

Welcome Letter to Parents

Welcome to the **2008-2009** school year. We want this to be an enjoyable and productive year.

The Pinnacle Charter School Student Handbook contains information about our school and the policies and procedures you and your child will need to be familiar with for a successful school year. In it you will find information pertaining to:

- Code of Conduct
- Bus Transportation
- Your child's grades and progress reports
- Records pertaining to your child
- Conferences with your child's teacher
- Attendance policy
- Emergency/ Safety Plan

Because the information contained in this handbook is so important, we want to ensure that you and your child have read the handbook and you assist your child in his/her understanding of the contents. Therefore, to acknowledge receipt of this handbook and the information contained in it, please **review the statements below and return a signed copy of this page to the main office by Friday, September 5**. If you have any further questions about anything contained in this handbook, please contact Mrs. Rotella in the main office at (842-1244).



I have received a copy of the Pinnacle Charter School Student Handbook and have read, discussed and understand the contents of the 2008-09 student handbook and the Acceptable Use Policy.

Print name of student 1: _____ Grade: _____

Signature of student 1: _____

For members of the same family:

Print name of student 2: _____ Grade: _____

Signature of student 2: _____

Print name of student 3: _____ Grade: _____

Signature of student 3: _____

Signature of parent: _____

Date: _____

PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

Directory of School Staff

To reach any of the following individuals during school business hours, please dial their direct line.

Teachers are working with students from 8:30 – 4:00. Please feel welcome to leave a detailed message for the teacher on their voice mail, if you call during that time.

Chief Academic Officer (CAO)	Mrs. Rotella	842-1244
Main Office	Mrs. Herlofson	842-1244
	Mrs. Arnold	842-1242 fax
Director of Student Services	Mrs. Davis	583-3047
Director of Instruction	Mrs. Lyon	390-3187
Nurse/ Attendance	Mrs. Katz	842-1241
School Counselor	Miss Bedell	842-1244
Family Service Coordinator	Mrs. Rochelle	570-6269

CLASSROOMS:

Kindergarten	Mrs. Turner	923-5586
Kindergarten	Mrs. Raybeck	570-6165
Kindergarten	Mr. Maier	583-3043
Grade K-1	Miss Clark	583-3048
Grade 1	Mrs. Gorski	583-3019
Grade 1	Miss McGee	570-6173
Grade 2	Miss Ellson	583-3023
Grade 2	Mr. Heiser	923-5658
Grade 2	Mrs. Reiter	583-3022
Grade 3	Mr. Setter	570-6176
Grade 3	Miss Meyer	583-3021
Grade 3	Mr. Boehringer	923-5592
Grade 4	Miss Grosso	570-6170
Grade 4	Mr. Buffomante	923-5203
Grade 4	Ms. Tomczak	583-3036
Grade 5	Miss Whitford	570-6175
Grade 5	Mrs. LeBarron	923-5590
Grade 5	Mr. Kling	570-6171
Grade 6	Miss Ferrentino	923-5659
Grade 6	Miss Miller	570-1902
Grade 6	Mrs. Cudzilo	923-5660
Grade 7/8	Mr. Doucet	570-6161
Grade 7/8	Mr. Schwagler	583-3026
Grade 7/8	Mrs. Sadler	923-5142
Grade 7/8	Mrs. Koslowski	570-1907

SPECIALS:

Art (K – 4)	Miss DiCioccio	570-1987
Art (4 – 8)	Miss McCarthy	583-3057
FACS (gr.5-8)/ CDOS (gr. 6-8)	Mrs. Quagliana	923-5159
LOTE (Grades K-3)	Mrs. Springer	923-5591
LOTE (Gr 6-8) French	Miss Repasky	570-6179
LOTE (Gr 6-8) Spanish	Mrs. Reukauf	570-6163
LOTE (Gr 3-8) Italian	Miss Connell	570-1576

Library Media Teacher	Miss Ciminelli	842-1244 x225
Music (K - 3)	Miss Curcio	570-6167
Music (Instrumental)	Mr. Pinchoff	570-2278
Music (4 - 7)	Mr. Cole	570-6521
Physical Education	Miss Bund	923-5329
Physical Education	Miss Lingle	583-3055
Physical Education	Mr. Moretta	570-6172
Tech Ed./Info Tech.	Mr. Olsen	570-2248

SUPPORT TEACHERS:

Reading Specialist	Ms. Gordon	583-3044
Reading Specialist	Mrs. Caine	570-2294
Reading Specialist	Miss Janik	570-2370
Reading AIS TA	Mrs. Smith	570-2235
Reading AIS TA	Ms. Scibetta	570-6637
Math AIS	Mrs. Steinborn	583-3025
Math AIS	Mrs. Olivieri	923-5588
Math AIS TA	Miss Nigro	570-2780
Special Education Teacher	Mr. Gainey	570-1215
Special Education Teacher	Miss Curry	923-5545
Special Education Teacher	Miss Peterson	923-5589
Special Education Teacher	Miss Rogers	583-3041
Speech Language Pathologist	Mrs. Wilkins	923-5143
Speech Language Pathologist	Ms. Klippel	923-5199

