine third quarter eligibility. Eligibility is determined by quarter grades except for fall activities, which are based on the final grade for the previous year's courses. Students with Incompletes are ineligible until the work is completed and grade is submitted. The eligibility of all students shall be considered official on the date when report cards for that marking period are mailed.

Application for a waiver because of a failing grade will be allowed. However, approval is limited to once in the middle school and once in the high school. The waiver will be reviewed by the principal. That decision can be appealed to a committee consisting of the principal, athletic director, teacher, coach, parent and player. See Athletic Handbook for more specific information pertaining to sports.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR ATHLETICS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Pioneer has set the standard that a student may only participate in athletics and extra-curricular activities if he/she has been in school for a full day. This is consistent with MIAA rules. To be in attendance for a full day a student must arrive at 7:50, or no later than 8:10 with a signed note from a parent or guardian submitted to the main office and attend all classes. A student who is chronically late to school (excused or unexcused) may lose the privilege of participating. If a student leaves during the school day he or she is not eligible to participate in a practice or game on that day. There are three exceptions:

1. Students with senior privileges may use their privileges.
2. A student may submit a note from a parent/guardian to the main office requesting an exception from the attendance requirement for a medical or court appointment that cannot be scheduled at any other time when the appointment does not cause the student to miss more than two hours of school. Only a limited number of exceptions will be approved for a student each season.
3. A senior may make one college visit during a season. We encourage student to make these visits between seasons, on weekend and during holiday.

If a student must miss more than 2 hours of school he/she should not expect to practice or play on that day. If you have a concern about whether a dismissal or tardy will be accepted, you can request approval a day ahead. You may also discuss any special circumstances with the athletic director.

## **CHEMICAL HEALTH POLICY FOR ATHLETICS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

All Pioneer athletes must observe sound health and training rules. MIAA Blue Book states under its *Chemical Health section*, "From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer." It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor (see the Athletic Handbook for more information).

Participants in extra-curricular clubs and activities are expected to maintain the same chemical health standard as athletes. Students who fail to meet this standard may lose the privilege of participation in athletics or extra-curricular activities in addition to school consequences.

## **SCHOOL VARSITY SWEATSHIRTS**

Those students participating in sports are eligible for Varsity letters. The requirements for Varsity letters can be found in the Athletic Handbook. Those athletes who receive seven (7) Varsity letters will also receive a Varsity Sweatshirt. Managers are also eligible for this, as they may receive letters for their hard work throughout the season.

## **SCHOOL COLORS**

The school colors are black, gold and white.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES APPEAL BOARD**

The Pioneer Valley Regional School recognizes the value of participation in co-curricular and other school-sanctioned activities. Effort will be made by the advisors and coaches of such activities to avoid scheduling conflicts. Should an unavoidable conflict occur and attendance at one activity prevents attendance at another activity, the student involved may appeal any penalties imposed. More information on this process can be obtained from the Athletic Director.

## APPENDIX A: BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION POLICY

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*. This new law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to addressing bullying incidents. Parts of the law (M.G.L. c. 71, & 370) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

These requirements are included in the district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan.") The Plan includes the requirements of the new law, and also information about the policies and procedures that the school or school district will follow to prevent bullying and retaliation, or to respond to it when it occurs (the full text of the Plan is available on the district web site). In developing the Plan, schools and districts consulted with school and local community members, including parents and guardians.

### Definitions:

**Aggressor** is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.

**Bullying**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

**Cyberbullying** is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

**Hostile environment**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

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

**School Staff** includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, and bus drivers, and athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

**Target** is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

**Support Services:** The strategy to help the target and aggressor will be based on the nature of the offense, the age of the victims & aggressors, and the decision based upon the results of the investigation. It may require the district to review its student curriculum to assure it is clear, and achieves the objectives of properly educating and imparting the message to the students. This will require pre & posttests of understanding and

comprehending lessons. This district incorporates 2nd Step in the elementary schools, and practices Positive Behavior Support.

The counseling services for the aggressor and victim may include the following:  
Social emotional skills programs to prevent bullying by:

- Classroom Teachers
- Guidance Counselors
- School Adjustment Counselors
- School Psychologists
- Behavior Analyst Intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors:

To provide services for targets, aggressors and their families, the district uses culturally and linguistically appropriate resources outside the district. The district maintains a list of translation and/or interpreter services.

