

# PARSIPPANY-TROY HILLS TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT



## EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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# **District Employee Handbook**

The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District's Employee Handbook contains only general guidelines and information. It is not intended to be comprehensive in nature nor intended to address all the possible applications of, or exceptions to, the general policies and procedures described. For that reason, if you have any questions concerning eligibility for a particular benefit, or the applicability of a policy or practice to you personally or professionally, you should address your specific questions to your building level administrator, director, supervisor, or the Human Resources Department for clarification.

Some of the subjects described in this handbook are covered in detail in official board policy and procedure documents. You should refer to these documents for specific information, since this handbook only briefly summarizes those benefits. These policies can be viewed in paper form at the district's Central Office, or electronically online at the district's website <http://www.pthsd.k12.nj.us/> under "BOE."

This handbook is not a contract. The procedures, practices, policies, and benefits described here may be modified or discontinued without prior notice. Every attempt will be made to inform you of any changes as they occur. However, it is your responsibility to review board policies and procedures in detail and to request any clarification needed from your principal, director, supervisor or the Human Resources office.

## **District Information**

Parsippany's highly recognized schools contribute to Parsippany-Troy Hills consistently being named in the Top 20 of Money Magazine's "Best Places to Live."

The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District serves over 7,000 students daily through its ten (10) elementary schools for grades PreK/K through 5; two (2) middle schools for grades six through eight; and two (2) comprehensive high schools for grades nine through twelve. The wealth of program offerings in the district is the direct result of a rigorous, ongoing, professional development program and involvement and commitment of the community that has been incorporated into the basic educational programs of the children of Parsippany-Troy Hills. In addition to our comprehensive educational programs offered to general education students, our district also takes great pride in its in-district offerings for special needs students, both serving disabled as well as accelerated learners.

Our elementary schools offer a full program of instruction that strives for excellence while addressing the needs of an ever-more diverse student population. Our elementary staff set high expectations for student achievement and the safety and welfare for all of our students. They strive to develop students' abilities to think critically, be problem-solvers, and develop creativity. In addition, the focus of our instructional program is designed to prepare our students to be productive, contributing members of our community and our nation by providing them with the skills they need for both success and the limitless opportunities they will enjoy as 21st-century adults.

Our middle school structure is based on a child-centered philosophy supported by grade-level academic teams that additionally offer our students a more personalized approach to learning. Each academic team is comprised of a Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Reading/Writing teacher. Our teachers are highly trained in the instructional methods most suitable for pre-adolescent students. Emphasis is placed equally upon the individual student's academic, personal, emotional, and social growth. Students are provided with an

extensive, exploratory program in such areas as computers, world languages, technology, music, library, and media skills. Health and physical education are provided for each grade level.

Our high schools provide a comprehensive instructional program that exceeds the State requirements and meets the needs of a diverse student population. Since the district supports a comprehensive educational program, students have the opportunity to prepare for advanced training in college, technical school or for employment after graduation. Work-study, co-op programs, and courses at the county vocational school are available to Parsippany students. In addition, a wide variety of college-preparatory courses, including Advanced Placement in Chemistry, Calculus, Computer Science, European History, American History, World Languages and English provide students with the academic training needed to succeed at a two-year or four-year institution of higher learning.

### **Mission**

The mission of the Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District, in partnership with families and the greater community, is to challenge and nurture all students academically and to develop confident learners who are compassionate, generous, appreciative, and invested in their diverse world. This will be accomplished through innovative opportunities that inspire life-long learning, critical thinking and problem solving, creative exploration, and the democratic collaboration among students and staff.

### **Philosophy**

The Board of Education, administration, faculty, staff, and patrons believe the Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District exists to help students by preparing them to become productive citizens in a democratic society. To achieve this, we believe that it is necessary to administrators, teachers, students, and parents to take responsibility for each child's education. We believe that only through common effort will individuals develop the social, intellectual, physical, and emotional potential, which allows students to become productive members of society.

In order to perpetuate and improve society, Parsippany-Troy Hills Schools will provide an environment for all students to develop habits, knowledge, and technological skills, thereby preparing them to be able to make sound choices, participate effectively in a post high school educational and/or vocational pursuit, and become responsible citizens of the twenty-first century.

