

# Pittsburgh Phillips K-5

1901 Sarah Street | Pittsburgh, PA 15203 | Phone: 412.488.5190 | Fax: 412.622.7920  
Parent Hotline: 412.622.7920 | [www.pps.k12.pa.us](http://www.pps.k12.pa.us)

## Welcome!

Rodney Necciai, Principal

### SCHOOL PROCEDURES

#### Bell Schedule

Please visit our website at [www.pps.k12.pa.us](http://www.pps.k12.pa.us) or contact our Parent Hotline at 412.622.7920 for the bell schedule for your child's school.

#### Arrival Procedures

Students who eat breakfast may arrive at 7:30 a.m., not before since there is no supervision prior to that time. After eating, the students sit on the benches in the cafeteria. At 8 a.m. all the breakfast students go the Sarah Street playground. Once these students are on the playground, the students who have not eaten breakfast may enter the playground.

Students who do not eat breakfast should arrive as close to 8 a.m. as possible. Until the breakfast students enter the playground, there is no adult supervision outside.

Students who arrive at school by bus or van should enter the building after exiting the bus/van. If they are eating breakfast, they should follow the breakfast procedures which are explained to the students upon arrival. Students who are not eating breakfast are required to sit along the benches in the cafeteria until students are permitted on the playground. While on the playground, students are required to line up against the fence and quietly talk until it is time to enter the building.

#### Rainy and Extremely Cold Weather

If it is raining outside, students will be permitted to wait inside the school building until school begins. Students will remain outside in the winter except during bitter cold and snowy days. Therefore, you are encouraged to send your children to school as close to the 8 a.m. starting time as possible.

The following procedures will occur when students are permitted in the building:

- Students with homerooms on the second floor will line up in the hallway near the gym or sit on the benches in the cafeteria.
- Students with homerooms on the first floor will line up near their lockers.

All students are supervised during this time.

#### After-school Procedures

When the afternoon homeroom bell rings, students are to return to their homerooms and prepare for dismissal. Over the intercom one of the office staff will call out a specific bus or van, "Bus A, Van D, etc." Students who ride that bus/van will quietly walk through the halls and exit through the Sarah Street doors. Students who ride the vans E, F, G, H, I, and J will exit through the 20th Street doors. Staff without homerooms will be stationed at different areas of the building to remind the students to leave the building quietly.

After the bus/van students have been dismissed, the walkers can prepare to leave their classrooms with a teacher escort. Students in grades 3, 4 and 5 will leave through the Sarah Street doors. Students in kindergarten and grades 1 and 2 will exit through the 20th Street doors. Teachers are to make sure the students are met by an adult. If, after a reasonable amount of time, there is no one to pick up the children, they are escorted to the office. Students who are attending the South Side Children Center after-school program meet at the Sarah Street doors and students who are attending The Learning Tree after-school program meet at the 20th Street doors.

#### Parents' Role during Arrival and Dismissal Times

We ask that parents remain outside in the morning and afternoon. At dismissal time, they should be clear of the ramps and gates and make room for students to get by on the sidewalk; otherwise, it is difficult for the students to exit. If parents have made appointments to meet with teachers in the morning, they should report to the office before going to the teacher's classroom. At dismissal time, parents should wait until the students have been dismissed before entering the building to meet with teachers

and, as in the morning, should report to the office before going to the teacher's classroom.

In the morning it is important that the area in front of the school on Sarah Street (between the two telephone poles) remain open. The buses/vans need to safely drop students off. If parents are dropping their children off in this area, they must only drop them off. If it is necessary to park the car and enter the school, it is important that the cars are not parked in the area between the telephone poles. If parents want to stand with their children on the sidewalk or watch the children until they have entered school, it is necessary to park on the other side of the street or on 19th or 20th streets.

It is imperative that parents and/or children do not attempt to cross the street to or from school in the middle of the block. All parents and children must cross the street at one of the street corners at all times of the day.

During afternoon dismissal, parents are not to block the street with their cars. Not only will this prevent congestion, it will allow the school buses and vans to leave in a timely manner. Not only do the bus/van drivers need to take our students home, they also must be at another school by 3:15 p.m.

Please see to it that your child is met at the school or walks home with someone. If they must walk home alone, please see that they have a safe route. In addition, if you normally meet your child after school and have asked someone else to do so, you must send a note with your child. The note must contain a phone number where you can be reached to verify dismissal changes.

