



**PIKE COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL
2026-2027 PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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PCMS Facebook Page:
[Pike County Middle School](#)



Please note:

Students are required to follow the policies outlined in both the student handbook and the Pike County School System Handbook and Code of Conduct. This handbook and any policies contained herein are subject to change. Any changes made to this handbook after print will be available in the link under the principal's signature within the weekly Principal's Communication.

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OFFICE CONTACTS

Name	Title	Email
Michael Teti	Principal	tetim@pike.k12.ga.us
Melissa Bedford	Assistant Principal (8 th ; 7 th A-L)	bedform@pike.k12.ga.us
Nathan Wilson	Assistant Principal (6 th ; 7 th M-Z)	wilsonn@pike.k12.ga.us
Jacob Boone	Athletic Director	bookej@pike.k12.ga.us
Mariah Banks	Graduation Coach	banksM@pike.k12.ga.us
Kim Coursey	Counselor (last name A-L)	coursek@pike.k12.ga.us
Kelci Sorensen	Counselor (last name M-Z)	sorensk@pike.k12.ga.us
Stephanie Freeman	Media Specialist	freemas@pike.k12.ga.us
Amanda Bennett	Registrar	bennetAm@pike.k12.ga.us
Melinda Harrison	Nurse	harrisM@pike.k12.ga.us
Heather Marchman	Bookkeeper/Office Manager	marchmh@pike.k12.ga.us
Ashley Daniel	Attendance Clerk	danielA@pike.k12.ga.us
Sky Slagle	Receptionist/Transportation	gunters@pike.k12.ga.us
Jodi Ansalve	Aramark Food Services Director	ansalvej@pike.k12.ga.us

ACADEMIC PLACEMENT/SCHEDULING

Students are heterogeneously grouped on grade level teams in 6th and 7th grade. There are no teams in 8th grade as students operate in more of a junior-high model as we work to prepare them for high school. If there is an issue or concern with academic team placement, please use the following guidelines:

1. Parent should schedule a meeting with the student, teacher, and counselor to discuss issues and possible solutions.
2. If the issue is not resolved, parents can request a meeting with an Assistant Principal to discuss concerns and placement changes.
3. If the issue is not resolved, parents should submit in writing to the principal to request a change in schedule, listing reasons for the request.
4. The principal will make the final decision about any changes to the student's schedule.

Connection Class Scheduling

Connection classes at Pike County Middle School are designed to provide students with a variety of experiences to explore interests and create well rounded students. With the exception of yearlong connections classes (band and chorus), students will rotate through a variety of nine-week connection classes in grades 6-8. Connection classes will not be changed without sufficient reasoning or rationale as determined by counselor or administrator.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Part of character development is understanding the importance of honesty in all situations. Any attempt to obtain credit for work done by another is unacceptable at Pike County Middle School. The use of artificial intelligence platforms (unless outlined as a part of the assignment or with guidance from the teacher) to complete or to aid in the completion of assignments is prohibited and will receive the same consequence as cheating/academic dishonesty. Cheating includes cheating on tests, copying work of others, copying word-for-word from books, magazines, encyclopedias, technology media, or other acts of plagiarism, including distribution of any assessment material (i.e., failing to cite proper documentation or authorship, using someone else's term paper, using electronic devices/internet/other people to translate foreign languages), or other similar activities. Please refer to the PCS Handbook and Code of Conduct for level 1 and level 2 offenses

for academic dishonesty. Actions can include disciplinary action and may also include a zero on the assignment or assessment.

ATHLETICS

An Athletic Permission/Physical Packet must be completed and on file at PCMS prior to any child participating in an athletic activity. Athletic activities include but are not limited to conditioning, workouts, team try-outs, events, and games.

PCMS Athletics operates according to the PCMS Athletic Handbook. Once a team is set, a mandatory parent meeting will be held with coaches and the athletic director (as available). The Athletic Handbook, Middle School Athletic Code of Conduct, team rules, and other pertinent information will be reviewed at this meeting. The handbook is available upon request through Jacob Boone, bookej@pike.k12.ga.us.

6th, 7th, and 8th Grade students may participate in Football (7/8 only), Boys and Girls Basketball, Boys and Girls Soccer, Wrestling, Cheerleading, Dance, Girls Softball, Boys Baseball, Boys and Girls Swimming, Boys and Girls Cross Country, and Boys and Girls Track. 8th grade students may be eligible to participate in Esports and sub-varsity programs at Pike County High School, subject to the approval and discretion of the head coach.

All forms in the PCMS Athletic Handbook and Athletic Permission/Physical Packet must be filled out and returned to the front office of PCMS prior to the beginning of any athletic event. Students who wish to participate in athletics must not have any outstanding school debt (media center, cafeteria, athletics). Student athletes must be academically eligible to participate in any athletic activity/event. PCMS students who do not pass 3 of 4 core content classes, and 3 of 4 elective/connection courses during the semester immediately preceding participation will not meet academic eligibility.

ATTENDANCE

One of the most important factors determining success in school is attendance. Being consistently present and on time will pay dividends during a school career. In addition, regular school attendance helps the student develop an acceptance of responsibility, creates self-discipline, and promotes character development. The following policies exist for all classes at Pike County Middle School, beginning promptly at 8:10 a.m. Students must be counted present for the day to participate in after-school activities, including athletic events. Exceptions to this rule may be made at the discretion of the principal. Any questions or concerns regarding attendance should be directed to the attendance clerk. Parents should monitor PowerSchool for student attendance records. Please communicate any questions or discrepancies in a timely manner.

