



# Pemberton Township Schools

**Pemberton Learning Community:**

*Pursuing Excellence, One Child at a Time*

*Tami J. Strege  
Principal*

*Darvis Holley  
Brian Volpe  
Assistant Principals*

2018-19

**HELEN A. FORT  
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

301 Fort Dix Road  
Pemberton, NJ 08068  
609-893-8141 Ext. 1600

*We are honored to be a...*



## Welcome to the 2018-19 School Year

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the start of a great school year! At Pemberton Township Schools, we are dedicated to the development of each student's potential for learning in the most positive environment possible. In order to achieve this goal, our schools must be free from disruptions that interfere with our teaching and learning activities. Students, parents, and the school staff must assume a responsible role in promoting behavior that encourages learning and the development of individual potential.

This student handbook is a powerful tool that can greatly assist both students and parents in achieving success.

We provide these handbook regulations for the students of Pemberton Township Schools so that they and their parents will fully understand our school and its policies. **Each student is responsible for knowing these regulations. Parents, please review the handbook with your children, as they are accountable for the information in the handbook.** A productive learning environment is possible when students, staff, faculty, and administration are compliant with established procedures and collaborative in their efforts to improve upon these procedures.

Students, we endeavor to create a partnership with you and your parents to provide a quality educational experience at Pemberton Township Schools that will equip you to make responsible choices regarding your future. Your cooperation is essential to the success of our school community.

Pemberton Township Schools provides equal education opportunities for all students. You may contact the Affirmative Action Office at (609) 893-8141, ext. 1024.

Let's have a great year!

Warm regards,

Tami J. Strege

Principal

## Frequently Called Numbers

PTS Main Switchboard ..... 609-893-8141

### Helen A. Fort Middle School Administration

Tami J. Strege..... ext. 1134  
Principal

Principal's Secretary.....ext. 1134

Darvis Holley..... ext. 1135  
Assistant Principal

Secretary.....ext. 1135

Brian Volpe..... ext. 1016  
Assistant Principal

Secretary.....ext. 1016

### Guidance Counselors

Eileen Alexander..... ext. 1130

Nicole Roccato..... ext. 1168

Emily Whitley..... ext. 1106

Secretary..... ext. 1034

### Emergency Closing Information

Except in cases of emergency, schools will be open in accordance with the school calendar. When it is necessary to close schools because of extreme weather or other reasons, Pemberton Township Schools will send a Blackboard Connect telephone message. In addition, radio station KYW-1060 will announce the DISTRICT CODE NUMBER 651. School closing information is posted on the district website, Facebook, and Twitter, as well as broadcast on the Pemberton Township Board of Education's Channel 19, serving Pemberton Township, Pemberton Borough, and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. Parents should not call the school unless absolutely necessary.

### Transportation

Bus Garage..... 609-893-1963

### Social Media

Helen A. Fort Middle School

<https://goo.gl/52JZiA>

Pemberton Township Schools

<https://www.pemberton.k12.nj.us>

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## Admission

### Child Custody Documentation

Parent must present Official Court Orders to building principal, or at time of registration.

### Identification Cards

Each student receives a free photo identification card upon admission. Each student must carry this card whenever he or she is on the school property. Admission to events such as school dances requires a current school ID card.

IDs must be available upon request to administrators, hall monitors, teachers, and cafeteria staff. Refusal to show ID will be considered insubordination. If the original ID is lost, students must purchase new IDs at a cost of \$1.

### Personal Property & Lockers

Personal items belonging to a student can get lost, broken, or stolen. **All parents and students are cautioned that the school will not be held responsible for the repair or replacement of these items when situations such as that occur. If a student's possessions are damaged or taken by another student, the issue of replacement/repair must be settled between the parents/guardians of the involved students.** In circumstances where the damage or loss occurred during the transgression of items in the school's discipline code, students are held accountable by the school for their actions. **The lockers are property of the Board of Education and may be opened by school staff as needed. Material in lockers is not to be considered held in trust by the Board of Education. Items lost or stolen will be the responsibility of the student.**

Lost and found is located in the Cafeteria Lobby.

## Academics & Attendance

### Attendance

#### **Policy**

It is clearly recognized that the time spent interacting with a teacher in a classroom setting plays an important part in the total educational experience of a

student. Attendance standards, then, must be reflected in the grading system. It is in the context of this notion that the following Pemberton Township Schools Attendance Policy exists.

In order for a student to receive course credit in a full year course, he/she must attend school for at least 166 full days. **Absences of more than 14 unexcused full days for yearlong courses or more than 7 unexcused full days for a semester course will result in the student receiving no credit (NC) and/or other consequences including the risk of not being socially promoted for all courses.**

In order for your child to succeed in school, attendance is not only necessary, but mandated according to NJ Statute 18A:38-25 for students between the ages of 6-16.

As stated in the Board policy 5113, "an unexcused absence shall be defined as absence of a student from school, a class or classroom or his/her assigned program for a school day without proper notification by the student's parent/guardian or for reasons other than those listed in this policy under Excused Absences, below."

#### **Excused Absences**

The Board considers the following as cause for excused absence:

- A. Disabling illness; (requires a doctor's note)
- B. Recovery from accident (requires a doctor's note);
- C. Required court attendance (documentation shall be required);
- D. Family illness (serious illness of a family member residing in the household of the student or the quarantine of the family member, family or student in accordance with the directives of health officials);
- E. Death in the family (death of a family member of the student, including, but not limited to, parent/guardian, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc.);
- F. Religious observance—In accordance with statute, no pupil absent for religious observance of a day recognized by the commissioner of education or this Board of Education shall be charged with an unexcused absence, deprived of an award or eligibility/opportunity to compete for an award, or of the right to take an alternate to a test or examination missed through such absence.

All absences for all other reasons are considered unexcused.

Parents are encouraged to keep track of student attendance at all times, through the Genesis Parent Portal.

Students should always document absences when they have a doctor's/dental appointment, etc. Please be aware that only the original notes are accepted (no photocopies). Students should submit notes to the appropriate grade level assistant principal by the end of the marking period in which the absence occurred. Faxes must be sent directly to the school from the doctor's office. The school will verify all notes with the person or office which issued the excuse.

Students returning to school with medical equipment such as canes, crutches, wheelchairs etc. must have a doctor's note stating the equipment is needed at school and providing a timeframe for use.

**If any note is altered, forged, or tampered with in any manner, the student will be subject to disciplinary consequences.**

The Assistant Principal responsible for attendance will be able to excuse all doctors' notes, death in the family and court appearances. All notes for such absences should be turned in immediately following the absence. An administrator must approve absences of unusual circumstances.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Mitigating circumstances (absences felt to be beyond a student's control or of an unusual nature) can be appealed to the building principal. Attendance warning letters will be sent to the student, the home, and the counselor after the 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> unexcused absences. On the 15<sup>th</sup> absence, a letter of NO credit will be sent.

### **Tardies, Half-Days, & Early Dismissals**

Late arrival (tardy) will be recorded if a student reports up to 2 hours late after the opening of school.

If a student reports after 2 hours late in the morning, a half day AM absence will be recorded.

Early Dismissals will be recorded if a student leaves school up to 2 hours before the close of school. If a student leaves more than 2 hours before the close of school, a half-day PM absence will be recorded.

A student must be in school at least 2 hours to receive half-day credit for attendance on any given day.

### **Truancy**

Students leaving the school prior to the end of the school day are required to have their parents/guardians sign them out in the main office.

**Identification is required at the time of every dismissal. There are no exceptions to this rule to ensure the safety of our students.** Leaving school without permission will result in disciplinary consequences and/or referral to Guidance, Child Study Team, and/or the PTS Truancy Officer.

### **Make-up Work**

Students are expected to make up all work missed because of absences from school, including absences because of a suspension from school as outlined in the Course Proficiencies. In cases of long-term absences, parents must request assignments through the Guidance Office. Assignments can be picked up from Guidance within 24 hours.

Students have one day for each day absent to make up all assignments, tests and other teacher-assigned requirements. For example, if a student is absent for three days and a test was given during that period, the student must make up that test within three days after returning to school. Homework, classwork, tests, and projects that were assigned prior to a student's absence must be turned in to the teacher by the end of the day the student returns to school from the absence.

NOTE: Students who willingly cut class or are truant from school are not given the opportunity to make up missed work.

## Grading Procedures

The purpose for the existence of a grading system is threefold:

1. To report students' educational progress and achievement to them and their parents.
2. To report students' educational progress and achievement to prospective employers and schools students may wish to attend after graduating from high school.

- To assist students and their counselors in planning students' futures.

The following symbols represent grades:

- A = 92-100 (excellent)
- B = 83-91 (above average)
- C = 74-82 (average)
- D = 65-73 (passing, below average)
- F = 64 and below (failing)

The teacher will determine the final grade average for a course. Each letter grade has an assigned numeric value within the range of reference (subject to revision). A teacher's record book must denote how a grade was determined. The final grade is an average of all four marking periods and the quarterly exams. The average of the four quarterlies will constitute 25% of the final grade. Any grades given are based on evidence recorded in the teacher's class record book. For example, grades of C, C, F, F do not automatically equal a "D" but depend upon the exact numerical grade recorded. The minimum failing grade in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> marking periods is 55. In the final marking period, a "0" may be awarded if earned.

Students are encouraged to discuss their progress with their teachers, counselors, and assistant principal. Students have the right to know what grades are recorded by their name and the teacher's interpretation of those grades.

### Genesis Parent Module

Pemberton Township Schools utilizes the Genesis Student Information System, which allows parents access to student information through the Genesis Parent Module. Parents/guardians of students in grades three through twelve can obtain online access to the student's attendance, grades and assignments by completing the form sent home at the beginning of the year, or by downloading the form from the school website. After returning the form, access is enabled and parents/guardians will be sent an email regarding their username and password.

### National Junior Honor Society

Seventh and eighth grade students who meet the national criteria are eligible to apply for induction into

the National Junior Honor Society. For criteria and guidelines, visit [www.nhs.us](http://www.nhs.us).