### **Safeties**

Our fourth- and fifth-graders have the opportunities to be safeties for the year. They have posts on the corners of 19th and Sarah, 20th and Sarah, and 21st and Sarah. They are responsible for crossing students safely. Other safeties work on the playground before school begins by walking the primary students to class. Safeties may also be needed to monitor on the school buses. In the morning they may enter the school building at 7:30 a.m. to eat breakfast. In the afternoon they will be dismissed from school at 2:37 p.m. to be at their posts. If, for whatever reason, you have a problem with a safety, please speak with Mr. Necciai or the safety sponsor, Mr. Igims.

### **Bus/Van Students**

Bus/Van students are dismissed at approximately 2:41 p.m. Bus students exit through the Sarah St. doors and van students exit through the 20th Street doors. If you are having a problem with your child's bus/van, please call the bus company – not

the school. If the buses are late arriving at the designated stop either in the morning or afternoon, school personnel really cannot help you. The bus company should be able to provide you with answers. If you repeatedly have problems with the bus company, you should then make the problem known to Mr. Necciai, who may be able to assist in helping you resolve it.

Students are expected to behave on the school buses and vans. Parents of students who are provided with transportation need to talk with their children and stress the importance of behaving while on the bus/van. When students are referred to the office for misbehavior, it may be necessary for the parent to meet with Mr. Necciai and/or be suspended from school or the bus.

### **School Closings**

Please listen to the radio or watch TV to learn of school closings. We recommend Channel 11 because they have the information in the large box on the side of the screen, and KQV (1410AM) radio station. If you do not hear that the Pittsburgh Public Schools are closed, please assume they are open. Do not call the school. We cannot accommodate calls from parents of 300 students.

Individual schools are not identified as being closed unless there is a problem specific to that school. When you hear that the Pittsburgh Public Schools are closed, Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 is closed. If you hear that the South Side Area Schools are closed or having a delay, please note that this is not a reference to Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 but another school district in rural Southwestern Pennsylvania.

When the schools are closed, school staff does not report. Therefore, no one will be here to provide you with information.

### **School Delays**

Some days, a two-hour delay is enough time for the roads to be salted and for traffic to end. When there is a delay, students are not to report to school until either 9 a.m. for a one-hour delay or 10 a.m. for a two-hour delay. The buses will run on a delayed schedule also. Please make sure that you have a plan for your child(ren) when the weather may cause a delay or closing. It is important to determine who will be responsible for them if you have to work prior to the morning of the snow.

### **Snow-related Early Dismissals**

Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 School does not have early dismissals when it begins to snow. Students can only be dismissed after all parents are notified and we do not have the staff or phone lines to do this. (If the buses/vans arrive early, students may be dismissed if the parents can be notified.) We ask that parents

wait until 2:41 p.m. to pick up their students so that there is no disruption to the school day.

### **Emergency Related School Changes**

If there is ever a need to evacuate the school building, students will be taken to Ormsby Park on 22nd Street when the weather is nice and to the Prince of Peace Church on 15th Street when the weather is bad. After we are settled there, school staff will make phone calls to parents. It is extremely important that we have up-to-date phone numbers and emergency numbers especially for this purpose.

If there is a tornado related emergency, students will remain in school and follow the procedures practiced during the severe weather drill. If injuries occur, we will contact parents and work with UPMC-South Side to assist students.

### **Breakfast/Lunch Program**

Applications from the last school year are valid only through the month of September. At that time, there must be a new application on file for each child in the family. Applications were mailed from Food Service to students' homes. If you did not receive one, please request one from the school. All applications should be completed and returned to the school as soon as possible. You will then be notified of your status.

Breakfast and lunch money will be collected each Tuesday for the following week. Please place the money in an envelope with your child's name, room number and amount, and the days for which you are ordering. Breakfast and lunches must be ordered in advance. If you are ordering for less than a full week, mark the envelope with the dates for which you are ordering. Checks are not accepted. Please send the correct change. If a student is absent and has paid for breakfast or lunch, credit will be given for the following week. Menus are available at the beginning of each month.

### **Attendance Standards**

Class attendance and participation in classroom activities are the basic underlying components of a student's academic work and are necessary for the accomplishment of curriculum objectives. Therefore, legal absences of more than five days per report period necessitate the completion of make-up assignments. The assignments must be completed prior to the close of grades for students to be eligible to pass the report period. Any student who has more than five absences in a report period will receive a failing grade for the report period. However, students with excused absences will be given the opportunity to make up the work and receive the grade that they earn.