The Pike County Board of Education recognizes the importance of regular school attendance in making academic progress; therefore, students shall be in attendance as required by Georgia's compulsory school attendance law for the number of full-length days as prescribed by law.

Absences: Absences from school are classified as excused or unexcused. Absences are considered excused under the state law and State Board of Education policies to include illness, medical/dental/eye examination, death in immediate family, religious holiday, instances in which attendance could be hazardous as determined by Pike County Public School System, service as a Page in the legislature, a parent deploying to/returning from military duty (5 days per year), or a court order.

Students will be marked present when absent for any of the following approved reasons: serving as a legislative Page, participating in a 4-H activity, or attending court as a foster care student.

Medical Guidelines for Returning to School: Students must be fever-free (under 100.0 without medication) and vomit-free for **24 hours** before returning.

Chronic Absenteeism: Georgia defines chronic absenteeism as a student missing 10% or more of the school days in which they are enrolled, regardless of the reason for the absence. This includes both excused and unexcused absences.

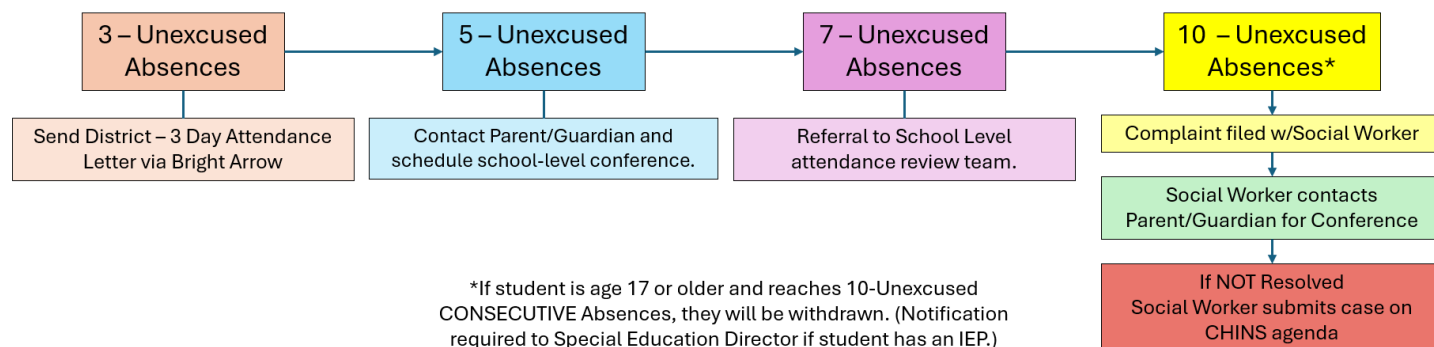
Board Policy JB: Student Attendance: The parent or guardian shall provide a signed and dated explanation of the student's absence within five school-days of the student's return to school. The student's record shall reflect an unexcused absence if a note is not submitted within the five school-day allowance. Notes excusing student absences will be accepted from parents/guardians/healthcare professionals or other governmental agencies (DDS, DFCS, etc.). Absences will be excused with the parent/guardian note for up to five (5) days per year. Absences may only be considered excused if they align with the state-approved school absences listed in Board Policy JB Section B. Parents/Guardians of students with five (5) unexcused absences in a year will be required to attend an attendance conference with the school, at which time possible attendance barriers, solution-focused problem solving, and potential interventions will be discussed. Court intervention will be reserved as a last resort; however, if **unexcused** absences persist after the required 5-day meeting, the parent/guardian of a student (Kindergarten–16 years of age) subject to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1 may be referred for prosecution in State Court (where available) or Superior Court. Penalties may include misdemeanor charges, fines, and up to 30 days in jail. Parents/Guardians of students with ten (10) unexcused absences in a year will have a complaint filed with the school social worker. If the matter is not resolved and if prior school-based interventions have not been effective, Parents/Guardians of students with (10) ten unexcused absences in a year will be referred to the Child/Family in Need of Service (CHINS) committee for consideration of other community service-focused interventions.

Pre-arranged Absences: For a pre-arranged trip to be approved, the parent or legal guardian must submit a written request describing the educational nature of the absence to the principal prior to the absence. Requests should be made at least three weeks prior to the planned trip. Pre-arranged absences are applicable only to trips that are considered educational in nature. The principal will review the request to determine if the absence falls under the guidelines for a pre-arranged absence. The principal's decision on the absence will be the final decision.

It is the responsibility of the student to inform the teacher(s) of these dates prior to the absence. Teachers are not required to prepare assignments in advance for students who are anticipating days of absence. The student will be permitted to make up any assignments missed. Students will be given 2 days for each day missed to complete make-up assignments.

Unexcused Absence Protocol – FLOW CHART

Annual Protocol per 2026-2027 Board Policy



Student Check-In/Tardies/Unexcused Early Check-out: Promptness to school and each class is very important. Students who are not in class by 8:10 a.m. must check in at the office to receive a late pass. Medical and dental appointments are excused. All other check-ins/check-outs will be considered unexcused and may result in discipline consequences for tardiness.

Unexcused Tardies (to class and to school)

- Tardiness disrupts the learning environment and subjects the student to progressive discipline as outlined in the student code of conduct (see below Behavior Detrimental to Learning). Once a student reaches (3) cumulative unexcused tardies to class or (5) unexcused tardies to school, administrators will begin with Section 1 progressive discipline.
 - **Behavior Detrimental to Learning:** Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, unexcused tardies to school or class and conduct that disrupts the learning environment.
 - 4th Tardy: Parent Call; 5th Tardy: ISS; 7th Tardy: ISS; 10th Tardy: ISS

Student Check-Out: Anyone picking up a student must report to the office, provide picture ID, and sign the student out before he/she is released. Only those individuals listed in PowerSchool as Emergency Contacts will be allowed to check a student out of school. State policy mandates that a student shall be physically present in school for one-half of the school day in order to be counted present for the day.

