

Taconic High School



**Student Handbook
2021-2022**

Message from the Principal:

Welcome to Taconic High School! The Taconic High School Student Handbook is designed to supplement the Pittsfield Public Schools District Handbook. This handbook is designed to provide a summary of the most important procedures and policies as they relate to THS students and families. This information will help you to understand your rights and opportunities as well as your responsibilities and obligations in order to have a safe and successful high school experience. It is important that you and your families review these policies and procedures to ensure a successful and positive experience at THS.

The staff of THS looks forward to serving you.

Dr. Matthew Bishop
Principal
(413)448-9600
mbishop@pittsfield.net

School Department Organization

School Committee

The Honorable Linda Tyer, *Mayor of Pittsfield*

Mrs. Katherine Yon, *Chair*

Dr. William J. Cameron, *Clerk*

Mr. Mark Brazeau

Mr. Daniel C. Elias

Ms. Alison McGee

Ms. Nyanna Slaughter

Administration

Mr. Joseph Curtis, *Superintendent*

Mrs. Kristen C. Benhke, *Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance*

Mrs. Tammy Gage, *Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness*

Taconic High School

Dr. Matthew Bishop, *Principal* 448-9600

Ms. Angela Johansen, *Vice Principal* 448-9600

Mr. Ryan Sabourin, *Vice Principal of Teaching
and Learning* 448-9600

Ms. Marcie Simonds, *Vice Principal of Teaching
and Learning CTE* 448-9600

Mr. Michael Taber, *Dean of Students* 448-9600

Statement of Nondiscrimination

The Pittsfield Public Schools, in accordance with its non-discrimination and zero tolerance policy, does not discriminate in its programs, activities, facilities, employment, or educational opportunities on the basis of race, color, age, disability, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity and does not tolerate any form of discrimination, intimidation, threat, coercion and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others by interfering with their freedom to learn and work. [M.G.L. c.76, s5]



Taconic High School
BELL SCHEDULE 2021-2022
(50 minute class time, 4 minute passing)



WARNING BELL.....7:20

PERIOD ONE.....7:25 - 8:21

PERIOD TWO.....8:25 - 9:15

PERIOD THREE.....9:19 - 10:09

PERIOD FOUR.....10:13 - 11:03

CTE LUNCH (Students scheduled for Period 4 CTE will take lunch 10:13- 10:43)

PERIOD FIVE (two Non- CTE lunches)

FIRST LUNCH
(FLR 2)

Lunch	11:07 - 11:37
Pass	11:37 - 11:41
Class	11:41 - 12:31

SECOND LUNCH
(FLR 3)

Class	11:07 - 11:57
Pass	11:57 - 12:01
Lunch	12:01 - 12:31

PERIOD SIX.....12:35 - 1:25

PERIOD SEVEN.....1:29 - 2:20

BUS DEPARTURE.....2:25

Marking System

Report cards are issued approximately every ten weeks. A report card grade reflects elements of completion of assignments, test scores, and attendance. Informal progress reports are issued approximately halfway through each marking period.

THS encourages all families to utilize their Powerschool accounts to monitor their student's grades. If you do not have a Powerschool account, forgot your password, or need assistance logging on, please see the detailed instructions on our school and/or district website or contact the Taconic High School guidance department at 448-9600 x1582. If you already have access, but need assistance navigating the website or smartphone app, please do not hesitate to call guidance and someone will assist you. The Powerschool parent portal is an important tool to help families monitor student academic progress, and we strongly encourage all families to frequently log in to check student grades.

High school grades range from 0 to 100. A grade of 60 is passing. Averaging the four-quarter grades arrives at a final grade for a full-year course. Class attendance and teacher comments will appear on the report card.

A grade point average is used to determine the following:

High Honors	=	92
Honors	=	88

Class Leveling

Leveled courses at Taconic will carry a designation of Advanced Placement, Honors, or Intensive. In some subjects, non-leveled courses will be offered as well.

Advanced Placement courses are part of the College Board program. These courses are taught at the college level and may earn college credit depending on the level of achievement on Advanced Placement tests. Students enrolling in any Advanced Placement course are required to sign an AP contract, complete a summer assignment, and take the AP exam at the end of the course. As our mission is to promote Career and College readiness, all students are strongly encouraged to attempt an AP class before they graduate.

An **honors level course** covers the same curriculum and high priority standards as **intensive level** courses. The difference between the two levels is the depth to which the material is covered, added supporting standards, as well as an increased expectation of independent work.

It is expected that the course level will be appropriate to student capabilities. Please note that some four year state colleges will not recognize non-titled courses as fulfilling admission requirements and students who take non-titled courses are at risk for non-acceptance at these institutions.

Students and parents are advised that courses taken preparatory to the fulfillment of entrance requirements at competitive colleges and universities should be at the AP, Honors or Intensive level.

If you have any doubt about the level that is appropriate for you or your student, please consult your school counselor who will help you come to an appropriate conclusion.

Teacher Grades

Teacher grades for all courses not labeled Pass/Fail shall be on a numerical basis with a grade of 60 being the lowest passing grade.

The grade as submitted by the teacher shall not be altered in any way by the differential weighting system insofar as the recording of this grade on the report card, the office record card and the transcript is concerned.

Differential Weighting of Courses

Courses labeled AP, H, or I shall be given a differential weighting called an add-on as follows:

AP – level courses to have 6 points added to the grade received if 60 or above.

H – level courses to have 5 points added to the grade received if 60 or above.

I – level courses to have 3 points added to the grade received if 60 or above.

Non-Titled – courses to have 2 points added to the grade received if the mark is 88 or higher.

Grade Point Average (G.P.A.)

- All courses not labeled Pass/Fail shall affect the G.P.A. except physical education.
- The add-on weight shall be used in calculating the G.P.A., but will not appear on the student report card or transcript.
- The quarterly and the cumulative G.P.A. shall be calculated at the end of each marking period.
- Only courses taken in the Pittsfield Public Schools shall be used to calculate the G.P.A.
- Repeated courses taken in summer school will be noted on the transcript, but will not be used to calculate the G.P.A.

Rank in Class (RIC)

The official RIC will only include students continuously enrolled in Pittsfield Public High Schools with an exception granted for no more than four quarters missed before beginning of grade 12.

Students with less than three years coursework in the Pittsfield Public High Schools will receive a comparative estimated decile rank in class standing.

The RIC will be calculated at the end of each marking period.

The RIC will be reported at the end of the first marking period of junior year and at the end of each marking period thereafter.

Students choosing to graduate early are given a GPA but not included in class rank.

Final RIC will be used to determine Honor and High Honor graduates. Students who have a final RIC with a G.P.A. over 92 will receive High Honor recognition at graduation, while those students who have a final RIC with a G.P.A. between 88.0 and 91.9 will receive Honor recognition.

Credits

Two credits are earned for each period per week that the course meets. Example - English meets 5 periods per week and therefore awards 10 credits.

Home Tutoring

The School Department provides home tutoring for students who will be absent for a prolonged period of time due to illness and/or physical or emotional disabilities. Such requests should be directed to the Guidance Department.

Homework

On the average, thirty minutes of homework in each major subject may be assigned daily, including long-range assignments. We believe some homework is necessary to further a student's understanding of the subject material and it is the expectation of all students to complete the homework to the best of their ability. Having said that, Taconic understands the complexities and demands of a student's time and teachers will assign homework in a responsible, empathetic manner.

Make-Up and 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 one to know if you need help. Your teacher may ask

you to stay for extra help, even though you do not request it. Be sure to inquire as to your teacher's availability.

Testing

During the course of a high school student's career, both mandatory and optional assessments will be administered. A descriptive list (not limited to) is provided below.

MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System): English Language Arts, Mathematics tests are offered in the spring of students' sophomore years. Science is offered in the spring of the 9th grade year. Students must obtain a 220 on all three exams to be eligible for a diploma. Three re-tests are offered each year to those sophomores, juniors and seniors who do not pass. Students who achieve high scores are eligible for tuition relief at state schools.

Quarterly Benchmark Assessments: These exams are created and administered in each course and will comprise 5% of the quarter grade. The purpose of quarterly benchmarks is to assess student progress towards identified high priority state standards for each course. Seniors may earn an exemption from the fourth quarter benchmark if they meet defined criteria below:

Exemptions from Final Benchmark Exams for Seniors:

- The average of Q1, Q2, Q3 must be 88 or above and Q4 grade 85 or above in any non-AP course.
- AP: Seniors who take an AP exam are EXEMPT from a fourth quarter benchmark in that class. Seniors who do not take the AP exam take a final benchmark exam in that class regardless of grades.

SAT/ACT/PSAT: These exams are given to those students in preparation of application to colleges and universities. Recently changed, the exam has been modified, including the addition of a writing component. SAT preparation is integrated into the English and mathematics curriculum and private vendors also market tutorial materials. Subject (SAT II) exams are also offered to demonstrate proficiency in specific content areas.

AP (Advanced Placement): Administered upon the completion of an advanced placement course at THS. Scores may be used to demonstrate proficiency in the subject area and allow students to skip some first year college classes. Students taking an Advanced Placement class are expected to take the AP test in that class.

ASVAB: A free exam offered to students to support their exploration of future careers and aptitudes in specific career pathways.

GRADE & GMADE: These assessments are used to track student progress in both reading and mathematics in order to evaluate academic growth and determine course placement, including the need for remediation.

Summer School

A student who has failed a course during the school year with a minimum final course grade of 40 may make it up during the summer school. Courses failed during the school year with a final grade below 40 must be made up during the school year. See your guidance counselor for more information. It is the student's responsibility to properly inform summer school personnel so that the correct course is registered for. **A student must complete the regular course during the school year before taking remedial summer school courses. Failing a course with a grade of less than 40, or failure to make up a failed course in summer school might require a student to complete an additional year of high school to graduate.**

Taconic High School Graduation Requirements

The following are the minimum graduation requirements for Pittsfield Public Schools:

4 years of English (English 9, English 10, English 11, English 12)

3-4 years of Math (Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2)

If score "Needs Improvement" (220-238) on math MCAS, 4th year of math is a requirement to graduate to satisfy Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP); however, we highly recommend ALL students take a 4th year of math.

3 years of history (US. History I, US History II, World History)

3 years of science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

4 years of PE

2 Years of Human Development

Demonstrate Proficiency on MCAS in ELA, Math and Science (Score 240 or satisfy Educational Proficiency Plan)

244 total credits- 64 credit minimum a year

MassCore: The Massachusetts High School Program of Studies (MassCore) is intended to help our state's high school graduates arrive at college or the workplace well prepared and reduce the number of students taking remedial courses in college. MassCore recommends a comprehensive set of subject area courses and units as well as other learning opportunities to complete before graduating from high school.

The *recommended* program of studies includes: four years of English, four years of Math, three years of a lab-based Science, three years of history, two years of the same foreign language, one year of an arts program and five additional "core" courses such as business education, health, and/or technology. MassCore also includes additional learning opportunities including AP classes, dual enrollment, a senior project, online courses for high school or college credit, and service or work-based learning.

What is the difference between MassCore and the PPS requirements?

- Mass Core is the state recommended course of study for students

- PPS is the minimum required course of study in order for a student to graduate from Pittsfield Public Schools. It is strongly recommended that students attempt to take the course of study that follows the Mass Core model

	MassCore Requirements			PPS Requirements	
	Academic	CTE		Academic/CTE	
English	4	4		4	
History	3	3		3	
Math	4	4		3	
Science	3	3		3	
Foreign Language	2	exempt		1/CTE-exempt	
PE	4	4		4	
Human Development	2	2		2	

Promotion

Promotion at the high school level shall be by course rather than by grade. Students who fail required subjects and do not take and pass said subjects during the subsequent summer school session shall be required to repeat these subjects the following school year.

Career & Technical Education (CTE) Programs

The program course requirements for CTE certification shall include all shop and related courses for the particular CTE Program in which the student is enrolled as well as all regular graduation requirements. Because vocational students' course requirements leave little room for electives or makeup of failures, it is strongly recommended that any failure be made up in the summer school following the year in which the failure occurred.