### **Strategic Goals**

We will serve all of our students by focusing on the following goals within a comprehensive and coherent PK-12 framework:

- \* Our district will create an innovative and rigorous educational experience in a borderless learning community that produces creative students who are problem solvers and self-directed individuals.
- \* All students will receive social and emotional support to become adaptable, confident citizens who embody self-awareness and strong interpersonal skills, capable of responsible decision-making and managing their emotions and behaviors.
- \* Our community of adult learners will be fully engaged in professional growth experiences which enable them to continuously hone their craft and maximize student achievement.

## Board of Education

The Board of Education is a representative body elected by the registered voters of the Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District of Morris County. It is the purpose and the role of the Board of Education to exercise general supervision over the schools of the district, and to ensure that the schools are maintained as provided by the state statutes, the rules and procedures of the New Jersey State Board of Education and/or the New Jersey Department of Education, and the policies, rules and procedures of the school district.

## Board of Education

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Frank Neglia     | President      |
| Alison Cogan     | Vice-President |
| Tim Berrios      | Member         |
| Kendra Von Achen | Member         |
| Andrew Choffo    | Member         |
| Deborah Orme     | Member         |
| Matthew DeVitto  | Member         |
| Suzy Golderer    | Member         |
| Judy Mayer       | Member         |

## Employment Information

### Equal Opportunity Employment

The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, military status or any other basis prohibited by law. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience and abilities. See **board policy 1530** and **board policy 1550** for further information.

Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age or military status should contact the district's Human Resource Office. Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should also contact the district's Human Resource Office.

### Job Vacancy Announcements

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, with the assistance of the administrative staff, to determine the professional staff personnel needs of the Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District and the individual schools. Announcements of job vacancies by position will be posted on the district website ([www.pthsd.k12.nj.us](http://www.pthsd.k12.nj.us)) under "District."

## **Professional Staff Recruiting and Hiring**

The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District's hiring procedures comply with all federal and state hiring practices. All candidates will be considered on the basis of job qualifications, related training, prior field experience and the ability to fulfill the requirements of the position for which they have applied. Assistant Superintendents, Building Principals, Directors, and Department Supervisors are responsible for selecting suitable candidates to recommend to the Superintendent, and thereby the Board of Education, for employment with the district.

## **Performance Evaluation**

Evaluation of an employee's job performance is a continual process that focuses on improvement of job-related knowledge, skills and dispositions. All certificated staff will be evaluated in accordance with AchieveNJ and the Marshall Model. All non-certificated support staff will be formally evaluated on a regular basis. Specific duties will be outlined by the immediate supervisor in relationship to the unique needs of the position. Copies of general job descriptions for all positions are available at the Central Office, and on the district website under "BOE."

## **Staff Development**

All district certified and support staff are encouraged to grow professionally. Professional learning for certified staff will occur through weekly collaborative meetings (i.e. common planning time, department meetings). Moreover, the district provides certified and non-certified staff with PD (Professional Development) days, curriculum work, job embedded support (from ELA Literacy Coaches, Reading Specialists, Guidance Counselors, and Technology Specialists).

All new hires to the Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District will participate in a 3-day NSO (New Staff Orientation) which includes learning about district policies, procedures, curriculum, initiatives, and our current district strategic goals. All teachers who are new to the teaching profession will also participate in a one year mentoring program with a District New Teacher Mentor and be supported at their site by the building principal and supervisor. This support will include completion of the novice teacher program required by NJDOE.

In addition, all teachers, regardless of experience, will complete a Professional Development Plan (PDP) to help guide and personalize their desired professional learning. Support staff will be provided various opportunities for general and/or job-related training.

## **District Research**

The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District encourages educational research by advance degree candidates, agencies, and institutions of higher learning. All research projects to be conducted in the schools must have prior approval by the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and the Superintendent. Please contact the Office of Curriculum and Instruction to begin this process. Consent forms are mandatory prior to any research.

## **Substitutes**

All teacher substitutes are being outsourced through Educational Staffing Solutions (ESS). All substitutes are required to meet background checks and applicable screenings required of full-time teachers in the district. All

Long-term substitutes (LTS) must complete mandatory professional development training required by the NJDOE and PTHSD BOE. Finally, all (LTS) will sign an Acceptable Use Agreement before accessing district technology.

