



Port Charlotte Middle School



Student Handbook

I. ATTENDANCE

a. ATTEND SCHOOL REGULARLY

- i. The Florida Compulsory School Attendance Law emphasizes the importance of attending school. It is your parents' responsibility, as well as yours, to make sure that you attend school regularly. The Florida Statutes state that you must attend school between the ages of 6 and 16. ***POOR ATTENDANCE COULD BE A FACTOR IN RETENTION OR PROMOTION. SEE THE STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN FOR MORE INFORMATION. YOU ARE EXPECTED TO ARRIVE AT SCHOOL ON TIME EVERYDAY AND BE IN YOUR SEAT IN YOUR FIRST PERIOD CLASS BY 9:25 A.M.*** The warning bell rings at 9:20 a.m. School begins promptly at 9:25 a.m. Any student who arrives to school after 9:25 a.m. is considered tardy and should report to the Main Reception Office for a tardy pass.

b. ASK YOUR PARENTS TO CALL THE STUDENT OFFICE (255-7460) WHENEVER YOU ARE ABSENT.

- i. If you are absent from school, remind your parent or guardian to call the Student Office at **255-7460 before 10:00 A.M.** on the day of your absence. You will receive an excused absence:
 1. if you are ill or suffer a serious injury
 2. if someone in your family is ill
 3. if there is a death in your immediate family
 4. if you have a dental or medical appointment
 5. if you are celebrating a religious holiday specific to your faith.

c. REQUESTING HOMEWORK WHEN YOU ARE ABSENT

- i. It is **YOUR** responsibility to ask your teachers for any make-up work. We ask that parents only request homework if their child is absent 3 days or longer. Teachers should be given 24 hours notice to get homework prepared. Once you return to school, you have 2 days for every day of absence to make up the work missed.

d. IF YOU MUST LEAVE SCHOOL EARLIER THAN THE END OF THE DAY, your parent or guardian should check in first at the Main Reception Desk. Parents will be asked to show identification to ensure student safety. You will be allowed to leave school grounds only with

your parents or the adults who are listed on your emergency card. If you return to school on the same day, please sign back in at the Reception Desk and receive a pass to class. **No early dismissals will be permitted after 3:15 p.m.**

II. GUM/CANDY

- a. Gum and Candy are prohibited on campus. All other food items are restricted to the cafeteria. No open containers or drinks will be permitted in the building, including water.

III. HALL PASSES

- a. A "planner" will be distributed to every student in the school. It will be utilized as a school wide hall pass to note and log the dates and times of clinic, office, restroom, and media center visits. Students will NOT be allowed out of class without a planner. Replacement cost for a lost/damaged planner is \$5.00 and can be purchased from the Front Office.

IV. PERSONAL PROPERTY

- a. You are responsible at all times for your personal property. If you bring cellular phones, MP3 devices, or any other electronic device to school, they must be turned off and stored for the entire school day. Use of these items during the school day will result in confiscation and parents will have to pick the item up at school. PCMS is **not responsible** for the theft of personal property.

V. STUDENT DRESS CODE

- a. The School Board of Charlotte County believes that there is a relationship between student attire and classroom behavior, attitude, and achievement. The objectives of this serious and conservative dress code are to bring more dignity to the classroom, to have fewer classroom distractions, to help achieve stronger discipline, and to help provide guidelines for appropriate attire. **It is expected that students will wear the following:**
 - i. Clothing and hairstyles which are not harmful, disruptive or hazardous to health or safety.
 - ii. Appropriate undergarments at all times. Undergarments are to remain unexposed.
 - iii. Footwear which is appropriate to activities and conditions.
 - iv. Tops and dresses which have sleeves.
 - v. Pants, skorts, shorts, skirts, and dresses whose length is about the knee or longer when standing.
 - vi. Pants, skorts, shorts, and skirts are to be fastened at the waist.
- b. **It is also expected that students will not wear the following:**
 - i. Caps, hats, headwear, or sunglasses except when authorized by school staff.