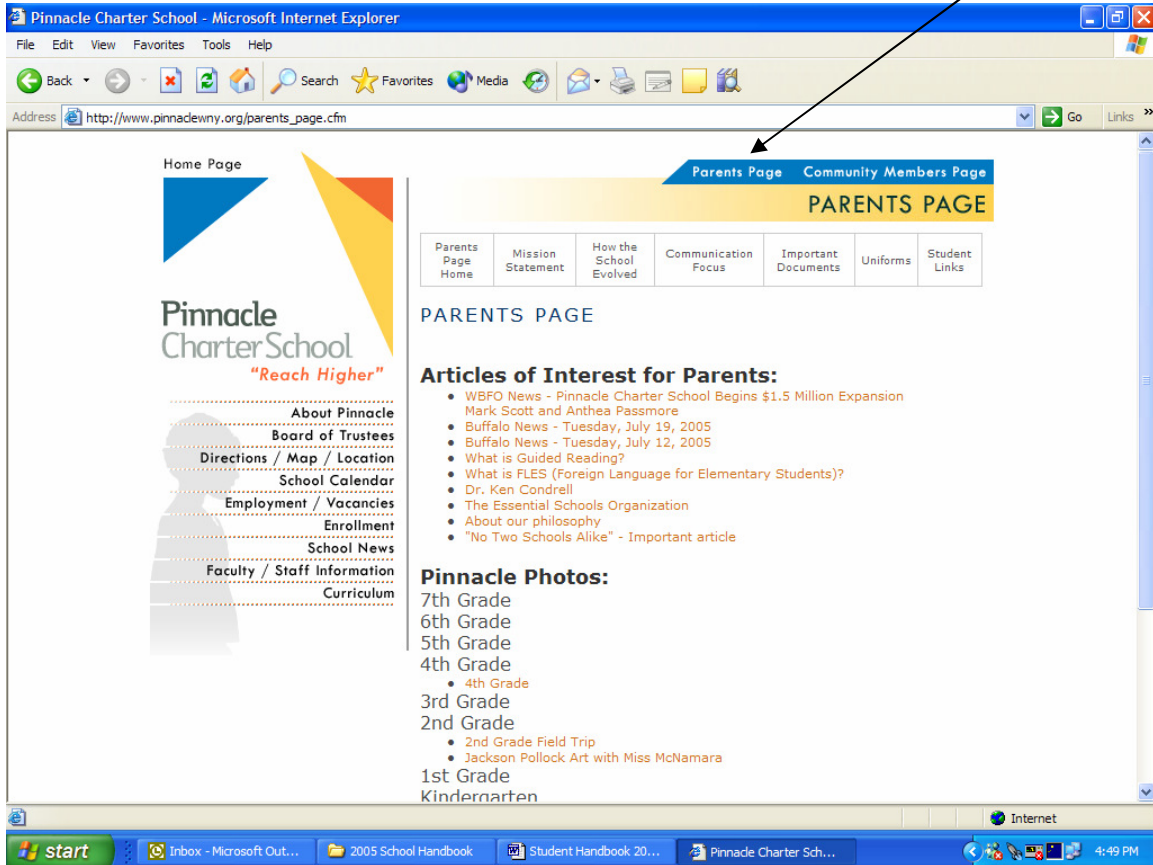
Whom do I contact about...

After-School Clubs	_____	Miss Lingle
Cafeteria/Meal Information	_____	Mrs. Katz, School Nurse
Courses - Curricula	_____	Mrs. Rotella, Chief Academic Officer
Discipline	_____	Mrs. Rotella, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Lyon
Health Concerns	_____	Mrs. Katz, School Nurse
Lost and Found	_____	Mrs. Herlofson, Main Office
Academic Problems	_____	Classroom Teacher and then Mrs. Davis, Director of Student Services (Child Study Team)
Transportation	_____	Mrs. Arnold, Main Office

IMPORTANT TIMES:

8:10 – 8:25	Breakfast
8:15	Bus Arrival (students wait in hallways)
8:25	Students may enter classrooms
8:30	Announcements
8:35	Attendance/ Tardy Bell
3:50	Classes end
3:55	Bus dismissal
4:00 – 4:15	Parent Pick Up/ Dismissal
4:15 – 5:15	After School Program

Parents can also obtain school information by visiting the **UPDATED** Pinnacle Charter School website at www.PinnacleWNY.org. The website includes information on upcoming activities, school calendar, school news, academic achievements, policy information and curriculum. **Click Here!**



INSTRUCTION & INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Mission

**Statement of Nondiscrimination/
Anti-Harassment**

Instruction

Attendance

Released Time for Religious Instruction

Student Dismissal Precautions



Transportation

Character Education

Physical Education

Library

Multimedia Tools in the Classroom

Use of School Computers

Internet Safety

MISSION

The Charter School has as its mission to optimize the potential of each child to meet or exceed the New York State *Learning Standards* and advance to personal independence with short and long term contribution to the community. The school is unique in that it uses the Coalition of Essential School philosophy with a communication focus. The school is located in the city of Buffalo for children K through 8th grade living in the Buffalo Niagara region.

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION / ANTI-HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the Pinnacle Charter School not to permit discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, sexual orientation or disability in the school's educational programs, activities or employment.

In order to work, play and live as a community, all students must show respect for each other and their differences. Actions or comments based on a person's race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, sexual orientation or disability are called harassment and are not allowed in school. Examples of harassing behaviors include name-calling, inappropriate gestures, offensive remarks, physical abuse, pinching or any other behavior that is designed to bother, threaten or cause fear. If anyone discriminates against you or harasses you, tell your teacher or see Mrs. Rotella.

ATTENDANCE

It is each student's basic responsibility as a member of the school community to be on time and attend all classes. Daily telephone calls will be made to parents or guardians to report unexcused absences.

The following reasons for student absences from schools are recognized as **excused**:

1. Personal illness
2. Illness or death in the family
3. Impassable roads or weather making travel unsafe
4. Religious observance
5. Medical appointment
6. Approved school-sponsored trips
7. Quarantine
8. Required court appearances

Any other absence is considered **unexcused** (including family vacation, haircut, oversleeping, lack of transportation).

PCS encourages parents, whenever possible, to schedule outside appointments for their children before or after school hours. **ALL ABSENCES REQUIRE A WRITTEN NOTE, INCLUDING DATE AND REASON FOR ABSENCE**, from the parent/person in parental relation on the student day of return to school or as soon as possible. Parental notification for student tardiness or early departure will be presented on the day of the tardiness/ early departure, indicating the date, time and reason. Excuses may be verified for authenticity and will be kept on file according to NYS State Law. **(EXCUSE PADS ARE AVAILABLE one per family, from Mrs. Katz.)**



Obtaining Assignments for Extended Excused Student Absences

Parents may call the school to obtain assignments for their child who is or is expected to have an excused absence for two or more consecutive school days. A twenty-four hour turn-around time is needed by the school to assemble the assignments.