### **Non-tenure and Tenure**

The Superintendent and designees, at the direction of the Board of Education, shall recommend employment for the professional staff, maintain personnel records, administer leaves, evaluate performance, issue or terminate contracts within the provisions established by New Jersey Statute Title 18A Education and TeachNJ. See section 3000 of **board policies** for additional information regarding professional teaching staff, section 1000 for professional administrative staff, and section 4000 for professional support staff.

### **Notice of Non-Discrimination**

Any individuals who have entered into employment agreements with Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District are hereby notified that our district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability. Any employee having inquiries concerning our school district's compliance with the laws and regulations implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), the Age Discrimination Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), or Titles II or III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), is directed to the Compliance Coordinator, who has been designated by our school district to coordinate our district's efforts to comply with the laws and regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, the Age Discrimination Act, Section 504, and the ADA. In addition, any inquiries concerning our district's compliance with the employment provisions of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is also directed to the Compliance Coordinator.

### **Re-assignment of Duties/Reduction in Workforce**

All district personnel are subject to assignment and re-assignment of duties at the discretion of the Superintendent, acting as the designee of the district Board of Education. Employee re-assignment constitutes a transfer to another position, department, or school facility which does not necessitate a change in the employee's contract. All transfers will adhere to current negotiated contract language. Extracurricular or supplemental duty assignments may also be re-assigned at any time.

Staff members may be re-assigned to another position in the school district in order to meet the needs of the District. The most common needs occur when enrollment patterns change either by school attendance areas or by course offerings and there are excess staff members at a school which may be needed at another school location. The Board of Education reserves the right to reduce the teaching workforce in accordance with NJ Statute and Code- Title 18A, as necessary due to decreases in student enrollment, school district re-organization, or the financial condition of the school district. Additionally, whenever it becomes necessary due to lack of funding, lack of work, or in interest of the economy, the Board of Education may reduce the number of non-instructional personnel in accordance with NJ Statute and Code. See **board policy 3146**, **board policy 4145**, and **board policy 4146** for additional information.

### **Workload and Work Schedules**

**Professional Employees (Exempt):** Professional and administrative employees are exempt from overtime pay and are employed on a 10 or 12-month basis, according to the work schedules set forth by the district and in conjunction with Collective Bargaining Agreement. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule for teachers and all school holidays. Notice of work schedules including required days of service

and scheduled holidays will be distributed each school year.

**Support Staff Employees (Non-Exempt):** Support staff members will be notified annually of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their specific position. Support staff employees are NOT exempt from overtime and are NOT authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedules without prior approval from their supervisors. See **board policy 4410** and **board policy 4413** for additional information.

- Ten-month professional staff members (teachers) are employed for 186 days.
- Ten-month paraprofessional support staff members are employed for 184 days.
- Twelve-month administrative staff member (principals, assistant principals, supervisors, directors) are employed for 220 days.
- Twelve-month secretarial staff are employed for 245 days.
- The custodial staff, maintenance staff, bus drivers, are employed as per their individual affiliated contract.
- Other positions might have a different total for number of work days due to special circumstances. Please refer to your letter contract for your specific obligation.

## **Compensation and Benefits Information**

The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District Board of Education recognizes attractive compensation plans which include excellent base salary, professional development incentives and employee benefits are necessary to recruit and retain highly qualified staff. The Board has final authority over salary schedule and fringe benefit package decisions for all professional and support staff employed by the Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District.

### **Contracts**

Non-tenured teachers will be notified of being re-hired no later than April 15 of each calendar year. Tenured teachers are automatically re-hired. Professional and support staff will receive employment contracts, annually with updated salary information after board approval. Newly hired professional staff must provide a valid New Jersey Department of Education teaching certificate, all pertinent college transcripts indicating completion of coursework requirements.

Moreover, all new employees are required to submit to a fingerprinting/background check through a state approved-selected agency. Employment is contingent on the results of this process. The cost incurred by the new employee for this background check ranges from **\$26.00 to \$66.00**; however, this cost is subject to change without prior notice. All new employees are also required to present a legitimate form of identification proving they are allowed to work in the United States. All new employees are required to undergo state mandated professional development training to satisfy the district insurance liability assurances. These mandatory state and district professional development topics will be monitored through the Superintendent's Office. All trainings must be completed by October 1 of the new school year.