## Promotion & Retention

The following rules are promulgated with the policy of the Board of Education dealing with the promotion and retention of pupils. **Implementation of this regulation will be at the Principal's discretion.**

### A. Standards for Pupil Promotion

Elementary (K-5) and Secondary (6-8) – A pupil will be promoted to the next succeeding grade level when he or she demonstrates the proficiencies required for movement into the next grade and has satisfactory attendance according to the district attendance policy.

### B. Procedure for Grades 6-8 Retention or Promotion

- If failing Core Content Courses at the end of the second marking period, students will be offered after-school targeted instruction that will be skill based.
- If a 6th, 7th or 8th grade pupil fails more than one Core Content Course at the close of the school year, he/she will not be promoted to the next grade.
- Pemberton Township does not offer summer school. However, if parents send students to a pre-approved summer instructional setting at their own cost, and students complete and pass the curriculum equivalent of the failed subject, the principal may promote the students to the next grade.

## Conduct & Discipline

### Code of Conduct

The student Code of Conduct is an official declaration of our school district that...

- describes positive school environment, specifics, rights, and responsibilities of students.
- defines the attendance policy and other associated policies.
- safeguards the rights of students.
- defines conduct that disrupts a positive environment and indicates the administrative responses to that conduct.

The Code is in force...

- on school property prior to, during, and following regular school hours.
- while students are on the school bus, or at the bus stop, for any purpose.
- during a reasonable timeframe before and after school.
- at all school-sponsored events and other activities where school administrators have jurisdiction over students, whether such events are in our school buildings or away from our school property.

Events that violate our code of conduct out of school, which may be reasonably expected to carry over into the school setting, may be assigned school consequences.

### **Character Education Program**

Helen Fort Middle School is honored to be a New Jersey School of Character. The objective of our Character Education Program is to create a positive institution by promoting and modeling a common language of character strengths to help improve academic engagement, positive behavior, happiness (morale), citizenship, and the success of our students.

We promote and model these character strengths:

#### Grit

- Perseverance and passion for long-term goals
- Starting and finishing goals
- Trying hard even after experiencing setbacks
- Working independently with focus

#### Zest

- Quality of actively participating
- The ability to motivate others
- Displaying passion and enthusiasm for what you learn and what you do
- Showing humor and fun in learning and life

#### Self-Control

- Having willpower and self-discipline to manage oneself
- Resisting distractions
- Handling one's own emotions and inhibiting impulses

- Delaying gratification
- Planning ahead for short and long term goals

#### Empathy

- Showing compassion, kindness, friendliness, and caring
- Understanding, demonstrating sensitivity, and demonstrating respect for others' feelings
- Adapting to different social situations
- Finding solutions during conflict with others

#### Optimism

- Having a positive attitude
- Establishing a growth mindset
- Being willing to adapt to circumstances
- Making the best of circumstances
- Being willing to try new things

#### Curiosity

- Having a desire to investigate and learn
- Displaying eagerness to learn and explore new things
- Asking and answering questions to deepen understanding
- Thirsting for knowledge

### **Restorative Practices**

One of the greatest concerns of parents and educators is how to assist our children, through teaching and guidance, to become responsible and caring adults. Providing adequate and appropriate discipline is an important part of this process. Restorative discipline adds to the current discipline models, which attempt to prevent or stop misbehavior, and teaches more life-giving responses. The goals of restorative discipline apply not only to those involved in or affected by misbehavior, but to the larger educational community as well.

Pemberton Townships Schools are committed to restorative practices that allow us to assess each student on a case-by-case basis to address behaviors and infractions that allow students to repair, reflect, and reconnect.

The goal of restorative practices is to encourage children and adults to build and maintain positive

relationships within the school, creating a positive school climate and productive learning environment. Restorative practices are the first step in addressing student behaviors or incidents, as opposed to more formal discipline such as out-of-school suspension.

Restorative practices are not appropriate in all discipline situations. The restorative model can be applied to all age levels and aims to assist all involved to **reflect, repair** and **reconnect**. In short, it is about restoring relationships between people through a controlled environment. This allows for individuals to listen, to hear how it has been for others, and to gain sufficient understanding and empathy to support the healing process.

As with any disciplinary measure, the school administration will contact parents/guardians to discuss these restorative practices.

### **Expectations for Behavior**

As an extension of our Character Education Program, we have established these expectations for student behavior:

Treat all peers, students, faculty, staff and other adults with respect and dignity.

- Resolve disputes without verbal or physical confrontation (ask for help from teachers, guidance, administration or other sources).
- Respect and value differences in race, religion, and ethnic background.
- Avoid any form of unwanted physical contact while in school or at school events.
- Settle disputes without resorting to the use of profanity, obscenity, insults, put downs, or threats.
- Treat school property with respect and leave property, which does not belong to you, alone. Return all found items to the main office.
- Refrain from improper display of affection in school and at school events.
- Refrain from all forms of bullying or harassment, sexual or otherwise.

Do the job that the school and your parents/guardians expect of you.

- Attend school daily
- Be on time for school and class. Avoid loitering in stairs and hallways.

- Be prepared with materials you will need for class.
- Make the best use of all educational time.
- Cooperate with all staff members and your peers at all times.
- Turn in all work within the allotted time frame.
- Demonstrate integrity in academic work; cheating and plagiarizing will not be tolerated.

Dress for success during school and school functions.

- Leave all outerwear in your lockers or homerooms.
- Clothing with references to alcohol, drugs, cigarettes and violence are not to be considered appropriate for school.
- Students will not wear clothing which displays profanity or sexual innuendos.
- Students are expected to keep all head coverings, headbands and sunglasses in their lockers or homerooms.
- Students will not wear halter tops, tank tops, sleeveless T-shirts, bare midriffs, excessively short shorts or skirts, dangerously baggy pants or exposed underwear, or pajama bottoms.
- Metal chains or wallet chains will not be worn.
- Students are expected to wear safe footwear at all times.
- Students will not wear potentially dangerous, revealing, ripped, and torn clothing. Excessively tight clothing is not acceptable for school.

Contribute to the safety of all members of the school community.

- Walking is the expected pace students should adhere to within the school building.
- Show self-control and patience when walking in the halls. Pushing, shoving, horseplay and tripping can be dangerous.
- Individual teachers can and will amend these rules depending on the particulars of their classroom or subject.
- All students will leave potentially dangerous or disruptive items at home. There is never a reason for lighters, knives of any size or type, mace, pepper spray, BB guns, firecrackers, stink bombs, or similar items in school.
- Treat all emergency drills as serious events, and behave accordingly.
- Bused students will treat the driver of the bus as they would treat a teacher.

### Value health and well-being.

- Obey all state laws concerning tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, steroids and drugs of all types.
- All medications—over the counter and prescription—must be kept in the nurse’s office at all times. This does not apply to prescription asthma, EpiPen, and diabetic medication if students have orders on file with the nurse to self-administer.

### Follow local school policy regarding the following items, which are not permitted in school.

- Cell phones will be turned off, put away, and not used at any time inside the building.
- Leave iPods, CD players, MP3 players, cards, dice and toys of any type, collectible cards and other electronic and non-academic items at home.
- Leave excessive amounts of money and valuables at home. The school accepts no responsibility for items brought to school in opposition to these restrictions.

### Strive to be positive influences in the school and community.

- Demonstrate pride in your school and community by picking up trash and litter and by using the proper receptacles for trash and litter.
- Keep your lockers clean and locked at all times.
- Lockers are the property of the Pemberton Township Board of Education and are subject to inspection without notice.

### **Loss of Privileges Status**

Occasionally students choose to disregard behavior expectations. In these situations, the school utilizes a loss of privileges program (demerits). All disciplinary consequences assigned to a student during the school year will also include an appropriate number of demerits. These demerits are recorded in the assistant principals’ offices and compiled on a computer database for all administrators to review.

A student may receive demerits for a variety of reasons, i.e., being late for class, cutting class, or showing disrespect towards a teacher. If a student accumulates 15 demerits, h/she will be placed in loss of privileges status. A student in loss of privileges status may not represent the school in any public

contact, contests, meetings, activities with other schools or the general public, extracurricular activities, or public events such as sports or drama performances. Nor can that student attend any non-academic school activities such as assemblies, dances, and athletic contests (even as a spectator).

Students accumulating 15 or more demerits may reduce their demerit balance and remove themselves from the loss of privileges classification by not committing any infractions for 14 calendar days. At that point, four demerits will be removed. Additional consecutive weeks of good behavior will result in a reduction of two demerits for each consecutive week. A student can have additional demerits removed by arranging and performing community service. This service may be performed in the community and must be approved by an administrator in advance. Community service is only after the completion of two consecutive weeks of good behavior and only if the good behavior record remains intact.

- 5 Demerits = each day of out-of-school suspension
- 4 Demerits = each day of Saturday detention
- 3 Demerits = each day of in-school suspension
- 2 Demerits = each day of after-school detention
- 0 Demerits = successfully serving a day of teacher-assigned detention

### **Cafeteria & Recess Rules**

Please observe the following rules during lunches and recesses:

- Students will remain seated until their tables are called. No one is to be wandering around from table to table.
- Students who cut into the lunch line before the table is called will receive a consequence.
- Each student and each group of students will be held responsible for keeping the table and the area under the table free of debris.
- Students may be assigned to eat at other locations by the staff if an area cannot be kept clean and orderly.
- Passes to the lavatory, the phone, the nurse, and the offices may be obtained from the teacher at the entrance of the cafeteria. No student can leave the cafeteria area without a pass.
- The grassy area (weather and PE class schedules permitting) behind the gymnasium

and the cafeteria are designated as the lunch period recreation area. Students are permitted to use the recreation area during the latter part of the lunch period, if weather permits and the tables and floor are returned to order.

- Students are not permitted to eat or drink in the recreation area. All food and beverages are to be consumed in the cafeteria. Students are not to use the athletic fields or to visit the wooded areas behind the school. Students are to remain at a distance from the modular building (a yellow line indicates the boundary).
- Students with a doctor's note barring participation in gym are not allowed to participate in recess and after-school sports for the same timeframe.
- Students who fail to follow these rules will lose the privilege of going outside for recreation.

### **Helen A. Fort Passes**

Students are allowed in the **hallways** only with an official Helen Fort Middle School pass any time that classes are in session. Any student found in the hallways without a pass will be escorted back to class.