CTE Safety Violation Procedures

The Pittsfield Public Schools Safety Policies are designed for students that continue to disregard their own safety and the safety rules of their vocational/technical program. An instructor that has a student that chronically displays unsafe behaviors must document the student's unsafe behavior. A safety offense does not have to be similar in nature, any demonstration or disregard for personal or others safety is an indication of poor safety behavior.

The Safety Program is to educate the student on their unsafe practices. The following procedures must be followed when a student is in violation of unsafe practices in their vocational/technical area.

First offense: The instructor informs the student that their first safety violation has occurred and the teacher instructs the student on the proper safety procedures in their technical area. The students' unsafe behavior must be documented on the schools log entry form. In addition, a letter will be sent home notifying the parent or guardian of the students' unsafe behavior. The parent will be informed that their child has received his/her first safety violation.

Second offense: The instructor informs the student that their second safety violation has occurred and the teacher will instruct the student on the proper safety procedures in their technical area. The students' unsafe behavior must be documented on the schools log entry form. In addition, a letter will be sent home notifying the parent or guardian of the students' unsafe behavior. The parent or guardian will be informed that their child has received his/her second safety violation and a parent meeting will be requested to discuss the unsafe behavior.

Third offense: The instructor informs the student that their third safety violation has occurred and instructs the student on the proper safety procedures in their technical area. The students' unsafe behavior must be documented on the schools log entry form. In addition, a letter will be sent home notifying the parent or guardian of the students' unsafe behavior. The parent or guardian will be informed that their child has received his/her third safety violation and a parent meeting will be requested to discuss the continued disregard of the safety policies of the Pittsfield Public Schools CTE Health and Safety Policy.

It is at the discretion of the Assistant Superintendent of College and Career Readiness or the building Principal, that a student be removed from a technical program depending on the severity of the offense, even after the first offense. The safety of all students enrolled in the PPS Career and Technical programs is our main priority.

Alternative Educational Pathways

Taconic High School and the Pittsfield Public Schools are dedicated to providing a complete and appropriate education for each child. While the programs outlined thus far offer a range of experiences for a diverse student body, there are exceptional cases that necessitate unique alternative educational pathways. These pathways are accessible through student support teams (SST). Student support teams

consist of academic, behavior and attendance. Each team analyzes Panorama's four categories (coursework, attendance, behavior and SEL) as well as Powerschool data to develop individual student intervention plans. After 6 weeks of interventions the teams review the data, and if needed, recommendation for alternative education is brought to the district level team.

Each of the pathways and programs listed below are offered on an availability basis. In some cases, program delivery is dictated by grant funding, the support of local agencies, and staffing availability. This list, thus, is provided as an overview of programs that may be offered in a given year. If there is a program that may be of interest, please see your guidance counselor.

Policy for Course Credits Outside The Pittsfield Schools

It shall be the policy of the Pittsfield Public Schools to authorize the granting of credit to students at Taconic High School and Pittsfield High School for courses pursued at Berkshire Community College, the Adult Evening Program, or other educational institutions approved by the Superintendent of Schools, for which they received prior authorization from their high school principal.

Guidelines:

Students are responsible for obtaining and returning paperwork in a timely manner

Students must gain approval from their building principal

Credit equivalents are determined as directed by the guidance departments, the building principal, and the educational institution

Pass-fail courses will not factor into GPA or RIC

Student athletes, in order to be eligible for participation, must meet minimum credit, attendance, and academic standards. Students may be required to produce attendance verification and/or academic progress reports. They must sign to give the institution attended permission to share attendance and grade information with the Taconic guidance department.

Approvals may not be granted if equivalent courses are available through the Pittsfield Public Schools

Accidents

Accidents of any nature should be reported to the nurse and the Main Office.

Health Services

The high schools maintain fully equipped health suites staffed by a full-time registered nurse. Students may go to the nurses' office between classes or get a pass from a classroom teacher.

School Counseling Services

The School Counseling Office encourages SELF-REFERRAL. This involves the student signing up for appointments in the Guidance Office. Appointment cards are sent out to teachers throughout the day. Emergency situations will be handled immediately.

Students are encouraged to spend some time with their counselor. Work may be left with the secretary if the counselors are tied up. Counselors will make it a point to see you on any matter on which they may be of assistance to you.

In addition to guidance services, students at Taconic High School have access to services from the Brien Center for Health and Substance Abuse for prevention and intervention services.

Course Registration

Registration occurs each spring and both students and parents are involved in the registration process using the Xello program which offers course planning and selection, college and career readiness tools as well as college application process. Evening informational meetings as well as faculty support the registration process. Student schedules are released and mailed to students shortly after the close of the school year. Guidance counselors are available to support schedule changes throughout the summer and at the start of the school year.

Course Changes

Indiscriminate change is disruptive to students and to the educational program. Course changes will not be made without very good reason, and only under exceptional circumstances. The principal may ultimately approve changes to be made, but only after remediation steps have been attempted following the start of school in the fall. At a minimum, evidence of a meeting between student, teacher, and parent/guardian must have occurred before a change would even be considered. Personality conflict between student and teacher is not a valid reason for a course change. If you believe you have a good reason for requesting a change, discuss the matter with your teacher and secure from him/her a Request for Change of Course Form. **Advanced Placement courses can only be dropped by August 1st of the upcoming school year.**

Withdrawal from a course will result in the following:

Full Year Course

Time	1-3 weeks	4-40 weeks
Grade	No record	Mark at time of withdrawal

- Partial credit may be given for courses withdrawn from prior to the end of the normal termination date subject to the approval of the principal.
- When a student changes from one level to another, the two teachers will meet jointly to determine an appropriate grade for the quarter.

The course change process will be:

Within the first two weeks of a course:

When a student desires to withdraw from a course he should obtain a **Change of Course Form** from the Guidance Office. After filling out the form the student will return it to the Guidance Office. The teacher will approve or reject the request. The student will then bring the form home for a parent's signature. When this has been accomplished, the student will make an appointment with his counselor and deliver the **Change of Course Form** to that counselor. If approved by all parties, the counselor will make up a drop and enter form, which will be taken by the student to be signed by the teachers who will be affected. Once this is done, the student returns the form to the guidance counselor.

However, if the counselor notes that the teacher opposes the change, the counselor will pursue the matter and contact the parent.

After two weeks into a course:

Course changes after two weeks into a class are strongly discouraged. In most cases these changes will not be made until the close of the current grading period. In order for a course change to occur, evidence of attempts to receive extra help and family-teacher communication must be evident. Conflict of personality between student and teacher is not a valid reason for a course change request. In some cases a guidance counselor may refer a case to the school principal for review and the principal will, ultimately, have the authority to endorse or deny any course change. *Please note: All course changes are subject to availability of classes and the class enrollment.

Withdrawals and Transfers

A student withdrawing from high school must obtain a withdrawal card from the guidance office. The student must return all texts and other school property and secure the signatures of his teachers, his counselor, the school nurse, the Attendance Office, and the Main Office. Once completed, the card is returned to the guidance department. The school department will share demographic information about school dropouts with Berkshire Works, the Adult Learning Center or other appropriate agencies that may be able to help the student obtain a GED or job training. Furthermore, an exit interview will be attempted prior to the student's departure.

Scholarship Information

In the fall there is a general orientation for seniors where scholarship information is explained. Individual counselors discuss scholarships with their students. Scholarships are available from three sources: the federal government, local organizations, and colleges.

Restitution Policy/Damage to School Property

Students and their parents are held responsible for loss of or damage to textbooks, equipment, and materials that have been assigned to them, and for loss, damage, or destruction of school property for which the student has been judged responsible by the principal.

The principal has authority and responsibility to administer restitution procedures for lost, damaged, or destroyed school property. The principal shall establish the repair or replacement cost of the property in question, under regulations issued by the Superintendent of Schools.

When damage or destruction to a school building is concerned, the Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance shall consult the Director of Building Maintenance to ascertain the repair or replacement cost.

The student or parent shall make restitution payable to the school department, or when a school building is concerned, to the City of Pittsfield. If the principal is unable to obtain restitution from the student or parents, the principal shall refer the case to the City Solicitor for possible legal action.

School Operations

For detailed information regarding school operations and practices, please click here to access Taconic High School's [Entry, Exit, Transition, Bathroom, Breakfast, Lunch Plan](#)

Volunteers & Visitors

While Taconic High School extends a warm welcome to parents and others who visit our school and classroom, at the same time, we must assure that our students and staff are safe and learning is not disrupted. Schools must be aware of who is in the building and why they are there. With the exception of the main entrance, all exterior entrances to THS are locked after the start of the school day. During the school day, the only doors that should be used by students and visitors are the front doors, where school staff are continually stationed. All visitors must report to the main office and may be asked to provide I.D. (preferably a driver's license), sign in, and receive a visitor's pass/identification for use while in the building. Visitors will be escorted to their destination.

Anyone who wishes to volunteer time to work with our students and is likely to have access to students which, at times, may be unsupervised while on school premises or while participating or assisting in school-sponsored programs or activities must register with the district for a Criminal Offender Records Information (CORI) check before engaging in volunteer activities. The opportunity to volunteer may be denied if the check reports evidence of criminal conduct deemed by the superintendent or designee to create a credible risk to students, staff, or the public.

Student Code of Conduct, Character, and Support

For the Pittsfield Public Schools full Code of Conduct, Character, and Support, please see the PPS District Website at www.pittsfield.net

Behavior Concerns, Infractions and Aligned Consequences and Interventions

Major Shifts in the Discipline Matrix in the Current Code:

- The Code places a greater focus on aligned restorative and accountable consequences and interventions rather than punishment. When an exclusionary response, such as in-school (ISS) or out-of-school (OSS), is warranted, the focus will be on short-term removals.

- The Code of Conduct, Character and Support places greater emphasis on interventions where students must account for their behavior and do something to repair the harm or make things right, rather than relying only on exclusionary consequences.
- Infractions are described as concretely as possible to avoid problems with assigning consequences that cover too wide a range of options.
- The delineation of four levels of consequences and interventions reduces the risk of discretionary determinations with the intended result to be increased equitable responses and decreased disproportionate responses for groups of students that are often overrepresented in exclusionary discipline.
- Differential responses will occur when indicated to accommodate for differences in the severity and frequency of the infraction and developmental differences in students based on age and ability.
- Level 1 lower impact behaviors should be managed by classroom teachers.
- As with all levels of behavior, if the behavior persists, restorative and accountable responses from higher levels may be imposed.

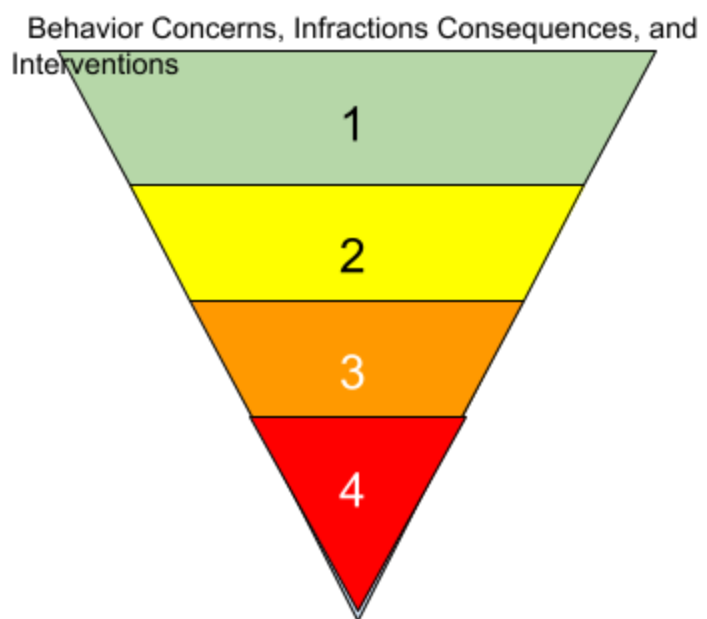
Level 1 interventions incorporate universal schoolwide and classroom practices that promote the development and practice of prosocial behaviors, self-discipline, habits of learning, and healthy well-being. Teachers aim to prevent minor discipline problems from becoming major disciplinary incidents.