### **Procedures for Issuing Grades**

Tardiness that results in a student missing a class or subject period will be considered an illegal absence when calculating grades. A student who has received a failing grade(s) for one or more report period(s) due to failure to meet the attendance standard and whose absences are legally excused, shall be entitled to receive the yearly or semester final grade for the course which the student otherwise would have received had it not been for the failing report period(s) grade(s), provided that the following requirements are met:

- The student has completed all course requirements and assignments.
- The student, at the direction of the teacher, has made up any missed course work, class periods and/or testing within a reasonable period of time.
- The student passes the final yearly or semester examination, if any.
- The student's final grade would have been a passing grade, if it had not been for the failing report period(s) grade(s) due to the student's failure to meet the attendance standard.
- The student has provided appropriate documentation to verify the reason for the absences, i.e., notes from dentists, doctors, courts, etc.

Students who have more than five illegal absences will receive a failing grade for the report period in the subject areas affected by the absences. Teachers are not expected to accommodate students who have illegal absences by providing make up assignments.

### **Attendance-Related Procedures**

- Administrators shall be responsible for developing the attendance referral procedures for their schools.
- Subject area teachers shall be responsible for maintaining accurate daily class attendance for all students and should refer those who are improperly absent from their classes to the appropriate person in the school.
- Homeroom teachers shall be responsible for maintaining accurate school attendance records and making at least one contact with the parents after three illegal absences. These absences need not be consecutive. The teacher contact should be by telephone, but if this is not possible, the contact should be by mail.

- Homeroom teachers shall refer a student to the administrator or designated person on the fourth illegal absence. Upon receipt of such referral the administrator/designated person makes a contact with the parent(s) and takes appropriate action. A brief, written summary of the contact is to be given to the administrator and/or teacher.
- Legal notices shall be issued to parents or guardians of students who are illegally absent for any extended period and in every instance no later than the fifth day of illegal absences in any semester.
- Prosecution procedures shall be initiated if illegal absences continue after a legal notice has been sent.

During the first month of school, homeroom teachers must identify those students who during the last year had illegal absences of 10 days or more. The parents of such students are to be contacted by letter which is available for this purpose.

### **Addressing Violations of the Attendance Standards**

A parent or guardian shall be notified when a student has three school days of illegal absence or four school days of total absence in any semester. The homeroom or classroom teacher will notify the parent by phone and follow up with written notification by regular mail or email. The written notification can be in the form of a letter or post card, return receipt requested. The teacher will also notify the principal or designee that notification has been sent. The principal or designee will meet with the parent to discuss the student's attendance.

After the fourth day of illegal absence in any semester, the developmental advisor will issue a legal notice to parents. If illegal absences persist beyond 10 days in any semester, prosecution procedures will be initiated.

### **Makeup Work**

When students are absent from school for legal reasons, a written explanation of the absence must be provided to the homeroom teacher upon return to school. This must be signed by the parent or supported by the appropriate medical or legal personnel. Teachers will provide students with make-up classroom assignments. When students complete and return make-up assignments, it will be included along with other student work to determine the student's report period grade. However, classroom participation is an important part of a student's report period grade and will be included in calculating the grade.

If students are participating in school approved activities such as field trips, service learning, assemblies, support groups, counseling, mentoring, tutoring, etc., they should not be marked illegally absent from school or class. In these instances, students must be permitted to make up missed assignments or exams, which will be included in calculating the student's report period grade.

### **Tardiness and Early Dismissals**

Tardiness and early dismissals affect attendance since students who arrive late or leave early are missing some of their classes. Arriving late deprives the tardy student of important instructional time. In addition, tardiness interrupts the instruction of those students who do arrive on time since the teacher must stop instruction to tend to the tardy student. The same holds true for those students who leave early. They are losing out on instruction and hold the class back the following day since the teacher must help the student with the material he or she has missed.

Students who walk to school and arrive after 8:05 a.m. more than three times in a semester will need to stay inside during lunch recess. Parents and students are notified after the third tardy that the next tardy will result in lunch detention. Students who are late due to doctors' appointments will be excused from staying late if there is a doctor's note verifying the appointment. We do ask that you try to schedule appointments after 2:41 p.m. Bus students who arrive late due to bus problems, i.e. bad weather, traffic, are not held responsible for the tardies. These tardies, however, are recorded and shown on the report card and attendance reports. If a student missed his/her bus for reasons unrelated to the bus, he/she will be held responsible for the tardy and will receive lunch detention. Students who miss the bus are expected to come to school another way. Otherwise, it is considered an illegal absence and will count towards the number of days absent in the report period.

If an early dismissal is necessary, please write a note indicating the reason and the time the student will need to leave school. After the student shows the note to the homeroom teacher, it will be shared with the school secretary who will record it in the early dismissal book. The student will not be released from class until the parent has arrived at the office.