Student Attendance Record-Keeping

The record of each student's presence, absence, tardiness and early departure shall be kept daily. Any absence, tardiness or early departure will be entered as "excused" or "unexcused", along with the school code for the reason.

The School believes that classroom participation is related to and affects a student's performance and grasp of the subject matter and, as such, is properly reflected in a student's final grade. For the purposes of this policy, classroom participation means that a student is in class and prepared to work. Consequently, for each trimester, a certain percentage of a student's grade will be based on classroom participation as well as the student's performance on homework, tests, papers, projects, etc., as determined by the building administrator and/or classroom teacher. **At all grade levels, a student must be in attendance a minimum of 85% of the total school days. Parents can expect that excessive absences will be reflected in the student's grades.**

Make-Up Opportunities

It is School policy that students with approved excused absences, tardiness and early departures for which the student has performed any assigned make-up work, assignments and/or tests shall not be counted as an absence for the purpose of determining the student's eligibility for course credit. It is the student's responsibility to seek out the teacher to obtain the assignment within five days of his/her return.

Students with unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures may request to be provided any missed assignments; however, such work, if completed by the student, must be completed within five school days and will not remove the class absence.

Denial of Grade Level Promotion

Parents/ Guardians and students will be informed of the School's policy regarding minimum attendance and the implementation of specific intervention strategies to be employed prior to the denial of grade level promotion (retention) of the student for insufficient attendance. If students are in attendance less than 85% of the total school days, the student may be denied promotion to the next grade level.

Attendance Incentives

In accordance with the Commissioner's Regulations and in order to encourage student attendance, the School will develop and implement grade-appropriate building-level strategies and programs to include: exemplary attendance awards, pins, and honors.

Disciplinary Consequences

Unexcused absences, tardiness and early departures will result in disciplinary sanctions as described in the School's Code of Conduct. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, in-school suspension, detention and denial of participation in clubs, intramurals and extracurricular activities. Parental notification will be consistent with the School's Code of Conduct.

Intervention Strategy Process

In order to effectively intervene when an identified pattern of unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures occur, our Attendance Officer/ School Nurse will pursue a series of intervention strategies to help the student improve school attendance.

Released Time For Religious Instruction

A student will be released for religious instruction for a maximum of one hour each week upon the presentation to the CAO of a parental request in writing.

STUDENT DISMISSAL PRECAUTIONS

In order to ensure students' safety, the Main Office maintains a list of individuals who are authorized to obtain the release of students in attendance at the school. No student may be released to the custody of any individual who is not the parent or guardian of the student, unless the individual's name appears upon the list.

Parents or guardians may submit a list of individuals authorized to obtain the release of their children from school at the time of the child's enrollment. The signature of the parent or guardian must be provided.

A parent or guardian may amend a list submitted pursuant to this regulation at any time, in writing, with a signature of the parent or guardian. Certified copies of any court orders or divorce decrees provided by the custodial parent, which restrict a parent's ability to seek the release of his or her child, must be maintained in school offices.

If anyone seeks the release from school of a student, he/she must report to the school office and present satisfactory identification to the Main Office or CAO.

Early excuses for emergency reasons should be requested in writing by the parent. Medical releases are handled through the Nurse's Office. All other reasons for release must be submitted to the Main Office, and students must be picked up in the Main Office. The person seeking the student's release must sign the register in the office.



NEW!!

TRANSPORTATION

The Buffalo City School District provides yellow bus transportation services for children who live within the City of Buffalo and attend Pinnacle Charter School. (No Metro Bus passes will be provided as of August 2008 due to the Yellow Bus service.) The service will be identical to that provided to students of the Buffalo Public Schools.

Arrival:

- Students will be picked up at corner bus stops within a reasonable distance of their home.
- The average length of the bus ride is less than 30 minutes.
- The buses will unload and load along the Ash Street side of Pinnacle with Pinnacle staff supervision at 8:15. (**Please respect these areas if you transport your child to school. Continue to use the front driveway for car drop-off.**)
- Buffalo City School District provides this service using buses and Bus Drivers contracted through First Student. It is our goal to have a Bus Aide on each bus. The Bus Aide is a Buffalo City School District employee.
- Parents can elect to have their child picked up or dropped off at an alternate location as long as it does not add significant time to the bus ride, but it must be the same for all five days of the week.
- The bus ride is considered an extension of the school day so if **a behavior** is not allowed in school, it is not allowed on the bus.

Applications and changes will be submitted to the Transportation Department through the **school office**. Make sure you keep the office supplied with the most current information (address, phone number and emergency contact) so that your child's service will be correct and we can contact you in the event of an emergency.

Dismissal:

- The buses will load along the Ash Street side of Pinnacle with Pinnacle staff supervision at 3:55.
- **Do NOT park along Ash Street between 3:30 and 4:15 pm.**
- Parent pick up for dismissal will occur in classrooms from 4:00 – 4:15. Parents (or designated guardians or adults) are required to sign out their student in the classroom.
- Pick up for grades K-4: Parents can park in the Spruce St. Parking Lot (use Door #4) or along Spruce Street.
- Pick up for grades 5-8: Parents can park in the Rear Parking Lot or along Spruce Street (use Door #3).
- **NO PARKING will occur in the front loop, as Suburban Buses load here.**
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CHARACTER EDUCATION

The Pinnacle Charter School works in partnership with parents to maintain a learning and working environment that supports positive student attitudes and the character development of its students. Character development will reflect and reinforce character and civic values such as flexibility, courage, caring, integrity, cooperation, responsibility, initiative, effort, and perseverance.

Parents, students, and the school community will work together to teach, promote, and model ethical behavior. The Pinnacle Charter School will reflect and reinforce positive character traits that embody community values and promote principles of fairness and justice.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Every student who attends school must take part in a physical education program.