Level 1 behavior requires intervention/consequences by the teacher/staff member; it may involve documentation. At this level, teachers/staff provide support to and set classroom limits with students, with possible follow-up consultation from student support staff.

Level 2 involves targeted interventions and may include consequences when a student's behavior violation warrants this. At this level, when the behavior persists after teacher interventions are not successful it may involve student removal from classroom, restorative interventions, meeting with administrator or student support staff member or having a family conference.

Level 3 and 4 involve violent or dangerous behavior violations that seriously jeopardize school and classroom safety and order. Students who are experiencing high risk or pervasive behavioral, academic, and physical and mental health concerns are assigned more intensive, individualized interventions.

Consequences and interventions apply to all students, Kindergarten to Grade 12, including all students with IEPs and 504 plans. Multiple incidents or chronic violations of the same behavior will warrant more intensive interventions and more serious consequences. Level 3 and 4 consequences and interventions may be modified for students to ensure the developmental appropriateness of the response, as well as, compliance with regulations for students with disabilities on an IEP or 504 plan. Employment of a suspension at a K-2 level is used only as a last resort and must include consultation with the Superintendent or his/her designee. Principals can also request this consultation for other grade levels to



determine the most appropriate consequences and interventions. Exclusionary responses, such as ISS or OSS, allows the school community to devise a safety and a reintegration plan. Parents of any student who has engaged in highly aggressive or dangerous behaviors are expected to participate in the intervention plan created to support their child's success.

The matrix below outlines the definitions of behavioral infractions and the initial level of response to be expected.

NOTE: Lowest level infractions are noted below. In situations where behavior continues and may become persistent, infractions progress to higher levels.

Level 1 <i>Teacher/Staff support with student support team consultation if necessary</i> The behavior requires intervention/consequences by the teacher/staff member; it may involve documentation.						
Level 2 <i>Involves support staff and/or appropriate administration</i> The behavior persists after teacher interventions are not successful; it may involve student removal from classroom, restorative interventions, meeting with administrator or student support staff member or family conference.						
Level 3 <i>In-school and Short-Term Suspension</i> The behavior presents a risk to the safety, health, or welfare of the adults and students; may involve in-school suspensions (partial or full day) or short-term suspensions from 1 to 5 days based on severity and repeated occurrences; may also involve meeting with administrator or student support team member, family conference, and/or re-entry restorative planning conference.						
Level 4 <i>Request for Long-Term Suspension</i> Infractions at this level represents the most serious infractions and may result in a suspension of more than five days, up to and including a full-year of suspension or exclusion from school. Behavior involves violent or dangerous behavior violations that has a substantial detrimental effect on safety and the general welfare of the school.						
Code	Offense Category	Description of the Offense	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Alcohol (liquor law violations: possession, use, sale)						
1010	Sale of alcohol	Selling or attempting to sell alcoholic beverages on school property or at a school function.				■
1020	Distribution of alcohol	Distributing (i.e., giving away) alcoholic beverages on school property or at a school function.			■	
1030	Drinking alcohol	Consuming alcoholic beverages on school property or at a school function.			■	
1040	Possession of alcohol	Having alcoholic beverages in one's pocket(s), bag(s), locker, car, etc. while on school property or at a school function.			■	

1050	Suspicion of alcohol use	Exhibiting behaviors that suggests that an individual consumed alcohol.		■		
1100	Arson (Setting a Fire)	The unlawful or intentional damage, or attempt to damage, any school property by fire or incendiary device. Firecrackers, fireworks, and trash can fires would be included in this category if they were contributing factors to a damaging fire.				■
Attendance Policy Violation (Not Attending School or Classes as Required)						
1210	Forging absence excuse	Creating a false document or signature used with the intent to deceive a school official.		■		
PPS-01	Forging absence excuse	Creating a false document or signature used with the intent to deceive a teacher.	■			
1220	Skipping or Leaving Class	Missing or left class without permission	■			
1230	Tardiness	Lateness for school or class without permission.	■			
1240	Truancy	Missing or leaving school without permission		■		
1300	Physical Altercation or Attack	Committing an act of violence toward a person, including, hitting, kicking, shoving, punching, scratching or spitting on another person. Must have an offender and a victim.			■	
1700	Physical Fighting	Mutual participation in an altercation involving physical violence. No victims, only offenders.			■	
1400	Burglary / Breaking and Entering (Stealing Property/Unlawful Entry)	Unlawful entry or attempted entry into a building or other structure with the intent to commit a crime.				■

PPS-02	Classroom Misbehavior	Refusal to do work or participate in lesson; lack of compliance with classroom rules; off-task behavior; interrupting others from doing their work; engages in demands, argumentative and adversarial speech, confrontations or “back talk” (includes share or buddy teachers)	■			
PPS-03	Persistent Classroom Misbehavior	Refusal to do work or participate in lesson; lack of compliance with classroom rules; off-task behavior; interrupting others from doing their work; engages in demands, argumentative and adversarial speech, confrontations or “back talk” that requires removal from class by an administrator (does not include share or buddy teachers)		■		
PPS-04	Public Space Misbehavior	Running, excessive noise, horseplay, loitering or unauthorized hall walking	■			
PPS-05	School Bus Misbehavior	Distraction of driver while driving;				
1500	School-Wide Disorderly Conduct	Any act that substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of the <u>school environment</u> . Required a high level of administrative and/or support staff resources to return to calm.			■	

Drugs Excluding Alcohol and Tobacco (Illegal Drug Possession, Sale, Use/Under the Influence)

1610	Sale of illegal drug	Selling or attempting to sell illegal drugs on school property or at a school function.				■
1620	Sale of substance represented as an illegal drug	Selling a substance represented as an illegal drug (e.g., selling oregano represented as marijuana).			■	
1630	Distribution of illegal drug	Distributing (i.e., giving away) illegal drugs on school property or at a school function.				■
1640	Distribution of substance represented as an illegal drug	Distributing (i.e., giving away) substance represented as an illegal drug.			■	

1650	Use of illegal drug*	Smoking, snorting, injecting, ingesting, or otherwise using an illegal drug not mentioned above			■	
MA02	Marijuana use	Smoking or otherwise using marijuana on school property or at a school function.			■	
1660	Possession of illegal drug*	Having an illegal drug in one's pocket(s), bag(s), car, locker, etc. on school property or at a school function.			■	
MA01	Marijuana possession	Having marijuana in one's pocket(s), bag(s), locker, car, etc.			■	
MA03	Possession of illegal drugs with intent to sell	Possession of illegal drugs with intent to sell on school property or at a school function.				■
1670	Possession of drug paraphernalia	Having equipment (e.g., bong) for use in consuming illegal drugs in one's pocket(s), bag(s), car, locker, etc. on school property or at a school function.			■	
1680	Suspicion of use	An instance where an individual's behavior suggests that he or she used illegal drugs.		■		

Harassment, Nonsexual (Physical, Verbal, or Psychological)

1810	Bullying	The repeated use by one or more students (aggressors) of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture of 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 him/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process of the orderly operation of a school. This includes cyber bullying.			■	
1820	Hazing	Committing an act or acts against a student or coercing a student to commit an act that creates risk of harm to a person in order to be initiated into a student organization or class.				■
1897	Other nonsexual harassment	The incident cannot be coded in one of the above categories but did involve nonsexual harassment. This includes harassment based on the basis of race, color, age, disability, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity.			■	

1900	Harassment, Sexual	Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other physical or verbal conduct/communication of a sexual nature, including gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.			■	
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Inappropriate Use of Medication (Prescription or over-the-counter)

2110	Sale of medication	Selling prescription or over-the-counter medication.				■
2120	Distribution of medication	Distributing (i.e., giving away) prescription or over-the-counter medicine in violation of school rules.				■
2130	Use of medication in violation of school rules	Using prescription or over-the-counter medicine in violation of school rules.			■	
2140	Possession of medication in violation of school rules	Having prescription or over-the-counter medication in one's pocket(s), bag(s), car, locker, etc., in violation of school rules		■		
2150	Suspicion of use of medication in violation of school rules	An instance where an individual's behavior suggests that he or she used prescription or over-the-counter drugs in violation of school rules.		■		
PPS-06	Inciting or Participating in Disturbance	Engaging in an intentional act to disrupt the normal operation of the school community; instigating or encouraging another person to violate the Code of Conduct, Character and Support		■		
2200	Administrative Non-Compliance/ Insubordination	Unwillingness to comply with authority, refusal to respond to a reasonable request, or other situations in which a student fails to comply with the reasonable requests of school personnel. Includes failure to comply with assigned consequence and failure to identify oneself.		■		
2300	Kidnapping (Abduction)	Unlawful seizure, transportation, and/or detention of a person against his/her will, or of a minor without the consent of his/her custodial parent(s) or legal guardian. This category includes hostage taking.				■

Obscene Behavior

2410	Displays of affection in violation of school policy	Holding hands, kissing or other displays of affection	■			
2420	Obscene written messages	Writing obscene messages on paper, on black boards, or elsewhere on school property (e.g., on bathroom wall).		■		
2430	Drawing obscene pictures	Creating illustrations of a sexually explicit or vulgar nature.		■		
2440	Obscene electronic communication	Posting obscene messages on Internet message boards, sending obscenities via Internet chat rooms/instant messaging, Twitter, cell phone text and downloading or emailing obscene material.			■	
2450	Obscene gestures	Gestures that are offensive, socially unacceptable, or otherwise not suitable for an educational setting.		■		
2460	Obscene language/profanity	Suggestive, explicit, or vulgar language, cursing, or abusive language.		■		
2500	Physical Altercation, Minor	Confrontation, horseplay, or physical aggression that does not result in injury.	■			
PPS-07	Refusal to Be Searched	Refusing to allow a search by a school official who possesses reasonable suspicion that a student may possess contraband violating school policy that could potentially endanger the welfare of the student or the safety of others.			■	
PPS-08	Refusal to Identify	Refusing to identify oneself when asked by a member of school staff, either an administrator or a teacher.		■		
2600	Robbery (Taking of Things by Force)	The taking of, or attempting to take, anything of value that is owned by another person or organization under confrontational circumstances by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear. A key difference between robbery and theft is that the threat of physical harm or actual physical harm is involved in a robbery.				■
School Threat (Threat of Destruction or Harm)						

2710	Bomb threat	Intentionally making a false report of potential harm from a bomb, dynamite, explosive, or arson-causing device on school property.				■
2720	Fire alarm	Verbally or otherwise (e.g., ringing alarm bells) making a false report of fire.			■	
2730	Chemical/ biological threat	Intentionally making a false report of potential harm from dangerous chemicals or biological agents.				■
2740	Terroristic threat	Making terroristic threats to harm students or school officials, and/or to destroy school property.				■
2800	Sexual Battery (Sexual Assault)	Oral, anal or vaginal penetration forcibly or against the person's will or where the victim is incapable of giving consent on school property or at a school function. Includes rape, fondling, indecent liberties, and child molestation.				■
2900	Sexual Offenses, Other (Lewd Behavior, Indecent Exposure)	Sexual intercourse, sexual contact, or other behavior intended to result in sexual gratification without force or threat of force on school property or at a school function. Code statutory rape here.				■

Theft (Stealing Personal or Other Property)

3110	General theft, Person	Taking or attempting to take money or property belonging to another person or the school with the intent to permanently deprive the victim of his or her possessions.		■		
3120	Motor Vehicle Theft	Theft of a motor vehicle on school property. This category includes theft of a car, truck, motorcycle, dune buggy, snowmobile, RV, or anything that is self-propelled on school property or at a school function.				■

Threat/Intimidation (Causing Fear of Harm)

3210	Physical threat	Threatening an individual or group of individuals with a gesture(s) or body language.		■		
3220	Verbal threat	Threatening an individual or group of individuals with spoken words or sounds.		■		

3230	Written threat	Threatening an individual or group of individuals in writing (e.g., letter, note, message on chalkboard).		■		
3240	Electronic threat	Threatening an individual or group of individuals by text, email, postings on Internet sites, or through other electronic mechanisms.		■		
MA04	Threat of robbery	Any threat (verbal, written, electronic) by a person to commit a robbery.		■		
PPS-08	Extortion	Theft using coercion, which includes obtaining money or property from another student through coercion, intimidation or threat of physical harm			■	

Tobacco (Possession or Use) Tobacco products is defined to include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, juul and vape pods.