- ii. Apparel, emblems, insignias, badges, or symbols that display obscenities, are sexually suggestive, or that promote the use of alcohol, drugs, violence or other illegal activities.
 - iii. Apparel or symbols which are identified with gang or cult involvement, participation, or membership, or that are offensive to any specific group.
 - iv. Any articles of clothing or jewelry that could likely cause injury or disruption, such as belts, chains, bracelets, rings, chokers (with or without spikes or studs), or wallet chains.
 - v. Halters, backless or sleeveless dresses or tops, tops with low or revealing necklines, or any other clothing which may be distracting unless covered by an appropriate outer garment which remains as part of the outfit. In addition, the midriff shall not be exposed.
 - vi. Disruptive facial paint, stickers, inappropriate make-up, distractive or disruptive hair coloring or styles (i.e. primary colors, fluorescent colors, spikes, etc.)
- c. Effective July 1, 201, Florida Statute prohibits a student, while on the grounds of a public school during the regular school day, from wearing clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent or vulgar manner or that disrupts the orderly learning environment
- i. Pants/Shorts must be above the hips at all times. Consequences for violation of this offense will be as follows:
 - 1. First Offense – verbal warning and phone call to parent/guardian
 - 2. Second Offense – Student is ineligible to participate in any extra curricular activity for 5 school days. Parent/Student conference will be scheduled
 - 3. Third Offense – Student receives ISS and student is ineligible to participate in extra curricular activity for 30 school days.
- d. **Please refer to the 2013 – 2014 Charlotte County Code of Conduct for updated information. Note: The principal or the principal's designee has the final authority for interpreting whether a student's apparel conforms to the dress code. If it is determined that a student's clothing does not comply with the dress code, OR that it is disruptive, a parent/guardian may be asked to bring an appropriate change of clothes to school, or a student may be sent home to change clothes.**

VI. STUDENT SERVICES

- a. **Office Appointments** – If you wish to see your counselor or an administrator, you may obtain an appointment slip from any period teacher.
- b. **Telephone Communications** – Student use of school telephones will be limited to emergency calls. All calls will be monitored by school staff. Teachers are unable to take calls except during their planning times.

Please leave a message on their voicemail and they will return your call within 24 hours.

- c. **Student Messages/Deliveries** – Students are encouraged to make all plans and have all required materials prior to arriving at school each day. To avoid interruption to the learning environment, families are asked to refrain from requesting school personnel to deliver messages/materials to students. Special occasion gifts for students will not be accepted in the office and can not be brought on school transportation.
- d. **Media Center** – The Media Center is a focus of learning for the entire school. Research, recreational reading, browsing, and technological activities take place within the Media Center. You may use the Media Center before school. If you wish to go to the Media Center at any other time, you must have your planner signed by your teacher. The Media Center will be closed during 3rd period AND 8th period with the exception of returning books.
 - i. **Loan Policies**
 - 1. Books can be checked out for two weeks. Overdue fines are five cents per day for each overdue book. You must pay the purchase price of the book or material if you lose it. If you have overdue books, you must resolve that situation before you are allowed to check out additional books.

VII. Student I.D.

- a. You will be assigned a Student ID number. Students will need their ID number to check out books. Any materials that you check out are your responsibility. Any items not returned will be the financial responsibility of the student.

VIII. School Cafeteria

- a. Champ's Cafe, the school's cafeteria, serves breakfast from 8:50 a.m. - 9:20 AM. and lunch to the students and staff PCMS. Food may be eaten only in the cafeteria. All students have **Personal Identification Number (PIN)** to be entered into the computer for quick identification. It may also be used for prepaying of lunches, desserts, milk, etc. Each student should memorize his/her number as quickly as possible. Breakfast prices for 2013 – 2014 school year are \$1.10 and lunch prices are \$2.40.