If a student requires a special or adaptive physical education program, he/she should notify the P.E. teacher as soon as possible. A note from the student's physician may also be required.

If a student must be excused from P.E. classes for less than a week either due to minor injuries or upon returning to school following an illness, the student must deliver a note from the parent to the physical education teacher.

If a student must be excused from P.E. for more than a week, that student must deliver a note from his/her physician to the school nurse.

Proper Attire for Physical Education Class and Intramurals

Students are expected to dress appropriately in order to participate in physical education classes. All students are required to wear sneakers for safety and performance reasons (platform sneakers or sneakers without full backs are not acceptable).

Students in **Grades K-3** will wear their regular school uniform. However, girls wearing skirts should bring shorts to wear underneath.

Students in **Grades 4-8** must wear the identified PE uniform each class:

- Knee-length navy blue or khaki (tan) shorts
- White t-shirt (plain with no graphics or words)

No jewelry may be worn at any time. Students will receive a "0" for the day if they do not remove their jewelry. If a student has a new piercing, they must submit a doctor's note stating their inability to remove the jewelry.

LIBRARY

Pinnacle Charter School is fortunate to have a good library housing hundreds of books, magazines, videos and more. Students are brought into the library twice a week as a class and may sign books out for a two-week period of time.

Students using the library and checking books out must:

- Return books and materials on time so other students can enjoy them
- Take good care of books when they are borrowed
- Not write on any pages or rip any pages out of the books they borrow

Students who damage or lose library books will have to pay for them.

MULTIMEDIA TOOLS IN THE CLASSROOM

During the course of the school year, teachers supplement classroom work by utilizing a variety of multimedia tools. As such, your child may have the opportunity to view one or more videos as part of his or her classroom participation, including:

- Videos related to the curriculum being taught to your child.
- Videos that are in the library.
- G-rated videos.

Use of School Computers

We encourage students to use computers and technology available in our school facilities; however, with this use comes responsibility. Violations of the following guidelines may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary actions or legal action in accordance with applicable laws and/or due process procedures. Users are expected to:

Respect the privacy of others.

1. Users will not try to gain unauthorized access to networked or stand alone systems.
2. Users will not modify or read files of other individuals, however, it should be noted that system and/or district administrators have access to all files. **Privacy shall not be assumed in this case.**

Respect the legal protection provided by copyright and license to programs and data.

1. Users will not make copies of licensed programs, in violation of Copyright Laws.
2. Users will not install their own software on Pinnacle Charter School computers without authorization.
3. Users will not intentionally develop or use programs to harass others or infiltrate a computing system or damage or alter the software components or network.
4. Users will not intentionally send inappropriate, obscene or hateful messages/mail to others.
5. Users will not be allowed access to various Internet sites including pornography, personal web sites or any online gambling site of any type.

Abide by this Acceptable Use Agreement distributed to all Pinnacle students, and their parents, who use Pinnacle Charter School computers.

Acceptable Use Agreements

An acceptable use agreement for student use of the school's computer network is sent home annually with this Student Handbook (front page). Students are required to sign the agreement to abide by school policy and regulation in the use of the school's computers. These agreements are kept on file in the Main Office.

Failure to abide by these regulations may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school and/or revocation of system access and related privileges.

School Responsibilities

While the school uses technological and manual means to regulate access and information on the school computer network, parents should understand that these methods do not provide a fool-proof means of enforcing the provisions of the school's policy and regulations.

The school makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, for the access being provided. Further, the school assumes no responsibility for the quality, availability, accuracy, nature or reliability of the service and/or information provided. Use of the school's computer network and the Internet is performed at the user's own risk. Each user is responsible for verifying the integrity and authenticity of the information that is used and provided.

The school will not be responsible for any damages suffered by any user, including but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or the errors or omissions of any user. The school will also not be responsible for the unauthorized financial obligations resulting from the use or access to the school's computer network or the Internet.

Internet Safety

The Pinnacle Charter School is committed to safeguarding children's access to the Internet and World Wide Web on school computers. Although the school cannot totally guarantee the effectiveness of selected filtering and blocking technology, the school will use such measures that block or filter Internet access to visual depictions that are obscene or otherwise harmful to minors, as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

Programs for Students with Disabilities

Academic Intervention Services

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities are entitled to receive, at public expense, special education, related services and/or supplementary aids and services as necessary to ensure a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment, appropriate to meet their individual needs.

Each student identified as having a disability will have access to the full range of programs and services of this school, which are available to all other students enrolled in the school.

Parents/students who desire further information on these programs and services should contact Mrs. Davis (Director of Student Services) or the Child Study Team through their classroom teacher.

Services are provided based on the recommendations made by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the student's school district.

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES

The school shall provide academic intervention services to students who have been identified as being at risk of falling below the state learning standards in English language arts, mathematics, social studies, and/or science. Such services may include additional instruction services and/or student support services such as attendance monitoring, etc.

A student's eligibility for academic intervention services will be determined based on his or her performance on state assessment examinations and/or in accordance with school assessment procedures, by the Child Study Team.

When it has been determined that a student needs academic intervention services, the parents will be notified, in writing, by the Director of Student Services. The notice will outline the reason the student needs such services, the type of services to be provided and the consequences of not achieving the performance standards. In addition, the school will provide the parents with opportunities to consult with teachers and other professional staff, regular reports on the student's progress and information on ways to monitor and work with teachers to improve the student's performance.

GRADING AND PROMOTION

GRADING SYSTEMS

HOMEWORK

HONOR ROLLS

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

GRADING SYSTEMS

Grades are used to indicate achievement and development in each class or subject area in which a student is enrolled. Grading will be based, in part, upon student improvement, achievement, and participation in classroom discussions, activities, and projects. Classroom participation, and thus student attendance, is an important factor in earning high grades. The school uses the school's uniform grading system:

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Rubric</i>	<i>Grade</i>
A	4	(E) Excellent
B	3	(V) Very Good
C	2	(S) Satisfactory
D	1	(N) Needs Improvement
F	0	(U) Unsatisfactory

Classroom teachers will evaluate students and assign grades according to the established system. All students are expected to complete the assigned classwork as directed. Students are also expected to participate meaningfully in class discussions and activities in order to receive high grades.