3310	Sale of tobacco	Sale of tobacco products			■	
3320	Distribution of tobacco	Distribution (i.e., giving away) tobacco products.			■	
3330	Use of tobacco	Smoking, chewing or otherwise using tobacco		■		
3340	Possession of tobacco	Having tobacco in one's pocket(s), bag(s), car, locker, etc.	■			
3350	Suspicion of use of tobacco	An instance where an individual's behavior, breath, etc., suggests that he or she used tobacco.	■			
3400	Trespassing (Unlawful or Unauthorized Presence)	Students are on school grounds either in the building they regularly attend after notice or in another school building without permission			■	

Vandalism (Damage to School or Personal Property)

3510	Vandalism of school property	Intentionally damaging or destroying school property (K-2 considerations)			■	
3520	Vandalism of personal property	Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student or staff member, including graffiti (K-2 considerations)			■	

3600	Violation of School Rules	Violation of school rules without insubordination.	■			
3600 (PPS)	Academic Dishonesty	Includes plagiarism, cheating, copying from another student, altering records, and assisting another student in any of the above actions.		■		
3600 (PPS)	Violation of the Dress Code	Wearing clothing that is in opposition to the dress code policy.	■			
PPS-09	Violation of Electronics Device Policy	Students may not use or operate personal electronic devices or cell phones during the school day. This includes earphones or buds.	■			
PPS-10	Recording and/or Distribution of Others	Students may not record the voice or image of another without consent or in any way that interferes in the educational environment. This includes the distribution of voice and/or image, as well as, posting to a public forum.			■	
PPS-11	Violation of Electronic Acceptable Use Policy	Refer to District Electronic Acceptable Use Policy	■			
MA05	Felony Conviction Outside of School*	When type of felony determines a substantial threat to a safe, peaceful school environment.				■
MA19	Felony complaint (charge) outside of school*	Type of felony determines a substantial threat to a safe, peaceful school environment.				■

Weapons Offenses						
Firearm						
0011	Handgun	A handgun or pistol				■
0012	Shotgun	A shotgun				■
MA14	Rifle	A rifle				■
0013	Other type of firearm*	The weapon involved was another type of firearm not named above, including zip guns, starter guns, and flare guns. As defined by the Gun-Free Schools Act.				■

Knives/Other Weapons (Level 3 could be a first consideration based on a student's age and development.)						
0021	Knife with blade less than 2.5 inches	Knife with blade less than 2.5 inches				■
0023	Knife with blade greater than or equal to 2.5 inches	Knife with blade greater than or equal to 2.5 inches				■
0029	Other knife*	The weapon involved was another type of knife.				■
0030	Other Sharp Objects*	The weapon involved was another type of sharp object, (e.g., razor blade, ice pick, dirk/dagger, Chinese star, other pointed instrument [used as a weapon]).				■
0040	Other Object*	The weapon involved was another known object (e.g., chain, nunchakus, brass knuckle, billy club, electrical weapon or device [stun gun], BB or pellet gun).				■
0050	Substance Used as Weapon*	The weapon involved was a substance (e.g., mace, tear gas) that was used as a weapon.				■
MA51	Explosive or Incendiary Device	A bomb, grenade, rocket, missile, mine, or other incendiary device				■
0099	Unknown Weapon	Any other object not described above, such as fireworks or firecrackers				■

Aligned Supports and Interventions

As stated throughout, the focus of the Code of Conduct, Character and Support is on finding a balance between assigning accountable consequences for behavioral infractions and providing supports and a restorative approach to interventions to both address behavior and to assist students to learn effective skills to positively impact future behavior. It is important to keep the following context in mind: One of the best ways to prevent problematic behavior is the presence of a well-structured, engaging and culturally responsive lesson as outlined within the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Rubric.

Supports and interventions are aligned with each level of the behavioral infraction matrix and represent a menu of suggested responses. Teachers, support personnel and administrators may select one or more responses in each level. It is not expected that all interventions at each level would be used.

Administrators, teachers, and student support personnel may also use a lower level intervention when it is appropriate. They will strive to match students with interventions that are the least intensive, while being the most effective. Interventions will be monitored and adjusted based on student response.

School personnel are responsible for developing and using strategies that promote optimal learning and positive behavior throughout a student's school experience. Administrators, teachers, school counselors, social workers, psychologists and other school staff are also expected to use promotion and prevention strategies to engage students, including students with disabilities, that facilitate students' academic and social-emotional growth, assist them in following school rules and policies, and support correction when behavioral issues arise. If, at any time, school officials suspect that a student's difficulties may be the result of a disability which may require special education services, the student should be referred immediately to the school Special Education Director/Coordinator and her team.

Teachers are expected to use Universal Tier 1 practices to create respectful, orderly, and productive classrooms through (1) the development of caring, supportive relationships with and among students; (2) organizing and implementing instruction in ways that optimize students' access to learning; (3) using group management methods that encourage students' engagement in academic tasks; (4) promoting the development of students' self-management and social efficacy; and (5) using appropriate interventions to assist students with behavior problems.

The chart below is a tool to indicate how supports and interventions are aligned at the four levels of behavioral infractions. Note that it is always acceptable, and often appropriate, to include lower level restorative and accountable actions even when addressing higher level behavior.

<p>Level 1 Behavior: Support/behavior intervention provided by the teacher.</p> <p>The behavior requires intervention/consequences by the teacher.</p> <p>May include additional consultation with student support personnel when patterns of behavior persist.</p> <p>Level 1 behavior does not include exclusion, such as ISS or OSS, as an initial response.</p>	
<p>Level 1 Documentation and Restorative & Accountable Responses</p>	<p>Level 1: Prevention and Classroom Behavior Support Responses</p> <p>(Utilize the Promotion and Prevention Toolbox for additional strategies.)</p>

<p><u>Documentation:</u></p> <p>Consider submission of a discipline referral for “Classroom Misbehavior” in PowerSchool if a pattern of behavior persists or intensifies that the staff member believes should be documented.</p> <p><u>Accountability Responses:</u></p> <p>Suggested communication with parent/family to discuss and problem solve a concern via phone, email, in-person conference or letter.</p> <p>Assign teacher-supervised consequences.</p> <p><u>Restorative Responses: Personal, Academic and Behavioral Check-ins</u></p> <p>Choose from the following based on relevance (See following pages for descriptions.):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restorative Question Conference 2. Personal Efficacy Conference 3. Diffusing Conference 4. Problem-Solving Circle 	<p><u>Prevention:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote opportunities to get to know your students and develop positive, trusting relationships, including meeting and greeting students daily or learning about students’ lives outside the classroom. 2. Practice clear, consistent academic and behavioral classroom procedures and routines daily. 3. Pre-teach, model, practice, reinforce, and monitor classroom expectations. 4. Differentiate classroom instruction to best meet diverse student needs. Students will have less behavioral difficulties when they can access the instruction. 5. Provide activities that promote group cohesion in your classrooms. 6. Use positive, specific praise/feedback in a 5:1 ratio over negative feedback. Include individual and group kudos, recognitions and celebrations. 7. Use developmentally appropriate sensory, motor and and space modifications to change the environment or the ways that students engage. 8. Lesson Planning--remember that one of the best ways to prevent problematic behavior is the presence of a well-structured, engaging and culturally responsive lesson. <p><u>Classroom Behavior Support Responses:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First Response--use redirection strategies including: prompts, cues, proximity, effective reminders, positive directives that invite cooperation and self-correction. 2. Diffuse and de-escalate upset students or charged situations by calmly responding to negative and inappropriate speech in ways that support students to self-correct. 3. Avoid or disengage from power struggles. 4. Remain calm. Avoid taking conflict personally. It’s rarely about you, even when it feels like it. 5. Watch that the nonverbal messages you are giving out match what you want to communicate. 6. Use brief behavior check-ins with individual students during class time or during a group/class discussion to solve a problem, assist students to make a positive choice to self-correct their behavior. 7. Utilize brief restorative conversations to promote self-reflection and help repair relationships with the teacher or students experiencing an interpersonal conflict. 8. Consult with student support personnel to generate possible strategies to reduce unskillful behaviors and increase desired target behaviors.
<p>Level 2 Behavior: Involves support staff and/or appropriate administration.</p> <p>The behavior persists after teacher interventions are not successful; it may involve student removal from classroom, restorative interventions, meeting with administrator or student support staff member or family conference. It could include referral for a Building Assistance and/or Student Support Team meeting.</p> <p>Level 2 behavior does not include suspension, such as ISS or OSS, as an initial response.</p>	

Level 2 Documentation and Accountability Response	Level 2: Behavior Support Responses (Incorporate all Level 1 Prevention and Classroom Behavior Support Responses as well.)
<p><u>Documentation:</u></p> <p>REQUIRES submission of a log entry in PowerSchool to document the incident.</p> <p><u>Accountability Responses:</u></p> <p>Requires communication with parent/family to discuss and problem solve a concern via phone, email, in-person conference or letter.</p> <p>Teacher- supervised and/or administrative consequences can be assigned.</p> <p>If behavior warrants use of the Reset Protocol, all requirements of the protocol must be met.</p> <p><u>Restorative Responses:</u></p> <p>(See following pages for descriptions.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Problem-Solving and Planning Conference 2. Return Conference After Classroom Removal 3. Student-Teacher Mediated Conference. 	<p>Teacher Facilitated Level 1 Behavior Supports PLUS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restorative conferencing between teacher and student (might also include parent and/or student support personnel) to develop a plan for improving behavior, engagement, and academic performance in the classroom. Restorative conferencing should include the relevant type of conferencing listed to the left. 2. More intensive academic and/or behavioral progress monitoring. 3. Review and rehearse classroom and/or school-wide academic and behavioral expectations. <p>Student Support Staff/Administrator Facilitated Interventions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continued incident investigation. 2. Meeting with a member of the school administration, school counselor, or school adjustment counselor. 3. Conference with student followed by conferencing with teacher teams, Building Assistance Team (BAM) and/or Student Support Team (SST) when a pattern persists. 4. Provide Tier II student support staff facilitated interventions that could include referral to school adjustment counseling services and other building-based Check and Connect/PBIS Tier II or PBIS Tier III programming, which could include individual, and small group interventions, mediation, restitution, social and emotional learning programs. 5. Individualized psychological assessment and trauma assessment when recommended by BAM Team after interventions previously instituted. 6. Individualized case management services for students with IEPs and 504 plans with possible reconvene of IEP/504 Team to review needs for additional accommodations and supports when concerns persist. 7. Referral to services, collaboration and coordination as appropriate with community-based supports and agencies. 8. Referral to Intervention Support Centers when developed in year two of the Code implementation.
<p align="center">Level 3 Behavior: Behavior Support Responses</p> <p align="center">Warrants in-school and/or short-term out-of-school suspension (1-5 Days)</p> <p>The behavior presents a risk to the safety, health, or welfare of the adults and students; may involve in-school suspensions (partial or full day) or short-term suspensions from 1 to 5 days based on severity and repeated occurrences; may also involve meeting with administrator or student support team member, family conference, and/or re-entry restorative planning conference.</p>	

If student presents with significant mental health distress and concerns about immediate risk to self or others, school adjustment counselor should be consulted to assess need for a referral to the Brien Center Emergency Services/Crisis Team (413-499-0412). Parent permission is required.

Documentation:

REQUIRES submission of a log entry in PowerSchool to document the incident.

Discipline letter sent home by administrator, including information to parent on due process rights.

Due process hearing when requested.

Accountability Responses:

Behavior warrants removal from classroom or other building location by administrator.

Parent/guardian notification and scheduling of conference with administrator, student and parent.

Administrator investigation of incident and consideration of past pattern of ODRs in determining consequences.