- **Students who arrive before 11:30 will be counted present for the day.**
- **Students who arrive after 11:30 will be counted absent for the day.**
- **Students who check out before 11:30 will be counted absent for the day.**

Students must be sent home by the school nurse to be checked out with an excused sickness.

Students must be present for the day to participate in school activities and athletics. Please note that student attendance is an important part of our school's ability to meet the attendance indicator in the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI), our current accountability system. Your child will be counted absent for each class period missed.

If someone other than a parent is to pick up a student, a parent note should state that fact. A daytime telephone number for the parent should be listed on the note for verification. Once a student arrives at school, he/she is NOT to leave campus for any reason without permission from the principal or assistant principal. If a student leaves the building or campus without permission during the day, he/she is considered truant from school.

A student who checks out of school then returns to school without a written excuse will be considered "unexcused" regardless of the reason for the absence.

Student Early Check-Out Notice: The Pike County Middle School instructional day ends at 3:05. When a student leaves before the end of the day, instruction is missed. To prevent continued loss of instruction in the class/classes, a student's schedule may be changed for excessive early check-outs for unexcused reasons. If documentation is provided that the student's early checkout is an acceptable reason to miss school as described in the handbook section entitled **Absences**, the excused early check-out will not count toward receiving a schedule change.

Make-Up Work:

- Students are allowed two school days to make up work for each excused day absent (ex: 5 days missed = 10 days for all assignments to be completed). All work not turned in within the specified time allowed may receive a grade of zero.
- It is the student's responsibility to initiate contact with the teacher to schedule make-up tests/quizzes. Tests, quizzes, or other class assignments should be made up before/after school or during lunch at teachers' discretion.
- It is the student's responsibility to obtain, complete, and turn in make-up assignments to the teacher.
- If a student is absent for three or more days, a parent may contact the school and request that assignments and/or books be gathered for the student. Please allow at least 48 hours for assignments to be gathered and ready for pickup.

AWARDS

The following awards will be recognized at the end of the year awards program. Specific questions regarding awards should be directed to Amanda Bennett (registrar), (bennetam@pike.k12.ga.us). PCMS faculty understands that awards are very important to both parents and students. We encourage parents to utilize PowerSchool regularly, and to communicate grade concerns with their child and/or the child's teacher in a timely manner. Only students receiving an award will be recognized at the awards program. An invitation to the awards ceremony will be sent home with honorees.

*The cut-off date for awards will be determined by the administration and communicated to families by the fourth quarter. Please Note: The grade cut-off date is typically 4 weeks prior to the awards day.

*9th Grade Lit, Algebra, and Physical Science: These three high school courses do not calculate a year-end average. Therefore, awards will be determined based on an average of S1 and S2 grades in these courses.

(Each semester counts as its own class for 9th grade courses)

- Exemplary Attendance: Students with less than two absences (excused or unexcused) for the year.
- "A" Honor Roll: "A" year-end average in the four academic courses and "A" in every connection course taken throughout the year.
- "A/B" Honor Roll: "A/B" year-end average in the four academic courses and "A/B" in every connection course taken throughout the year. A student must have at least one A (year-end average) in a core academic to qualify for this award.
- Lamp of Knowledge: Awarded to 8th graders who have received A Honor Roll all 3 years of middle school
- Excellence in Academics: Teacher-chosen award for the top-performing student in their subject area
- Excellence in Connections: Teacher-chosen award for the top-performing student in their subject area
- Literacy Days: RESA Winners in Ready Writing and Poetry Recitation
- Math Competition: Griffin RESA Middle School Competition Participants
- Hope Squad: Member of our school-based, peer-to-peer suicide prevention program
- Student Advisory: Member of the Principal's Advisory Team
- Flag Team: Student leaders who maintain proper presentation of flags
- Principal's Award: Highest GPA per grade level
- Citizenship Award

Awards may be added or removed at the discretion of the building administrator.

CARE OF OUR BUILDING AND RESOURCES

Every student should take pride in our school building and campus to help keep it clean and attractive. Only drinks with a sealable, screw top lid will be allowed in the building. Students are expected to pick up all paper

and litter from the classroom floors and cafeteria before exiting. The hallways and outside areas are also to be kept free of all litter and paper.

Students marking on or damaging school equipment or property in any way may be required to clean the article or pay for damage and will face disciplinary consequences. The Board Policy specifically provides that parents and students are responsible for damage to school property or materials loaned to the student. Not only should students refrain from doing anything that damages school property, but students should also help protect the school by discouraging and/or reporting such activity by other students.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

In accordance with Georgia law under the *Distraction-Free Education Act (HB 340)*, effective July 1, 2026, and to maintain a focused and respectful learning environment, the use of cell phones and other electronic devices during school hours is strictly prohibited. Cell phones and other personal electronics devices, as outlined below, must be **OFF** and stored in a student's **bookbag** or **locker** only during the school day.

- All cell phones and personal electronic devices must be turned off and stored away, **not on person**, during the bell-to-bell school day.
- At PCMS, this begins at 7:55 with dismissal from the gym. Students must turn off and put ALL electronics in their bookbag. They can choose to then store them in **bookbag** or **locker** only during the day (cannot be in pockets, purse, small bag, lunchbox, etc.)
- Electronics include, but are not limited to, smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, E-readers, headphones, smart/video glasses, or other devices with functionalities such as wireless communication, internet access, messaging, video recording, gaming, social media access, or data transmission.
- Cell phones are to be off during the instructional day, 8:00-3:05. They may only be used before and after school.
- Cell phones will **not** be used for instructional purposes.
- Wired headphones will be allowed for instructional purposes with a school device.
- Taking photos or recording videos on school property is strictly prohibited.
- Parents, in case of emergency, please contact the office.
- If after school activities are cancelled, students will be allowed to use the office phone to notify parents.
- The office phone is for transportation changes, cancellation of activities, illness, or emergencies.