Grading will not be used for disciplinary purposes, i.e., giving lower grades for bad behavior, unless the student's misconduct is directly related to his or her academic performance (plagiarism, for example).

Homework

The Pinnacle Charter School utilizes a "No Homework" policy.

Extended project work may be brought home by students to continue the completion of the unit project. If student work is not completed within ample classroom time as well as extended opportunities, students may be asked to complete the assignment(s) at home.

Reading and reinforcement activities may be beneficial to students and can be requested by the parent/ guardian.

If a student knows that he or she will be absent for several days, it is possible for homework assignments to be sent home. Arrangements for assignments can be made by contacting the classroom teacher **at least one day in advance** (see Attendance Policy).

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The Pinnacle Charter School will make every effort to place each student in the most appropriate learning level for a successful educational experience. The following guidelines govern promotion and retention:

Student Progression

At the elementary level, students who pass all subjects will be promoted. Students who do not make satisfactory progress in one or more basic subjects —communication (ELA), mathematics, social studies and science — shall have their cases considered on an individual basis and may be retained.

Standards for student progress at each grade level are contained in an administrative directive available from the classroom teacher or CAO.

A decision to retain shall be arrived at by consensus from a case conference approach involving the teacher, CAO, Child Study Team, and parent/ guardian. Factors to be considered include teacher recommendation; classroom achievement and attitude; standardized test scores; social, emotional and physical development; attendance; family conference; and, for identified students, recommendations by the committee on special education (CSE) of the student's school district of residence. No student will be retained without an appropriate educational plan defining what will occur that is instructionally different for the student. Once the educational plan has been implemented, the student will be monitored regularly. The educational plan will be revised (by the Child Study Team) until the student demonstrates acceptable performance.

Early Identification/Intervention

Classroom teachers are expected to make every effort to identify early those students at risk of failing. The CAO and the parents/guardian must be notified promptly if retention is anticipated, and a special support program shall be designed for each child identified as in danger of failing.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Code of Conduct Summary

Student Conduct in the Cafeteria/Lunchroom

Recess and Playground Rules

Student Dress Code

CODE OF CONDUCT Summary

The Pinnacle Charter School and Board of Trustees are committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive, and school staff deliver, a quality educational program without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, staff, parents and visitors is essential.

The following is intended to serve as a guide for what is expected of Pinnacle students. The adherence to school policies will promote proper student behavior and promote the academic excellence in which our school was founded. As required by the NY State *Project SAVE legislation*, the full text of this Code of Conduct is available to each parent/ guardian and is available in the main office.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

With every right comes a responsibility:

RIGHTS

RESPONSIBILITIES

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1. Attend school and be granted the opportunity to receive a good education. | ⇒ | Attend school regularly and on time, complete assignments, and strive to do the highest quality work possible. |
| 2. Be made aware of the school rules and policies, and to always be treated in a manner consistent with these policies in all disciplinary matters. | ⇒ | Be familiar with the Pinnacle Charter School Code of Conduct, obey the rules it contains, conduct oneself in a manner not distracting to others. |
| 3. Have the opportunity to present your version of the facts and circumstances in all disciplinary matters. | ⇒ | Be truthful and respectful when responding to authority. |
| 4. Take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of race, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. | ⇒ | Work to one's best ability in all academic and extracurricular activities, while as being fair and supportive of others. |
| 5. Be safe in the school environment. | ⇒ | Behave in a manner that will not jeopardize the safety and well being of oneself or others. |
| 6. Not to be intimidated or harassed by others. | ⇒ | Respect one another and treat others fairly and in accordance with this Code. |
| 7. Dress according to personal taste. | ⇒ | Dress in a manner not distracting to others, and in accordance with school policy. |

Students who are found to have violated the school's Code of Conduct may be subject to the following penalties, either alone or in combination. The school personnel identified after each penalty is authorized to impose that penalty.

1. Oral warning – any member of the Pinnacle staff.
2. Written warning – lunch monitors, coaches, school counselors, teachers, Chief Academic Officer.
3. Written notification to parent- school counselor, teachers, Chief Academic Officer.
4. Detention – teachers, Chief Academic Officer.
5. Removal from classroom by teacher – teachers, Chief Academic Officer.
6. Suspension from athletic participation – coaches, Chief Academic Officer.
7. Suspension from social or extracurricular activities – activity director, Chief Academic Officer
8. Suspension of other privileges – Chief Academic Officer or designee
9. In-school suspension – Chief Academic Officer or designee
10. Short-term (five days or less) suspension from school – Chief Academic Officer, Board of Trustees.
11. Long-term (more than five days) suspension from school – Chief Academic Officer, Board of Trustees.
12. Permanent suspension from school – Chief Academic Officer, Board of Trustees.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

- Engage in conduct that is disorderly.
- Engage in conduct that is insubordinate.
- Engage in conduct that is disruptive.
- Engage in conduct that is violent.
- Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others.
- Engage in any form of academic misconduct.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property. (See Visitors/ Public Conduct section of this Handbook).

Student Conduct in the Cafetorium/ Lunchroom

To make lunch time more enjoyable for everyone at Pinnacle Charter School, we ask that all students:

1. Respect the Monitor/ Teacher.
2. Walk in single file.
3. Talk in quiet, conversational voice.
4. Follow posted classroom, breakfast and lunchtime rules.
5. No pushing, running or throwing food.
6. No glass containers.
8. Remain seated until dismissed by the Monitor/ Teacher.

Students who misbehave during lunch time will be reminded of the rules after their first offense. Students who continue to misbehave will be placed at a separate table/ location. Finally, continuation of misbehavior will result in having their parents contacted and may be disciplined under the school's code of conduct.

Recess and Playground Rules

Students may have the opportunity to go outside for recess throughout the school year. It is important that students are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions.