### **Prohibition against Bullying**

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds,
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds,
- at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a computer or over the Internet),
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device, if the bullying 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.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

### **Report Bullying**

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the principal or another staff member, or reports may be made anonymously. Copies of the incident report form can be found in the district website (<https://www.pvrsk12.org/>) under “Forms” at the bottom of the main page.

School staff members must report immediately to the principal or his/her designee if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.

When the school principal or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or

guardians of an aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

### **Professional Development for School and District Staff**

School and districts are obligated to provide ongoing professional development to increase the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying.

The content of such professional development is to include, but not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) 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; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber bullying during any education program or activity; or while in school, on school equipment or property, in school vehicles, on school buses, at designated school bus stops, at school-sponsored activities, at school-sanctioned events; or through the use of data, telephone or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of any public educational institution.

As defined by state statute, bullying is “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 victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property, (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.” This also includes cyber-bullying.

### **Bullying Complaint Procedure**

If any student believes that he or she has been subjected to bullying (by peers or staff members) he/she is to report the incident(s) immediately to an adult and then in writing on an incident report form. All written reports will be investigated. When warranted appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Counseling may be required for perpetrators as well as to support victims.

## APPENDIX B: PVRSD ACCEPTABLE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY AND CELL PHONE USE

Electronic resources provided by Pioneer Valley Regional School District are intended to:

- Improve education for all students through access to unique resources and partnerships;
- Improve learning and teaching through research, teacher training, collaboration and distribution of successful education practices, methods and materials.

These resources – including, but not limited to, computers and Internet access – allow users access to local, national, and international sources of information and collaboration vital to intellectual inquiry and democracy, and are intended solely for educational purposes. Every user has the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every other user in our school community and on the Internet.

Account holders are expected to act in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner, in accordance with both school and district policies, rules, regulations and guidelines and the laws of the Commonwealth and the United States. A consequence of access to computers and individuals outside of the school district network may be the availability of inappropriate material. On a global network it is impossible to regulate all materials and an industrious user or innocent error may uncover subject matter inimical to our educational mission. That being said, however, we believe that the valuable information and interactions available on this worldwide network far outweigh the disadvantages.

The following explains our policies for acceptable use of the Pioneer computer network. Use of the computer network and the Internet are privileges, which may be revoked unless students, faculty and staff agree and cooperate with these terms. If a member of the school community fails to comply, limited network/Internet access, suspended network access, or other disciplinary action may be taken. Consequences for students may include loss of computer privileges for two weeks or longer as well as application of any relevant consequences from the code of conduct.

### USER-SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

#### A. All users

##### **Students, staff and faculty may not:**

1. Use the network to access and/or transmit material in violation of a U.S. or Commonwealth law or regulation. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, obscene material, pornographic material, or material that advocates illegal acts, violence or discrimination towards other people.
2. Degrade, damage or disrupt equipment or system performance
3. Gain unauthorized access to network resources
4. Use an account owned by another user or vandalize another user's data
5. Waste electronic storage space by saving unnecessary files or programs
6. Download, install, load or use programs without written permission of a technology administrator
7. Use the Internet for personal commercial purposes (e.g., to advertise a personal business) or for political lobbying
8. Use inappropriate, offensive, foul or abusive language in any electronic documents
9. Harass by posting, sending or forwarding annoying, obscene, libelous, threatening or anonymous messages
10. Forward chain letters
11. Forward e-mail messages of broad interest (e.g., virus alerts, "Joke of the Day" e-mails, etc.) to the entire school community (see number 5 below)
12. Knowingly make use of pirated software or violate software-licensing agreements.

**Students, staff and faculty must:**

1. Use the Internet and other electronic resources only for legitimate educational purposes.
2. Respect commonly accepted practices of Internet etiquette including, but not limited to, use of appropriate language.
3. Be aware of potential security risks at all times and take all reasonable steps to minimize risks such as logging off the network when a computer is unattended.
4. Avoid bulk e-mailing.
5. Forward all e-mails of broad interest (e.g., virus alerts) to a technology administrator for further actions.
6. Treat all computer areas and equipment with the utmost care and respect.
7. Use only PVRs laptops and PVRs wireless devices to access the school's network system including internet connections unless approved by the principal.