In order to use the **restroom**, students will obtain a pass from their teachers. They must sign in and out of the lavatory log provided by the staff member monitoring that lavatory. Lavatories will be unlocked and available for students to use after the first 10 minutes of the period.

**Library** passes are only to be issued by regular classroom teachers. Duty teachers and substitute teachers cannot issue library passes. A few library passes will be available at the lunchroom for students to use who want to return books or do research during their lunch period.

### **Computer Standards & Usage**

Students are responsible for good behavior on school district computer networks. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. Violations may result in a loss of access, as well as other disciplinary or legal action. Students who do not have a signed computer contract on file may not use any building computer. Inappropriate use of a computer will be dealt with on an individual basis.

### **Dressing for Success Code**

In keeping with the Board of Education policy, choice of school clothing should be made on the basis of safety, cleanliness, practicality, comfort, simplicity, and modesty. Types of dress that distract other students from learning or that cause disruptions are not acceptable in the school setting. What is appropriate for the beach or outside social activities is not appropriate to wear to school, or school-sponsored functions. With these general guidelines in mind, the specific regulations apply in all Pemberton Township Schools

Incidences of failure to comply with dress standards will result in the following actions by the principal:

**The following is a list of the most common dress code violations. It is not exclusive, and it is provided to help the students and parents more easily envision what is expected.**

- No one is permitted to wear articles of clothing that are "see through", nor may any student expose a bare midriff. Underwear is never proper outer attire at school.
- No chain-type jewelry can hang from clothing or pockets. Chains are not permitted.
- No drooping pants/trousers are allowed. Pants must be worn at the waistline. Students must wear belts or suspenders whenever appropriate.
- Appropriate shorts, dresses, or skirts may be worn, but they must reach to at least mid-thigh (usually checked with the "fingertip" rule, but subject to the discretion of administration).
- Extremely tight shirts/blouses and t-shirts with obscene or objectionable matter are not permitted.
- Bike shorts/pants (of spandex material) are prohibited.
- No pajama tops or bottoms may be worn (including look-alike products that have pockets). Pajamas are not allowed in school.
- Footwear: Safety is always the primary concern. House slippers, cleated or spiked shoes, shower shoes (Adidas, soccer slides) and flip-flops are never permitted. Fashion (i.e., the height of the heels/soles or roller blades incorporated into the shoes) will not take precedence over safety.
- Sleeveless tank tops, camisoles, tube tops and halter tops are not permitted in the school (usually checked with the "4 fingertip" rule, but subject to the opinion of administration). Single tank tops

and muscle shirts may not be worn to school. This will apply to both males and females. A basketball jersey is considered to be a tank top.

- No head gear, hats, scarves, head coverings, sweatbands, bandanas, combs, or picks, etc. are to be worn. Any head covering that is considered distracting is not permitted.
- Sunglasses are not to be worn inside the building. Sunglasses are to be out of sight. This includes goggles.
- Spiked or studded belts, bracelets and jewelry are not permitted.
- Pants and shirts may not contain excessive holes or tears that make the clothing unacceptable for school.
- Rings designed to fit more than one finger are not permitted on school property.
- Clothing or any item that advocates drug usage, violence, gang membership or other objectionable themes is not to be worn in the school.
- All outerwear (overcoats, jackets, windbreakers) and hats are to be placed in the school lockers upon entering the building, and are only to be removed/replaced when the students enter/exit lunch and in extenuating circumstances, which will be announced by the administration. For the purposes of this regulation, sweaters, sweatshirts and fleeces are not considered outerwear and may be worn. Matching jackets/coats which compromise a suit are not considered outerwear and need not be placed in student lockers.
- Students taking umbrellas to school must leave them in their lockers during the school day.
- Any items worn for the express purpose of displaying gang affiliation or support (such as insignia, bandanas, medallions, wrist/neck bands, beads, markings, etc.) are strictly forbidden as per 18A: 11-9.
- Hoodies will be allowed unless the hood is placed on the head. Students continually abusing the hoodie policy will have the right to wear a hoodie revoked.

### **Dressing for & Participation in Physical Education**

Physical education is mandated by the State and local Board of Education. Students are required to wear approved uniforms for participation in physical education activities. A standard uniform, which

includes both aspects, is in keeping with Board of Education general dress codes of safety, cleanliness, practicality, comfort, simplicity and modesty. The physical education uniform will be as follows:

- Students shall wear a green, gray, white, or black plain t-shirt, shorts, and/or sweatpants as a uniform.
- A plain green, white, gray, or black sweatshirt may be worn over the uniform top.
- Black, white or green Spandex shorts may be worn under the uniform.
- Students who do not change into the PE uniform will be marked as 'unprepared for class' and will receive a failing grade for the day.
- Athletic uniforms may not be worn as a physical education uniform.
- No jewelry is permitted to be worn in class. Body or oral piercings are an unsafe health practice while participating in physical activities. Students may use a rubber/plastic plug in their piercings while participating in physical education, but do so at their own risk.

A student can be excused from participation in gym only with a doctor's note specifying the timeframe that the student is not to participate. Students must submit this note to the nurse's office during homeroom. If students are medically barred from participation in gym, they cannot participate in recess or after-school sports for the same timeframe.

### **Lost or Damaged Textbooks & Devices**

Pupils who cause damage to school property such as school-issued textbooks and school-issued electronic devices will be subject to disciplinary measures. The Board authorizes the imposition of a fine for the loss, damage, or defacement of a textbook or device and reserves the right to withhold a report card or diploma from any pupil whose payment of a fine is in arrears.

### **Alcohol, Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia, and Steroids**

Possession, use or sale of drugs, narcotics, or intoxicants in the school is an illegal act with the exception of medication prescribed by a physician and dispensed by the nurse. Individuals who require medication during school hours must report this to the school nurse and must take the medication in the nurse's presence. The nurse will require an updated prescription and doctor's note on file in the health

office that states the dosage, frequency and duration. Violation of the policy can result in suspension from school and police arrest, in addition to a criminal complaint in court. Violators of this regulation not only break school policy but also the law. Therefore, these infractions are punishable by fines and/or jail sentences.

A student exhibiting signs of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs on school property or at a school function shall be immediately reported to the principal or designee. By law, that person shall immediately notify the parent or guardian and the chief school administrator, and arrange for the parent or guardian to have their child seen by their family physician or by a hospital. If the chosen physician is not immediately available, the examination shall be conducted by the medical inspector; if the medical inspector is not available, the pupil shall be accompanied by a member of the school staff, designated by the principal, to the emergency room of the nearest hospital for examination. If available, a parent or guardian should also accompany the pupil.

### **Gang-related Activity**

Gang related activity seeks to intimidate, harass, bully and/or threaten other students. This will never be permitted at our school. A student who is identified as a potential gang member, affiliates with known gang members, emulates gang type behaviors, or participates in gang-related activities and incidents shall be dealt with utilizing the utmost severity. (As per NJ Law: 2C:33-28.)

If the student appears to be involved in gang-related activities, a conference with the student, parent/guardian, and administrator will be held. If a student is involved in any incident during school hours (defined as any time the school has responsibility for that student or the student's victim) which includes any aspect of gang-related activity, the normal discipline for that incident will be assigned, and an additional 2-10 days Out-of-School Suspension shall be assigned, at the discretion of the administration. A conference with the Superintendent may be necessary prior to readmission to school, and a police complaint may be filed.

In addition, the student will be immediately banned from all after-school activities, extracurricular functions, and all trips requiring the student to leave the school grounds.

### **Weapons**

We define a weapon as anything readily capable of lethal use or of inflicting serious bodily injury. Possessing or concealing any item that can be construed as a weapon will result in the following:

- 4-10 day Out-of-School Suspension
- Parent conference and Superintendent's hearing
- Possible police complaint
- Possible recommendation for Long-Term Suspension (up to one year) or expulsion.

"Look-alike" or imitation "weapons" will be considered weapons and receive the same penalties. Today many toy pistols and guns look too authentic and may be thought to be real. Air guns or BB guns not only look like real guns, but also are considered weapons. Examples of other weapons include, but are not limited to the following:

- Firearms, even if not loaded or lacking a clip or other component to render them immediately operable
- Components that can be readily assembled into a weapon
- Knives, explosive devices, blackjacks, bludgeons, metal knuckles, bats, pipes, chains, sling shots, leather bands studded with metal, box cutters or razor blades imbedded in wood
- Stun guns and any other weapons or device that projects, releases, or emits any other substance intended to produce temporary physical discomfort or permanent injury
- Any item not listed here that, in the opinion of the administration, the student used or intended to use as a weapon

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Sexual harassment of students by other students or by employees of the District is unlawful under both New Jersey and federal law, and is contrary to the commitment of this District to provide a stable learning environment. This School District will not tolerate sexual harassment. It is the policy of this School District that all contact between students, teachers, and other adult employees of this district be in keeping with respect for the individual student, be of a nature which does not make a student feel uncomfortable and be conducive to creating a stable learning environment.

Sexual harassment includes making unwelcome sexual advances, engaging in improper physical contact, making improper sexual comments, or otherwise creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. All students and all district employees are expected to conduct themselves with respect for the dignity of others. If a student has concerns about the nature of any conduct or physical contact by an adult employed by this district, by a fellow student, or by a member of the public, the student should immediately report this concern to his or her teacher, guidance counselor, principal, or the HIB Specialist, as well as discuss this concern with his or her parent or guardian.

Students are encouraged to report any conduct or contact that makes them feel uncomfortable, is bothersome, or is contrary to a stable learning environment. All such reports will be investigated immediately by the district and will be handled discreetly to maintain confidentiality in order to avoid embarrassment and to protect the student making the report. However, it should also be understood that this district is required by law to report child abuse to the Division of Child Protection & Permanency (DCP&P).

Sexual misconduct: The use of verbal, written, electronic, or physical actions or any language that is sexually demeaning. This violation includes, but is not limited to, indecent exposure, consensual participation in any sexual act involving physical contact, lewd comments, touching private areas, "depantsing", pulling another's underclothing, possession or distribution of pornographic materials.