Students who are tardy or leave school early do not have perfect attendance even if they are in attendance every day. In order to be acknowledged for perfect attendance at the awards assemblies or Pittsburgh Phillips Surprises must be in school all day, every day, no exceptions.

## Homework

Homework serves an important purpose in your child's school life. Students complete homework in order to:

- Reinforce learning through practice, application, integration and/or extension of knowledge and skills.
- Develop study skills, work habits and a sense of personal responsibility so that the student may become an independent learner.
- Foster students' personal development in areas such as time management, responsibility, perseverance, and self confidence.
- Stimulate imagination, originality and creativity.
- Enhance home/school communications and provide for increased curriculum understanding.
- Encourage a follow-up of worthwhile school activities into permanent leisure interests.
- Involve families in the learning process of their children.

Please Remember: District policy states: A student should complete no less than 80% of homework for a given subject during a report period or have his or her report card grade lowered one level. (ie: from C to D)

You can help your child develop some routines that will be of assistance in successfully completing homework assignments. The following suggestions are offered for this purpose:

- Promote a positive attitude toward homework as part of the learning process.
- Understand and reinforce expectations for the quality of student work.
- Provide structure, a site, and tools needed to help the child organize and complete homework.
- Be available to provide supervision and support, but do not do the assignment.
- Communicate often with the child and his or her teacher, giving feedback to the teacher when there is a homework concern.

The following are homework guidelines for the kindergarten, primary and secondary grades:

### Kindergarten

Assignments will be given on an occasional basis according to classroom activities and student need.

### Primary Grades (1-2)

Each student will be assigned homework four nights per week for a minimum of 15 minutes and a maximum of 30 minutes per night. As an example:

- Reading - 15 minutes
- Mathematics - 10 minutes
- Language Arts - 5 minutes

### Intermediate Grades (3-5)

Each student will be assigned homework four nights per week for a minimum of 30 minutes and a maximum of 60 minutes per night. As an example:

- Reading - 20 minutes
- Mathematics - 15 minutes
- Language Arts - 10 minutes
- Social Studies - 15 minutes

Students in grades 1-5 are responsible for turning in science homework, once a month for grades. At the beginning of each month, students will receive a science calendar which lists ideas for the homework assignment. It is expected that the following elements are present in each homework assignment:

### Grade 1

- Stated requirements fulfilled
- 1 – 2 sentences explaining the activity
- Neat work
- Legible handwriting

### Grade 2

- Stated requirements fulfilled
- 3 – 5 sentence paragraph explaining the activity
- Neat work
- Legible handwriting
- One sentence to show relevance to society (2nd semester)

### Grades 3, 4 and 5

- Stated requirements fulfilled
- 8 – 10 sentence explaining the activity
- Neat work
- Legible handwriting
- Bibliography if books or the internet were used
- 3-5 sentences to show the relevance to society

You will receive specific information regarding your child's homework from the subject teacher. Don't hesitate to call your child's teacher(s) if your child has not been bringing work home or states that there is no homework in a particular subject.

### **Spelling Guidelines**

The spelling grade should reflect your child's ability to spell when they write independently. Currently, they are engaged in a variety of spelling activities that are meant to help them learn how to spell new words. Too often students perform well on these

activities and receive A's on their spelling tests but they don't transfer this skill to their writing. Even when they are asked to edit their writing, they don't seem to correct their spelling errors. Therefore, it can be said that the spelling grades do not reflect the students' true spelling ability.

By the fifth grade, approximately 90 percent of the words on rough drafts should be spelled correctly in order for students to be considered proficient or to receive an A. At Pittsburgh Phillips, we have expanded on the recommendation to include third and fourth graders. By fourth grade, approximately 80 percent of the words on rough drafts should be spelled correctly in order for students to be considered proficient or to receive an A. For third graders, approximately 70 percent of the words on the rough drafts should be spelled correctly.

It is our hope that the students will begin to see a connection between the weekly spelling tests and the writing they do. Students often want to ask an adult to spell a word even though they are getting better at sounding out words by syllables. Using these skills is more likely to become automatic if their use is expected and valued. Making correct spelling on daily work a part of the spelling grade increases its value. In addition, it sends a clear message to students that spelling proficiency includes more than memorizing a list of spelling words.

### **Response To Intervention Team (Rtl)**

The Response to Intervention Team provides the support needed for students in grades kindergarten through fifth to be successful in school. These students may be experiencing academic difficulty by failing reading and/or math, behavior difficulty with several office referrals and life stresses in family situations. The team consists of parents, principal, teachers and support staff. This process utilizes the site-based resources. The team develops individual strategies for students in the regular classroom. The team also works within specific timelines creating teacher/parent partnerships to enhance student learning.