School and district resources for electronic communication shall be used for educational purposes. Incidental and occasional personal use of electronic mail may occur when such use does not generate a direct cost for the district and follows district guidelines, but such messages will be treated no differently from other messages on the network. Prohibited electronic communications include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of electronic communications to send copies of documents in violation of copyright laws
2. Use of electronic communication systems to send messages, access to which are restricted by laws and regulations.
3. Use of electronic communications to intimidate others or to interfere with the ability of others to conduct school/district business.
4. Constructing electronic communications to appear to be from someone else.
5. Obtaining access to the files or communications of others for the purpose satisfying idle curiosity, with no substantial school/district business purpose.
6. Users will conform to the rules of e-mail archiving and document retention.
7. Any other communication in violation of this policy or the specific school policy.

**B. Students**

Students may access the Internet only with adult supervision, and must notify a teacher or technology administrator immediately if they come across inappropriate content. In addition, students may not use the Internet or email to give out personal information (such as a home address, telephone number, or picture) about themselves or other students. Students' use of electronic resources is restricted to teacher-approved projects and research. Occasional investigation of news and information of personal interest when appropriate to a school setting and not disruptive to curricular use may be allowed with prior adult permission.

<b>CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC LISTENING DEVICES AT PVRs</b>
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**A. Before and after school**

Before the first bell (7:50) and after the last bell (2:30) students may use cell phones and electronic listening devices in the hallways, lobbies and cafeteria. Classroom policies apply at all times, including before and after school.

**B. During the school day (7:50 to 2:30)**

Middle School students may not use devices for any reason. High school students may use their cell phones or electronic listening device during their one lunch period in the cafeteria. Classroom teachers decide whether and when students may (or may not) use electronic listening devices in their classrooms. Seniors may use cell phones and electronic listening devices in approved senior areas during lunch. Seniors with privileges may use their devices during their periods of privileges in the senior lobby.



### **C. Content**

Each student is responsible for the content on his or her cell phone and electronic devices at all time.

Inappropriate content can result in consequences as outlined in the Student Handbook Acceptable Use Policy and the Code of Conduct. This includes but is not limited to bullying and obscene material.

Cell phones and other devices can never be used for recording audio, video or taking pictures without the express consent of the principal. Please understand that it is important to respect the privacy of others.

### **D. Consequences**

While we are permitting the use of devices during some parts of the day, we want to be very clear that if devices disrupt the learning environment or are used in violation of classroom or school policies at any time the following consequence will be used:

The use, or perceived use, of a cell phone or other electronic device in violation of these guidelines:

- First offense
- Confiscate device and held by administrator until the end of the school day
- Second offense
- Confiscate device and held by administrator until parent picks up device
- Subsequence offenses
- Multiple offenses may lead to suspension.

**Note: violation of additional school rules may include additional consequences.**

## APPENDIX C: DUE PROCESS GUIDELINES FOR SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

### DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS: NOTICE OF PROPOSED SUSPENSION

Except in the case of an emergency removal or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½, the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed suspension, an opportunity to be heard at hearing, and the opportunity to participate at the hearing. 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 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/guardian to attend the hearing;
- e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- f) the right of the student and student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. In order to conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. Reasonable effort is presumed if the principal sent written notice and documented at least two attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency situations.

All written communications regarding notice of proposed suspension shall be either by hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

### DUE PROCESS FOR SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND ADMINISTRATOR DETERMINATION

A short-term suspension is the removal of the student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive days or less. Short-term suspensions which do not cumulatively over the course of the school year exceed ten (10) days of suspension shall be conducted in accordance with this section.