### Police in the School

Students have the same rights with respect to the police in school that they have out of school. They have the right to be informed of their legal rights; to be protected from coercion and illegal constraint; and to remain silent.

NJAC 6:29-10.1 is now in effect regarding issues of planned or threatened violence to others. The law defines a threat as a planned serious bodily injury, significant bodily injury, or death to another person. The duty of the school is to call the police. Once called, the police will immediately dispatch an officer to the scene and take such actions as may be appropriate "given the circumstances." Students are encouraged to make use of the "WeTip"

program on the district website. This program allows students and parents to anonymously report potential dangers and incidents.

### Student Sales

No student, at any time, is authorized to sell anything or any service to any other students in the school unless it is a sanctioned sale for the purpose of raising money for Helen Fort Middle School activities, as approved by the administration. Disciplinary action may be taken.

### Teacher and Administrative Detentions

Staff members are encouraged to hold teacher detentions for infractions committed in their classes. Teacher detentions are assigned at the teacher's discretion with appropriate notice unless parents make other arrangements.

Administrative detentions may also be assigned by the principal or assistant principals. Detention is for approximately one hour after school in a supervised area. Students must bring homework or class work, or something to read. Failure to attend or unsatisfactory behavior will result in additional detentions, in-school suspension, or possible out-of-school suspension.

After-school detentions will be rescheduled only if the absence is supported by a doctor's note, a verified death in the family, or through **prior notification** to the issuing office by the parent or guardian.

1. **Students must bring schoolwork or reading material to detention.** If the student fails to bring work to do or something to read, the detention is graded as 'unsatisfactory.'
2. **The session begins promptly 5 minutes after the bell for end of school rings.** Students reporting late to detention will receive a grade of 'unsatisfactory.'
3. **The monitor in charge of the detention will grade the students on their behavior.** If a student receives a grade of 'unsatisfactory' for behavior, then the student will receive a grade of 'unsatisfactory' for the session.
4. **Once the session begins, students are not allowed to leave the room** except to use the bathroom. Time is allowed (2:42-2:50 p.m.)

before detention starts for all students to use the bathrooms.

5. At the end of the session, the students will report to the front of the building to ride the late bus home.
6. **If students receive a grade of 'unsatisfactory' for their detention, they will receive two additional detentions.**
7. **If students are ejected from an After School Detention due to behavior, they will receive in-school suspension.**
8. Any student who stays after school for administrative after-school detention may not participate in any after-school activities that day (unless the teacher in charge of the activity has made special arrangements with administration prior to the day of the activity).

### **In-school Suspension**

In-school suspension (ISS) is issued for an incident of misconduct of a serious nature. Unsatisfactory conduct in ISS will result in Out-of-School Suspension. Students in ISS are not allowed to participate in any after-school activities on the day they have ISS.

#### **Rules for In-school Suspension:**

1. Students report directly to homeroom upon arrival to school.
2. Students report to the ISS room after homeroom is completed.
3. Students remain in the ISS room, or other designated area, for all eight periods. They are taken as a group to lunch and the lavatory.
4. **Non-attendance for ISS will be excused and rescheduled only in the case of illness verified by a doctor's note, death in the family, or prior parental contact. An unexcused failure to serve assigned ISS will result in Out-of-School Suspension.** Students who miss ISS due to excused absences will be placed in ISS immediately upon their return (at the principal's discretion), where they will complete the assignments that were assembled for them.
5. **Students must complete all assigned work.** Failure to complete the assigned work will result

in an additional referral to the appropriate assistant principal for additional ISS assignments or possibly Out-of-School Suspension. Students who habitually do not complete their assigned work, or who turn in dramatically unsatisfactory work, will be required to repeat the session.

6. **Students must take everything they need to complete their assigned work with them to the ISS room or designated area.** This includes, but is not limited to, work, books, and materials necessary to complete all assignments. Coats, lunches and all other personal items must be brought to ISS since there are no locker breaks.
7. **Students are to remain busy reading or completing assignments for the entire time they are in ISS.** Students who sleep or put their heads down, will be rated unsatisfactory. Students are responsible for processing the completed work as directed by ISS monitors.
8. **Misconduct** of any type (talking, refusing to work, passing notes, etc.) is not tolerated in ISS.
9. If a student is **ejected from ISS** for a discipline issue, the student will be assigned out-of-school suspension.

Students and parents are reminded that ISS is used as an alternative to out-of-school suspension. Misconduct of any form while in ISS indicates that the student is not interested in an alternative to suspension. Consequently, that student will be suspended out of school, and an ISS option may not be offered to that student again.

### **Out-of-School Suspension**

Students may be suspended out-of-school (OSS) due to their inability to conform to the standards of conduct expected from children of this age.

OSS does not create an immediate requirement for a classroom teacher to procure extra work, missed work, or other classroom-related work for the student to do while denied access to the school. There are cases/instances/teachers where this might happen. Parents/guardians who wish to request work should contact the Guidance Office, which will have 24 hours to assemble the work for the suspended student. The suspended student is given time to make up missed work using the formula of one day given for each day

of suspension. If no request is made by guidance, the student's 'grace period' starts the day of their return.

Any student who attempts to attend school while in a 'suspended out of school' status will be sent to the Assistant Principal's office, where his or her parent/guardian will be notified that the student must be picked up from school. Students unable to be picked up will remain in ISS. The student will then serve his or her OSS the following day.

### Student Grievance Procedures

The Pemberton Township Board of Education affirms its responsibility to ensure all students in the public schools of Pemberton Township equal educational opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, gender, ancestry, national origin, social, or economic status. If a student or parent wishes to appeal a disciplinary action taken, the following process shall be utilized:

1. The student and/or parent must request a hearing with the principal within two days of the written notification of the punishment.
2. Certain types of cases where criminal acts have occurred will be processed through the court.
3. The principal will hear the appeal.
4. During the appeal, additional information may be presented, and witnesses may present information.
5. The principal will render one of the following decisions:
  - a. The disciplinary action could be **ELIMINATED**.
  - b. The disciplinary action could be **REDUCED**.
  - c. The disciplinary action could be **UPHELD**.
6. A decision regarding the appeal should be forthcoming from the principal within 24 hours.
7. If the appellant is not satisfied with the decision made by the principal, then appeals may be filed with the Office of the Superintendent.

During the appeal process, the student shall either remain at home or in school at the discretion of the administration.

### Saturday Detention

In an effort to keep students in the educational setting, the option of Saturday Detention may be offered to the students in lieu of ISS, OSS, or other disciplinary consequences. These conditions apply:

1. Saturday detention is not a guaranteed option and will be offered only when funding is available.
2. Saturday detention will never be offered for offenses where violence was involved.
3. Saturday detention is an option which can be offered by an administrator, not a requirement the administrator must provide.
4. Parents/guardians must drop off and pick up their children at the prescribed times.
5. The behavior and productivity of the students in Saturday detention must be exemplary.

If additional discipline referrals are received for the student after the offer of Saturday detention has been made but prior to the serving of the actual Saturday detention, the offer of Saturday detention may be withdrawn by the administrator. The administrator will then issue all the punishments due for all of the infractions for which the student has been referred.

### Discipline Guide & Unlisted Offenses

Please refer to the discipline guide included in this handbook. The consequences listed represent a range of administrative actions but are not inclusive of all actions that may be taken. The administration reserves the right to deal with other offenses that disrupt the educational process, in accordance with the severity of the offense, which are not included in the discipline guide.

## Emergency Responses

### Emergency Situations

In the event of a threat of violence, credible suspicion of weapons, or any potential environmental issues, direction will be given to students and staff to enact appropriate emergency procedures. In the event of a lockdown or shelter-in-place, **no one is permitted to enter or leave the building until the all clear is**

**given.** We will provide information to guardians as soon as possible and regularly throughout an emergency via the website and global connect. **Do not call or go to the school** during these emergencies. School personnel are busy handling the emergency, and first responders cannot have additional people at the scene.

It is critically important to have updated contact numbers so you can receive information and direction as to where to assemble, should that be necessary.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

### **After-School Activities**

Staying for after school activities is permitted as long as a certified staff member supervises the students and previous parental consent has been obtained. Students must arrange transportation in advance. No student is allowed to stay for after-school activities if...

- s/he has served Administrative After School Detention (ASD) or in-school suspension (ISS) on the day of the event (unless alternative arrangements have been made with administration by the teacher in charge of the activity prior to the day of the activity)
- s/he has been banned by the administration from participation
- s/he has been identified as a gang member, or potential gang member (see "Gang Related Activities").

**Participation in after-school activities or field trips will be denied if the student needs medication and orders are not on file with the school nurse.**

Students who participate in after school activities may use the 4:30 and 5:30 p.m. late buses provided by the district, provided that such transportation has previously been arranged. Students must follow all bus rules stated in the code of conduct. Students who violate bus rules will be disciplined, and continued misconduct will result in a suspension of activity bus privileges.

### **Eligibility**

A student who fails one or more core subjects (English, Math, Science, or Social Studies) on his/her report card will be ineligible to participate in

extracurricular activities until the next marking period, with the exception of homework club/tutoring.

If a student is already involved in an extracurricular activity, he/she may appeal to the appropriate assistant principal. The assistant principal will present the name(s) of the student to the athletic director or the principal. The assistant principal may allow the student to remain in the activity with the understanding that the student will be required to participate in the homework club or tutoring two days each week until the next progress report. The coach/advisor will provide the student with a permission slip for the homework/tutoring club.

If the student's grade has improved to passing by the next interim report, he/she may return to the sport or activity full time. A written approval must be given to the principal from the coach/advisor. A student may only appeal once per marking period. Any further F's will result in dismissal from the activity for the entire marking period each week until the next progress report.

### **Sports Physicals**

All students who wish to participate in after-school sports are required by state law to have a sports physical every year prior to beginning practice.