Violations & Consequences

- Any violation of this policy, use or storage/possession violation, will result in a discipline referral.
- Consequences begin with up to **two days of in-school suspension**.
- All personal electronic devices must comply with the **Pike County School System Handbook and Code of Conduct**.
- The school is **not responsible** for lost, stolen, or damaged devices and will not conduct searches for lost phones. To avoid issues, students are strongly encouraged to leave devices at home.

DISCIPLINE

Pike County Middle School will use the discipline procedures and progressions outlined in the Pike County Schools Handbook and Code of Conduct. It is necessary that teachers, parents, and students understand, accept, and support the discipline policies of our school. PCMS believes in, encourages, and enforces age-appropriate discipline policies for all students. This District Code of Conduct applies while on campus, at designated bus stops, while riding any Pike County school bus, and while participating in field trips or other school sponsored activities. Misconduct will not be tolerated at PCMS. Any student who violates discipline

policies listed herein are not only disrupting their education, but also the educational environment of others should expect consequences because of this choice.

Students are responsible for following the directions of all staff members including the principal, assistant principals, counselors, teachers, secretaries, paraprofessionals, custodians, bus drivers, substitutes, cafeteria workers, and any other authorized adult employee of the school system.

Teachers may utilize the following consequences for behavior/disruptions to the school day as part of their classroom management strategies:

- Silent Lunch
- Before/After school detention
- Loss of privileges/team privileges/team time
- Other consequences approved by administration including removal from special activities or events (field day, dances, tournaments, special day activities, field trips etc.)

Vaping

At PCMS, we take the use, distribution, and possession of these devices seriously and want to educate students accordingly. Please see the Pike County School System Handbook and Code of Conduct for the vaping protocols. Administrators who have reasonable suspicion that a student possesses a vaping device may initiate a search of both the student and their belongings in accordance with Pike County School System Handbook and Code of Conduct.

Bus Conduct

For detailed information, please refer to the District Code of Conduct.

Students have the privilege of using the transportation services of the Pike County School System. Rigid standards of discipline must always be maintained to satisfy safety requirements. Whenever a driver must direct his/her attention away from the road, dangers exist. Foremost in our minds is the safety of each passenger.

Students may only ride the school bus to which they are assigned. At times, it may be necessary for athletics or teams to ride a specified bus to another location after school. Only that bus may be boarded for that purpose. If an emergency arises which makes it necessary for a student to ride a different bus, the parent must send a written request along with a copy of a valid picture ID no later than 2:00 p.m. to the school receptionist.

We are unable to unload a bus for student check-out once they have loaded the bus for dismissal.

Late to Class Policy: The classroom teacher will assign the appropriate consequence when a student is late to class. A student is considered late if he/she is not in a seat in the classroom with the necessary materials out and ready to begin work when class begins. It is the responsibility of the student to make up any missed work. If tardiness to class becomes a pattern of behavior, the student will be referred to administration for discipline.

After School Events and Activities

Students may lose the privilege of attending after-school events, games, and activities due to inappropriate behavior. Determinations will be made at the discretion of the building administrators.

Examples of behaviors that may result in loss of privileges include:

- Late pickup following an activity, game, or event
- Disrespectful or inappropriate conduct/language/behavior

- Any behavior resulting in an office referral

DRESS CODE

PCMS will enforce the 6-12 dress code as outlined in the Pike County Schools Handbook and Code of Conduct. Students shall dress in a manner that is reasonable and not distracting to other students and teachers. The dress of students must be in good taste and appropriate for school activities.

School principals and assistant principals have final authority in all judgments related to dress. The Superintendent or school Principals are responsible for implementing this policy and may disseminate additional regulations, procedures, or directives as necessary to enforce the policy.

EMERGENCY/CRISIS DRILLS

The importance of following instructions from staff during an emergency/crisis drill cannot be emphasized enough. We will engage in various crisis drills throughout the school year. Students should listen to their teachers and follow directions. Failure to follow expected emergency drill protocols may result in a discipline referral.

FEES/SCHOOL PAYMENTS

Various fees and payments are made to the school throughout the year i.e., locker rental, lost/damaged books, fundraising, athletics, etc. Fees may be paid with cash/check. Checks should be made payable to Pike County Middle School. Please note that all returned checks will be subject to a \$25 charge. Returned checks and non-payments may result in actions being taken with the magistrate court for recovery of funds. Privileges such as participating in extracurricular school functions (ex: athletics, dances, trips) will be denied to students with outstanding debt.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a privilege for our students. Permission slips will be sent home with students for a parent/legal guardian signature. No student will be allowed to participate in a trip unless a permission slip is signed and returned to school by the date specified by the teacher. A current and updated Student Demographic/Medical Information Sheet, which includes the signed Emergency Medical Transportation, must be completed online through the PowerSchool Parent Portal. Students who cannot contribute to the expense of the field trip will not be denied participation. Parents, please communicate with your child's teacher if a need arises. Only Pike County School employees may chaperone field trips. Students will not be available for check-outs from field trips.

