



Student Responsibilities, Rights, and Discipline

HANDBOOK



Portland Public Schools

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Portland Public Schools recognizes the diversity and worth of all individuals and groups and their roles in society. No discrimination or harassment of individuals or groups on the grounds of age, color, creed, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation will occur in any educational program, activity, or employment.

This handbook is also available at your school in the following languages: Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Somali. For more help with interpretation or translation of languages, please call 503.916.3427.

For additional information, you may request to see the ***Guide to Policies, Rules, and Procedures on Student Responsibilities, Rights and Discipline***. The guide is available for reference in each school's main office, and online at www.pps.k12.or.us. The guide summarizes the policies and procedures related to student rights, responsibilities, and discipline. The full texts of policies and administrative directives are in the Portland Public Schools Policies and Regulations book and online.

Roles and Responsibilities

Portland Public Schools' students are expected to be safe, respectful, and responsible.

Students are expected to act in a way that allows teachers to teach and students to learn.

STUDENTS

As a student, you have a right to:

- Talk with your teachers, counselor, and other school staff about any concerns.
- Receive fair discipline without discrimination.
- Report any incidents of bullying, harassment, abuse, and verbal or physical threats.
- Access your own records, within appropriate guidelines.
- Receive discipline information in a language you can understand.

As a student you have a responsibility to:

- Attend school regularly, arrive on time, bring appropriate materials, and be prepared to participate in class and do homework.
- Do your best.
- Respect the rights, feelings, and property of other students, parents/guardians, school personnel, visitors, guests, and school neighbors.
- Behave properly on school grounds, school buses, at bus stops, at any school-related activity, and in the classroom so as not to interfere with teaching and learning.
- Follow classroom, school, and District rules.
- Report violations of rules.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Your parent/guardian has a right to:

- Receive regular official reports of your academic progress and attendance.
- Make recommendations and give input about educational planning.
- Participate in conferences with teachers and/or the principal.
- Receive explanations from teachers about your grades.
- Access all your school records, within appropriate guidelines.
- Obtain further clarification on student rights, responsibilities, and discipline.
- Receive discipline information in a language she/he can understand.

Your parent/guardian has a responsibility to:

- Assist school staff by sharing ideas for improving student learning and preventing or resolving student discipline problems.
- Provide supervision for your health, physical and emotional well-being.
- Ensure your attendance is prompt and regular while also providing the school with explanations for your absences or tardiness.
- Attend parent/guardian conferences.
- Help enforce student compliance with school rules.
- Provide appropriate supervision for you before and after school.
- Review and discuss student rights, responsibilities, and discipline with you.
- Support the school self-discipline and conflict resolution programs.

Rights

AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Attendance

Students are expected to attend school and classes regularly and on time. Parents/guardians are legally responsible to have their children in school.

The parent/guardian may notify school staff of absences and/or tardiness by sending a note, email, fax, or leaving a voicemail or message. The following absences are excused when the parent/guardian informs school staff of:

- student illness,
- family illness requiring student's presence,
- religious holidays,
- death in a family,
- prearranged doctor or dentist appointments.

Notification must occur within three (3) days of the absence and should include:

- the date,
- the name of the student,
- the reason for the absence, and
- the signature of the parent/guardian.

When it is necessary for parents/guardians to pick up their child before the regular dismissal time, they should come to the school office. The office cannot release a student to anyone who is not listed on the child's emergency information form. If parents/guardians are sending someone else to pick up a student, prior written arrangements must be made with the school office.

Students should make up all work missed and will receive credit for make-up work for excused absences.

State law requires schools to withdraw students who are absent ten (10) consecutive school days for any reason.

Before and After School

Students can be disciplined for misbehaving on the way to and from school within a reasonable period of time. School personnel, however, cannot be assigned to supervise students who walk to and from school. School personnel are not responsible for the students' conduct or safety while en-route to and from school prior to or after published school hours.

Buses

School bus transportation is a privilege, which students keep by being safe, respectful, and responsible.