If behavior warrants use of the Reset Protocol, all requirements of the protocol must be met.

Manifest Determination required when student with disability reaches 5-10 days of suspension or a pattern of behaviors resulting in suspension occurs.

Consultation with public safety officials, police and fire, when a crime is suspected.

Restorative Response Protocols:

(See following pages for descriptions.)

1. Return Conference after Classroom Removal
2. Bullying-Harassment Caucus and Conference when relevant

Incorporate all Level 1 and Level 2 Prevention and Classroom Behavior Support Responses as well.

Additional Responses Include:

- Development of comprehensive student specific academic and behavioral intervention plan, such as, completion of a functional behavioral assessment and plan, reassess and adjust existing plans and increase monitoring.
- Creation of a safety plan.
- Referral to SST, BAM, IEP/504 eligibility or reconvene team as indicated based on student's current services.

<p>3. Restorative Group Conferencing</p> <p>4. Suspension Re-Entry Protocol</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Level 4 Behavior: Behavior Support Responses</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Warrants longer-term out-of-school suspension (5 days or more)</p> <p>Infractions at this level represents the most serious infractions and may result in a suspension of more than five days, up to and including a full-year of suspension or exclusion from school.</p> <p>Behavior involves violent or dangerous behavior violations that has a substantial detrimental effect on safety and the general welfare of the school.</p> <p>If student presents with significant mental health distress and concerns about immediate risk to self or others, school adjustment counselor should be consulted to assess need for a referral to the Brien Center Emergency Services/Crisis Team (413-499-0412). Parent permission is required.</p>	
<p><u>Documentation:</u></p> <p>REQUIRES submission of a log entry in PowerSchool to document the incident.</p> <p>Discipline letter sent home by administrator, including information to parent on due process rights.</p> <p>Due process hearing when requested.</p> <p><u>Accountability Responses:</u></p> <p>Behavior warrants removal from classroom or other building location by administrator.</p> <p>Parent/guardian notification and scheduling of conference with administrator, student and parent.</p> <p>Administrator investigation of incident and consideration of past pattern of ODRs in determining consequences.</p> <p>If behavior warrants use of the Reset Protocol, all requirements of the protocol must be met.</p> <p>Manifest Determination required when student with disability reaches 5-10 days of suspension or</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Incorporate all Level 1 and Level 2 Prevention and Classroom Behavior Support Responses as well.</p> <p><u>Additional Responses Include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of comprehensive student specific academic and behavioral intervention planning, such as, completion of a functional behavioral assessment and plan, reassess and adjust existing plans and increase monitoring. • Creation of a safety plan. • Referral to SST, BAM, IEP/504 eligibility or reconvene team as indicated based on student's current services.

<p>a pattern of behaviors resulting in suspension occurs.</p> <p>Consultation with public safety officials, police and fire, when a crime is suspected.</p> <p><u>Restorative Response Protocols:</u></p> <p>(See following pages for descriptions.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Return Conference after Classroom Removal 2. Bullying-Harassment Caucus and Conference when relevant 3. Restorative Group Conferencing 4. Suspension Re-Entry Protocol 	
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An Act Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing

M.G.L. c. 269 Section 17-19

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

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

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

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand

dollars.

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

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

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

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

BULLYING

Bullying Prevention Investigators:

Matthew Bishop, Principal, mbishop@pittsfield.net
Angela Johansen, Vice-Principal, ajohansen@pittsfield.net
Michael Taber, Dean of Students, mtaber@pittsfield.net

All can be reached via email or through calling the main office (413) 448-9600.

Included are selected portions from the 2020-21 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Please refer to the complete document posted on the website at www.pittsfield.net for further information.

PITTSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROHIBITION OF BULLYING, CYBER-BULLYING AND RETALIATION:

Bullying, including cyber-bullying, and retaliation as defined in this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (BPIP), is not acceptable conduct and is prohibited within the Pittsfield Public Schools. Bullying of any type has no place in a school setting. The Pittsfield Public Schools leadership and staff will strive to maintain learning and working environments that support positive personal relationships between students and between students and staff and are free of bullying. Any student who engages in conduct that constitutes bullying shall be subject to disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension or expulsion in accordance with state law, district policy and student handbooks. In addition to disciplinary consequences, a student engaging in bullying behavior will also receive other interventions intended to build increased competence in relationship-building and other necessary social emotional learning skills.

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

Any form of bullying is prohibited:

- *in any school building and on all school grounds*
- *in district provided virtual learning environments and learning management systems*
- *on property immediately adjacent to school grounds*
- *at a bus stop or on a school bus or any other school sanctioned transportation, such as another vehicle whether owned, leased, or used by the school district*
- *at a school-sponsored or school related activity, function or program whether it takes place on or off school grounds*
- *through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by the school district or school*
- *at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district, 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*

As the District's Anti-Bullying Policy (STU-80) states, it is not the District's intent to prohibit students from expressing their ideas, including ideas that may offend the sensibilities of others,

or from engaging in civil debate. However, the District does not condone and will take both disciplinary and remedial action in response to conduct that creates a hostile environment and interferes with students' opportunity to learn.

III. DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS:

The following language and definitions are applied throughout this BPIP and are to be used consistently within the Pittsfield Public Schools in relation to incidents of bullying/cyber-bullying:

A. Bullying: *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 causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyber-bullying. (Reference M.G.L. c.71, s. 37O)*

B. Cyber-bullying: *Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or any 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, including, but not limited to blogs, websites, and social networking. (Reference M.G.L. c.71, s. 37O)*

C. Retaliation: *Any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student or staff member who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.*

D. Aggressor: *A student or staff member who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliatory behavior. (The use of the term aggressor varies from the term "bully" in the Act to Prevent Bullying, yet is being used in the plan under the guidance of the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.)*

E. Target: *A student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation is directed.*

F. Hostile Environment: *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 the student's education. (Reference M.G.L. c.71, 37O)*

G. Staff: *School staff is defined as including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity and paraprofessionals.*

Students with Possible Increased Vulnerability: *The plan recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex,*

socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics.

REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others and may be in oral or written form. Reports made by a staff member must be submitted in writing by the person making the report. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members can be written on the same reporting form or may be made anonymously. Oral or anonymous reports made by a parent and/or student shall be scribed by a staff member in circumstances where a written report was not submitted. Also, a web based system will allow users to file anonymous reports electronically. Click here for a copy of the [Suspected Bullying Reporting and Determination Form-2](#)

Use of a “Suspected Bullying Reporting and Determination Form” (see Appendix B) is required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will:

- Annually provide information on how to access the [Suspected Bullying Reporting and Determination Form](#) posted on the website or from their child’s school building.*
- The Suspected Bullying Reporting and Determination Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.*
- Annually, the school or district will provide the school community, including administrators, educators and other staff, students and parents or guardians with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation as parts of district and school handbooks. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, will be included in these handbooks, on the school and district website, and in information made available to parents or guardians.*

B. Reporting by Staff

Every school or district staff member, including but not limited to, central office administrators, building principals and administrators, school adjustment counselors and school psychologists, teachers and related service providers, paraprofessional staff, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodial staff, bus drivers, athletic coaches and extracurricular advisors is required to monitor and address student behavior and to intervene when unkind behavior occurs. This includes immediately ensuring that any need for student safety in the present moment is restored. Concern about any bullying or retaliatory conduct must also be reported as soon as possible to the principal or the administrator designated to investigate suspected bullying behavior.

In addition, if any adult suspects that a student is being targeted and bullied, they are required to fill out the district suspected bullying determination form and submit it to the building

administrator. As the person who has witnessed the behavior it is most effective if that staff member makes contact with the family of the target and the aggressor to give the clearest description of the bullying behavior and the steps planned to take to promote respectful behavior in your classroom.

The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority and the responsibility of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

C. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians and Others

The school or district asks students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or administrative designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Anonymous reports can be made from a link on the district website. [Suspected Bullying Reporting and Determination Form-2](#). Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report or may report orally. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member or with the principal or designee. A student who knowingly makes a false allegation of bullying or retaliation shall also be subject to disciplinary action.

D. Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation

Safety First

Before fully investigating allegations of bullying or retaliation, the staff member, principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but are not limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The staff member, principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting the following persons from bullying or retaliation: a student/staff member who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student/staff member who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student/staff member who provides information during an investigation, or a student/staff member who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

Notification Requirements

Notice to Parents or Guardians: Upon investigation and determination that bullying or

retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor and will review response protocols. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

Notice to Another School or District: If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

Notice to Law Enforcement: At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and in compliance with school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer or another member of the Pittsfield Police Department in the absence of a school resource officer and/or other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

Investigation

The following provides general guidelines for responding to a report of bullying or retaliation. Note that the guidelines should be modified as necessary to respond appropriately to the individual complaint.

Pre-Investigation: Before fully investigating allegations of bullying or retaliation, school personnel will assess the level of need and take immediate steps to support the alleged target and/or protect the alleged target from further potential incidents of concern. If the initial report is to or by a staff member, the staff member will complete an initial review of the situation and intervene as necessary. The staff member will make a referral to the principal or administrative designee if further administrative investigation is needed.

Investigation: The investigator will seek to determine the basis of the complaint, gather information from the complainant, including such matters as what specifically happened, who committed the alleged acts, who was present or may have information about the events, when the events occurred and where the events occurred.

The principal or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and could result in disciplinary and restorative actions in alignment with the Student Code of Conduct, Character, and Support.

The principal or administrative designee and other staff members, as determined by the principal or administrative designee, may conduct interviews. To the extent practical, given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal, designee and any other interviewers will maintain a written record of the investigation. Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for other investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

Determinations: The principal or designee will make a determination based upon the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted from participating in school or from school activities. The principal or designee will, one, determine what remedial action is required, if any, and, two, determine what response and/or disciplinary or restorative actions are necessary as guided by the Student Code of Conduct, Character, and Support.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development and/or mental health interventions.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor orally about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken with other students unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

Responses to Bullying

Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-Building

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the school principal or designee will decide upon a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior and restore/repair relationships. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v). Some skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- *Offering individualized skill-building or restorative sessions;*
- *Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students in consultation with guidance and/or school adjustment counselors and other appropriate school personnel;*
- *Implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral interventions and supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;*
- *Meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;*
- *Developing individual behavior plans to include a focus on specific social skill development; and*
- *Making a referral for counseling or other mental health services for targets, aggressors and family members.*

Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of information gathered through investigation by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the BPIP and with the district and school's Code of Conduct, Character and Support. Discipline up to and including suspension and expulsion may be applied by the school principal. All suspensions or expulsions are subject to review by the Superintendent and his/her designee with the student and parents afforded full due process rights.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and state laws regarding student discipline. A manifest determination will be completed to determine the connection between a student's bullying behavior and his/her disability. As necessary, a special education team will be reconvened to review the student's IEP.

Students with disabilities are known to be considered to be a vulnerable population for both being bullied and, in some disability categories, for engaging in bullying behavior. The risk for this will be reviewed at all IEP initial, reevaluation and annual meetings as part of the IEP process to determine appropriate interventions, both universal for all students and individualized.

Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well.

Supportive services will be assessed and offered to the target. These services may include safety planning, school adjustment counselor services and mental health referral, as well as, increased use of Tier 1 classroom strategies that promote safe and supportive learning environments.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures or other responses are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

Attendance

Teachers are expected to cooperate with and assist students who miss class work, quizzes or examinations due to absences. While the fact that an unexcused absence is not in itself justification for automatic grade reduction, it is to be expected that such absences will adversely affect student performance due to missed quizzes, examinations, assignments, and participation in class activities. It is therefore appropriate for teachers to establish marking procedures which will include grades for daily activities, which, when not made up, will be reflected in the teacher's grade book.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

Students must bring in a note or have a parent/guardian email (clausier@pittsfield.net) the school for each day, or part of a day, that they are absent. This note or contact must include the date absent and the reason for the absence. Such absences are classified as either excused or unexcused.