Please check our website for the necessary forms; that information will be available in late July or early August. Guidelines for physicals are as follows:

1. The sports physical may only be completed by a licensed physician, advanced practice nurse or physician assistant that has completed the Student-Athlete Cardiac Assessment Professional Development Module. (Per the Scholastic Student-Athlete Safety Act (P.L. 2013, c.71), N.J.S.A. 18AL40-1.1 & N.J.S.A. 18A:40-41d) It is recommended that you verify that your medical provider has completed this module before an appointment. If you do not have health insurance, Southern Jersey Family Medical Center (609-894-1100) can provide services.
2. Only the NJ Department of Education Pre-participation Physical Evaluation Form can be used for sports physicals. The form must be filled out completely by the parent and physician. Incomplete forms will be returned, and the student will be ineligible to participate in a sport until it is corrected. Reviewing the paperwork

before you leave the doctor's office will save you a lot of time and aggravation later.

3. The Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation Form (4 pages) must be taken with you to your doctor's office. The parent completes the History Form/Supplemental History Form. Your physician must review the History Form/Supplemental History Form and then fill out the entire Physical Examination Form/Clearance.
4. The Physical Examination/Clearance form is good for 365 days or one calendar year (i.e., 3/2/18 to 3/1/19). If your child's physical should happen to expire in the middle of the sport season, s/he will be allowed to finish/complete that specific sport only (intramural or interscholastic). For example, students participating in intramural basketball whose physical expires middle of intramural basketball season can play until the end of intramural basketball only. Students would need a new physical to participate in interscholastic basketball.
5. Per NJ state law, all sports physicals must be reviewed and approved by the school physician prior to any tryouts or practice. All paperwork must be completed and returned in a timely manner to ensure approval and eligibility for sports participation. The school physician will be available to sign the physical exam forms prior to the start of each season on his/her regular scheduled day – which is once a week. If physicals are turned in after the school physician's scheduled day, there will be a turnaround time of 7 to 14 days. **PLEASE PLAN AHEAD AND GET YOUR COMPLETED PHYSICAL TURNED IN AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO TRYOUTS.**
6. Students with asthma, serious allergic reactions or diabetes are required by state law (N.J.S.A.18A:40-12.3 & 12.8, N.J.S.A. 18A:40-12.5 & 12.6, N.J.S.A. 18A:40-12.11 through 12.15) to have action plans completed every school year. If these forms are not returned, your child will not be able to participate in any after school activities (sports, clubs and trips).
7. The school district will provide written notification to the parent/guardian, indicating approval of the sports physical based upon review of the

physical by the school physician, or must provide reason(s) for the disapproval of the student's participation.

8. A Health History Update Questionnaire for athletics must be completed every 90 days or prior to a new seasonal sport (fall, winter, spring) per state law. The update informs the nurse if your child has had any medical problems since his or her last physical. Explain all "yes" answers on the parent form and a doctor's note may be required for clearance.
9. Parents and students must also sign that they reviewed the educational fact sheets on sports-related concussions, sudden cardiac death in young athletes, and the use and misuse of opioid drugs, before any student participation in sports. This paperwork will be distributed by the coaches/athletic trainer.

For more information, please review the state's website Frequently Asked Questions at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/health/services/athlete/faq.pdf>.

## **Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying (HIB)**

Harassment, intimidation and bullying is defined as any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by an actual or perceived characteristic such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or by any other distinguishing characteristic that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, school bus or off school grounds (NJ Statute 18A:37-15.3)

These actions that have a negative effect on a student(s) or that substantially disrupt/interfere with the orderly operation of the school are considered HIB infractions and will not be tolerated.

### **Administrative Responses to HIB**

We follow BOE policy 5032, which directs that an investigation will be conducted. Depending upon the

serious nature of the incident(s) and the results of the investigation, consequences can range from a verbal or written warning to 10 days of out-of-school suspension, and in extreme cases, expulsion. Parents will be notified, school counselors will be notified to provide services and education on the harmful effects of HIB and, if warranted, a police complaint may be filed.

We use a three-tiered approach for repeat offenders with founded HIBs: Tier 1) Building Level: Counselor/Anti-Bullying Specialist and Administration; Tier 2) Affirmative Action Officer for Students; Tier 3) Superintendent's Hearing.

**Upon the perpetrator's first founded report:**

*School Counselor/Anti-Bullying Specialist will...*

1. Review the definition of bullying and harassment under the NJ *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act* with the perpetrator.
2. Review Character Education mission/vision statement and school pledge if applicable.
3. Develop role-playing scenarios to help perpetrator.
4. Ask perpetrator how s/he wants to make amends and ask victim how and if s/he will accept amends.
5. Schedule a follow-up session to make sure no other incidents have occurred.

*Building principal will...*

1. Advise parent/guardian of the incident.
2. Document in incident in Genesis.
3. Determine appropriate discipline and/or restorative practice.

**Upon the perpetrator's second founded report:**

*School Counselor/Anti-Bullying Specialist will...*

1. Review the definition of bullying and harassment under the NJ *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act* with the perpetrator.
2. Review Character Education mission/vision statement and school pledge if applicable.
3. Have the student write an apology letter to the victim, and counselor will facilitate meeting of victim/perpetrator.
4. Enroll perpetrator in individual and/or group counseling to address bullying/harassment behavior. Minimum number of sessions required will be four.
5. Make a referral to Hive if applicable.
6. Make referral to I&RS, if applicable.
7. View bullying videos from resources: StopBullying.gov, PACER'S National Bullying

Prevention Center, and Kids Health (depending on age).

*Building principal will...*

1. Meet with student.
2. Review definition of bullying per NJ the NJ *Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act*.
3. Review all HIBs associated with student.
4. Assign a restorative project/assignment indicative of reports to encourage self-reflection and responsibility-taking, using an agreement format if appropriate.
5. Follow-up with parent/guardian.
6. Reiterate next step is a re-admit meeting with Superintendent.

**Upon the perpetrator's third founded report:**

*Building Principal and Counselor/CST case manager will...*

1. Immediately require a Superintendent's hearing.

*Superintendent will...*

1. Schedule a mandatory re-admit meeting with student, parent, building principal, counselor/CST case manager and Rita Jenkins.
2. Mandate outside counseling services through services such as Perform Care.
3. Possibly recommend "sensitivity" training with SAC (Student Awareness Coordinator) for district.
4. Firmly state any further HIB investigations would result in application to a 45-day interim out-of-district alternative placement.

**Student Conflicts**

Incidents that are the result of actions not covered under the HIB policy that result in substantial disruption of the school day and the victimization or other students verbally, electronically, in writing or physically will not be tolerated.

**Administrative Responses to Student Conflicts**

An investigation is conducted, and depending upon the serious nature of the incident(s) and the results of the investigation, consequences can range from a verbal or written warning to 10 days of Out-of-School Suspension and in extreme cases, expulsion. Parents will be notified, school counselors will be notified to provide services and education on the harmful effects of victimizing others, and, if warranted, a police complaint may be filed.

## **Intervention & Referral Services (IRST)**

Each school district's board of education is required (N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8) to establish and implement a coordinated system in each school building, in which general education students are served, for the planning and delivery of intervention and referral services (I & RS) that are designed to...

- Identify learning, behavior, and health difficulties of students.
- Collect thorough information on the identified learning, behavior, and health difficulties.
- Develop and implement action plans which provide for appropriate school or community interventions or referrals to school and community resources.
- Work with teachers to assist in achieving the desired outcomes.

Pemberton Township Schools uses the Masonic Model as a vehicle to conduct I & RS. The Masonic Model is a strength-based intervention approach which focuses on the whole child. The Masonic Model is based on the belief that the social and emotional needs of our students must be met in order to have academic success.

### **The Masonic Model Student Assistance Program**

This model teaches educators to work as a team to assist students who are "at risk." The objective is to provide early and effective interventions using resources readily available in the school community. This program is rooted in developing the social and emotional competence of the student.

Parents/guardians may reference the district website at [www.pemberton.k12.nj.us](http://www.pemberton.k12.nj.us). Once there, click on *Departments--counseling services—IRST*. A full explanation of this process is detailed, along with a link at the very bottom of the page to upload the IRST/Masonic Model brochure that is also available in all school buildings.

### **Guardian Complaint Procedure**

Education is a partnership between school and home. In the event a guardian has a concern about an incident involving their student and the school the following procedure should be followed in order:

1. Speak with the teacher to resolve the issue; if unresolved:

2. Speak with the counselor or assistant principal; if unresolved:

3. Speak with the principal; if unresolved:

4. If the issue involves a certified teacher, submit detailed information to the Director of Curriculum in writing or via email. If the issue involves any other staff member, submit written concern to the Human Resources Manager; if unresolved:

5. Submit written concern to the Office of the Superintendent; if unresolved:

6. Submit written concern to Business Administrator to be forwarded to the School Board.

Guardians may call the County Superintendent's Office, the Police Department, or the Office of Institutional Abuse if applicable. Guardians will be sent a letter relating the action taken at each level and what avenues of recourse are available. Be aware, most personnel files are confidential. Guardians may file an Open Public Records Act request with the Business Administrator, and the district's solicitor will determine what information may be provided. Please note that the New Jersey Anti-Bullying law applies only to actions between students, not adults and students.

### **Counselors**

School counselors offer a variety of skills and a broad area of knowledge with which to help students, parents, and teachers establish beneficial relationships. Middle school counselors are in an ideal situation to enable students to achieve a solid beginning in their educational, personal, and social development. They help students become more able learners, assist parents in their supportive roles, and enable teachers to provide beneficial instruction for all children. The guidance counselor and Intervention and Referral Services Team play a major role in discipline matters and are used to bring about positive behavior changes.

A copy of any custody/guardianship papers will be provided to the student's guidance counselor.

### **Suicide Awareness & Prevention**

The Board of Education recognizes that the rate of self-destructive behavior is increasing among children and adolescents in this country. Pupils who experience depression are unable to benefit fully from

the educational program of the school. Moreover, a pupil who attempts suicide poses a danger both to self and possibly to others.

Therefore, the Board of Education directs that all school personnel should be alert to the warning signs of childhood and adolescent suicide and the procedures to follow in the event of an actual attempt or completion. Such signs and behavior shall be taken seriously and reported to the school administration and student's guidance counselor who shall determine what further action is required. Other district employees may be used to intervene or assist with such situations. If emergency intervention is required, the pupil shall be taken to the appropriate medical facility.