If a student rides a school bus to and from school, he or she must follow the posted bus rules. Misbehavior on the bus and at bus stops will be dealt with by a school administrator. A student may lose the bus-riding privilege by repeated misbehavior or a serious violation of a bus rule.

The State of Oregon has rules for students riding school buses. These rules are posted in all school buses.

BE SAFE	BE RESPECTFUL	BE RESPONSIBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No fighting, wrestling, or rough behavior.▪ No firearms, weapons, or hazardous materials.▪ Only recognized guide or assist animals allowed on the bus.▪ Stay seated while bus is in motion.▪ Cross in front or at driver designated location when exiting.▪ Keep hands, arms, and head inside the bus at all times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Students are under the authority of the driver.▪ The driver may assign seats as needed.▪ Use only soft voices (no loud or vulgar language).▪ Ask driver permission before opening or closing windows.▪ Keep the bus clean and undamaged.▪ No eating or drinking.▪ Be courteous to the driver, peers, and passersby.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Use the emergency door only in an emergency.▪ Be at your stop at least five (5) minutes prior to bus arrival.▪ Bus rules also apply to bus stops.▪ Students need written permission for an alternate stop.

Clubs, Student Participation

A club is a group of students that meets at a regular time, shares a common interest, or wants to provide a service. The club must be supervised by an adult who is approved by the principal and be open to any student.

Transportation for students participating in a club that meets before or after school is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Students are encouraged to participate in school activities and services that promote a positive atmosphere within the school. They are also invited to discuss school issues with teachers and the principal and take part in making decisions and solving problems.

Community Respect, Responsibility

When walking to or from school or waiting for a bus, students must respect the rights and property of other people. They should not throw paper or garbage on the ground. Students must not cause damage to any property.

Complaint Procedures – Student and Parent/Guardian

If a problem happens outside the classroom, students and parents/guardians may talk to the teacher, the counselor, or the principal. If a problem relates to the classroom, the student or parent/guardian is encouraged to talk to the teacher first. If these steps do not solve the problem, they may ask for a conference with the principal. If this conference does not solve the problem, the principal will recommend additional steps the parent/guardian may take to resolve the situation.

Dress and Grooming

Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for the student's cleanliness, clothing, and neat appearance. Students should wear clothing that is clean and appropriate for the weather and follows the rules of the school. Clothing must not:

- interfere with the learning process;
- be too revealing (examples include bare midriffs, visible undergarments, plunging necklines, see-through material, saggy pants);
- be related to alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs;
- be vulgar or insulting, or promote behavior that would violate school rules;
- threaten health or safety of others;
- be demeaning to a particular person or group; or

- indicate gang membership or activity.

Such clothing is prohibited at school or at school-sponsored events.

Students may be directed to change dress or grooming if it interferes with the learning process or school climate.

Individual schools may also have specific dress codes.

Schools must establish an exception to the dress code for sincerely held religious beliefs.

Drugs and Alcohol

Students must not use, possess, or sell/transfer alcohol or drugs, or anything that looks like a drug in the schools, on the school grounds, at school activities, or during school hours. Students whose behavior indicates they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be disciplined.

Fees and Fines

There are no fees for the basic required educational program. There may, however, be fees for field trips and athletics. Families with serious financial problems should contact the school to make special confidential arrangements.

Fines will be charged for damaged or lost books or school equipment. School records and grades may be withheld until payment is received.

Food Safety

The State of Oregon has strict rules regarding the use and preparation of food in public places such as schools. Classroom treats may only be commercially-prepared. Foods must be wrapped in individual portions and cannot be shared between students. Students may not share food from their lunches that they bring from home.

Freedom of Expression and Assembly

Within state and Federal law, District policy, and school guidelines, students have freedom of expression and assembly under the First Amendment.

Harassment, Bullying, Hazing, Sexual Harassment

All students have the right to feel safe at school. Harassing, bullying, hazing, threatening, or physically harming a student or staff member or a person's property is prohibited. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual behavior, including words or actions, and is prohibited. Students should report any harassment to school staff.