### **Standardized Tests**

Students also are given a number of standardized tests which are used to compare our students to students in the district, state and country and to show student progress toward the PA Academic Standards in math and reading.

### **School Awards**

In addition to the acknowledgements students may receive in their classes, they also receive awards after each report period during the awards assemblies. Students are acknowledged for academic performance, citizenship and perfect

attendance. In order to receive a perfect attendance certificate, students must have attended school every day during the report period, no exceptions. Tardies and early dismissals disqualify students from perfect attendance.

### **Citizenship Grades**

Questions often arise with both parents and teachers as to what constitutes a citizenship grade. At Pittsburgh Phillips, a citizenship grade encompasses the Pittsburgh Phillips School Rules: Present, Prompt, Prepared, Productive and Polite.

- Present and Prompt refer to attendance and tardiness. Students cannot learn if they are not in school. When they arrive late, they are disrupting the learning of themselves and others.
- Prepared requires students to bring the necessary materials to class - homework, pencils, books, etc. When students come to class without being prepared, they often cause a disruption to the classroom routine.
- Productive students use their time wisely and complete all class work. They participate in class work diligently & work collaboratively in groups.
- Polite seems to be most difficult to articulate. To be polite in school a student must pay attention and follow the directions of the teacher; be quiet when the teacher or another student is talking; raise his/her hand to volunteer an answer; and be quiet if he/she finishes an assignment before others.

A student can complete all assignments accurately, earn an A grade on tests but still have poor citizenship. This occurs when he/she has not paid attention, followed directions, or has exhibited discourteous behavior by speaking out in class or talking at inappropriate times. In addition, some children finish their work ahead of their classmates and may disturb others.

Conversely, a student who has earned an E grade in a subject may receive a satisfactory citizenship grade. If the student pays attention, is quiet, turns in homework assignments and works very, very diligently in class, he/she has met the requirements for a satisfactory citizenship grade. (When we learn about students who display these characteristics, we know that we need to develop other strategies to increase the success of these students.)

### **Phantom Awards/Rainbow Awards**

Individual students can receive a Phantom Award when they are 'caught doing something good.' This could be for attending every day, helping another student, doing well in class, etc.

Entire classes can receive a Rainbow Award for good class behavior, i.e. walking quietly in the hall, behaving properly anytime or anywhere, completing a task appropriately, etc.

The names of students receiving the awards are announced over the PA system each Friday morning. Each student receives a Phantom certificate and a button which they wear on that day. Nominated classrooms receive a Rainbow Award which is displayed in the classroom. Each homeroom earns a pizza party after every 10 Rainbow Awards.

### **Pittsburgh Phillips Surprise**

Pittsburgh Phillips staff stress the importance of following the school rules of being “present, prompt, prepared and polite.” So many of our students follow these rules daily but may not be acknowledged with a Phantom or Rainbow Award. Therefore, we decided to highlight a different rule each month and do something special for the students. In the past, students have enjoyed sundae parties, bingo, a magician, and a trip to the Loews Theatre or games at an arcade.

Parents receive notification of what the activity is on the day of the activity and whether or not their child has participated. If a trip is planned, we try to share that information at the beginning of the month. Parents should check the school calendar to see when the Pittsburgh Phillips Surprise takes place.

The following are the rules and criteria for the Pittsburgh Phillips Surprise:

- Present/Prompt - perfect attendance, no tardies or early dismissals
- Polite – no referrals from classrooms & lunchroom, or bus. Appropriate classroom, hall and cafeteria behavior
- Prepared – 90 percent homework returned on time. Any materials considered necessary by the classroom teacher. Classroom behavior that indicates that they are ready to learn
- Productive - completes all class work, uses time wisely, works collaboratively with others

### **Promotion – Fifth Grade**

The fifth grade students participate in promotion at the end of the school year. It is an opportunity to celebrate their accomplishments while at Pittsburgh Phillips K-5. Several standard awards are the President’s Award for Educational Excellence, President’s Award for Academic Achievement, the American Citizenship Award, The Gerwig Award, and Perfect Attendance. In the past, teachers have also acknowledged specific work – writing, Spanish oral proficiency, etc.

The President’s Award for Educational Excellence and the President’s Award for Educational Achievement are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education in partnership with the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. For the President’s Award for Educational Excellence, the students must have a 3.5 grade point average in grades 3, 4 and the fall semester of 5th grade. They must also score at 85 percentile on a math or reading standardized test or receive a recommendation from two teachers that reflect outstanding achievement in one or more areas of the school’s core curriculum. The President’s Award for Educational Achievement recognizes students who have shown outstanding educational growth, improvement, commitment or intellectual development in their academic subjects but do not meet the criteria for the President’s Award for Educational Excellence.