For the safety and enjoyment of all students at recess, students are asked to:

1. Stay on designated playground or area with their teacher/ monitor.
2. Respect others, take turns, share and allow others to play.
3. Maintain a safe distance from playground equipment while it is being used by others.
4. Refrain from throwing snowballs, playing king of the mountain, or throwing objects (sticks, stones, dirt, rocks, etc.).
5. Refrain from using foul language, offensive names, or put-downs.
6. Sneakers only (no sandals) will be allowed and must be tied at all times.
7. If a student sees anything dangerous, it must be reported to the teacher/ monitor immediately.
8. When climbing on the rock wall, stay on one side of the wall. Wait to begin until the previous student is past the bend.

Failure to follow playground rules can result in a loss of playground privileges and disciplinary measures consistent with the school's code of conduct.

Dress Code

The Board of Trustees believe that appropriate dress and grooming contribute to a productive learning environment. All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance in the school setting. Teachers and all other personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

A student's dress, grooming, and appearance shall:

1. Not present a health or safety hazard to the student or others in the school.
2. Not create a distraction that interferes with the educational process.
3. Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
4. Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
5. Not include headwear in the classroom except for a medical or religious purpose.
6. Not represent membership in a gang that disrupts or threatens to disrupt the educational process.

Students attending Pinnacle Charter School are required to wear uniforms. (For research supporting school uniforms, see <http://www.ed.gov/updates/uniforms.html>) Students have some choice as detailed below:

Boys and Girls:	Light blue, denim, or yellow shirt (polo/ tennis or Oxford) White or yellow turtleneck Khaki pants (Chinos, Corduroys, or Shorts) Navy blue sweater (V-neck, crew neck, cardigan or fleece) Sneakers or shoes that cover toes and heels
Girls:	Light blue, denim or yellow blouse Khaki skirt (chino, corduroy, pleated/ flat front, or skorts)

Please note: Pants and skirts must be secured at the waist with a belt.

Jewelry Policy

Pinnacle Charter School's jewelry policy will be strictly enforced.

1. No neck chains or neck wear, bangles or bracelets.
2. Students may wear a small pair of earrings, no bigger than the size of a dime, and must **not** extend beyond the bottom of the earlobe. (No dangling earrings are permitted.)
3. Students may wear a watch.

The Chief Academic Officer or designee shall be responsible for informing all students and their parents of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year and whenever a revision to the dress code is made during the school year.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline, up to and including school suspension. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further disciplinary action pursuant to the Code of Conduct.

STUDENT REDRESS

Student Complaints and Grievances

Peer Mediation

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

Students will be given an opportunity to be heard on complaints and grievances they may have. Students should talk to a classroom teacher, the CAO, or place a note in the foyer mailbox.

A student filing a complaint for any matter, or alleging discrimination on the basis of disability and/or sex including sexual harassment or harassment on the basis of sexual orientation, should read the following information regarding the resolution of the complaint. The following procedures may also apply to student grievances over other matters, such as racial harassment.

Investigation of a Complaint

Upon receipt of a formal or informal complaint, a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation of the allegations will follow. All witnesses shall be interviewed and complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation.

Informal Complaints

The Pinnacle Charter School encourages the resolution of all student complaints as promptly as possible and at the lowest level possible. Accordingly, students are urged to discuss complaints first with the appropriate teacher, staff member or CAO. However, if the complaint concerns sexual harassment, the student and/or parent should notify the Nurse, Mrs. Katz. In no event will the student be required to discuss the alleged harassment with the individual alleged to be harassing him or her.

Upon receipt of an informal complaint the CAO or other appropriate staff member will conduct a prompt investigation to determine what occurred and then take appropriate steps to resolve the situation.

Complainants have the right to end the informal process at any time and begin the formal stage of the complaint process.

Formal Complaints

Formal complaints may be submitted either to initially report a complaint or as a follow-up to an unsatisfactory resolution of an informal attempt to resolve a complaint.

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

School Ceremonies and Observances

Assemblies

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The school recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating national holidays such as Memorial Day, Thanksgiving and President's Day are encouraged. We remind students, faculty and administration of the variety of religious beliefs, and all are urged to be conscious of and respect the sensitivities of others.

Activities related to a religious holiday or theme will be planned to ensure that the activity is not devotional, and that students of all faiths can join without feeling that they are betraying their own beliefs. Therefore, keep in mind the following:

1. School and class plays shall be secular and nonsectarian in nature. Although school and class plays may have religious content, the overall themes of such plays must be to teach about religion or portray events which happen to include religious themes such as "The Sound of Music."
2. Although religious music may be played and/or sung to demonstrate the cultural significance of such art forms, we will not permit such music to entirely dominate the school's music program or concerts.
3. Program notes and illustrations of a religious nature shall not be included if the purpose or effect is to encourage students and community members to accept and/or follow such religious teachings.

Students shall be given the option to be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme which conflicts with their own religious beliefs. If a parent or student has any questions regarding the use of religious music, artwork and/or symbols in a particular course/activity, the CAO should be contacted.

ASSEMBLIES

Student assemblies are seen as part of the overall educational process. School assemblies, at all instructional levels, are often held to provide recognition of student accomplishments by peers, parents and staff members. Assemblies will be appropriate to the educational experience and reflect our school's educational mission.

Students are reminded of proper conduct at assemblies to ensure responsible audience participation:

- Take an assigned seat quietly.
- Do not speak above a whisper, and then only when necessary.
- Pay attention to the speaker/performer(s).
- Applaud only when appropriate.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Accident Prevention and Safety Procedures

Student Health Services

First Aid

School Safety Planning (Crisis Response Plan)

Fire Drills

School Food Services

ACCIDENT PREVENTION AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

These rules are to ensure the safety of students and employees of the school while on school property.