IX. SCHOOL CLINIC

- a. PCMS is fortunate to have the services of a school nurse. If you need medical assistance, the school nurse is there to help you and to notify your parents/guardian if she feels that further treatment is required. The nurse will assist students with medical emergencies, the dispensing of medications during the school day and maintain the immunization and health records for all students.
- b. If you become ill during class, you may ask your classroom teacher to sign your planner to the clinic. ***Do not use your cell phone to call your parent***

if you do not feel well. The nurse will contact your parent when you are at the clinic.

- c. **MEDICATIONS** – Medication will be dispensed from the School clinic upon the receipt of a "Prescribed Medication in Charlotte County Schools" form properly completed by a doctor and parent/guardian. Aspirin, Tylenol, and other over the counter medicines fall under the same category as prescription medication and the above rule applies to the dispensing of these medicines as well. Medication is kept in the School Clinic and given to students by authorized personnel. **AT NO TIME ARE STUDENTS PERMITTED TO CARRY PRESCRIPTION OR OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATION.** Consequences of this offense will be dealt with according to the CCPS Code of Student Conduct.

X. STUDENT SAFETY

a. Transportation

- i. **Bus Students** – Only students who are eligible to ride buses may do so. If your child is a walker, or is out of district, he or she cannot ride a bus for any reason. Bus Passes will NOT be given unless an emergency situation arises. Students must obtain an official bus pass from a school personnel or they will not be allowed to ride a bus different from their assigned bus. Students are NOT permitted to exit the bus at any other stop other than their assigned bus stop.
- ii. **Parent Pick Up** – For the safety and security of all students, Parent Pick Up/Drop Off will occur at the front of the school ONLY (Midway Blvd).
- iii. **Walkers** – It is your responsibility to leave the school grounds as quickly as possible when you are dismissed from your last class.
- iv. **Bikers** – To protect your bike in the fenced lockup area, make sure that you have a bike lock and use it each time you leave your bike. **Remember it is a Florida Law that all bike riders MUST wear a helmet.**

b. Student Conduct

- i. The discipline procedure is a step process. The use of these steps will open the lines of communication among the teachers, your child and yourselves. Our goal is to encourage any child having difficulty in the classroom to change their behavior so that they will achieve success.
 1. Step 1
 - a. Teacher Verbal Warning to Student
 - b. Teacher documents step in FOCUS under Student Documentation
 2. Step 2
 - a. Teacher/Student Conference & Phone Call
 - i. Teacher documents step in FOCUS under Student Documentation

- ii. Teacher phones home and documents time of call in FOCUS under Student Documentation
- 3. Step 3
 - a. Guidance/Student Conference
 - b. Teacher documents step in FOCUS under Student Documentation
 - c. Teacher emails Guidance Counselor with information on student.
 - d. Guidance Counselor meets with student
 - e. Guidance Counselor phones parents and informs that next step will result in Parent Conference
 - f. Guidance Counselor adds to documentation in FOCUS after phone call
- 4. Step 4
 - a. Referral
 - b. Teacher will input Referral into FOCUS
 - c. Admin will administer appropriate discipline
- ii. Major Behaviors, such as fighting, will result in an immediate Administrative Referral. Consequences range from assignment of ISS to Out of School Suspension.
- iii. Illegal activities such as vandalism, graffiti, use or possession of drugs, paraphernalia, alcohol, tobacco products or other controlled substances are prohibited. Matches, lighters, weapons, firearms or any other dangerous items are also illegal on campus. All of these activities may result in suspension, expulsion, and/or police action.
 - ** Note: This list is not intended to be all inclusive; therefore a student's action will be subject to the discretionary authority of the principal/designee of the school.**
- iv. All rules apply when you are:
 - 1. on the school grounds
 - 2. off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event.
 - 3. at assigned CCPS Bus Stop
- v. Bullying/Harassment
 - 1. Bullying/Harassment of students or staff, whether verbal or physical, will not be tolerated at PCMS or at any school sponsored activity. Name calling, obscenities, teasing a person about their physical appearance, written comments about a person and inappropriate gestures are a few examples of unacceptable behaviors may include out of school suspensions. Students may also utilize a CCPS Bully Reporting Website. A link can be found at the Port Charlotte Middle School Website for this site.
- vi. Zero Tolerance for School Related Violent Crime