### **Salary, Wages and Stipends**

Salaries are negotiated by the BOE and each respective Collective Bargaining Unit every three years. Bargaining Unit employees who perform extracurricular duties or supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the district's Collective Bargaining Agreement.

## Payroll Information

**Pay Checks:** All employees will be paid on a bi-monthly basis. **Direct deposit** is required as per Policy 6511 for all employees by the district instead of the traditional issuing of paper payroll checks. Employees must enroll in Direct deposit by contacting the Payroll Department. Direct deposit forms are available on the Human Resources Website. Employees will no longer receive a paper verification of their payroll information; however, they may log into the districts DOC/Sharepoint portal for information about deductions, withholdings, and benefit status each month.

**Payroll Deductions:** Tax deferral options for additional retirement plans and supplemental insurance premiums are available. Contact the Business Office with questions.

**Pay Periods:** Payroll is distributed on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of each month. If the 15<sup>th</sup> or the 30<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or holiday, payday will be the last workday prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup>.

## Health Benefits

**Health Insurance:** The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District's Board of Education provides many employees with medical insurance (i.e. health benefits). Health benefits vary depending on the type of employee and/or bargaining unit the employee is a member. For information concerning medical/health care benefits, please contact Mrs. Stella Gizas, Confidential Secretary to the Business Office at [sgizas@pthsd.net](mailto:sgizas@pthsd.net) or at (973) 263-7255.

**Supplemental Insurance:** Employees of the Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District have the opportunity to purchase a variety of supplemental insurances. Vision, dental, and fringe benefits within the America Fidelity Assurance Company are available at the employee's expense and enrollment is optional. Enrollment eligibility for newly hired employees is the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month following 30 days of employment and during the annual enrollment period.

**Workers' Compensation:** All Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District employees are covered under Workers' Compensation Insurance. Employees are required to report any on-the-job injury in person to the administrative supervisor and building nurse as soon as possible, but no more than 24 hours after the injury occurs. The supervisor and/or building nurse will contact Stella Gizas in the Business Office. At that time, information will be given concerning the specific doctor the employee is to see and any other information pertinent to the injury. All guidelines concerning Workers' Compensation procedures will be provided by Stella Gizas in the Business Office as required by our insurance provider.

## Employee Conduct and Welfare

The Board of Education expects that each professional and support staff member shall put forth every effort to promote a quality instructional program in the school district. In building a quality program, employees must meet certain expectations in regard to their professional conduct. For specific information, please see **board policies 3270 and 3211** for certificated staff and **4215** for non-certificated staff.

## Attendance, Leave and Absences

Consistent contact with students and staff is important to the learning environment and district operation and therefore is an essential duty of a professional staff member's position. When a professional staff member is

routinely tardy, frequently absent or is absent for an extended period of time, the learning environment and district operations deteriorate, and the students suffer. Professional staff employees may be required to secure physician's note and meet with the Assistant Superintendent to address excessive absences or tardiness.

**Attendance:** Punctuality and attendance are a crucial part of the staff's responsibility as each position directly affects the learning environment. If you are unable to report to work on one of your scheduled days, it is your responsibility to notify ESS (formerly S4T) as soon as possible so appropriate measures can be taken to cover your position.

**Sick Leave:** Sick days are contractually provided to staff members. Please check your association contract or check with Human Resources to find what you are entitled to as a PTHSD employee. Sick days can be accumulated and rolled over from year to year.

**Personal Days:** Personal days are contractually provided to staff members. Please check your association contract or check with Human Resources to find what you are entitled to as a PTHSD employee. Personal days cannot be carried over from year to year.

**Family Illness Days:** Family Illness Days are contractually provided to staff members. Please check your association contract or check with Human Resources to find what you are entitled to as a PTHSD employee. Family Illness days cannot be carried over from year to year.

**Vacation days:** Vacation days vary for Non-affiliated Central Office staff. Twelve-month administrative bargaining unit members earn twenty-five vacation days per year. Vacation is awarded each year in July. Twelve-month support staff earn twenty-five vacation days per year. First year administrators, accrue pro-rated vacation days until the end of their first year, please check with the Central Office if there is a question.

### **Professional Dress Code**

The district administration encourages professional attire. Both professional and support staff employees should check the BOE Dress Code Policy, and see their immediate supervisor for specific dress code requirements associated with their position.