All students and members of the school community must:

1. immediately report any conditions involving equipment or buildings which may be dangerous to student or employee health or welfare;
2. immediately report any unsafe practices by anyone in the building or on the grounds.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

The School Nurse monitors the health of all students in the school and is the liaison between the school and various health agencies. All students are required to have an updated Student Registration Card in the Main Office. This card should be filled out completely and signed by the parent or guardian. The Main and Health Office should be advised of any changes in address, phone numbers, and emergency contact person(s).

The school nurse will provide emergency care for students involved in accidents or unexpected medical situations.

Administration of Medicine in School

If a student needs to take medication during the school day, he or she must follow these rules:

- **Complete a Medication Form:** Bring a note from his or her parent which gives the nurse permission to store the medication for the student's use, releasing the Board and its employees of liability for the administration of medication.
- Give the nurse a doctor's note with instructions about dosage, times given, etc.
- Bring a copy of the prescription.
- An adult must bring the medication to school in the original container.

Student Physicals

In accordance with the State Education Law, each student shall have a physical exam given by their family physician upon entrance to school and in grades 1, 3, and 7. Physical forms are available from the school nurse for the family physician to fill out. **If a form is not returned to the school nurse by the first week of school, the student will be UNABLE to attend school.**

In accordance with law, the school will provide vision, hearing, and scoliosis screening.

FIRST AID

In emergencies, the school nurse will follow established first aid procedures. These procedures include the following requirements:

1. No medical treatment except first aid is permitted in school.
2. A master first aid kit shall be kept and properly maintained in the school.
3. No drugs shall be administered by school personnel unless authorized by a physician.
4. Parents are asked to sign and submit an emergency medical authorization which shall indicate the procedure they wish the school to follow in the event of a medical emergency involving their child.
5. In all cases where the nature of an illness or an injury appears serious, the parent will be contacted if possible, and the instructions on the child's emergency card followed. In extreme emergencies, arrangements may be made for the child's immediate hospitalization whether or not the parent can be reached.

SCHOOL SAFETY PLANS (CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN)

The Pinnacle Charter School has adopted a school-wide school safety plan and building-level emergency response plans. These plans are intended to define how the school will respond to acts of violence and other disasters.

They provide a framework for identifying and implementing appropriate strategies for creating and maintaining a safe, secure learning environment for all students.

A copy of the school-wide school safety plan is available for examination in the school office.

FIRE DRILLS

The CAO is responsible for conducting fire drills in order to instruct students and staff in exiting the school building in an emergency in the shortest time possible and without confusion and panic. Fire drills shall include instruction on fire drill exits and fire alarm boxes, as well as fire drill procedures.

All students are expected to cooperate with staff members during fire drills, and to leave the buildings in a quiet and orderly manner. The exit route is posted in each room. Students must stay with their teacher. Distracting behavior will be subject to either teacher or administrative discipline, and may merit a penalty.

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES

The School offers a free, reduced and paid breakfast and lunch program.

Students will receive a monthly menu indicating the “hot lunch” of the day. Milk and/or juice accompany each meal along with snacks.

The school breakfast program provides students with a healthy morning meal. Each breakfast includes milk, fruit or fruit juice, bread, cereal and/or muffins. **Breakfast will be served, first come-first serve from 8:10 – 8:25 each morning in the Cafetorium.**

Eligibility for free and reduced price meals is based upon the economic need of the family. Applications are distributed each September to determine eligibility and may be obtained through the Main Office throughout the school year. Parents must file a new application for the program each September. Families who fail to file a new application annually will be discontinued from the program by Oct. 1. For information on this program, please call the school nurse at 842-1241.

PARENT PACKET

Parents with Disabilities

Parental Involvement

Access to Student Records

Student Progress Reports to Parents

Parent Conferences

Visitors to Schools

Conduct on School Property

Public Complaints

Child Abuse in an Educational Setting

Board of Trustees

Public Participation at Board Meetings

PARENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Parents with disabilities will be afforded an equal opportunity to participate in the services, programs and activities of the school, particularly those which are designed for parental involvement and are directly related to their child's academic and/or disciplinary progress (e.g., parent/teacher conferences, and/or meetings with other school personnel).

Requests for accommodations should be directed to the CAO at least 10 business days prior to the scheduled activity or program. Such requests should include a description of the parent's needs and the specific accommodation they are requesting.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Pinnacle Charter School believes that children succeed when there is a strong partnership between home and school. This partnership thrives on open communication between parents and the school, parental involvement in their child's education, and parental responsibility for all aspects of their child's education.

Parents can become partners in their child's education by:

- Becoming familiar with their child's school activities and academic program, including special programs offered by the school.
- Discussing with teachers and the CAO the options and opportunities available to their child.
- Monitoring their child's academic progress and contacting teachers when necessary.
- Attending scheduled teacher/school conferences.
- Monitoring their child's attendance at school. Regular school attendance is important if a child is to achieve his/her full potential. Parents are urged to make an extra effort to ensure their child establishes a regular attendance pattern.

Learning does not end when the school day is over. The School encourages parents to set aside time for reading, informal learning activities, and assisting their child with end-of-unit projects.

Parents can also become involved in their child's education on a broader scale by joining the Family Council. The Family Council typically serves as a strong link between home and school. By joining, parents become partners in advancing the educational goals of the school while enhancing the welfare of their child.

ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives parents and students over 18 years of age (referred to in the law as “eligible students”) the following rights:

1. The right to inspect and review your child’s education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the CAO a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The CAO will make arrangements for access and notify you of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of your child’s education records that you believe are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading by writing the CAO, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed, and specifying why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the school decides not to amend the record as requested, it will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to appeal to the Board of Trustees.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in your child’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The Office that administers FERPA is the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS

Pinnacle Charter School's formal reporting system includes report cards and/or forms developed by the professional staff and issued periodically. Scheduled conferences between parents and teachers, and interim reports will be issued as needed or required. Parents are urged to visit the school and to meet with teachers whenever necessary. Please schedule all such visits in advance.