**Principal Hearing:** The purpose of the hearing with the principal 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 has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts. A parent/guardian present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal will make a determination whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequence. The principal will provide notification in writing of his/her determination in the form of an update to the student and parent/guardian, and provide reasons for the determination. If the student is suspended, the Principal shall inform the parent/guardian of the type and duration of the suspension, and shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up assignments and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through 3, the principal shall send his/her determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

#### **DUE PROCESS FOR LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND ADMINISTRATOR DETERMINATION**

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The purpose of the hearing with the principal 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 has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal will consider in determining whether alternatives to suspension such as loss of privileges, detention, an apology, a student contract, restitution, and/or probation are appropriate.

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

- i. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
- ii. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and or parent's/guardian's expense;
- iii. 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
- iv. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- v. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

Based on the evidence submitted at the hearing the principal shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension (the use of evidence-based strategies and programs, such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports) what remedy or consequence will be imposed. If the principal decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination shall:

- i. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- ii. Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
- iii. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- iv. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress during removal, and the contact information of a school member who can provide more detailed information.
- v. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or his/her designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days.

The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through grade 3, the principal shall send his/her determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or by other means of communication where appropriate.

#### **DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS: APPEAL OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION**

A student who is placed on a long-term suspension shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent if properly and timely filed. A good faith effort shall be made to include the parent/guardian at the hearing. The appeal shall be held within three (3) school days of the appeal, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, which the superintendent shall grant.

The student and parent/guardian shall have the same rights afforded at the long-term suspension principal hearing. Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing the superintendent shall issue his/her written decision which meets the criteria required of the principal's determination. If the superintendent determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the principal. **The superintendent's decision shall be final.**

#### **DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS: EMERGENCY REMOVAL**

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal.

During the emergency removal the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.

A decision shall be rendered orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. The decision shall meet all of the due process requirements of a principal's determination in a long-term suspension.

#### **SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. 71 §§37H and 37H½**

1. The due process procedures above do not apply to a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) an assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a

substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c.71, §§37H or 37H½.

2. The principal will inform the student of the specific charges in writing, informing the student of the right to be represented by counsel (at the student's expense) and the right to provide evidence and question witnesses, on the proposed hearing date.
3. The student may appeal the principal's expulsion determination to the Superintendent of Schools within ten (10) days of notification of the expulsion.
4. The superintendent may uphold, reduce, or reverse the disciplinary action after the appeal hearing. Note that a failure to make an appeal to the superintendent within the ten (10)-day period will exhaust any further right of appeal.
5. All students who have been suspended or expelled who remain residents of the District shall have an opportunity to make academic progress during their period of suspension, expulsion, or removal from regular classroom activities.
6. If the superintendent upholds the expulsion decision, 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.

## **APPENDIX D: DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES UNDER SPECIAL EDUCATION/SECTION 504 LAWS**

The discipline of students with disabilities eligible for special education and students on Section 504 Accommodation Plans is governed by federal and state special education laws and the regulations promulgated there under. These laws include the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, its implementing regulations 34 C.F.R. et seq.; and Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 71 B and its implementing regulations 603 C.M.R. 28.00.

Students with disabilities who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current educational placement for up to ten (10) school days per year, to the extent that such a removal would be applied to students without disabilities, without a prior determination as to whether the misconduct is related to the student's disability. The student's IEP or 504 team must meet within ten (10) days of the decision to suspend to review all relevant information in the student's file.

Anytime school personnel seek to remove a student from his or her current educational placement for more than ten (10) days in any school year, this constitutes a 'change in placement.' This includes both in school and out of school suspensions. A change in placement invokes certain procedural protections under the IDEA, the federal special education law.

These include, but are not limited to:

A. If the school did not conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such a student before the behavior that resulted in the discipline, the school shall convene an IEP meeting to develop an assessment plan to address the behavior, or if the child already has a behavior intervention plan, the IEP Team shall review the plan and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior.

B. A review by the IEP Team of the relationship between the child's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action, which is often referred to as the Manifestation Determination. School personnel may order a change in educational placement of a child with a disability to an appropriate Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) that provides the student with a free appropriate public education for the same amount of time that a child without a disability would be subject to discipline, but not for more than forty-five (45) calendar days if the student:

1. Carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function.
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs at school, a school function, or school sponsored event; or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school, a school function, or a school sponsored event.