A. Absence for any of the following reasons will be classified as excused provided that the school receives written verification from the parent/guardian within three (3) school days of the student's return from absence:

1. Illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school. The illness or injury must be verified by the school nurse or the parent/guardian in writing. If the absence is three (3) or more consecutive days it needs verification by a healthcare provider. Note: tutoring will be available to any student who is ill for 9 consecutive days and presents medical documentation (a physician's note);
2. Bereavement for a member of the immediate family, (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt/uncle, cousin); other bereavement if approved by the Principal or designee;

3. Specified religious holidays (STU-17);
4. Required court appearances;
5. Medical or psychological tests during the school day. The parent must show evidence (such as a note from the health care provider) that the tests could not be scheduled after school;
6. Other functions, activities, or extraordinary situations approved by the school principal.

B. Any absence not considered Excused by the reasons stated in Section A above will be considered Unexcused.

C. The school office will maintain records for all students delineating excused and unexcused absence from school or class until the first day of school the next year.

Class Attendance Grading Policy

A. General

1. All work missed as a result of an absence must be completed (See INS-104). Students who are absent on a day on which an assignment is due and/or a test quiz is administered will be required to submit the assignment and/or complete the test/quiz on the day of their return. Students absent more than one day should consult with their instructor for a timeline to submit missed work.
2. Absence or tardiness from school or class, whether excused or unexcused, is detrimental. Instructional time is a precious commodity, and it is reasonable to assume that absences from class for whatever reason adversely affects learning. It is expected that the classroom teacher enable the student who misses class to compensate for the instructional opportunity lost through make up opportunity. -

B. Points

1. Student attendance will count for 10 percent of the overall quarter grade.
2. Each faculty member will create a weekly assignment in the attendance category that will illustrate the student's attendance for the week.
3. Daily points will be awarded
 - a. student who arrives on time for class and stays for the duration of class - 20 points
 - b. student is tardy for class - 15 points
 - c. student leaves class without permission or is removed by an administrator - 0 points
 - d. student cuts class - 0 points
 - e. Student has an approved excused absence with a note - no loss of points

D. Appeals

1. Students may appeal loss of attendance points to the Principal. The Principal has two possible actions: 1) accept attendance appeal and grant attendance points or 2) deny the appeal

Notification:

Attendance data will be collected on a period basis. Teachers should be reaching out to families with any attendance concern during the course of the school year.

Upon reaching 15 absences in a year parents should be contacted and an appointment will be scheduled with a school counselor or administrator.

Attendance data is collected daily, upon reaching 10 days of consecutive unexcused absences, a letter will be sent home with a date and time for a parent or guardian to come in to discuss interventions and/or alternative education with a school counselor or administrator.

Tardiness and Dismissal

A. Tardiness: General

1. Tardiness to class not only limits the amount of time that an individual student can be engaged and on-task, but is also disruptive to the class as a whole. In order to encourage student promptness to class, school staff will continually research best practices and adjust guidelines accordingly. Currently, tardiness is addressed in Items B and C below.

B. Tardiness: Guidelines

1. Students who arrive late to class and have shown a pattern of tardiness will have a referral sent to office for further consequences.
2. The Principals will work with school personnel to intervene in cases of regular tardiness. These interventions will involve parent meetings.
3. If a student arrives tardy to class he/she will receive a reduction of 5 daily points out of the 20 points possible

C. Dismissal: Guidelines

1. Students should report to the main office prior to the start of the school day with a note from their parent/guardian to request a dismissal. This dismissal slip should then be presented to the classroom teacher from whose class the student will be dismissed. Class periods missed after dismissal will result in a recorded absence for that period. In the high school, all dismissal slips will be verified via phone.

Attendance and Participation in Co-curricular Activities

Consistent with school athletic and co-curricular policy, students participating in athletics and/or co-curricular activities must attend school for five consecutive periods in order to be eligible to

participate in relevant after school, weekend, or vacation events. Students may appeal emergency cases to the Principal who will review them on an individual basis. Coaches and advisors will be expected to monitor student attendance for eligibility. Any student who participates in a practice, game or co-curricular activity, but is not in school for the required consecutive five periods will be suspended from participation for one week.

Electronic Devices/Use

Students are not allowed to access electronic devices (cell phones, personal listening devices, speakers, etc) during class time. Students may access electronic devices during passing time and lunch. This non-instructional time access must be of a personal nature. Playing music or other sound aloud will not be tolerated at any time. Students using headphones need to be able to hear announcements and directions from staff. Students who do not adhere to this policy may be subject to the school Code of Conduct, Character, and Support. Upon the second time a student's device is confiscated, it will be held until a parent/guardian comes to retrieve it.

No student or staff member may be recorded at any time, either visually or audibly, without their permission.

Electronic devices lost or stolen while at school are not the responsibility of the Pittsfield Public Schools.

Food/Beverages

Due to life-threatening allergies and THS' Integrated Pest Management Plan the only food/beverage allowed in classrooms is water. Students must consume all other food/beverages in the cafeteria or Epicurean room (when open) as they are designated food safe zones.

Schoolwide Expectations

In conjunction with the Positive Behavioral Supports initiative at Taconic, students are expected to apply the THS principles when considering their conduct and behavior as a member of the Taconic High School community.

At THS, we:

Take responsibility - Be present and on time !

Have respect - Be considerate and courteous !

Strive for excellence - Challenge yourself to grow and learn !

The Positive Behavioral Supports team will review and implement programs to teach these expectations with all students throughout the year.

[For further information on the Taconic School-wide Expectations click here to see the THS](#)

PBIS Handbook.

Assemblies

Attendance at assemblies is required of all students except those excused by a proper authority. If you need to leave an assembly, permission must be secured from a staff member. For all assemblies, bags, backpacks, and purses are prohibited and must remain secured in lockers or the classroom. Students are expected to refrain from any behavior that will interfere with the enjoyment of the program by others.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Taconic students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly manner while participating in school sponsored clubs, sports, dances and other school activities. All students should be mindful of the rights of others to participate and enjoy the activities.

Administration reserves the right to prohibit students who are not meeting the school wide expectations for academic performance and/or behavior from participating in these events.

Students failing two or more classes, who receive an out-of-school suspension, or students who receive two or more in-school suspensions may not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities. This decision can be appealed to the building principal.

Dances

Only Taconic students and their guests may attend dances at THS. Also, students who chronically cut class are also ineligible to attend dances. Students will be notified by administration within 5 days of an upcoming dance if they are ineligible to attend. All school rules apply to the student and the guest. The guest must be enrolled in high school and be in grade 9 or above. If the guest is guilty of an infraction of school rules, the student bringing the guest may potentially face disciplinary consequences. Students may bring one guest to a given event and must purchase a ticket in advance and get signed for approval by a member of the administration. No guest tickets will be sold at the door. Dances are scheduled from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. No student will be admitted after 7:30 p.m. unless they have made arrangements with the principal or designee in advance.

Provocative dancing, “grinding”, and back-to-front dancing are prohibited at school-sponsored dances.

Serious infractions of rules at dances will result in severe consequences which may include suspension from school and a ban from participation in future co-curricular activities. Being in

possession or under the influence of any drug, including alcohol may result in suspension and banishment from future dances including the prom. Students must arrive within one half hour of a dance start time and cannot leave the dance until one-half hour prior to the end of the dance. Parents of student(s), who do not show up to the dance and/or request to leave early, will be called by school administration.

Prom

School prom is for THS students in grades 11 and 12 who are meeting the behavioral and academic expectations. Grade 10 THS students may attend the Prom as a guest of either a Grade 11 or 12 student. Grade 11 and 12 THS students attending the prom may bring guests from outside the building under the following conditions:

- Guests must fill out the THS Prom Promise and guest permission form
- Guests enrolled in a high school and attending grades 10-12
- Guests who are not attending high school must be under the age of 21 and have permission from the THS administration
- The THS administration reserves the right to deny permission to any potential prom guest

School Grounds

Students under the age of 18 may not leave the grounds during the school day without a written request from your parent or guardian. Students age 18, or over, may seek permission to leave the grounds from an administrator. All dismissals will be **approved at the discretion of the Administration and/or the Main Office. Students are not allowed to leave school for lunch.** Students who leave the building without permission during the school day may be refused re-entry or searched immediately upon return to the building to ensure the safety of students and staff.

Any student on school grounds without authorization may be charged with trespassing and is subject to school suspension and possible criminal action.

Student Presence in School or on Grounds After Hours

Students may remain in the school building after school hours for any organized activity or staff-supervised event. Students may only use school grounds for their intended purpose. Students who do not have a valid reason to be at school after the school day has ended, need to leave the building by 2:30 pm.

Student Parking and Motor Vehicle Regulations

There are limited parking spaces for students on campus at THS, and student parking passes will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis for seniors. Juniors may request a parking pass based on availability. Student parking is a privilege and subject to approval and students who wish to drive must register their car with the main office. Students who receive permission must

hang their student parking tag from their rearview mirror, and park in the designated student parking lots (lot parallel to Valentine Road, and dirt lot behind the softball field). Failure to do so may result in receiving parking fines and/or having their car towed. Furthermore, students who are consistently tardy may lose parking privileges at THS. Students who drive are expected to drive safely at all times on campus and to obey all traffic patterns and speed limits.

Gender Identification

The Pittsfield Public Schools, in accordance with its non-discrimination and zero tolerance policy, does not discriminate in its programs, activities, facilities, employment, or educational opportunities on the basis of race, color, age, disability, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity and does not tolerate any form of discrimination, intimidation, threat, coercion and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others by interfering with their freedom to learn and work. [M.G.L. c.76, s5]

Senior Week Guidelines

Several **optional** activities and events are held at the end of each school year to celebrate and recognize the contributions made by the senior class. Parents, relatives, faculty and community guests also share these events and need to feel welcomed. Observation of general guidelines of dress and decorum create a common expectation for students and adults. Similar expectations apply to those activities such as underclass awards ceremonies for students in lower grades. Any serious breach of school rules will result in termination of the privilege of participating in remaining senior activities, including graduation.

The events covered by these guidelines are optional for students. Any student who feels they cannot comply need not attend. Failure to adhere at the time of the event will result in exclusion from participation.

All school policies regarding smoking, drug and alcohol use, harassment and discipline remain in full force. Failure to abide by these policies will result in the prohibition from participation in any or all remaining events including graduation.

Activities Include:

- Honors/Scholarship Awards Night
- Class Picnic/Class Trip/Senior Banquet
- Junior/Senior Prom
- After-Prom
- Graduation Ceremony

Honors/Scholarship Awards Night and Graduation:

Males: Long pants – casual or dress slacks [NO SHORTS/CUT-OFFS/JEANS]
Shirt – short or long sleeve dress shirt [NO TEES]

Footwear – shoes, sandals or sneakers with socks [NO bare feet]

Females: Dress, skirt or dress pants [NO SHORTS/CUT-OFFS/JEANS]
Blouse/[no midriff tops]
Sheer garments require appropriate undergarments
Footwear – shoes, sandals, sneakers [No bare feet]

Senior Banquet, Junior/Senior Prom, After-Prom, Picnic:

Dress deemed appropriate as dictated by the event.

Passes

You are allowed four minutes to pass between classes. Students are encouraged to use the bathroom during this time. Passes may be granted by the teacher during class, but with good reason as instructional time is important. Passes are provided by teachers during class time for emergency use only. Teachers and students will utilize the E-hall pass system for all pass use.

Bathroom Passes:

Bathroom passes will be issued at teacher discretion during instructional time. No Bathroom passes will be allowed within the first and last 5 minutes of every class period. Students are to use the restroom closest to their classroom and return in a timely fashion.