In incidents of such potential self-destructive behavior, the pupil's parents shall be notified immediately and their cooperation shall be sought for immediate intervention. If the parent is unwilling to cooperate, the school administration and/or Guidance Department shall contact appropriate agencies to request intervention on the pupil's behalf. In cases of child abuse or neglect, school personnel are required to contact the New Jersey Division of Child Protection & Permanency (DCP&P).

## School Health Services

School Health Services are provided by the school nurses for the purposes of care of emergency sickness or injury in school; communicable disease prevention and control; determination of health needs; and follow-up and interpretation of health needs to pupils and parents.

Parent cooperation is requested in these situations:

1. Provide a **doctor's note** when your child returns to school from an absence due to illness or injury. A **gym note** should also be obtained from the doctor if your child is unable to participate in physical education class because of the illness or injury. Another **doctor's note** is required to clear your child to safely return to gym class, recess, or after school physical activity.
2. Students requiring medical equipment such as crutches, wheelchair, cane, etc. must have a **doctor's order** for the equipment. They will not

be able to participate in any physical activity unless cleared by the doctor.

3. If your child is absent due to illness or injury, please **call the school** to inform us of the problem.
4. Bring to the attention of the school nurse any **changes in your child's medical condition or medications** or **any recent medical procedures**. Your child's school nurse will coordinate care with your child's teacher as needed. Also, inform the school nurse of **medications** your child takes at home.
5. **Keep your child home and contact the school nurse** if your child has contracted any communicable diseases (i.e., measles, mumps, strep throat, ringworm, chicken pox, pink eye, etc.). A **doctor's note to return** to school will be required. Ringworm must be covered while at school.
6. If your child becomes ill or injured in school, we will call you to make arrangements for him/her to be picked up.

## General Health Regulations

1. Keep **up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers** filed in the Nurse's and main office. As the parent/guardian, you have the responsibility to keep these numbers current. The school has no place to care for your child for an extended length of time. We must have the name and telephone number of a friend, relative, neighbor, or babysitter who would be able to care for your child until you return home. Please remember you are responsible for your child's welfare 24 hours a day.
2. A child who has **diarrhea or vomiting cannot be sent** to school. A child who has been sent home due to diarrhea or vomiting should remain at home the rest of that day and the following day or longer until symptom free. For example, if your child is sent home sick on Wednesday, h/she can return on Friday if h/she is no longer experiencing diarrhea/fever/vomiting and is symptom-free.

3. A child who has a **fever cannot be sent** to school. A child sent home from school with a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or above) should not return to school until the temperature has been normal (less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit) for 24 hours without medication.
4. Any child with a **rash should not be sent** to school until it has been determined not to be contagious by a healthcare provider. A note from the healthcare provider is required for return to school.
5. Students who have a doctor's note stating they cannot participate in gym also cannot participate in recess or after school sports for the timeframe specified on the doctor's note.
6. Students wearing support devices such as a boot, brace or splints may not participate in PE or recess until splints are removed and medically cleared by health care provider.

## School Nurse

Please inform the school nurse of any specific health problems your child may have; even the slightest condition may have an effect on your child's learning process.

New students to our district must have a physical within 30 days of enrollment, regardless of their age. It is important for parents/guardians to obtain subsequent medical examinations for their child at least once during each developmental stage, at early childhood (preschool through grade three), pre-adolescence (grade four through six) and adolescence (grades seven through twelve) per NJ Administrative Code – Chapter 16, subchapter 2, 6A:16-2.2.

All new students must also, by law, present an up-to-date record of immunizations (required by the State of New Jersey) before being admitted to school.

## Immunization Requirements

The state of New Jersey requires that all entering 6<sup>th</sup> graders who are 11 years of age or older have the **Tdap and Meningococcal** vaccines; 6<sup>th</sup> graders who

are younger than 11 years of age must receive Tdap and meningococcal vaccines once age 11 is reached.

Students who do not meet these requirements *will* be excluded from school.

## Medication Policies

New Jersey law requires that the administration of medication to students in school be discouraged except when the student's health may be jeopardized without it. The following rules must be followed:

1. Medication will be dispensed to your child by the school nurse.
2. At no time may a student carry/self-administer any medication unless there is a life-threatening circumstance and both you and your child's physician have granted permission in writing.
3. Students must have a written statement from a doctor stating that the medication needs to be given at school. Written permission from the parent needs to accompany the physician's statement.
4. Medication orders must be renewed at the beginning of every school year. **Participation in after-school activities or field trips will be denied if the student needs medication and prior orders are not on file with the nurse.**
5. The medication must be in the original container and clearly labeled by the pharmacist with the student's name, the medication (check to make sure it has not expired), the dosage, and the time the medication is to be given.
6. The medication must be given to the school nurse by a parent/guardian and will be stored in the nurse's office.
7. Students with asthma, serious allergic reactions or diabetes are required by state law to have action plans completed every school year.
8. New Jersey law requires that a trained delegate be available for any student who may need an EpiPen or glucagon when the school nurse is

not available. Please have your doctor complete those forms every school year.

9. Students who have doctor's orders to carry/self-administer their inhalers/ EpiPens should have one in the nurse's office and carry one at all times.

### **Nurse's Office Forms**

All forms are available in the nurse's office upon request and can be downloaded from the Helen Fort Middle School's website. Go to *Students & Parents*, then *School Nurse*. During the summer months, physical and medication forms are available in the main office.

Once your child's paperwork is completed, he/she needs to bring it to the nurse's office. Handing it directly to the nurse cuts down on lost paperwork. This also gives the nurse the opportunity to ask your child any questions if needed. We advise you to **make copies for your own records** of any paperwork you send to the school. We are unable to fax or make any copies for you.

### **Health Screening Procedures**

Growth and development are related to inherited characteristics and environmental influence throughout the life cycle. We screen your child per the State of New Jersey guidelines. If there is a concern, we will notify you and advise you to consult your physician for further evaluation and treatment of any problem.

### **Pediculosis**

Pediculosis (head lice) is a condition that can affect children of all ages. Head lice occur without regard to income or social economic position. In-school transmission is considered to be rare, and no disease is associated with head lice.

Our district has a no-live lice policy, and students with live lice will be sent home for treatment. Students must be brought to the school by a parent/guardian to be examined by the school nurse before readmission to school to ensure that the pediculosis treatment has taken place and that no live head lice are present. If at the return examination your child still has live head lice, you will be required to take your child home for

further treatment. Students with nits only are not excluded from school.

At the discretion of the school nurse, it may be appropriate to screen other children who have had close head-to-head contact with the student who has active head lice, but classroom-wide or school-wide screening is not merited. Maintaining the student's privacy, family confidentiality, and preventing stigmatization are vital. Therefore, we do not send letters home if a case of head lice is discovered.

The school nurse retains the authority, in consultation with school administrator(s), to exclude a student with a current case of head lice for which there is inadequate management by the parent/guardian. This student may be referred to his/her healthcare provider and/or the Burlington County Health Department for additional intervention. This policy is endorsed by national organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association and the National Association of School Nurses. Similar policies have been adopted successfully by school systems throughout the country.

### **Local Health Resources**

A family health care center, Southern Jersey Family Medical Center, is open and taking appointments at New Lisbon Center - Aspen Hills Healthcare Center (formerly Buttonwood Hospital) in Pemberton Township. The center, located at 600 Pemberton-Browns Mills Road, provides services based on a sliding fee scale and also accepts clients with Medicare, Medicaid or other types of public or private insurance. Residents with no health insurance are encouraged to seek health care at this facility. The center's hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m. The phone number is 609-894-1100. This facility also has a dental center and bilingual staff.

Rowan at Burlington County College has a Dental Hygiene Center. They offer a wide variety of dental health preventive services, such as cleanings, exams, fluoride treatments, sealants and x-rays. There is a nominal charge of \$5 per visit. To schedule an appointment, please call 856-291-4215. The Dental Hygiene Center is located at 1000 Briggs Rd., Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054.

Should you need help with immunizations, you can call the Burlington County Health Department Clinic at 609-265-5533. The BCHD is located at 15 Pioneer Blvd., Westampton, NJ 08060.

For a complete list of local health resources, contact your school nurse, or check the nurse's web page.

### Health Insurance

Many of you have your children covered under your employer plan. However, some children do not have any coverage, and this is where our school system can help. Governor Corzine signed into law P.L.2008 Chapter 38, mandating that all children under the age of 18 have health insurance.

This is a tremendous opportunity because we will help you obtain health coverage for your children and possibly your entire family by sending your contact information to NJ Family Care. Written consent is required pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 123g (b) (1) and 34 C.F.R. 99.30 (b), so the parent must sign in the health insurance section on the Emergency Information Verification Form, and we will send your contact information to NJ Family Care. The Emergency Information Verification Form (emergency card) is sent home the first day of school with your child.

Please feel free to contact your school nurse with any questions regarding NJ Family Care, or you can contact them directly at (800) 701-0710 or visit [www.njfamilycare.org](http://www.njfamilycare.org) to apply online. If you have applied recently and are receiving coverage, please let your school nurse know. This will allow our district to keep your child's information up-to-date.

### Fragrance Protocol

Many students and staff have sensitivities or allergies to strong fragrances. Those sensitivities and allergies may be chemically based, such as perfume, fabric softeners, and cologne. Some sensitivities and allergic reactions are triggered by cut flowers or plants. We ask that everyone remain respectful of those with sensitivities and allergies. Reasonable accommodations may be necessary.

The use of AXE, TAG, and any other scented sprays is not permitted on school grounds or on school buses. Possession/use of these items may result in disciplinary consequences.

## Special Education

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* is the primary federal program that authorizes state and local aid for special education and related services for children with disabilities.

New Jersey Administrative Code for special education (N.J.A.C. 6A:14) and the federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* of 2004 (IDEA 2004) are laws that ensure children with disabilities a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. An important part of these laws provides parents with the right to participate in their children's education.

The special education process is initiated with a written referral. A referral is a written request for an evaluation that is given to the school district when a child is suspected of having a disability and might need special education and/or related services. Parents, school personnel, or any agencies concerned with the welfare of students, including the New Jersey Department of Education, can make referrals. If you believe that your child may have a disability, you may refer your child for an evaluation by submitting a written request to your school district.