Field trips are an extension of the school, and all school rules apply. Students must follow school rules and dress code guidelines to be able to participate in field trips. The following will prevent field trip privileges:

- Disciplinary problems establishing a pattern of misbehavior
- Inappropriate dress on the day of the field trip
- Failure to return permission and/or medical release forms by the due date

The final determination of a student's eligibility to attend a field trip will be decided by the principal.

FOOD/DRINKS

***Energy drinks are not permitted at PCMS.**

Food may not be delivered to students during the school day by food delivery establishments/services, including but not limited to Uber Eats, DoorDash, Grubhub, etc. Restaurant/delivery cups/cans are not allowed in classrooms. All beverages must be in a cup with a screw top lid. Classrooms will not be interrupted to inform students of lunch deliveries. Please communicate with your child before school if a lunch is going to be

dropped off in the front office. Your child will be allowed to come to the front office at his/her lunchtime to pick up his/her lunch. Thank you for your help as we work to minimize classroom disruptions.

GRADES AND REPORT CARDS

Individual class syllabi will outline grading categories and practices. Parents are encouraged to check grades in PowerSchool weekly and communicate any concerns/missing work directly with the teacher. A zero in the gradebook reflects a missing assignment. Students are encouraged to communicate with their teacher a plan to make up any missing work in a timely manner. **Late or missing work not related to an excused absence will be handled at the discretion of the classroom teacher, including decisions regarding submission timelines and grading. It is essential that any missing work be completed within the current unit of study, as teachers are not required to accept late work after a unit has concluded.**

At Pike County Schools, we embrace the reality that in the 21st century, student success will ultimately depend on both what they know and what they can do. Performance tasks are utilized as a unique assessment tool that combines standards-based content knowledge with the application of 21st century skills. Many of our courses utilize performance tasks as assessments and/or as a final exam.

Report cards are issued every nine weeks. Questions about grades should be directed to the teacher within two weeks of grade entry into PowerSchool. Teachers use numeric grades, with the following scale given for comparison:

90 – 100	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
Below 70	F

iReady Incentives

We plan to celebrate student growth on our iReady assessments this year. Based on our spring assessments' results, the following criteria will earn a student incentive based on growth Tier. PCMS staff will plan incentives for each Tier below and communicate those with students prior to the spring assessment.

Tier 1: Any Growth

Tier 2: 70% of Typical Growth

Tier 3: 80% of Stretch Growth

HALL PASSES

Students in the hallways must have a hall pass except during class changes. Passes may be issued by any teacher, but students **MUST** have a pass to go to the library, restroom, clinic, office, and anywhere else during class. Students will be allowed to go to their locker during class changes at the teacher's discretion. Refusing to follow this expectation may result in the loss of freedom and privileges.

HALLWAY TRAFFIC

We all must observe hallway courtesy for students to move safely and quickly about the building. Please observe the following rules of common courtesy in the halls.

- Keep hallways open by walking on the right.
- Take the direct route to your destination.
- WALK - do not run, push, shove, yell, or play in the hall.
- Do not block hallways by standing in groups to socialize.
- Do not block access to other lockers.

- Talk quietly - be considerate of others.

HORSEPLAY

Horseplay is disruptive and can often lead to serious discipline and/or injuries. The expectation is that you keep your hands to yourself and respect others' space and belongings. Horseplay inevitably escalates to leveled offenses such as inappropriate physical contact or fighting.

LOCKERS

Students may rent a locker with a combination lock for \$10/year. Assigned gym class lockers and locks will be used while in PE – provided by the PE teacher. Students should not tell their combination to ANYONE. This is for their protection. **Students should NOT BRING LARGE SUMS OF MONEY OR OTHER VALUABLES TO SCHOOL!** Students should not share lockers. The locker combination is a personal possession, and care should be taken to prevent anyone from learning that combination. Students are responsible for the safety and security of their combination, personal property, and school materials. Lockers are the property of the Pike County School System and are subject to inspection by authorized school personnel. School officials have a legal right and obligation to ensure enforcement of all school policies. The courts have reaffirmed that administrators have the legal authority to search a student, their locker, and other personal belongings if there is a reason to believe that any school policy or law is being violated.

LOST AND FOUND

Students should be responsible for their personal property. Be sure names are on all clothing - especially P.E. clothes. Do not leave personal articles unattended. We suggest you leave valuables at home, especially jewelry. In the event you lose articles of clothing or lunchboxes, check in the cafeteria. Books, glasses, jewelry items, etc., that are found are located in the front office. Lost and found items are periodically donated to local charities. Announcements are made reminding students to check lost and found.

LUNCHROOM

Students are encouraged to deposit money into their meal accounts, whereby a draft of the account may be made daily as meals are purchased. Deposits may be made online at www.myschoolaccount.com or by cash or check at each school. Negative Balance Notifications are sent out to parents/guardians for balances greater than \$10.00.

Students' behavior in the lunchroom should be based on respect for self, others, and our facility/resources. Students may not break in line and must remain in line to get their food. Students will sit at their assigned tables only. Students should leave their table and area clean. Walking around to socialize is not permitted.

MEDIA CENTER

The administration, library staff, and faculty want the Media Center to be a vital part of your educational development. The PCMS Media Center offers print and electronic resources to support and enrich the middle school curriculum. Students are encouraged to do research and to prepare class assignments in the Media Center. Students are encouraged to ask the Media Specialist for assistance.

The following items about the library should be helpful:

1. The Media Center will be open daily for use during school hours, including the lunch period and before the regular school day as communicated. If it is necessary to limit library use to a special class, group, or program, this will be posted on the door.
2. You are expected to enter and exit quietly.