Internet Use

Students using the Internet must follow the rules in the PPSNet Acceptable Use Regulation. The PPSNet Acceptable Use Regulation is sent home in the registration packet and is available at each school.

The rules are about:

- personal safety,
- illegal and destructive activities,
- security,
- inappropriate conduct,
- respect for privacy,
- plagiarism,
- copyrights, and
- inappropriate material and websites.

A student who breaks the rules may lose the privilege of using the Internet and receive disciplinary actions.

Lost, Stolen, Damaged Property

The District does not pay for or replace student property that is lost, stolen, or damaged at school. All items, including electronics, bicycles, and skateboards, are brought to school at the owner's risk. Lockers are not safe places to store valuable items.

Medicines, Medical Emergencies

Medicines

If a student must take a medication while at school, the parent/guardian must first take it to the principal. The principal will explain the rules and in most cases arrange for an appropriate staff member to give the student the medicine. Any medication must be in the original labeled container. Students are allowed to take their own medication under certain limited conditions but must check with the principal first.

Medical Emergencies

Medical assistance, as necessary, will be ordered by the school at parent/guardian expense.

Plagiarism, Cheating

Students may not copy written work or projects done by other people or cheat on tests and other schoolwork.

Prohibited Items

Students may not have dangerous or prohibited items at school, on school property, or at school activities including:

- dangerous or deadly weapons, knives, or anything else that could injure a person or property;

- anything that looks like a weapon, including toys;
- explosives, including fireworks, ammunition, bullets;
- harmful gases;
- poisons;
- alcohol, tobacco, and other illegal drugs;
- anything used to transport, sell, or use illegal drugs including paraphernalia, matches, and lighters;
- stolen property;
- clothing showing gang membership or activity;
- anything that is racially, religiously, or sexually offensive; anything else prohibited by school rules.

Prohibited items will be removed and held by school staff and shall only be released to the student's parent. Illegal items will be destroyed or held for Portland Police. Stolen items will be returned to the owner or to the police.

Searches – Locker Checks and Student Searches

The school may search a student if the school has a reasonable suspicion that a prohibited or dangerous item will be found. Backpacks, purses, lockers, and assigned storage areas may also be searched. Lockers, desks, and other places where students keep things are the property of, and are under the control of, the school and may be checked at any time for dangerous or prohibited items. Only items needed by a student for schoolwork and school activities can be stored in these places.

Student Information

The school keeps records on each student. These are records of student academic progress, student behavior, and other pertinent information relating to the student. These records are confidential.

Student records provide information for people such as school personnel and parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians have rights regarding student records, including the right to view these records, and request an amendment of the records. They may always take questions to the principal.

Military Recruiters

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires school districts to provide the names, address, and phone numbers of juniors and seniors to military recruiters and colleges or universities upon request.

For more information regarding student information and

your ability to “opt out” of releasing certain student records, talk to office staff at your school.

Testing, Evaluation

Testing

All students in grades 3 through 8, plus tenth graders, are tested each spring in reading and math. The tests come from the Oregon Department of Education and are used in every school in the state. Writing, math problem solving, and science are also tested, but only in some of the grades. A variety of testing options is available so that all students, including those with disabilities, can be tested at their appropriate level. Parents/guardians with questions about the testing program should contact the principal for more information.

Evaluation

The District has a “child find” obligation to identify, locate, and evaluate all resident children who are in need of special education and related services, or accommodations in general education classes. Parents may request that the District evaluate their child to determine eligibility for special education services, Section 504 Plan, Talented and Gifted, and/or English Language Learner/English as a Second Language programs. The District will either agree to conduct the evaluation or refuse to conduct the evaluation and provide the parent with notice of its refusal.

Threats, Weapons

Weapons are prohibited in or near our schools. Students cannot have or use guns or knives or anything that looks or is used like a weapon at school. Words and actions that threaten or could frighten other people are not allowed — even in play or with friends.

Federal and state laws say that students who bring guns and other weapons to school must be expelled for one calendar year.

Tobacco

Students and adults are not permitted to use, possess, sell, or transfer tobacco or tobacco/nicotine related products in school buildings, on school property, in vehicles used for school transportation and school-related work, and at all school-related activities.