### **Staff Health and Safety**

The health and safety of all district personnel is of vital importance to the school district. The Board of Education will seek to provide safe working conditions for all staff members and will give prompt consideration to those conditions which may present a threat to the health and safety of staff members. The district will respond to employee requests for reasonable accommodations when an employee has a disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All employees will receive annual training on universal precautions and the district's communicable disease policy.

**Communicable Diseases:** The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to protect the health of students and employees from the risk posed by infectious diseases. The Board also has the responsibility to uphold the right of affected individuals to privacy and confidentiality, to continue their employment, and to be treated the employee in a non-discriminatory manner. The district requires all staff to routinely observe universal precautions to prevent exposure to disease-causing organisms, and the district will provide necessary equipment/supplies to implement universal precautions whenever deemed appropriate.

**Drug-Free Workplace:** Student and employee safety is of paramount concern to the Board of Education. In recognition of the threat to safety posed by employee use or possession of drugs or alcohol, the Board of Education commits itself to a continuing good-faith effort to maintain a drug-free workplace. The Board of Education shall not tolerate the manufacture, use, possession, sale, distribution or being under the influence of controlled substances, alcoholic beverages or unauthorized prescription medications by district employees on any district property; on any district-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or district activities; off district property at any district-sponsored or district-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the supervision of the school district; or during any period of time such employee is supervising students on behalf of the school district or is otherwise engaged in school district business.

**Tobacco Use:** The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District, and each of the building facilities located within, has been designated as ‘tobacco free’. All persons are expected to refrain from the use of tobacco in any form while in and/or on school property. This includes all school and non-school events held on school property.

### **Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect**

The Board of Education requires its staff members to comply with the New Jersey state child abuse and neglect laws and the mandatory reporting of suspected neglect and/or abuse. All employees are required to view the district’s SafeSchool training video upon entering into employment with the district. Copies of the training video and re-training information may be accessed on-line, through SafeSchools by using your account membership Username and Password.

Any school official or employee acting in his or her official capacity who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or who observes the child being subjected to conditions or circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, will immediately make a report to the building principal or his or her designee, including any report of excessive absences that may indicate educational neglect. The principal or designee will then become responsible for reporting such abuse.

### **Technology Usage**

The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District's technology exists for the purpose of maximizing the educational opportunities and achievement of district students. Research shows that students who have access to technology improve achievement. In addition, technology assists with the professional enrichment of the staff and Board and increases engagement of students' families and other patrons of the district, all of which positively impact student achievement. The district will periodically conduct a technology census to ensure that instructional resources and equipment that support and extend the curriculum are readily available to teachers and students.

## **Separation from Employment**

### **Suspension**

The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent have been vested by the Board of Education with the authority to suspend any professional staff member for a serious violation of the policies and regulations of the Board of Education, or for violation of state law (i.e. disqualifying offense). Action shall be taken when, in the judgment of the Superintendent, the best interests of

the school will be served by immediate suspension.

Staff members may be suspended by the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent with pay after being notified of the basis for the suspension and given an opportunity to discuss or rebut the charges. Staff members may be terminated or suspended without pay if the employee is indicted on a criminal charge.

### **Termination of Professional Staff**

Termination of tenured certificated personnel shall be done in accordance with the provisions of the Teacher Tenure Act of New Jersey (TEACHNJ) or other applicable law.

### **Termination of Support Staff**

Support staff members employed under contract may may be terminated or suspended with or without pay for violation of Board policies, violation of state law, or for any other good cause.

The superintendent shall report any such termination or suspension to the Board of Education. The superintendent's recommendation will stand approved unless reversed by the Board.

Although support staff employees not employed under a bargaining unit contract have no contractual right to continued employment from one academic term or year to the next, such employees may reasonably expect continued employment until notified otherwise.

### **Resignations**

If a PTHSD staff member elects to resign from their position in the district, they must alert their supervisor or principal, and draft a signed resignation letter to the Office of Human Resources so HR can properly process the resignation. It is expected that resigning employees provide a signed letter to HR.