3. To come to the Media Center during any class period, homeroom, or lunch, you must have a pass. You are also responsible for returning the pass to your teacher before the end of the period.
4. Most library materials may be borrowed for two weeks and then renewed as needed. Exceptions are reference books and reserved books.
5. Students who lose or damage a book must pay the replacement cost of the book plus overdue fines. Overdue fines and fees for lost/damaged books will be paid directly to the library.
6. Students should ask permission before printing from computers. The cost is 25 cents per page for black and white and 50 cents per page for color. If students need anything printed, they need to email the media specialist and attach the document. They need to include their name and their teacher's name.
7. You are expected to be self-disciplined and use your time in the library to read or do research.
8. No food, drinks, or chewing gum is permitted in the Media Center.
9. All internet access is governed by the Pike County Board of Education policy. Students and parents/legal guardians must agree to comply with all PCBOE regulations. (See Internet Acceptable Use Policy on PCBOE webpage). You must agree not to use the internet for personal e-mail, chat rooms, games, or to view inappropriate web sites, etc. In short, you are only to use the internet to retrieve appropriate information for class assignments.

NURSE/HEALTHCARE CLINIC

The clinic provides an area to care for sick or injured students and faculty. A child should not be sent to school with diarrhea, vomiting, and/or elevated temperature of 100 degrees or higher. Students should not return to school following an illness until they have been without a fever, without fever medication, and have not vomited for 24 hours. To visit the clinic, students should first get a note/pass from his/her teacher. If classes are changing, the student should check in with the teacher of the next class to get a pass. The student should then check in with the nurse. Students will stay in the clinic or front office if they are waiting for a parent.

Head Lice

Students found to be infected with head lice or nits at school will be sent home by the school nurse or by an administrator. Parents are expected to treat the child's hair with an appropriate solution and to remove the dead lice and/or nits. A parent or guardian must accompany the child to school and allow the school nurse to re-examine the student to verify an absence of nits. Two weeks after a child's return to school, the nurse will do a routine reexamination to ensure that the student continues to be free of lice and/or nits.

Medicine Policy

When possible, medications should be given at home before or after school hours. No medication can be administered at school without a proper Pike County Board of Education authorization form signed by the student's parent for over-the-counter medications or signed by the physician for prescription medications. Prescription medications must be in the original container with a pharmacy label showing the student's and doctor's name and appropriate directions for administering the medication. Non-prescription drugs, including Tylenol, aspirin, cold remedies, eye drops, and any other over-the-counter medications must also be in the original container and furnished by the parent. While at school, students are not allowed to take any medication by themselves or to have any medication on their person (other than an inhaler for which a doctor's order indicating the student can have it with him/her must be on file). If a doctor or parent requests a student carry an EpiPen on their person, proper forms and training will be done through the school nurse. If it is necessary for a student to have medication at school, a parent must bring the medication and leave it with the clinic or office personnel. Students are not allowed to bring medication to school.

OFFICE PHONE USE

Students will not be called out of class to accept phone calls or return phone calls from parents/guardians. The front office staff will only relay messages of transportation changes/emergencies to students.

The use of the front office phone is discouraged for things other than emergencies and transportation changes. Students asking to use the front office phone will be expected to have a pass from their teacher and will present to the office personnel their reason for use. Students who do need the phone will be expected to know the number of the person they are calling. Acceptable reasons for office phone use are to make transportation changes warranted by school athletics/club changes. Permission to use the office phone will be left up to the office staff/administrators.

ORGANIZATIONS AND CLUBS

[PCMS Club Offerings.docx](#)

Pike County Middle School is proud to offer a variety of clubs and organizations. We encourage all students to discover new interests and be a part of the school community.

PARENT/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT POLICY

- Purpose – Because parent and community member involvement is an asset for our students, we encourage input and involvement from our stakeholders.
- Communication – Please make sure you are receiving the weekly principal's message through email. If you are not, please contact our registrar, Amanda Bennett at BennetAm@pike.k12.ga.us to ensure we have the correct email address on file.

Parent, teacher, and school communication is encouraged. Pike County Middle School may use automated phone calls or emails, the school website, the school Facebook® page and Bright Arrow to provide information about school activities, policies, and procedures. Parent/teacher meetings may be scheduled at the request of either party.

- Parent Participation – Parents are encouraged to attend conferences, extracurricular events, parent information meetings, and local Board of Education meetings.

PARENT CONCERNS

We understand that concerns arise, and we want parents to feel welcome to communicate with staff. We ask that concerns are addressed at the appropriate level before they escalate. Often, a simple conversation leads to a common understanding or resolution. Please follow the steps below when addressing concerns:

- Contact the teacher to request a call or meeting. Please allow teachers 24 hours to respond.
- If, after contacting the teacher, concerns continue, parents may request a meeting with the counselor and/or assistant principal.
- If after meeting with the counselor and AP, concerns continue, parents may request a meeting with the PCMS principal.

We can best address parent/student needs when meetings with school personnel are arranged in advance.

PARENTAL RIGHTS

By federal law, if parents are legally separated or divorced, each parent listed on the child's birth certificate has equal rights to access the child's records UNLESS there is a court order that prohibits such access by terminating said parent's parental rights. Unless the school has a copy of a court order on file indicating otherwise, either parent listed on the child's birth certificate may check the child out of school as well as view their records with proper identification.