Decisions regarding your child's special education needs are made at meetings. As the parent of a child who has or may have a disability, you have the right to participate in meetings and make determinations regarding the following:

- Identification (decision to evaluate);
- Evaluation (nature and scope of assessment procedures);
- Classification (determination of whether your child is eligible for special education and related services);
- Development and review of your child's individualized education program (IEP);
- Educational placement of your child; and
- Reevaluation of your child.

More information regarding the special education referral process and meetings scheduled with the IEP team can be found in the Parental Rights in Special Education handbook (PRISE), located on the NJ Department of Education website.

A case manager from the Child Study Team or Speech Department is assigned to each student with

an IEP. Case managers work with the students, parents, and district staff to develop appropriate programs and services for students with special needs.

Pemberton Township Schools offer a continuum of special education services to address the needs of each student requiring special education. To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with children who are not disabled in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Specialized classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the general educational environment occurs only when the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Parents or guardians of educationally disabled or potentially disabled students should feel free to contact Special Education Services at (609) 893-8141 ext. 1012, or visit the website at [www.pemberton.k12.nj.us](http://www.pemberton.k12.nj.us) (click on 'Departments', then 'Special Services'.)

## Transportation

### School Bus Ridership

School bus ridership in Pemberton Township Schools is a privilege. To that end, students must cooperate with the drivers by observing the following policies:

- Pupils should be on time at the designated bus stop. Buses cannot wait.
- Pupils should stay off the roadway at all times waiting for the bus.
- Pupils should wait until the bus has come to a stop before attempting to enter or leave.
- There should be no moving around or changing of seats on the bus.
- There should be no loud talking. Normal conversation is permissible.
- Pupils should keep their hands and heads inside the bus at all times.
- Throwing articles of any kind are very dangerous and will not be tolerated.
- Damage to the bus should be reported to the driver at once.
- Pupils should help to keep the bus clean, sanitary, and orderly.
- No eating, drinking, or smoking is permitted on the bus at any time.
- Fighting or using obscene language or signs on the bus will not be tolerated.
- When crossing the highway after leaving the bus, pupils should cross in front of the bus after first looking both directions.

Bus drivers shall enforce all the above regulations governing the conduct of pupils when being transported in buses. Drivers have the right to assign pupils to certain seats.

Safety must be the primary concern of everyone, including students. State law (18A:25-2) provides that **a pupil may be excluded from the bus or suspended from school for disciplinary reasons.** His/her parents shall provide for their transportation to and from school during that time.

## **School Bus Change Request Guidelines**

The Transportation Coordinator, available at 609-893-1963, must approve all changes. Approved changes will be emailed or faxed to the school principal.

- Before granting approval, there must be room on the bus (no more than 51 existing passengers).
- A written requested bus change made by the parent/guardian is a permanent change for the remainder of the school year. The change is consistent and does not vary. The babysitting arrangement does not have to be every day of the week as long as it is consistent every week (i.e., Monday, Thursday, Friday). A statement must be signed by the parent that this is a permanent arrangement for the school year.
- The only exceptions to be considered by the Transportation Coordinator, in consultation with the principal, would be medical conditions and/or active military assignment of the parent/guardian (with a doctor's note or military document).
- If the parent/guardian violates the condition stated above, the Transportation Coordinator, in consultation with the principal, will deny future requests. The student will only be entitled to transportation to and from the student's resident home.

## **After School Activity Buses**

Students who participate in after school activities may use the 4:30 and 5:30 p.m. late buses provided by the district, provided that such transportation has previously been arranged. Students must follow all bus rules stated in the code of conduct. Students who violate bus rules will be disciplined, and continued misconduct will result in a suspension of activity bus privileges.

Students are not permitted to wait in the building for parents to pick them up for other appointments after school is dismissed. Only students who are staying for after school activities can remain in the building after 3 p.m.

## Discipline Guide

Infraction	Definition	Minimum	Maximum
Abusive Behavior/ Language toward Staff	The use of abusive language and/or gestures, either written or spoken, which is offensive, obscene, or vulgar	Detention/ Counseling with AP; referral to Guidance or CST	1-3 days' OSS
Alcohol/Drugs (Use, under the influence)	Includes being intoxicated or under the influence on school property, at school-sponsored functions, and on school-sponsored transportation  Students are also suspended from all school extracurricular activities for 45 school days.	5 days' ISS w/counseling plan	OSS w/Supt. hearing, possible expulsion
Alcohol/Drugs (Possession)	Includes alcohol, drug paraphernalia, and steroids  Students are also suspended from all school extracurricular activities for 45 school days.	2 days' OSS + 5 days' ISS w/counseling plan	OSS w/Supt. hearing, possible expulsion
Alcohol/Drugs (Possession with Intent to Distribute; Sale or Distribution)	Includes alcohol, drug paraphernalia, and steroids  Students are also suspended from all school extracurricular activities for 45 school days.	10 days' OSS; police notification	10 days' OSS w/Supt. hearing; possible expulsion; police notification
Assault	Inciting a confrontation, attacking, or threatening another verbally or physically, with or without a weapon	1 day OSS	10 days' OSS w/Supt. hearing
Assault (on staff)	Attempting to cause or purposely, knowingly or recklessly causing bodily injury to any employee of the Board of Education; or negligently causing bodily injury to another with a deadly weapon; or attempting by physical menace to put another in fear of imminent serious bodily injury [NJ Rev Stat § 2C:12-1 (2013)].	4 days' OSS; police complaint	10 days' OSS; police complaint; possible expulsion
Bus Violations	Failure to cooperate with the reasonable request of a bus driver; failure to follow bus safety policies	Warning; Counseling with AP	3-5 days' bus suspension
Cell Phone/ Electronic Devices	Open possession or use of a cell phone or other electronic device in defiance of school personnel	Warning and possible confiscation	Confiscation and parent pick-up of item

<b>Infraction</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Classroom Disruption	Behavior that produces distractions, confrontations, or disturbances to the learning environment; such behavior interferes with the teacher's ability to teach or impedes the learning of others.	Detention/ Counseling with AP; referral to Guidance or CST	1-5 days' OSS; administrative conference with parent
Contraband	Balloons, stuffed animals, and toys of any type; any form of gambling; unauthorized use of a laser device	Warning and possible confiscation	Confiscation and parent pick-up of item; OSS
Cutting Class	Not attending an assigned class, study hall, lunch, etc. or being 10 or more minutes late without prior administrative approval or the approval of the teacher to whom student is assigned  Cutting class also includes the infraction of leaving the classroom without permission.	Detention/ Counseling with AP; referral to Guidance or CST	1-5 days' OSS
Defiance/ Insubordination of School Personnel	A verbal or non-verbal refusal to comply with a reasonable request from a staff member	Detention/ Counseling with AP; referral to Guidance or CST	1-3 days' OSS
Disruption of Operation of School	Actions or threats which disrupt or affect the operation of the school	1 day OSS	5 days' OSS w/Supt. hearing; police complaint
Dress Code Violation	Clothing that does not fit within the guidelines stated in school and/or district policy	Change of clothing; removal to ISS; parent pick-up	1-3 days' OSS
Electronic Harassment	Using a computer or portable communication device to cause another student or staff member to reasonably fear for his/her safety or privacy. This includes engaging in conduct that would constitute sexual harassment as well as recording or disseminating data with intent to psychologically torment or harass.	1 day OSS	5 days' OSS w/Supt. hearing
Emergency-Related Events	Misbehavior during an emergency drill or emergency situation	3 admini- strative detentions	1-3 days' OSS

Infraction	Definition	Minimum	Maximum
Extortion	Inciting a confrontation, attacking, or threatening another verbally or physically, with or without a weapon	1 day OSS	10 days' OSS w/Supt. hearing
Fighting	Physical altercation between two or more students	1-4 days' OSS; referral to Guidance or CST; possible mediation	10 days' OSS
Fire Alarm Misuse	Causing a false alarm of any type	4 days' OSS; police complaint	4 days' OSS; police complaint
Firearms	Convicted or adjudicated delinquent for possession of a firearm or crime while armed with a firearm or found knowingly in possession of a firearm on any school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored event	1 year removal from regular education program	Possible expulsion
Gang-related Activity	<p>Activity that seeks to intimidate, harass, bully, and/or threaten other students</p> <p>A student who is identified as a potential gang member, or who affiliates with known gang members, emulates gang type behaviors, or participates in gang related-activities and incidents shall be dealt with utilizing the utmost severity. (NJ Rev Stat §2C:33-28.)</p> <p>Students will also be immediately banned from all school extracurricular activities, functions, and trips requiring them to leave the school grounds.</p>	Conference w/parent & administrator	2-10 days' OSS w/Supt. hearing; possible police complaint
Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB)	Any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by an actual or perceived characteristic such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity & expression, or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or by any other distinguishing characteristic that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, school bus or off school grounds (NJ Rev Stat §18A:37-15.3)	Warning; Detention/ Counseling with AP; referral to Guidance or CST	10 days' OSS w/Supt. hearing
Inappropriate Language/Gestures	The use of profanity or any derogatory language directed at another, which impedes the educational process or creates an unsafe learning environment	Detention/ Counseling with AP; re-referral to CST or Guidance	1-3 days' OSS