Student Discipline and Due Process Rights

Discipline, the need to identify constructive limits and controls in order to develop positive behaviors in all students, is an essential ingredient in every student's learning experience. The goal of discipline is to help students develop wise decision-making skills so that they may learn to make responsible choices in their interactions with others. To deal with student discipline issues, certain progressive discipline strategies are used by the teachers and administrators of the Pittsfield Public Schools and may include:

- Counseling that starts at the classroom level between teacher and student and, if not productive, proceeds to the principal, vice principal or dean of students
- Written assignments that are meaningful and of reasonable length and are not merely exercises in penmanship
- Detention after school, to be preceded by parental notification
- In-school suspension where the student is removed from the regular program to complete work assignments under a specialist's direction - if available - at the school
- Suspension from school that may be imposed by the principal after a hearing for ten (10) days or less, if the suspension does not cumulatively over the course of the school year exceed ten (10) days. For suspensions of more than ten (10) days, or if the proposed suspension cumulatively in the school year exceeds ten (10) school days, a suspension may be imposed by the Superintendent after a hearing by the Principal and Superintendent
- Expulsion from school that may be imposed by the principal or by the School Committee.

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 or an in-school suspension as defined by 603 CMR 53.02(6), the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed out-of-school 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.

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL 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. Out-of-school 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.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL 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:

- a. 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:

- a. 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.

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.

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 or short-term suspension, as applicable, 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 or short-term suspension, as applicable.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION UNDER 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10

In-school suspension is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not the school premises, for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions over the course of the school year.

A Principal may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following procedures:

The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the

principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

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

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

The due process notification and hearing requirements in the preceding sections do not apply to the following disciplinary offenses:

Possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or assault of staff

A student may be subject to expulsion if found in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or the student assaults a member of educational staff, and the principal determines the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The Principal shall notify the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After said hearing, a principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to levy a suspension rather than expulsion. A student expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at the hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense.

Felony complaint or issuance of felony delinquency complaint

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Principal may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate by the Principal 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.

The Principal shall notify the student in writing of the charges, the reasons for the suspension (prior to such suspension taking effect), and the right to appeal. The Principal will also provide the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) the process for appealing the suspension to the Superintendent. The request for appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days. The hearing shall be held within three (3) days of the request. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing before the Superintendent. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

Felony conviction or adjudication/admission in court of guilt for a felony or felony delinquency

The Principal may expel a student convicted of a felony, or has an adjudication or admission of guilt regarding a 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.

The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for the proposed expulsion. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent, as well as the appeal process. The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.

The student shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his/her request for an appeal the decision no later than five (5) calendar days following the date of the expulsion. The Superintendent hearing shall be held with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

Subject to funding, the middle schools and high schools will utilize the Student Resource Center program site as an alternative to out of school suspensions lasting three or more days for students 14 years of age or older. The program offered at the Student Resource Center is seen as an educationally sound atmosphere to the three out of school suspension situations outlined below.

DISCIPLINE OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS (Special Needs Includes both Special Education and Section 504 Students)

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook.

Procedure: Procedures for suspension of students with disabilities when suspensions exceed 10 consecutive school days or a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative days; responsibilities of the Team; responsibilities of the district

1. A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive days or a series of suspensions that are shorter than 10 consecutive days but constitute a pattern are considered to represent a change in placement
2. When a suspension constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities, district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team, as determined by the parent and the district, convene within 10 days of the decision to suspend to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP—"a manifestation determination."
3. If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, then the suspension or expulsion may go forward consistent with policies applied to any student without disabilities, except that the district must still offer:
 - a. services to enable the student, although in another setting, to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward IEP goals; and
 - b. as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, to address the behavior so that it does not recur.
4. Interim alternative educational setting. Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (as determined by the Team) for up to 45 school days
 - a. on its own authority if the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance or the infliction of serious bodily injury on another person while at school or a school function or, considered case by case, unique circumstances; or
 - b. on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is "substantially likely" to injure him/herself or others.
 - c. Characteristics In either case, the interim alternative education setting enables the student to continue in the general curriculum and to continue receiving services identified on the IEP, and provides services to address the problem behavior.

5. If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, then the Team completes a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan if it has not already done so. If a behavioral intervention plan is already in place, the Team reviews and modifies it, as necessary, to address the behavior. Except when he or she has been placed in an interim alternative educational setting in accordance with part 4, the student returns to the original placement unless the parents and district agree otherwise or the hearing officer orders a new placement.
6. Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with the written notice of procedural safeguards. If the parent chooses to appeal or the school district requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise.

State Requirements Federal Requirements 34 CFR 300.530-537

For a discipline flow chart, see http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/IDEA2004/spr_meetings/disc_chart.doc.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Students are encouraged to bring their concerns about school issues or incidents to the attention of the professional staff. Students can contact a teacher, the Peer Resource Advisor, the School Adjustment Counselor, a member of the Guidance Department, or the Principal.

Parents/Guardians should feel free to reach out to professional staff with concerns about school issues or specific incidents. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers directly with concerns related to a particular class or academic performance. If unsatisfied with the contact with the teacher, parents may then share their concerns with building administrators.

Athletic Program

The athletic program is an important supplement to the Taconic High School academic program. Twenty-two varsity and junior varsity teams exist at our high school. All students are urged to become involved in this important part of the school. School rules and regulations apply during all school-sponsored functions.

1. Students who are members of a school team must be present for at least five consecutive class periods on the day of a game or practice; otherwise, they shall not be allowed to dress for or participate in any game or practice on that same day. Only a personal waiver from the principal will supersede this regulation. Violation of this rule will result in suspension from the sport two weeks or two competitions whichever is longer.

2. Any student who is under suspension from school may not participate in any game or practice during this period of suspension from school. Violation of this rule will result in suspension from the sport for the remainder of the season.
3. Those students who chronically absent themselves from school or are chronically tardy to school will be subject to suspension from that sport after a warning from the coach.
4. All athletes must have passed a physical examination and completed all proper forms concerning insurance before they may practice or participate in any athletic contest (period of practice is defined in the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association Blue Book).
5. Any student who violates a school rule while participating in an interscholastic game will jeopardize the privilege of participating in any high school sport either for a game, season, or his/her high school career.
6. Any punitive action taken by the administration, or a teacher, or any academic requirement imposed by a teacher takes precedence over practice or an athletic contest, as long as twenty-four hour notice is given to the student involved.

User Fee for Athletics & Co-Curricular

Each student who participates in an interscholastic sport or other co-curricular activity will be charged a user fee of \$125.00. Provision is included for review of hardship. Checks should be made payable to Pittsfield Public Schools.

Interscholastic Sports

Fall

1. Varsity football
2. Junior varsity football
3. Varsity soccer (Boys and Girls)
4. Junior varsity soccer (Boys and Girls)
5. Varsity cross country (Boys and Girls)
6. Varsity volleyball (Girls)
7. Varsity golf

Winter

1. Varsity skiing (Downhill and Cross Country) (Boys and Girls)
2. Varsity basketball (Boys and Girls)

3. Junior varsity basketball (Boys and Girls)
4. Varsity hockey
5. Varsity swimming (Boys and Girls)
6. Varsity wrestling

Spring

1. Tennis (Boys and Girls)
2. Varsity baseball
3. Junior varsity baseball
4. Varsity track and field (Boys and Girls)
6. Varsity softball
7. Junior varsity softball
8. Lacrosse (Boys and Girls)

Clubs, Teams, Extracurricular Activities

When a student is on suspension, he/she cannot participate in any extracurricular activities or interscholastic sports. Students must also maintain certain academic and department standards in order to participate. Students may be required to pay a user fee to participate in athletics or other co-curricular activities.

Conduct yourself in an orderly manner while participating in school-sponsored clubs, sports, dances, and other school activities. Be mindful of the rights of others to participate and enjoy the activities. School rules, standards, and expectations are in effect at all times.

Off-Campus School Activities

You are expected to show the same consideration for the rights of others in off-campus school activities as during the regular school day. For example, good behavior is expected on field trips, at school musical and dramatic presentations, and while being a spectator at a school game. In addition, for interscholastic athletics, the rules of the Massachusetts Secondary School Principals' Association must be followed.

Academic Requirements for Eligibility:

Class Officers and Student Council

1. A student must secure, for the period from the beginning of the school year up to the end of the regular ranking period next preceding the election, a cumulative passing average in at least twenty-five periods of prepared work or its equivalent. The equivalent may be decided by the principal of the school. Prepared work is defined as any subject or course in which homework is required on at least a weekly basis or one in which credit allowed toward the high school diploma per period studied per week is at least as much as is granted by the School Committee or board of trustees for

the subject of English. Any subject or course which carries no credit toward the high school diploma may not be counted toward the twenty periods of prepared work. A student cannot at any time hold office unless taking twenty-five periods of prepared work or its equivalent. (At least two periods of unprepared work shall be required as the equivalent of one period of prepared work). The scholastic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determined only on the date when the report cards for that ranking period have been issued to the parents of all students. Furthermore, to be eligible in September the student must have satisfied the scholarship requirements in twenty-five periods of prepared work or its equivalent for the previous year. If back work is to be made up, it must be made up and become a matter of final record within one week of the date on which school opens for the year.

PENALTY/DUE PROCESS REGARDING PLAGIARISM/CHEATING POLICIES

The Pittsfield Public School Committee recognizes that students are entitled to protections against unfair or arbitrary disciplinary actions. When accused of a violation of any of the expectations, codes or policies outlined in the *Pittsfield Public Schools Student Handbook*, the student in question will receive notice of the accusation, an explanation of the evidence, and an opportunity to present any information they think is relevant. Disciplinary consequences will not be assigned before those steps have been taken. If a student believes that he or she has been penalized unfairly, an appeal process is available. Throughout the process, all parties will adhere to the following guidelines:

A student has a right to submit an appeal to a disciplinary decision within three school days from the day it was given.

The student must write the appeal and address it to the supervisor of the person who made the original decision. Appeals of a teacher's decision must be made to the principal. There is no appeal of the principal's decision; the principal's decision is final.

An appeal shall result in a hearing between the parties involved within three school days after the receipt of the appeal.

The principal will make a decision on the appeal no more than five days after the hearing.

Rubric for Prevention of Cheating and Plagiarism

9th grade student responsibilities

1. Sign-off sheets completed and returned.
2. No incidences of plagiarism or cheating.
3. Any incidences of either plagiarizing or cheating will be documented using an "Incident Report Sheet."
4. All students involved in a cheating/plagiarism incident, may avail himself/herself of the procedure described in the Penalty/Due Process.

10th –12th grade student responsibilities

1. Numbers 1-3 above.
2. If a student has a 9th grade cheating/plagiarism incident recorded on his/her record, and there are no more incidents, a student *may* be nominated for induction into the NHS.
3. If a student has a 10th or 11th grade cheating/plagiarism incident recorded, he/she will **NOT** be given nomination papers for the NHS.
4. If a student has a cheating/plagiarism incident AND is a member of the NHS, he/she shall be removed from the NHS roster.
5. All students involved in a cheating/plagiarism incident, may avail himself/herself of the procedure described in the Penalty/Due Process.

National Honor Society Policy – Revised & approved 5/17/11

Juniors, and reconsidered seniors are to be formally selected in the fall of their junior and senior years . They are to be selected on the basis of the cumulative GPA reported at the close of their sophomore and junior years respectively . That cumulative GPA must be a minimum of 90.0 or above.

1 . In the event that a senior whose cumulative GPA was not 90.0 or above by the end of their junior year, achieved a cumulative GPA of 90.0 or above by the close of the 1st quarter of their senior year, that student may, at the discretion of the NHS advisory board, be listed as a member of the NHS. However, circumstances and timing may not allow for those senior students to take part in that year's induction ceremony .

2 . For the purposes of selection, the School Counseling Department, Powerschool and Building Administration are to be contacted to check for plagiarizing write-up slips and/or other offenses against the school rules for which a student would have been suspended, or otherwise disciplined etc . If a potential candidate has a write-up for plagiarizing in 9th grade, but nothing since that time, he/she would still receive an invitation to join the NHS . If he/she has been written up for plagiarizing/cheat- ing in grades 10-12, no invitation will be issued . If the potential candidate was suspended any time after 9th grade for any offense, during his/her enrollment at Taconic High School, that student would not be eligible for NHS membership.

3 . If a current NHS member is caught cheating and/or plagiarizing, or he/she is suspended for any reason, he/she will be dismissed from the NHS . At the date of the dismissal, membership in the NHS will be removed from his/her transcript.