PERSONAL FRAGRANCE POLICY (Cologne, Perfume, and Body Sprays)

In an effort to maintain a healthy and inclusive learning environment, PCMS has established the following guidelines regarding the use of personal fragrances such as cologne, perfume, and body sprays:

- **Fragrance-Free Zones:**
Classrooms, hallways, the library, and other shared indoor spaces are designated as fragrance-free zones. Students are asked not to apply strong fragrances in these areas to minimize allergic reactions and sensitivities among students and staff.
- **Use in Moderation:**
If a student chooses to use a personal fragrance (such as cologne, perfume, or body spray), it must be used in moderation and applied before arriving on campus.
- **Allergies and Sensitivities:**
Some individuals may have medical conditions such as asthma, migraines, or allergies that are triggered by strong scents. Out of respect for the health and comfort of others, all students are expected to be mindful of their fragrance use.
- **Violations:**
Repeated disregard for this policy may result in disciplinary action, including a warning, parental contact, and/or a referral to school administration. Students may be asked to remove or discontinue use of specific products if they cause disruption or health concerns.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

- Items outlined in the Code of Conduct (ex: pornographic material, weapons, vapes, drugs, alcohol, or any other item that is dangerous or disruptive to the learning environment).
- Electronic games/toys/communication devices are not to be used during school hours. Electronics must meet the guidelines stated in the Pike County Schools Code of Conduct. The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends when school is dismissed for the day at 3:05 p.m. The administration strongly encourages students to leave these items at home, as the school will not assume responsibility for their loss, theft, or damage.
- Other items that could cause a danger to students or which are disruptive in nature include, but are not limited to, firecrackers, stink bombs, matches, lighters, laser pointers, hot sauce, glitter, buck lure, permanent markers, superglue/nail glue, rubber bands, fake/counterfeit money, e-cigarettes, or any other items that are used to simulate smoking/tobacco use.
- Clothing that contains messages that disrupt the learning environment.
- Items intended for sale are not allowed.
- Glass bottles or containers (all drink bottles must have screw-on cap). **No Energy Drinks!**
- Toys including spinners, Needoh/squishies/stress balls, fidgets, wireless speakers, skateboards, and any items of value not required for school.
- Blankets, flags of any kind.
- Heelys or comparable footwear.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION (PDA)

Public displays of affection during the school day are not allowed. PDA includes, but is not limited to, holding hands, hugging, and kissing. PDA falls under the District Code of Conduct Section 1 offenses, inappropriate physical contact between students.

RESTROOMS

Students are encouraged to use the hallway restrooms during times designated by teachers. The Commons restroom, located at the cafeteria, is used during lunchtime and by hall pass only. Per the District Code of Conduct, stalls are limited to one person at a time. Multiple students in a restroom stall is an automatic office referral.

SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES

School counselors and the graduation coach work as team members with school staff, parents, and the community to create a caring, supportive climate and atmosphere whereby students can achieve academic success. The goal of our school counselors and graduation coach is to help students focus on academic achievement, personal/social development, and career planning so they achieve success in school and are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society.

Services provided by the Pike County Middle School Counseling Department include the following: individual counseling, group counseling, parent consultation, academic advisement, classroom guidance, crisis intervention, career development and guidance, mediation, conflict resolution, student support services team consultation, parent and family education, assessment results and interpretation, and community outreach and transition planning. Students may come to the Counseling Department with a teacher's permission. If the counselor is unable to see the student at that time, they may leave their name and a brief message, and the counselor will see them as soon as possible. However, in an emergency, the first available counselor will see the student. A teacher or administrator may also refer a student to a counselor if they feel that the student will benefit from counseling interventions or if they are aware of personal/social issues that need to be addressed. Parents/legal guardians may call and request that a counselor meet with their child, as well.

SCHOOL DETECTION AND DETERRENCE PROGRAM

This program reduces the presence of drugs, alcoholic beverages, abused medications, and weapons on school grounds. Random and unannounced visits, using highly trained detection canines, are escorted/observed by school personnel. Normal inspections include lockers, gym areas, common areas, vehicles, unoccupied restrooms, vacated classrooms, and perimeters of school property.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school hours for Pike County Middle School are 8:10 a.m. - 3:05 p.m. NO STUDENT SHOULD ARRIVE BEFORE 7:30 a.m. It is unsafe for students to be here unsupervised, and we cannot assume responsibility for safety before that time. Students should enter the building through the gym lobby doors adjacent to the bus lanes or the front doors located at the main entrance. Students will then report to the gym until dismissal to first period at 7:55. Students wishing to eat breakfast should do so in the cafeteria.

Unless participating in an after-school activity, all STUDENTS MUST BE PICKED UP BY 3:20 P.M.

A student participating in any after-school event/activity must be picked up no later than 10 minutes after the scheduled end of the event/activity. A student who is picked up late from two after-school events/activities will not be allowed to stay for any more events during the school year.

STUDENT DROP-OFF and PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Morning Drop-Off

Drivers may choose to enter the school campus through the Main Entrance or the Bus Entrance after 7:30 a.m. Drivers should pull forward toward the end of the sidewalk, and students **MUST** exit at the curb adjacent to the school building. After 7:50, all drop-offs will be at the front entrance. **After 8:10, a parent must enter the building with their child to check them in.**

Vehicles entering the Main Entrance should use both entrance lanes and merge into one lane at the front of the building. Drivers should pull forward so that multiple vehicles are curbside, and students can exit the vehicles safely. Vehicles **MUST NOT** enter the parking lot unless the driver parks in a designated space and escorts the student(s) across the drop-off lane using one of the two designated crosswalks. Visitors to the school must check in at the front office located just inside the main entrance front doors. Vehicles entering the Bus Entrance must yield to bus traffic at all times. Drivers should pull forward so that multiple vehicles are curbside, and students can exit the vehicle safely.

Afternoon Pick-Up

Students will be dismissed for pick-up around 3:05 when all buses are in place. Vehicle drivers may choose to enter the school campus for student pick-up through the Main Entrance or the Bus Entrance. It is essential for drivers and students to communicate which entrance will be used in the afternoon so the student will report to the proper area.