School Personnel may also seek an order from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA), using the authority of the hearing officer, placing a student in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) calendar days, when it is determined that the student is "substantially likely" to injure him/herself or others. Parents/guardians and/or students, where appropriate, may request a hearing at the Bureau of Special Education Appeals regarding a disciplinary action described above to challenge the Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) or the manifestation determination. For a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education brochure on Special Education Parents' Rights available in many languages visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb/> or contact the administrator of Special Education at (413)498-2911. All students are expected to follow the rules and regulations set forth in this handbook. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws, known as 603 CMR 28.00 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 20 U.S.C. Section 1400 and 34 CFR Section 300, require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have a disability and whose program is described in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Accommodation

Plan. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with special needs and students with 504 Accommodation Plans:

- Any modifications of the discipline code will be identified in the student's IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan.
- The principal will notify the Special Education Administrator/504 Coordinator of the suspendable offense of any student with a disability and a record will be kept of such notices.
- When it is known that the suspension(s) of a student with a disability will accumulate beyond 10 days in a school year, a review of the IEP/504 Accommodation Plan will be held to determine the appropriateness of the student's placement or program.
- The team will make a finding as to the relationship between the student's misconduct and his/her handicapping condition and:
  - Develop or review a functional behavioral assessment
  - Determine if the misconduct is a manifestation of the disability
  - Consider a modified program or alternate placement for the student
  - Consider an amendment to provide for the delivery of services during the suspension and any needed modification of the IEP/504 Accommodation Plan.

In addition, the Department of Education will be notified when required by law, and the procedures promulgated by the Department of Education for requesting approval of the alternative plan will be followed. Parents will be provided with written notice of their rights under special education regulations.

If the School District has knowledge that a student may have a disability and if that student has been referred for evaluation to determine eligibility for special education or section 504, that student will be entitled to all of the protections for a student with a disability until the eligibility process is completed.

## **APPENDIX E: PVRs DRESS CODE**

Students have the right to dress and groom as they deem appropriate, provided their appearance does not endanger health or safety, damage school property, or disrupt the learning environment.

Students may not wear/display items that:

- a. Advertise drug, alcohol or tobacco products
- b. Express obscenity, profanity, sexual innuendo, offensive messages or violence

Because of the nature of certain school activities, additional requirements may be made; for example, gym clothes may be required in physical education classes; neckties or jewelry may have to be removed or hair secured in shop classes; safety glasses or shoes adequate to protect the feet may have to be worn in laboratories or shop classes.

Failure to adhere to the dress code will result in the student having to remove/change/cover the article in question, and will receive a verbal warning. Refusal to comply could result in being sent home from school for the day.



## **APPENDIX F: UNHEALTHY AND UNSAFE BEHAVIORS (INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SUBSTANCE USE)**

### **UNHEALTHY AND UNSAFE BEHAVIORS**

Our *Expectations for Behavior* (p. 11) state that members of the Pioneer community are expected to avoid unhealthy and unsafe behaviors. It can be helpful to know that there are a variety of specific behaviors that fall into this category that we track and many of which we must report annually to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and through them to the federal government. This data is used to help develop policies and laws that will keep our schools safe and ensure healthy learning environments for students and staff. Unhealthy and unsafe behaviors include:

- Possession, distribution (through sale or by giving away), use, or suspected use of alcohol, prescription or over-the counter drugs, tobacco, vaping chemicals and or devices, or illegal drugs including marijuana or possession of equipment used to consume prohibited substances.
- Assault, battery or fighting
- Possession or use of weapons (any object the main purpose of which is to inflict injury or cause harm) – including chemical substances and fireworks
- Bullying, hazing, or harassment (including sexual harassment – see below)
- Threats to persons or property (physical, verbal, written, electronic, or by any other means)
- Theft and robbery
- Trespass, arson and vandalism
- Failure to follow reasonable requests by authorities (adults at school) and lying to authorities
- Obscene or profane language, gestures, drawing, etc.