## **Annual Training – Persons with Student Contact**

### **Annual Training and Notification**

All persons having contact with students of the Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District must receive annual instruction relating to the implementation of the district's board of education policies as well as state and federal requirements. Board policies related to the issues noted herein are located on the district's web site ([www.pthsd.k12.nj.us](http://www.pthsd.k12.nj.us)) and can be accessed by anyone in the public. Individuals requiring additional information on any of the topics defined below should consult these policies and consult with a district administrator if he/she has further questions.

As a person in contact with students of the Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District, will have a record of their completed SafeSchools training on file.

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." Rights granted by FERPA are highlighted below.

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the conditions outlined below (34 CFR § 99.31).
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
  - Accrediting organizations
  - Court system to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
  - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies
  - State and local authorities pursuant to specific state law

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification is left to the discretion of each school.

School employees do not have the right to see the educational records of a student unless they have a need to know in order to provide a free and appropriate public education. However, numerous employees in a school setting will have access to a substantial amount of information related to student behavior, progress, and personal information. All such information related to students is protected by FERPA and should be considered confidential. This information should never be discussed out of context or in non-job related situations. Employees are not authorized to have a "confidential" discussion with anyone other than school professionals who work directly with the child. No confidential information may be disclosed about any student unless a signed

release of information is obtained from the parent prior to the release of the information.

## **Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District and its employees will take action to protect students and other children from harm including, but not limited to, abuse and neglect, and will respond immediately when discovering evidence of harm to a child. Employees must cooperate fully with investigations of child abuse and neglect. The district prohibits discrimination, negative job action or retaliation against any district employee who, in good faith, reports alleged child abuse or neglect, including alleged misconduct by another district employee.

Employees failing to follow the directives of this policy or state or federal law will be subject to discipline including, but not limited to, termination, and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

The Board of Education requires its staff members to comply with the state child abuse and neglect laws and the mandatory reporting of suspected neglect and/or abuse. Any school official or employee acting in his or her official capacity who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or who observes the child being subjected to conditions or circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, shall directly and immediately speak with their supervisor/building principals and place a call to 1-877 NJ ABUSE. No internal investigation shall be initiated until such a report has been made, and even then the investigation may be limited if the report involves sexual misconduct by a school employee. The principal or designee will notify the superintendent and/or designee about the report.

In accordance with law, if a student reports alleged sexual misconduct on the part of a school district employee to an employee of this district, the employee who receives the report and the superintendent shall immediately report the allegation to the police/law enforcement.

## **Discrimination and Harassment**

The district's discrimination and harassment policy pertains to various interpersonal relationships, including the following: student to student, student to employee, employee to student, and employee to employee. Included in this policy is any unlawful discrimination, including harassment creating a hostile environment, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability, age or use of leave protected by the Family and Medical Leave Act, in its programs, activities and with regard to employment. Outlined below are common questions and answers related to this topic.

### **Q. What is a hostile environment?**

**A.** When the school or work environment becomes permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's participation in the district's programs and activities, or of an employee's employment, this is discrimination and is therefore within the prohibitions of district policy.

### **Q. What is sexual harassment?**

**A.** Simply stated, it is a form of discrimination based on sex, and, if it occurs at school or work, you're protected by state and federal law. More specifically, it is unwelcome sexual overtures in the workplace or school which results in the following: (1) your education or employment depends on your putting up with or giving in to the overtures; or (2) the sexual overtures makes a hostile environment. The overtures may be from a person in authority, like a supervisor at work or a teacher, or from a coworker or another student. Both males and females may be victims of sexual harassment.

**Q. What is meant by unwelcome?**

**A.** The victim determines what is unwelcome. One person may do or say something, and it is enjoyed or taken as a compliment; a different person may do or say the same thing to the same person and it is considered unwelcome.

**Q. Does this mean I can be accused of sexual harassment even if I didn't intend to sexually harass anyone?**

**A.** Yes. Intent is not part of the definition. Even though you may have thought it was just harmless teasing, flirting, or being funny, how the other person feels about the words or acts determines if harassment has occurred. In other words, you have to think about how your message will be received.

**Q. Since I cannot read someone's mind, how do I know if my behavior is welcome, or if I'm sexually harassing?**

**A.** Try asking yourself these questions: If you answer "no" to two or more of the questions, there is a good chance your behavior is unwelcome:

- Have I been told my actions are unwelcome or inappropriate?
- Would I say/do the same to someone of the same sex?
- Would I say/do this if my parent, girlfriend, boyfriend, spouse, boss, or teacher were present?
- Would I want someone to say/do this to my sister, brother, girlfriend, boyfriend, teacher, spouse, or boss?
- Would I want my actions to be on the evening news?
- Is the person to whom I'm saying/doing this in an equal position of power as me?
- Do my words/actions show respect for the other person?