1. Zero tolerance for school-related violent crime is part of a comprehensive approach to reducing school-related violent crime and for ensuring environments that promote learning and a high standard of student conduct. Students who are determined by the principal to have committed a zero tolerance, violent crime on school property, on school-sponsored transportation, or during school-sponsored activities, shall be recommended to the Superintendent for expulsion. The Superintendent will consider each case-by-case basis and may assign a student to a disciplinary program or alternative setting if it is determined to be in the best interest of the student and the school system. See the Code of Conduct for a list of zero tolerance offenses. State Board Rule 6A-1.0404, Florida Administrative Code, provides for teachers and other school personnel to file charges against a student if a crime has been committed against a teacher or other instructional personnel on school property, on school sponsored transportation, or during school sponsored activities.

XI. TECHNOLOGY USEAGE – Please refer to the 2013 – 2014 “Student Code of Conduct” for any new updates in the Technology Code

- a. Because we use technology in the Media Center and in many of our classrooms, you will be asked to sign and have your parents sign the **Charlotte County Public Schools Student Agreement of Understanding** relating to the proper use of the local area networks, computers, the internet, and other related technology equipment. The district policy for the use of as well as the discipline procedures for misuse of the technology are spelled out in this agreement.

XII. PARENT INFORMATION

- a. **Resource Officer**
 - i. PCMS has the full-time services of a Resource Officer from the Charlotte County Sheriff’s Office. She is available for classroom lectures, individual and group consultation, parent concerns, community involvement, and assistance and supervision both in school and at extra curricular events.
- b. **School Social Worker**
 - i. A social worker is available to assist the administration and counselors as a liaison between home and school. Attendance, individual and group problems, community resources and parental consultations are services provided.
- c. **Parent Conferences**
 - i. Parent conferences should be made through the student’s Guidance Counselor.
- d. **Visitors on Campus**

- i. Any visitor, parent, or volunteer must check in at the Main Reception Office and obtain a visitors pass prior to going to a designated area of the building. Be prepared to show ID. Your drivers license will be scanned through our Raptor system and an ID badge will be generated for you prior to entry. Please report back to the reception area to return your pass before leaving the campus. **Students are not allowed to bring guests to visit.** Unauthorized persons on campus may be prosecuted for trespassing.
- e. **Student Insurance**
 - i. Student insurance is available for all students. We encourage you to take this insurance since the school accepts no financial responsibility or liability for accidents. Students who participate in interscholastic athletics must be covered by accident and health insurance. Information on the insurance plan will be given to the students on the first day of school.
- f. **Withdrawal of a Student from School**
 - i. Parents must come to the Registration/Records Office prior to the student's last day of attendance and sign the withdrawal form. The student, on his/her last day of attendance, will take the withdrawal form to each teacher for signature and return each issued textbook. The Media Specialist's signature is also required. **In order for a student to enroll in another Charlotte County School, he/she must obtain a withdrawal form from the previous school.**
- g. **Academic Honor Roll**
 - i. Students earning a 3.5 grade point average or better at the end of a nine week grading period will be placed on the A-Honor Roll List. Students with a 3.0-3.49 grade point average will be recognized on the B Honor Roll.
- h. **Honor Society**
 - i. Membership in the Port Charlotte Middle School National Jr. Honor Society will be based on scholarship, character, leadership, citizenship, and services. To be eligible for membership in this society, you must have been in attendance for the first three grading periods of the year at Port Charlotte Middle School and have maintained a minimum grade point average of 3.5 in each of the three marking periods, with satisfactory record of conduct. Students must have the approval of the team's teachers.
- i. **Exceptional Student Education (ESE)**
 - i. Charlotte County Schools assures that every exceptional student will be afforded a free appropriate public education in compliance with Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and P.L. 94-142 of 1975. For further information, please contact the school's ESE Liaison, the Principal, or the Exceptional Student Education Office, 1445 Education Way, Port Charlotte, FL 33948-

1053