Discipline

AND PROCEDURES

Discipline Levels

School personnel and parents/guardians share the responsibility for encouraging students' appropriate behavior. Certain kinds of behavior are not allowed at school or at school activities.

District behavior expectations apply to students whenever they are:

- present in any school or on property of the school district;
- at any school-sponsored activity, regardless of its location, including traveling to and from within a reasonable period of time;
- traveling to and from school as defined in this document in the "Before and After School" section;
- involved in conduct (regardless of whether or not they are off campus or at a non-school sponsored program) that has a direct connection to a school's safety and/or welfare; or
- participants in District athletic programs, when rules are in force during the entire season in which the student is participating—seven (7) days a week, 24 hours a day, at any location.

Examples of misbehaviors:

- keeping other students from learning,
- using profane or abusive language,
- using or having tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs,
- fighting of any kind,
- bringing weapons or anything that looks like a weapon to school,
- stealing or damaging property,
- threatening, harassing, or bullying students or staff,
- wearing clothing showing gang membership or activity, or
- refusing to follow directions.

Summary of Disciplinary Consequences and Interventions

There is a range of consequences for student misbehavior.

Action Levels

Level 1 Conferences

Level 2 Interventions - exclusion from extra curricular

- activities, time-outs, detention, etc.
- Level 3 Suspension/Temporary Exclusion/
Reassignment/Referral
- Level 4 Expulsion/Delayed Expulsion/
Reassignment/Referral
- Level 5 Mandatory Expulsion
- Level 6 Mandatory One-Year Expulsion

Some violations may result in a referral to the Portland Police Bureau.

Spanking or physical punishment for breaking the rules is not permitted. Teachers and other school staff, however, may use reasonable physical force to stop a disturbance, protect other students, themselves, or property.

NOTE: Seniors are disqualified from participation in commencement exercises and related activities if within 60 consecutive calendar days of the last senior school day they are found to be in violation of District alcohol or drug policy, or any violation resulting in three or more days of suspension, or more serious disciplinary action.

Suspension Procedures

Suspension means that a student cannot attend school or school activities in Portland Public Schools. Suspensions can last for up to ten school days.

An informal meeting will be held between an appropriate school person (team leader, administrative assistant, principal) and the student before the student is suspended unless an emergency suspension is necessary.

When needed, interpretation services must be provided for students and/or parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians are notified when students are suspended. A parent/guardian conference is expected before a student is readmitted to school.

During any suspension, students are expected to complete homework and may request missed assignments.

A suspended student may not be on any Portland School property nor at any school-sponsored activities.

A student or parent/guardian wanting to appeal a suspension should contact the principal to arrange a conference.

Expulsion Procedures

Expulsion means a student cannot attend school or school activities in any Portland Public School for up to a full calendar year.

Weapon and gun violations require expulsions for a full calendar year.

Prior to a student being expelled, a hearing is held with parents/guardians, the student, and a hearing officer. The hearing officer decides if a student will be expelled, and if so, for how long.

When needed, interpretation services must be provided for students and/or parents/guardians.

An expelled student must not be on any Portland Public School property nor at any school-sponsored activities.

A student or parent/guardian may ask for a review of any expulsion or delayed expulsion decision.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

All students are subject to disciplinary procedures to promote positive changes in their behavior and to protect others.

For students with an IEP, a formal Section 504 plan or who have been identified for a special education referral, additional procedures may need to be followed to determine whether the student may be excluded for disciplinary reasons.

Special procedures exist for students with an IEP, a formal Section 504 plan or those who have been identified for a special education referral who are suspended for more than ten (10) days in any school year.

In cases where the disciplinary action includes a suspension or expulsion, the school administrator must notify parents/guardians/surrogates in the same manner as non-disabled students. The Special Education Department will notify the parents/guardians/surrogates of any special education meetings.

Student Conduct/Student Services
PO Box 3107 Portland, OR 97208-3107
503.916.2000

Portland Public Schools is an equal opportunity
educator and employer.

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