Infraction	Definition	Minimum	Maximum
Public Display of Affection	Includes, but is not limited to, kissing, hand-holding, hugging, "draping" (one student wrapping arms about/over, or leaning on another student while standing or sitting next to them), or caressing. Any of these examples, or any other infraction, which, in the opinion of the administration, crosses these lines, will be written up as "Inappropriate Physical Contact."	Warning; Detention/ Counseling with AP	1 day ISS
Sale of Items	Selling any product or any service to another unless sanctioned for the purpose of raising money for the school, as approved by the administration	Detention/ Counseling with AP; referral to Guidance or CST	1-3 days' OSS
Sexual Harassment	All contact between students, teachers, and other adult employees of this district shall be in keeping with respect for the individual student, be of a nature which does not make a student feel uncomfortable, and be conducive to creating a stable learning environment.  Includes making unwelcome sexual advances, engaging in improper physical contact, making improper sexual comments, or otherwise creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment	2 days' ISS; referral to Guidance or CST	5-10 days' OSS; investigation by the HIB specialist; possible police complaint
Sexual Misconduct	The use of verbal, written, electronic, or physical actions or any language that is sexually demeaning. This violation includes, but is not limited to, indecent exposure, consensual participation in any sexual act involving physical contact, lewd comments, touching private areas, 'depantsing', pulling another's underclothing, possession or distribution of pornographic materials.	3 days' OSS	10 days' OSS
Student Conflict	Incidents that are the result of actions not covered under the HIB policy that result in substantial disruption of the school day and the victimization or other students verbally, electronically, physically or in writing	Detention/ Counseling with AP; referral to Guidance or CST	10 days' OSS; possible expulsion
Tardiness to Class	Chronic lateness to class that creates a disruption in the educational process	Teacher contact w/parent; detention	Saturday Detention; ISS
Technology Misuse/Computer Tampering	Any unauthorized use of computers, software, Internet, network or other technology; accessing inappropriate websites; misuse of account credentials; disrupting the normal operation of a technology system.	Teacher contact w/parent; detention	Termination of technology access; OSS

Infraction	Definition	Minimum	Maximum
Terroristic Threats	Verbal, written, or drawn and directed at another individual's well-being	1-3 days' OSS	4-7 days' OSS w/Supt. hearing, possible expulsion
Theft	Taking property of another student/staff member without permission. Theft does not include confiscation by school authorities of property not permitted at school.	1 day OSS	5 days' OSS w/ possible Supt. hearing
Threats toward Staff	Verbal, written, or drawn and directed at the well-being of any employee of the Board of Education	3 days' OSS; possible police complaint	10 days' OSS; police complaint; possible long-term suspension/expulsion
Threats	Verbal, written, or drawn and directed at another individual's well-being	1-3 days' OSS	4-7 days' OSS w/Supt. hearing
Tobacco Products (Possession)	Includes the possession of lighters, matches, tobacco products, electronic smoking devices, or smoking related materials	1 day ISS; referral to SAC	1-3 days' OSS; referral to SAC
Tobacco Products (Use)	Includes the use of lighters, matches, tobacco products, electronic smoking devices, or smoking related materials	2 days' OSS; referral to SAC	3-5 days' OSS; referral to SAC
Truancy	Leaving school without permission or leaving school prior to the end of the school day without signing out through the main office.	1-2 days' ISS; referral to Guidance, CST, or Truancy Officer	OSS
Vandalism	<p>The willful or malicious damage or destruction of school property or the property of others; includes graffiti</p> <p>The parent or guardian of any pupil who shall injure any school property shall be liable for damages for the amount of the injury to be collected by the Board of Education of the district in any court of competent jurisdiction, together with the costs of the suit. (NJ Rev Stat §18A: 37-3)</p>	1-5 days' OSS; police notification; restitution	1-5 days' OSS; police notification; restitution

## **DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

The Board of Education strictly prohibits all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, domestic partnership status, affectional or sexual orientation, familial status, disability, nationality, sex, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, genetic information, military service, and AIDS and HIV status. It is the policy of the School District that the School District's educational program, employment practices, and other functions shall be free of all forms of discrimination and harassment.

The purpose of this regulation is to provide a procedure whereby complaints of discrimination and harassment are investigated and, if appropriate, addressed.

### **DEFINITIONS**

1. **Affirmative Action Officer.** A certified individual designated by the Board of Education to monitor the School District's compliance with the Policy Against Discrimination and Harassment and Affirmative Action Policy.
2. **Complaint.** An allegation of any form of discrimination or harassment.
3. **Complainant.** The aggrieved person who makes a complaint alleged discrimination or harassment.
4. **Discrimination.** Unlawful conduct whereby a person is treated differently from others on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, domestic partnership status, affectional or sexual orientation, familial status, disability, nationality, sex, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, genetic information, military service, and AIDS and HIV status. Discriminatory conduct is strictly prohibited whether it is engaged in students, employees, parents and/or other third parties.
5. **Harassment.** Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment consists of unwelcomed conduct including but not limited to: unwelcome verbal comments; jokes; unwelcome written comments (such as emails, flyers, memos, etc.); threatening or disturbing behaviors; stalking; and similar conduct. The examples provided are intended to be illustrative and are not an exhaustive list of all activities that consist of harassment. Harassing conduct is strictly prohibited whether it is engaged in by students, employees, parents and/or other third parties.
6. **Sexual Harassment.** Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination on the basis of sex. Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to: unwelcomed sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; inappropriate verbal conduct (such as name calling, using sexually explicit language, telling sexual jokes, repeatedly asking a person out on a date, etc.); inappropriate physical conduct (such as unwelcomed touching, physically blocking passageways, invading personal space, staring at a person's body, stalking, etc.); storing or displaying sexually explicit images or videos on School District property (such as photos, calendars, computer screen savers, electronic or printed pornographic materials, etc.); and similar conduct. The examples provided are intended to be illustrative and are not an exhaustive list of all activities that consist of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited whether it is engaged in by students, employees, parents and/or other third parties.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

- A. Any person may make a complaint alleging discrimination and/or harassment to any administrator at the School District or to the School District's Affirmative Action Officer. If the complaint is made to an administrator, the administrator must report the complaint to the Affirmative Action Officer. The School District encourages complainants to put their complaints in writing.
- B. The recipient of the complaint should request the complainant to put the complaint in writing. However, the complainant is not required to put his/her complaint in writing. If the complainant declines to put his/her complaint in writing, then the recipient of the complaint shall immediately make a written record reflecting what the complainant is alleging.
- C. Upon receiving notice of the complaint, the Affirmative Action Officer shall determine who at the School District shall investigate the complaint. The investigator may be the Affirmative Action Officer or it may be another administrator. The investigator shall be selected based on his/her ability to maintain objectivity and independence throughout the investigation, as well as his/her familiarity with the parties involved.

- D. The investigator shall promptly conduct an investigation into the allegations contained in the complaint. The investigation may include the following: conducting investigative interviews with the complainant and other potential witnesses, collecting/examining relevant documentation, reviewing video and/or audio recordings, and similar conduct.
- E. Investigations shall be initiated within three school days of the receipt of the complaint.
- F. All accused individuals shall have the opportunity to review and respond to allegations as part of the investigation before any decision is made regarding the veracity of an allegation. Accused individuals shall also have the right to identify witnesses and/or other evidence on their own behalf. It shall be in the investigator's sole discretion to determine what, if any witnesses may have information relevant to the complaint and therefore what, if any, witnesses shall be interviewed as part of the investigation.
- G. All investigations shall be completed within a reasonable timeframe, which shall depend on the nature and scope of the investigation unless the timeframe is dictated by applicable law (i.e., such as HIB investigations).
- H. At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator shall create a written report detailing his/her findings. The investigator's report shall include a finding indicating whether the allegations contained in the complaint were substantiated or not substantiated. A copy of the investigator's findings, along with all supporting documentation created and/or collected during the investigation, shall be forwarded to the Affirmative Action Officer. The Affirmative Action Officer shall maintain the documentation in an "investigative file" separate from any personnel records and/or student records.
- I. The Affirmative Action Officer shall make recommendations regarding the potential discipline of the accused individual.
- J. The Affirmative Action Officer shall communicate the results of the investigation to the complainant in writing. The complainant shall not be entitled to a copy of the investigative file unless required by law.
- K. The Affirmative Action Officer shall communicate the results of the investigation to the accused individual(s) in writing. The accused individual(s) shall not be entitled to a copy of the investigative file unless required by law. Accused individuals shall have the right to appeal any finding and/or discipline as provided for by law.
- L. If the complainant and/or the accused individual disagrees with the outcome as communicated by the Affirmative Action Officer, then the complainant may appeal to the Superintendent of Schools. The appeal shall include a copy of the complaint, a copy of the communication containing the results of the investigation, and an explanation of the reasons why the complainant and/or accused individual disagrees with the outcome.
- M. With the filing of an appeal, the complainant may request an informal hearing with the Superintendent of Schools. Such meeting shall be scheduled within a reasonable time frame and at a mutually convenient time. The Superintendent shall remain impartial and objective when reviewing the results of the investigation and reasons why the complainant and/or accused individual appealed the outcome.

## **OUTCOMES**

- A. If it is determined that discrimination and/or harassment has taken place, the School District shall take immediate steps to prevent the discrimination and/or harassment from occurring again and, if appropriate, shall take steps to remedy any discrimination and/or harassment that has taken place.
- B. If it is determined that discrimination and/or harassment has been engaged in by a student, the student may be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, as provided for by the Code of Student Conduct.
- C. If it is determined that discrimination and/or harassment has been engaged in by an employee, the employee may be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension without pay and/or termination from employment.
- D. If it is determined that the discrimination and/or harassment has been engaged in by a parent and/or other third party, the School District shall take reasonable steps within its legal authority to prevent the discrimination and/or harassment from occurring again.
- E. If appropriate, the School District shall take interim measures to preclude contact between a complainant and an accused person and such interim measures will not disproportionately impact the complainant. Complainants needing additional counseling or assistance may be referred to the guidance office for referrals.

## REPORTING COMPLAINTS

### AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICER

A. Any person may make a complaint alleging discrimination and/or harassment to any administrator at the School District or to the School District's Affirmative Action Officer. If the complaint is made to an administrator, the administrator must report the complaint to the Affirmative Action Officer.

The School District's Affirmative Action Officers/ADA/504 Coordinators are...

Rita Jenkins

Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX/ADA coordinator for **students**

(609) 893-8141 x. 1034

[rjenkins@pemb.org](mailto:rjenkins@pemb.org)

Pamela Kelly

Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX coordinator for staff and ADA/504 coordinator for all **staff**

(609) 893-8141 x. 1021

[pkelly@pemb.org](mailto:pkelly@pemb.org)

B. All employees are required to promptly report any incidents of discrimination and/or harassment that they witness and/or that become known to them in any way. Employees must report the discrimination and/or harassment to their immediate supervisors and/or to the School District's Affirmative Action Officer.

No person shall be subject to retaliation for having made a complaint and/or for participating in any investigation. Allegations of retaliation are taken seriously and will be investigated.