**Q. So if the words or acts are welcome, there is no sexual harassment?**

**A.** Not necessarily. If other people in the same area who observe the behavior find it offensive and unwelcome, this can create a hostile environment, which is a form of sexual harassment.

**Q. What are some examples of sexual harassment?**

**A.** There is no absolute list because whether or not certain behavior is considered sexual harassment depends on whether others find the behavior unwelcome, but listed below are some actions that are likely to be viewed as sexual harassment.

- Making comments about a person's body or sex life
- Making sexual comments, jokes, or gestures
- Looking or staring at a person in a sexual manner
- Touching, grabbing, pinching, or brushing up against another in a sexual way
- Flashing or mooning
- Spreading rumors about a person's activities or relationships
- Blocking passage in a sexual way
- Writing sexual messages, love notes, or sexual graffiti
- Pulling clothing down or off
- Calling a person "gay" or "lesbian"
- Spying on someone while showering or dressing
- Forcing kisses or other sexual advances
- Forcing someone to look at sexual pictures or materials

**Q. What can I do if I feel like I'm being sexually harassed at school or work?**

**A.** Ask for help. Report it to a principal or the assistant superintendent. If it doesn't stop, file a complaint with

the compliance officer (the district's assistant superintendent). You may also file a complaint with the state agency that deals with discrimination in education or the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights; however, the district strongly recommends you begin with the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. School officials and employers have a legal responsibility to put a stop to the harassment.

**Q. What are the consequences of discrimination or harassment?**

A. Listed below are possible consequences.

- Suspension with pay
- Suspension without pay
- Termination of employment
- Loss of teaching certificate
- Sued in civil court

**Q. What do I do if I receive a complaint of student-on-student harassment, student-on-teacher harassment, or teacher-on-student harassment?**

A. The worst thing you can do is nothing. Report it immediately to the building principal or assistant superintendent.

**Q. How do I determine if harassment at early grade levels is really harassment?**

A. Do not ignore conduct that would be sexual harassment if committed by older students. Always report inappropriate conduct with a sexual or otherwise intimate component to the administration. In early grades the focus should be on the behavior and not the label attached to it. It is important to address inappropriate behavior and to prevent its recurrence at an appropriate age and/or developmental level. However, do not be too quick to label conduct by very young children as "sexual harassment." It may be described as "inappropriate conduct" or "disruptive behavior," or by some other term that is less emotionally charged. Do not let the label get in the way of solving the problem. The goal is to eliminate the behavior through appropriate interventions and/or consequences. In doing so, it is important to remember that students who engage in sexual acting out in very early grade levels may be the victims of inappropriate conduct elsewhere. However, inappropriate conduct may not be excused or ignored because the child acting out is a victim as well.

## **Technology Usage**

The Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District recognizes the educational and professional value of electronics- based information technology, both as a means of access to enriching information and as a tool to develop skills that students need.

The district's technology exists for the purpose of maximizing the educational opportunities and achievement of district students. The professional enrichment of the staff and Board, and increased engagement of the students' families and other patrons of the district are assisted by technology, but are secondary to the ultimate goal of student achievement.

Use of technology resources in a disruptive, manifestly inappropriate or illegal manner impairs the district's mission, squanders resources and shall not be tolerated. Therefore, a consistently high level of personal responsibility is expected of all users granted access to the district's technology resources. Development of students' personal responsibility is itself an expected benefit of the district technology program.

In the Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District, we are proud to embrace the power of social media as a tool to communicate and engage with our parents, students and community. Negative behavior or attacks on any student or employee, by a student, employee, parent or any member of the public is disruptive to our district's

positive learning environment and will not be tolerated.

## **Definitions**

For the purposes of this manual, procedures and forms, the terms identified below are defined.

*User* -- any person who is permitted by the district to utilize any portion of the district's technology resources, including but not limited to students, employees, School Board members and agents of the school district.

*User Identification (ID)* -- any identifier which would allow a user access to the district's technology resources, or to any program, including but not limited to, e-mail and Internet access.