Vehicles entering the Main Entrance should use both lanes and merge into one lane at the front of the building. Drivers should pull forward so that multiple vehicles are curbside, and students can enter the vehicles safely. Vehicles **MUST NOT** enter the parking lot unless the driver parks in a designated space and escorts the student(s) from the building sidewalk across oncoming traffic using one of the two designated crosswalks.

Vehicles entering the campus at the bus entrance must yield to bus traffic at all times. Drivers should form a single lane of traffic behind the first stop line allowing buses to pass and align curbside for student loading. When buses exit the lanes adjacent to the building, drivers should pull forward maintaining a single lane so that multiple vehicles are curbside, and students can enter the vehicles safely. Vehicles **MUST NOT** enter the parking lot until all bus and car rider traffic has left.

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPH DISCLAIMER

During every school year, there are many opportunities for students to have pictures and/or information about themselves in the following publications. These publications include but are not limited to the following:

- Newspapers
- Newsletters
- Yearbook
- Clubs
- PTO programs
- School social media
- Pike Portraits
- Student of the month

This information is for the purpose of recognition for awards, honors, and/or achievements (honor roll, merit roll, student of the month, contests winners, athletics etc.) they may have received. The Pike County Journal-Reporter occasionally comes into the school to ask students a question and to take their pictures for publication in the newspaper. On rare occasions, a television news crew may be on campus and may photograph and/or interview students to show on television that evening. Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), parents have a right to deny the publication of such information about their children. **If you would like to opt out of having your child's photograph published, you must submit written notice to the school registrar (BennetAm@pike.k12.ga.us) within 30 days of the start of school or at the time of enrollment. This must be completed annually.**

STUDENT SAFETY

Students are expected to treat all people – other students, staff, and visitors, as well as themselves – with respect at all times. We have an expectation at Pike County Middle School that we will “Be Our Best Self.” **Students should report acts of aggression, hatefulness, or bullying to an adult immediately.** There are several avenues for these reports to be made:

1. Verbally tell the first staff member or administrator that you see about the incident you have witnessed or heard about.
2. Come to the counseling office and make a written report.
3. Sandy Hook Promise “Say Something” is a platform for students and parents to anonymously express their concerns about their students, friends, or classmates with people who can help. Reports can be made at Say Something Tips — Sandy Hook Promise online or through the Say Something mobile app, both of which are completely anonymous. Further information regarding Sandy Hook Promise “Say Something” is available in the High School, NGA, and Middle School Handbooks, as well as on the website for each school and that of the District. To report a tip, you can use the QR code below, call 1-844-572-9669, text TIP to 79775, or visit online at saysomething.net.

Students should also report to a staff member any person that they see who looks suspicious. As a community, we don’t want to live in fear, but we do encourage all members to trust their gut feelings and instincts and report when something is concerning.



Open Gate Weapons Detection System

Pike County Schools have implemented the use of the OpenGate Weapon Detection Systems (WDS) in the Middle School, Ninth Grade Academy, and High School. All students and guests must pass through the WDS as they enter these buildings. Students and guests that trigger the alarm will be required to present whatever article is in their possession that causes the alert. Any item that is inappropriate for school buildings will not be allowed in the building. If possession of the item is a violation of the law, then the school administrator will advise the School Resource Officer who will take appropriate action. Students who attempt to bring a prohibited item onto campus will be subject to school disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Conduct as well as any legal consequences if the item is a violation of the law.

Audio Enhancement Safe+ ALERT NOTIFICATIONS

All Pike County employees will be equipped with an Audio Enhancement crisis response notification lanyard. Each employee will be trained in the proper use of the notification system. The alert notification system will appear on staff desktops and display devices throughout the school, and announcements will be made by intercom throughout the building.

TRANSPORTATION

In the interest of our students’ safety and well-being, we will not accept transportation changes via telephone. All transportation changes **must be in writing** bearing the signature of the student’s parent/guardian and a phone number for verification. If you e-mail or fax the changes, they **must be in writing** bearing the signature of the student’s parent/guardian, a copy of your driver’s license, and a phone number. Due to time constraints, no transportation change requests will be accepted after 2:00 p.m. **DO NOT RELY ON VOICEMAIL**

FOR TRANSPORTATION ISSUES. Our transportation department does not allow distractions such as balloons, and/or oversized or breakable items to be taken on the school bus.

TEXTBOOKS/NOVELS

Each student will be issued system-owned books. Lost or damaged books must be paid for by the student. Students are responsible for the books they are issued.

VISITORS

All visitors to the building must enter the main entrance, walk through the OpenGate System, and sign-in at the front office to receive a visitor's badge. All visitors will be escorted by school personnel to designated areas. Any person seen in the building without proper identification or in an area not specifically approved upon signing in will be asked to leave the building immediately. Parent/legal guardians may observe their child's class, if desired. Requests should be made in writing to the school principal, and the principal will schedule a visit at an agreed upon time.

Parents who would like to eat lunch with their child may do so at a designated table in the cafeteria. Parents are only permitted to eat and interact with their child.

VOLUNTEERS/VISITORS

[Pike County School District Volunteer/Visitor Requirement Guidelines](#)

If you would like to volunteer, please visit the Pike County Schools website here:

<https://build.pike.k12.ga.us/hr/>. In the menu on the left, click [VOLUNTEERS](#) and follow the directions to apply. Please be advised that it may take a couple of weeks to process your application. Please direct any questions to Emily Johnson, Director of Human Resources, johnsoe@pike.k12.ga.us.