The American Citizenship Award is sponsored by the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. There are no “official” criteria for this award but the Associations suggest the following guidelines:

- Participates in school and/or community service
- Shows a positive attitude toward classmates, school, and community
- Displays an understanding and appreciation of civic responsibility
- Possesses strength of character and the courage to do what is right
- Promotes citizenship with the school or community through other activities

The Gerwig Award is sponsored by the Gerwig family through the Pittsburgh School District. It is awarded to a male and female student in grades 5, 8 and 12 who have given unselfish service to the school. This award is given in every school in each of the Pittsburgh Public Schools.

The Perfect Attendance Award acknowledges students who have had perfect attendance – no tardies and no early dismissals – during the school year.

### **Counseling**

The developmental advisor, Gail Blakey, has an office at Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. She is available to work with children who are having academic or behavioral difficulties in their classes or school, or in general. Students can be referred by teachers, parents and the students themselves by speaking to Ms. Blakey.

## Special Programs

Students who qualify for the District's Gifted Program attend the Elementary Gifted Center on Thursdays. Students who qualify for assistance in their academic classes receive that help at Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 during the school day.

Students who have been identified as having a learning disability receive both whole group and small group instruction with one of our learning support teachers. In addition, these students receive individualized help from the classroom teachers.

## Falcon Club Tutoring Program

Using formal and informal assessment information the teachers work very hard to identify the students most in need of an after-school tutoring experience. These students will be invited to attend the program every Tuesday and Thursday from 2:45 – 4:15 p.m., beginning in October and ending in May. They will receive intense, focused support in reading and math. The program is named the Falcon Club because we are the Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 Falcons.

## Reading in Families (RIF) Program

Reading in Families is a program sponsored by Central Northside Reading is FUNdamental and Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 Elementary School. It can help improve your child's reading level. Here is what you need to do:

- Listen to your child read a book to you, read a book to your child or have your child read independently.
- Have your child complete a reading log after he or she had completed a book.

For each form your child returns, he/she receives a sticker on a chart. This chart is displayed in the hall. At the end of each report period, all of the students who have at least one sticker will receive a certificate of participation and a book. They are also eligible for the "Reading in Families RIFFLE" which is drawn at the Awards Assemblies. Two students, one at each assembly, receive an educational game. In addition, to show our appreciation to the parents, we also have a parent RIFFLE during the assembly. Two parents, one of a primary student and one of an intermediate student, receive a gift certificate from Barnes and Nobles Bookstore. These gifts are provided for us through RIF-Pittsburgh.

## 25 Books

Each year the Pittsburgh Public Schools challenge all students to read at least 25 books during the school year. We have asked students to use a reading log to record the books they read over the summer and to bring the logs to school on the first day. These

books, if they are grade appropriate, will be included in their 25 book reading logs. We will set benchmarks during the year and acknowledge students who have reached them. During the year we provide a number of incentives to encourage students.

## Clubs

Fifth-grade students can participate in intramurals on Fridays and fourth-grade students can participate Wednesdays after school with the gym teacher, Mr. Igims.

## School Pictures

Superior Image Photography takes pictures of the students in early fall and spring. All students have their pictures taken in the fall so that we can use them for school purposes. If the pictures are to be purchased, payment is due the day the pictures are taken in the fall. They are delivered before the Christmas holidays. In the spring, all students again have their pictures taken. Payment is required only after you have seen the pictures and choose to buy them.

## Fundraising

The PTO engages in several fund raisers during the school year and all proceeds go to the students. In addition to students selling candy and gift wrap, there is also a Holiday Workshop in December so that students can buy gifts for their families. There is also a book fair in the fall and/or spring.

There are other times when fundraising may occur. In the past, fifth-graders have taken an end of the year trip and earned money through fundraising to pay for the trip. There are also times when the school would like to work with artists, actresses or performers who can enhance the curriculum. Since there is no money in the budget for this, there may be a need to fundraise. You will be told the purpose of all fundraising.

## Valuable Possessions

Students should not bring their personal belongings or money to school since there is always the possibility of these things being lost or stolen. If there is a reason for bringing such items to school, they should be brought to the office for safekeeping. Students who choose to bring toys or other personal items to school will have them taken, brought to the office and returned at a later time.

## Dress Code

Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 follows the Board policy concerning dress codes which states that no student shall wear any apparel or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures, or any combination thereof appearing on said clothing or jewelry, advocates or promotes sexual activity or violence, or the use of alcohol or

drugs or demeans or degrades another because of handicap or disability. This prohibition shall be in effect during regular school hours and at any school-sponsored event whether on or off school premises. In addition, we ask that students not wear short shorts or midriff tops.