The trimesters for the 2008 -2009 school year are as follows:

First Trimester	September 3 – December 9
Second Trimester	January 5 – April 3
Third Trimester	April 29 – July 16

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are an important element in reporting student progress to parents. They are held twice during the school year, once in the fall and once in the spring. Please sign up for a conference with your child's teacher on:

First Trimester Conference	Thursday, December 11, 2008
Second Trimester Conference	Monday, April 6, 2009

Parents should feel free to request a conference with their child's teacher at any time.

Parents may initiate a conference by calling the school office and making an appointment with the teacher. When a parent requests a conference with a teacher, the teacher will make every effort to arrange a mutually convenient time. Such conferences will be planned around the teacher's schedule so as not to interfere with class time.

If a parent cannot attend a scheduled conference, he/she should notify the school as far in advance as possible so that another conference time may be arranged.

Open houses are also scheduled during the first trimester with presentations by individual grade levels. This is a time for parents to be a part of a specific project, mini-program or activity involving their child. Open houses are not a time to discuss individual students.

VISITORS TO SCHOOLS

Parents are encouraged to visit the school periodically during the course of the school year. Unless they have a specific reason and prior approval from the CAO, student visitors from other schools are not permitted to enter school buildings.

All visitors to the school must report to the main office, sign the visitor's register and obtain a visitor's pass which must be displayed at all times. The visitor's pass must be returned to the main office and the visitor must sign out at the conclusion of the visit.

CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The following rules apply to visitors to the school (see Code of Conduct):

1. Anyone who is not a regular School staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
2. All visitors to the school must report to the main office upon arrival at the school and state the purpose of their visit. Visitors will be required to sign the visitors register and follow specific building procedures. Signs notifying visitors to report first to the school office shall be prominently posted in the school building.
3. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings are not required to register.
4. Parents or citizens who wish to observe a classroom while school is in session are required to obtain permission in advance from the Chief Academic Officer.
5. Visitors are expected to refrain from taking class time to discuss individual matters with teachers.

Visitation will occur in a way that avoids or minimizes disruption to the normal learning process and the ordinary classroom routine. The Chief Academic Officer or designee may accompany visitors during the visit when appropriate. Visitors are expected to maintain confidentiality regarding information acquired during the course of the visit.

6. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the Chief Academic Officer or his or her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.

Before a child may be released from the building with a visitor, must be approved by the Chief Academic Officer or designee as one having the legal right to take the child. The visitor will wait in the main office for the child to come from the classroom and/or follow other duly approved procedures for that building.

7. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in this Code of Conduct.

PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The School is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of an environment, it is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school functions. For purposes of this section of the Code, "public" shall mean all persons on school property or attending a school function including students, teachers and School personnel.

The restrictions on public conduct on school property and at school functions contained in this Code are not intended to limit freedom of speech or peaceful assembly. The School recognizes that free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the objectives of the School. The purpose of this Code is to maintain public order and prevent abuse of the rights of others.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property.

Prohibited Conduct

No person, either alone or with others, shall:

1. Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so.
2. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, or disability.
3. Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this Code applies.
4. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this Code.
5. Intentionally damage or destroy school property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other School employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
6. Use cell phones, pagers, or other electronic device that can be an interruption to academic learning in the classroom. Visitors should turn off electronic devices when they enter the classrooms to eliminate any distractions to the learning process.
7. Disrupt or prevent the orderly conduct of classes, school programs or other school functions.
8. Distribute or wear apparel or other materials on school property or at school functions that are obscene, advocate the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco products or illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school program.
9. Use tobacco products on school property or at any school function.

10. Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function.
11. Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers or except as specifically authorized by the School.
12. Gamble on school property or at school functions.
13. Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
14. Loiter on or about school property.
15. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable School officials performing their duties.
16. Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles, including the unauthorized operation of ATVs, snowmobiles and other such vehicles, as posted.
17. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or Board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

Penalties

Persons who violate this Code shall be subject to the following penalties:

1. Visitors. Their authorization, if any, to remain on school grounds or at the school function shall be withdrawn and they shall be directed to leave the premises. If they refuse to leave, they shall be subject to ejection and may not return. The duration of the eviction will be determined by the severity of the action and in accordance with law.
2. Students. They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant, in accordance with the due process requirements.
3. Faculty members. They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Education Law §3020-A, or any other legal rights that they may have.
5. Staff members other than those described in subdivisions 3 and 4. They shall be subject to warning, reprimand, suspension or dismissal as the facts may warrant in accordance with any legal rights they may have.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Most often, parental complaints and concerns can be addressed simply through a telephone call or a conference with the teacher. If the matter is not settled satisfactorily, the complaint should be directed to the CAO.

Complaints regarding school programs, instructional or library materials, operations and/or staff members, should be directed to the CAO. If the matter is not satisfactorily settled, the complaint should be directed to the Board of Trustees.

Some complaints may require different procedures. Additional information can also be found in Board Policy of the PCS Charter Application, available in the Main Office.

CHILD ABUSE IN AN EDUCATIONAL SETTING

Students have the right to an educational setting that does not threaten their physical and emotional health and development. Child abuse by school personnel and school volunteers violates this right and therefore is strictly prohibited. Parents who believe that their child has been abused by employees or volunteers of the school should immediately notify the CAO. The appropriate law enforcement authorities will be notified if there is reasonable suspicion that an act of child abuse has occurred. The parent of the alleged child victim will be promptly notified when someone other than the parent submits a report of alleged child abuse in an educational setting.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Who are the members of the Board of Trustees?

They are unpaid public officials nominated to take formal legal actions and assume the major responsibilities for the operations of the schools. These people are members of the community, who have taken on the additional task of Board membership in order to provide leadership for the welfare of school students.

Can members of the public speak at Board meetings?

The Board encourages public participation at Board meetings. At the identified portion of the agenda, the Board President may ask for brief comments from the public. Persons wishing to speak should identify themselves, any organization they may be representing at the meeting and the agenda topic they wish to discuss. Comments should be kept as brief as possible (not more than five minutes in length) and relate to school matters.