4 . If it comes to the attention of the principal from a reliable source that a Taconic student has been seen outside of school engaged in an illegal activity, the principal will investigate . The results of that investigation will have direct bearing on whether or not a student will be invited to join the NHS.

5 . The Plagiarizing/Cheating policy which is published in the Taconic High School Student Hand- book is hereby made a part of this policy.

6 . Students transferring in from other schools and who have been enrolled at least since the beginning of their junior year at Taconic could be selected as applicants to the NHS . Their former school's counseling department and teachers would be contacted by the NHS advisor(s) to ascertain if the student had been a member of that school's NHS, and if so, that the student's exiting cumulative GPA was 90 or above. The new (to Taconic) student's behavioral record at his/her former school would be checked for any record of plagiarizing, cheating, using illegal substances, etc . If this student, new to THS, has a 90 or equal cumulative GPA at his/her former school AND his/her continued academic performance at THS has equaled a cumulative GPA of 90 or above, AND his/ her behavior at Taconic and at their former school has been excellent, this student would be invited to apply for membership in the NHS . Membership in the NHS would have no bearing on the new student's rank or lack of class ranking at Taconic.

7 . If a junior or a senior has a cumulative GPA of 90 or above AND elects to attend courses at BCC (or another comparative institution), they could still be selected as an applicant to the NHS. However, solely for the purposes of the THS NHS, those students' GPAs would only be calculated on the basis of their THS classes. Periodic examination of their transcripts from BCC will be made by their school counselors, and if they are found to be slacking off academically or otherwise at BCC, their future membership in the NHS may be re-considered by the THS NHS Advisory Board, at the Board's discretion .

8 . For an initiated member of the NHS to remain an NHS member throughout the remainder of his/ her high school career, he or she should not drop below a cumulative GPA of 90 . However, if a member does drop below a cumulative GPA of 90 but remains above a cumulative GPA of 88 he/ she will be considered on probation . It is the student's responsibility to keep track of their own cumulative GPA . If their cumulative GPA drops below an 88 at any time during the probationary period, his/her membership will be revoked .

Juniors' Probation:

If a junior's cumulative GPA for the final quarter of their junior year is a 90 or above, the member will be removed from his/her probationary status and will recover his/her full NHS membership status. However, if the junior's cumulative GPA for the final quarter of their junior year is NOT 90 or above, that student will have his/her membership revoked .

Seniors' Probation:

If a senior's cumulative GPA drops below a 90 but remains above an 88 during the first or second quarter of their senior year, they will be considered to be on probation during that time . If their cumulative is still an 88 .9 or below by the close of their 3rd quarter, they will not graduate with NHS honors . But if at the close of a senior's 3rd quarter, their cumulative GPA is an 89 .0 or above, they will graduate with full NHS honors. No member's nomination to be an NHS officer will be accepted if he/she is on probation .

9 . If an NHS member student does not comply with any of the agreements within the NHS

Expectations and Contract, he/she may receive a letter home concerning but not limited to the following issues: not fulfilling and/or submitting his/her volunteer hours, having unexcused absences from scheduled meetings. A copy of that letter will be placed in the student's school file.

10 . If an NHS member student does not comply with any of the agreements within the NHS Expectations and Contract, he/she may have his/her membership status revoked at the discretion of the NHS Advisor(s) and the Principal.

11 . Freshmen and sophomores are encouraged to engage in volunteer activities within the Taconic community and in the larger Pittsfield community. Working w/ organizations such as Berkshire Youth United (BYU), and documenting your hours will probably help your Taconic NHS application

Reporting of Plagiarism/Cheating Incident

Students who cheat and/or plagiarize will be subject to the following reporting process: **first offense:** phone call notifying parents/guardians of the incident (with an "Incident Report" notation to be sent home *and* placed in student's guidance record of same), **second offense:** meeting with parents/guardians concerning incident and an "Incident Report" to be sent home *and* placed on student's record in guidance office, **on the second offense and any subsequent offenses, all or one of the following penalties is possible:** disqualification from nomination to the National Honor Society; removal from membership in the National Honor Society, referral to school administration. If two students participate in a cooperative cheating/plagiarizing incident, both sets of parents/ guardians shall be notified. *The school reserves the right to inform the student's potential college of documented cheating/plagiarizing incidents.*

In all cases, students are entitled to the protections afforded them in the Penalty/Due Process Regarding Plagiarism/Cheating Procedure. The above set of penalties is a mild one compared to those levied against students and professionals in post-secondary educational institutions. **Due Process**, shall be the only process of mitigating any of the policies described herein.

Please reference the Pittsfield Public Schools' Policy Handbook for Parent and Students for:

- Equal Education Opportunities
- Procedures for Enrolling Students
- English Language Learning Support
- Building Safety and Public Accessibility
- Student Safety, Health, and Immunization
- Student Transportation
- Due Process Rights
- Student Records and Privacy

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT GRIEVANCES OF DISCRIMINATION

This policy addresses how to file complaints regarding alleged discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, sexual orientation and disability.

The Pittsfield Public Schools has adopted procedures to assist any person who believes that she/he has been discriminated against for a prohibited reason, and to rectify any instances of such discrimination. Any student, or any parent or guardian, who believes that she/he has been discriminated against for any reason stated above should make her/his complaint, either formally or informally, to the school building principal or to the district's designated coordinator for compliance with the requirements of Title VI, Title

VII, Title IX, Section 504, ADA, IDEA, and M.G.L 151B. Any person who believes that she/he has been discriminated against for any reason stated above in a matter of hiring or employment, or in having access to school facilities or activities, should make her/his complaint, either formally or informally, to the district's designated coordinator for compliance with the requirements of Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504, ADA, and IDEA.

The Pittsfield Public Schools' designated coordinators for all such matters are:

	Problem Area	Position	Phone
Title VI	Discrimination by race, color, national origin	Deputy Superintendent	499-9510
Title VII	Discrimination by employers on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin	Human Resources Director	499-9505
Title IX	Discrimination in educational programs or athletics, on the basis of gender	Title IX Coordinator	499-9515
Section 504	Discrimination against individuals with disabilities	504 Coordinator	499-9515
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.	Special Education Director	499-9515
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act guarantees early intervention, special education, and related services to children with disabilities from birth to the age of 21.	Special Education Director	499-9515
Ch. 151 B	Discrimination by MA employers on the basis of race, color, national origin	Human Resources Director	499-9505

Rights of Students with Disabilities

Federal law guarantees every student the right to a free and appropriate public education regardless of handicap or disability. State regulations (603 CMR 28.00) further guarantee the right to an education in the "least restrictive environment," in typical settings with students without disabilities.

- Every Pittsfield public school offers academic support services. These programs provide specialized instruction for eligible students in the area of documented disability.
- The PPS also offer services in a substantially separate setting for students with developmental delays, intellectual impairments, autism, and behavioral disorders when documented within a student's IEP or 504 Plan. These programs provide specialized instruction in a structured and predictable learning environment.

If you believe that your child is having difficulty making progress in a regular classroom due to a suspected disability, you have the right to seek through the school principal or the district's Office of Special Education an evaluation of your child to determine if she or he does have a disability and is eligible for special education services. As a first step, contact the building principal to discuss convening a Building Assistance Meeting. For more information contact your child's principal or the Office of Special Education at 499-9515.

Rights under Section 504

A student with a disability recognized under the federal statute known as Section 504 (29 USC §794[a]) is entitled to accommodation of that disability. Section 504 covers qualified students with disabilities who attend schools receiving Federal financial assistance. To be protected under Section 504, a student must be determined to: (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or (2) have a record of such an impairment; or (3) be regarded as having such an impairment. Section 504 requires that school districts provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to qualified students in their jurisdictions who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Section 504 also prohibits discrimination against any student based on such a disability. A student whose disability is recognized under special education law, known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA: see USC §1401[3]) is entitled to educational programs and assignments that are designed to develop her/his educational potential. [M.G.L. c. 71B §1] Section 504 accommodation plans and special education individualized education programs (IEPs) must be developed in accordance with procedures set out in federal and Massachusetts law and regulations. The 504 Coordinator is responsible for assuring compliance with Section 504. Contact the Superintendent's Office for referral to the 504 Coordinator.)

For a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Education Special Education *Parents' Rights Brochure* and the *Section 504 Handbook*, available in many languages, visit www.doe.mass.edu/sped/parents on the Web.

Homeless Assistance

Consistent with the Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, homeless students are defined as those who lack a regular, fixed nighttime residence including supervised temporary accommodations (see definition, Policy STU-14). Students have the right to stay in their school of origin for the entire time they are homeless, even if they move to a different school district. Students who move into permanent housing during the school year can still finish the year in the same school. They may also choose to enroll in a school within the new zone, town or city where they live temporarily. Transportation will be provided unless your new address is within the walking distance of your child's school. For help, call the Deputy Superintendent's office, which serves as the district's homeless liaison, at 499-9510.

Appendix A. - Taconic School-wide Expectations Matrix

<u>ARRIVAL</u> Take Responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enter through the front doors by 7:15 am.	<u>HALLWAYS</u> Take Responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Walk on the right hand side of hall.• Take the most direct route to your next class.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Head to class at the first announcement at 7:20 am. ● Plan ahead for traffic and road conditions. <p>Have Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dump your breakfast trays. ● Be respectful to the school secretaries. <p>Strive for Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be prepared to learn and on time to class. ● Greet everyone in positive manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have your hall pass visible. <p>Have Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use respectful and responsible language. ● Use indoor volume. ● Keep hands and feet to yourself. ● Keep halls clear of litter. <p>Strive for Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acknowledge others respectfully.
<p><u>CAFETERIA</u></p> <p>Take Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remain in the cafeteria during your lunch time. ● Attend only one lunch period. <p>Have Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wait your turn in line. ● Dump your tray ● Say “please and thank you”. <p>Strive for Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be polite and respectful to everyone and everything. ● Pick up trays if left behind by others 	<p><u>CLASSROOM</u></p> <p>Take Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be in your classroom before the bell rings. ● Phones away, earbuds out, begin classroom routine. ● No passes for the first 5 minutes and last 5 minutes of class. <p>Have Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positive language and tone ● Be alert and engaging <p>Strive for Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Challenge yourself and ask questions. ● Don’t be afraid to make a mistake. ● Be an active participant in the lesson.
<p><u>BATHROOMS</u></p> <p>Take Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use the bathroom in timely manner ● Return to your class immediately after usage <p>Have Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Throw garbage in the trash, toilet paper in the toilet and flush ● Use the bathroom for its purpose <p>Strive for Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leave it neat and clean for others. 	<p><u>DISMISSAL</u></p> <p>Take Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remain in class until 2:20 pm when the bell rings. ● Report to your bus/car in timely and safely manner. ● Students may remain in the building after 2:30 if supervised by school personnel. <p>Have Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stay to the right and leave through the closest exit. <p>Strive for Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gather all material needed to be successful the next day.
<p><u>CTE SETTING</u></p> <p>Take Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arrive to class on time. ● Stay in your respective shop class. <p>Have Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use respectful and responsible language. 	<p><u>PARKING LOT</u></p> <p>Take Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Park your car before 7:15 am. ● Give school buses the right of way. <p>Have Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use student designated parking spaces.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use shop volume. ● Keep hands and feet to yourself. <p>Strive for Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use customer service language & behaviors. ● Demonstrate OSHA standards at all times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be respectful of the speed limit (5mph). ● Use appropriate exits and entrances. <p>Strive for Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Model appropriate driving laws. ● Be polite and courteous of other drivers & walkers.
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<p><u>BUSSES</u></p> <p>Take Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arrive at your stop on time. ● Keep bus clean. ● Follow driver directions. <p>Have Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain appropriate voice volume. ● Use appropriate language. <p>Strive for Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comply with all bus rules and procedures. ● Thank your driver. 	<p><u>AUDITORIUM</u></p> <p>Take Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dispose of all food and beverage before entering. ● Move to the front, sit in seats and keep feet on floor. ● Turn off electronics. ● Stay out of aisle. <p>Have Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listen to performance without making noises. <p>Strive for Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pay attention and keep an open mind when enjoying performance.
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