On gym days students are required to wear tennis shoes during class. Otherwise, they will not be able to participate in gym activities. Tennis shoes with high heels or platform bottoms may be in style but they are not safe during active play. Deck shoes, boat shoes and other slip-on or loafer-type shoes are not good choices for physical education, since there is no way to make them fit snugly.

Dresses, watches, rings, necklaces, earrings, and pins can either cause accidents or complicate injuries. Please give some thought as to what your children wear on gym days.

### **Lost and Found**

Items that students misplace are placed in a basket in Ms. Svitek's office where students can retrieve them once they realize they are missing something. We ask that you label your child's clothing so that it is easily identified. This makes it easier to return. Anything left at the end of the school year is taken to the Goodwill Store.

### **Field Trips**

Students take a variety of field trips during the year. Most are an extension of the classroom instruction; others are for fun. Rather than ask that you sign a permission slip for each trip, you will receive a generic permission slip to sign at the beginning of the year. You will be notified of every field trip as it approaches with the opportunity to state that you would prefer that your child not attend. We appreciate parental involvement on the field trips and often request parent volunteers to help chaperone. All adults who volunteer on field trips must have clearances related to criminal history and child abuse. Our office has these forms and will pay the necessary fees upon receiving the completed forms from you.

### **Library**

Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 has a school library and a librarian, Ms. Kimmel. She also works closely with the classroom teachers to provide students with enrichment opportunities. In addition, she works with the students on their research and investigative skills.

Please make use of the Carnegie Library on 22nd and Jane Streets or the Carnegie Library in your area. Ms. Jeanne Nikolaison, the children's librarian at the South Side branch and the other staff are very willing to provide our students with any assistance they may need.

### **Lockers**

Each student has a locker or shares a locker with a classmate. Locks are not permitted on any of the lockers.

### **Lost Books**

The number of books students receive is dependent upon the students' grade level and subject area. These books are evaluated as to their condition at the end of the school year and students are expected to use the books in a manner that maintains their condition. When lost, we need to ask students to pay for a replacement since the books are expensive and the money is taken from the school budget. The same hold true for library books that are lost or destroyed.

## **SCHOOL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Sick or Injured Students**

When students become ill or injured at school, they are sent to the office by the classroom teacher or lunchroom aide. On Fridays, the students can be seen by the school nurse. Otherwise, the office staff attempt to make contact with the parent to determine the best course of action.

If your child is not feeling well in the morning and you think that you can send them to school, please do not tell them that they can call you if they don't feel any better. You should contact the office and let us know that your child wasn't feeling well but you felt that it was okay to send him/her to school. We can keep an eye on them and call you if they do come to the office.

### **Medication**

Under no circumstance is medication to be administered by School District personnel to students by any person other than the school nurse or other nurse assigned to the school for the purpose of administering medicine.

The medication must be brought to school in a container properly labeled for that student by the pharmacy or physician and stored in a locked cabinet. Instructions, etc. on the label are to coincide with the written orders from the physician.

### **Insurance**

The legal liability for the negligent injury of students in the School District of Pittsburgh or for damage to a student's property is governed by a Pennsylvania statute commonly known as The Political Subdivision Tort Claims Act. It limits the liability of the School District so that most of the injuries sustained by a student or loss of a student's property would result in the School District not being responsible for

either medical payments, pain and suffering as it applies to injuries, or the replacement of the cost of lost property. For this reason you would be wise to consider purchasing accident insurance.

There are two types of accident insurance that you can purchase: school time coverage and 24-hour coverage. This accident insurance is not sold by the School District of Pittsburgh but it is endorsed by the School District, and parents are encouraged to purchase it because of the limit of liability governed by the aforementioned statute. At the beginning of the school year you will receive a brochure explaining the insurance.

### **Child Protection**

We are fortunate to be a small school and know the parents and other care givers of our students. We and other parents are aware of strangers around the school grounds. We do not release students to adults we do not know. If you are a parent new to Pittsburgh Phillips K-5, please come to the office to introduce yourself. It is also important that you inform us of the adults who can and cannot pick your child up after school. If someone other than the familiar adults needs to pick up your child, you must call the office to let us know and ask that person to come to the office to meet us. You may also send a note with your child in the morning with a phone number that we can use to reach you and verify the validity of the request.