**A complete list of DESE proscribed behaviors can be found in Appendix A of the SSDR Data Handbook available here <http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/ssdr.html>, along with descriptions of each offense.**

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION**

No student or employee shall be discriminated against or harassed on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This may include but is not limited to:

- a) Assault, inappropriate touching, intentionally impeding movement, comments, gestures or written communications of a suggestive or derogatory nature.
- b) Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome.
- c) Offering or granting favors or educational benefits, such as grades or recommendations, in exchange for sexual favors
- d) Other conduct such as: unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; sexually explicit language or gestures; any unwelcome physical contact; the presence of sexually provocative photographs, pictures or other material, the telling of sexual stories or jokes; verbal or non-verbal behavior about an individual's body that is interpreted as sexual in nature.

#### **Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure**

If any student of the district believes that he / she has been subjected to sexual harassment or discriminated against (by peers or staff members) on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation, he /she is to report the incident(s) to the Superintendent, Principal, Assistant Principal, School Nurse, or School Counselor. Your identity will be held in the strictest confidence. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, will be taken in any instance where a student violates this policy.

## CHEMICAL HEALTH POLICY

Students and adults shall be barred from school grounds and/or any school-sponsored activity if he or she is under the influence of alcohol, drugs or a non-prescribed controlled substance. It is the responsibility of all school staff members to forward any information they might have concerning drug or narcotic use, possession, purchase or sale, to the school administration. Students are urged to forward any information they might have so that the health and safety of fellow students may be protected.

### **Under the influence of Alcohol, Drugs, or a Controlled Substance on school grounds or at school sponsored events:**

The parent must come to school for a conference and to take the student home. Consequences could include suspension, community service to the school, meeting with the Student Adjustment Counselor, and/or an assessment done by an outside agency with plan of action submitted to school.

### **Possession or Distribution of Alcohol, Drugs, or a Controlled Substance on school grounds or at school sponsored events:**

The police will be called to school and the parent contacted. All contraband will be turned over to the police for criminal prosecution. In addition, under the Mass. Ed. Reform Act of 1993, any student found in possession of drugs is subject to expulsion and an expulsion hearing may be held. (For more information see Expulsion). Consequences could include expulsion from school, suspension, community service to the school, meeting with the Student Adjustment Counselor, and/or an assessment done by an outside agency with plan of action (such as an in-patient or out-patient treatment program) submitted to school.

## TOBACCO POLICY

The PVRSD is committed to having a smoke and tobacco-free environment for all members of the school community. Therefore, use or possession of tobacco or nicotine products on school property or at a school-sponsored event is strictly prohibited. Violations will result in the following consequences for PVRSD Students (minor or adult student)

### 1<sup>st</sup> Offense

1. Parent / legal guardian notification by letter and phone
2. A four (4) session after-school tobacco education class with proof of completion required
3. A \$50.00 fine if tobacco class is not completed
4. Offer of school resources and support for tobacco harm reduction / cessation
5. Notification of athletic director per MIAA rules

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense

2. Parent / legal guardian conference
3. A \$50.00 fine - OR - a student-managed tobacco education service project based on the PVRSD Independent Study Proposal  
(such as interviews of adults with emphysema) with proof of completions required
4. Offer of school resources and support for tobacco harm reduction / cessation
5. Notification of athletic director per MIAA rules

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense & Thereafter

1. Conference with parent / legal guardian
2. A \$50.00 fine.
3. Offer of school resources and support for tobacco harm reduction / cessation
4. Notification of athletic director per MIAA rules

**Failure to comply may result in further disciplinary actions.**

## **APPENDIX G: HAZING**

### **STATE LAW REGARDING HAZING**

#### **CH. 269, S.17. Crime of Hazing; Definition; Penalty**

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 “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 willful 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 subject 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. Added by St. 1985, c.536; amended by St. 1987, c.665.

#### **CH.269, S. 18. Duty 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 practical. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars. Added by St. 1985, c.536; amended by ST. 1987, c.665.

#### **CH. 269, S.19. Hazing statutes to be provided; statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Required.**

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 institutions 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 understand 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 regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education, certifying

that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organization 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 regents 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. Added by St. 1985, c.536; amended by St. 1987, c.665.

# Pioneer Valley Regional School



*We value*

**Universal Respect**

**Personal Responsibility**

**Academic Excellence**

*Through*

**Engaging in Real World Tasks**

**Collaboration**

**Problem Solving**

**In a Heterogeneous Setting**