### **Safety Guidelines for Parent Drivers**

Please observe the speed zones around the school. Pick up your children and let them out of the car only from the right side, and only from the side of the street nearest the building. If you must let them out from the side of the street away from the building, be sure to insist that they go to the corner to cross the street so that they will not dash out into the street from behind or between parked cars and buses. If possible, walk them across the street. Please do not park between the telephone poles or Sarah St. in the mornings. Please do not park in Sarah St. at all during afternoon dismissal.

### **Crossing Guards**

Stress that your children walk to and from school on the sidewalks and cross only at corners, especially where crossing guards or patrols are located. Safety patrols are located on 19th and Sarah and 20th and Sarah. Crossing guards have been located on 20th and Carson, 18th and Sarah, 18th and Mary.

### **Building Visitors**

A basic responsibility of the school is to ensure the safety of the children. Therefore, it is imperative that the office staff know who is in the building at all times. All visitors should enter the building through the Sarah St. entrance since the 20th Street doors will be locked. All visitors must report to the office for a visitor's pass, if one is warranted, before going through the building.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

There are a number of ways that parents can become involved in the school.

#### **School Volunteers**

- Help teachers help students
- Assist in creating a positive school atmosphere
- Provide additional adult presence
- Bring the school, community and business world together

Times: from one time only to once a day, during class or after school

Volunteers must obtain clearances related to criminal history and child abuse. The forms are available in the office.

#### **PTO**

- Find out what is happening at school
- Talk about parent concerns and student issues
- Exchange ideas that will help the school
- Raise funds for special projects
- Create a warm school experience for all students

Times: monthly membership meetings, committee meetings, other activities as scheduled

The PTO has provided the students with many wonderful experiences. They sponsor the Pittsburgh Phillips Surprise, Book Fairs, Santa's Workshop and a number of fundraising activities. In addition, they sponsor periodic family activities that are open to Pittsburgh Phillips K-5' students and their families. (Students are not admitted to the activities without an adult.) Past events have included bingos, Halloween parties, Valentine Day dances and a Cinco de Mayo Celebration.

## Parent /School Community Council

- Raise school-wide concerns and help resolve them at the school level
- Advise on school policies, programs, and critical issues
- Assist in the development of the school's Comprehensive Educational Improvement Plan (CEIP)

Times: monthly council meetings, committee meetings, occasional training sessions

Please let Mr. Necciai know if you are interested.

## Contact with Teachers

Communication between parents and teachers is extremely important. However, certain procedures need to be followed so that the time parents and teachers spend together can be productive. Please do not come to school in the morning before the school day begins with the expectation that you can talk with your child's teacher unless you have already scheduled an appointment with the teacher. Teachers have required meetings scheduled in the mornings, so they will not be readily available. Then they are expected to be with the students as they are entering the classroom. There are also quite a few teachers who arrive early so that they can prepare for the day or the week. They are not prepared to be interrupted unless they have scheduled an appointment ahead of time.

Please do not walk into the building during the school day and ask to meet with a teacher unless you have scheduled an appointment. Teachers are teaching from 8:05 a.m. until 2:41 p.m. each day. They have a 45-minute lunch and a 45-minute prep period each day. They cannot leave their classrooms even for a few minutes because it disrupts the learning of the students in the class. Teachers also have meetings after school and cannot meet unless, again, you have scheduled a time. Keep in mind that, at times, a phone call or email can be as effective as a meeting and less time-consuming for both you and the teacher.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

One parent-teacher conference is scheduled during the school year. These conferences will be held on Monday, October 9th between the hours of noon and 7 p.m. Teachers meet with parents and discuss the students' progress during 15-minute meetings.

## CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

There are consequences to violations of the rules of student conduct. Some are district-wide (expulsion) as with the weapons violation while others are school-based. At Pittsburgh Phillips K-5 we use in-house and out-of-school suspensions as last resorts. There may be times that in-house suspension or out-of-school suspension is used even when the child has never been referred to the office. This would occur when the infraction is considered serious enough to warrant these consequences.

We attempt to deal with student problems through discussion and conflict mediation. Several staff members have been trained in conflict mediation and the students are made aware of this method of problem-solving. We have found that students are seeking out adults to help them resolve their problems. Parents are notified when students are having difficulties with their behavior sometimes so that they can provide us with additional assistance, other times just so that they are aware of the problem. Also, there may be times when it is necessary for parents to bring their children to school to talk with the principal, teacher or another parent as a way to resolve the problems their child may be experiencing.

Students may be placed in in-house suspension for as little as one period or as long as a day. When this occurs, they spend time with Ms. Svitek in her office working on class assignments. In addition, she talks with them about the misbehavior and ways to prevent further problems from occurring.

**For more information, refer to the *Code of Student Conduct*.**