*Password* -- a unique word, phrase or combination of alphabetic, numeric and non-alphanumeric characters used to authenticate a user ID as belonging to a user.

## **Technology Administration**

The Board directs the superintendent or designee to create rules and procedures governing technology usage in the district to support the district's policy, as needed. The Board directs the superintendent or designee to assign trained personnel to maintain the district's technology in a manner that will protect the district from liability and will protect confidential student and employee information retained or accessible through district technology resources. Trained personnel shall establish a retention schedule for the regular archival or deletion of data stored on district technology resources. Administrators of computer resources may suspend access to and/or availability of the district's technology resources to diagnose and investigate network problems or potential violations of the law or district policies, regulations and procedures.

## **User Identification and Network Security**

The district technology resources may be used by authorized students, employees, School Board members and other persons such as consultants, legal counsel and independent contractors, provided the Superintendent and Director of Technology have granted authority to do so.

Use of the district's technology resources is a privilege, not a right. No student, employee, or other potential user will be given an ID, password or other access to district technology if he/she is considered a security risk by the superintendent or designee.

Users must adhere to district policies, regulations, procedures, and other district guidelines. All users shall immediately report any security problems or misuse of the district's technology resources to an administrator or teacher.

## **User Agreement**

Unless authorized by the superintendent or designee, all users must have an appropriately signed *User Agreement* on file with the district before they are allowed access to district technology resources. All users must agree to follow the district's policies, regulations and procedures.

In addition, all users must recognize that they do not have a legal expectation of privacy in any e-mail use activities involving the district's technology. A user ID with e-mail access, if granted, is provided to users of this district's network and technology resources only on condition that the user consents to interception or access to all communications accessed, sent, received or stored using district technology in his or her *User Agreement*.

## **Privacy**

A user does not have a legal expectation of privacy in the user's electronic mail or other activities involving the district's technology resources. The school district may monitor use of district technology, including but not limited to accessing browser logs, e-mail logs, and any other history of use. The district may intercept or access all communications sent, received or stored using the district's technology resources, pursuant to state and federal law, even if the district's technology resources are accessed remotely.

## **Content Filtering and Monitoring**

The district will monitor the on-line activities of minors and operate a technology protection measure ("filtering/blocking device") on all computers with Internet access, as required by law. The filtering/blocking device will protect against access to visual depictions that are obscene, harmful to minors and child pornography, as required by law. Because the district's technology is a shared resource, the filtering/blocking device will apply to all computers with Internet access in the district. Evasion or disabling of the filtering/blocking device installed by the district, including attempts to evade or disable, is a serious violation of district policy.

## **Closed Forum**

The district's technology resources are not a public forum for expression of any kind and are to be considered a closed forum to the extent allowed by law.

The district's web page will provide information about the school district, but will not be used as an open forum. The district web page may include the district's address, telephone number, and an e-mail address where members of the public may easily communicate concerns to the administration and the Board.

Any expressive activity involving district technology resources that students, parents and members of the public might reasonably perceive to bear the imprimatur of the school, and which are designed to impart particular knowledge or skills to student participants and audiences, are considered curricular publications. All curricular publications are subject to reasonable prior restraint, editing and deletion on behalf of the school district for legitimate pedagogical reasons.

All other expressive activity involving the district's technology is subject to reasonable prior restraint and subject matter restrictions as allowed by law and Board policies.

## **Damages**

All damages incurred by the district due to the misuse of the district's technology resources, including the loss of property and staff time, will be charged to the user. District administrators have the authority to sign any criminal complaint regarding damage to district technology.

## **Technology Safety**

For the purposes of this regulation and related policy and forms, the following terms are defined:

*User* -- any person who is permitted by the district to utilize any portion of the district's technology resources, including but not limited to students, employees, School Board members and agents of the school district.

*User Identification (ID)* -- any identifier which would allow a user access to the district's technology resources, or to any program, including but not limited to e-mail and Internet access.

*Password* - a unique word, phrase or combination of alphabetic, numeric and non-alphanumeric characters used to authenticate a user ID as belonging to a user.

### **Student Users**

No student will be given access to the district's technology resources until the district receives a *User Agreement* signed by the student and the student's parent(s), guardian(s), or person(s) standing in the place of a parent. Students who are 18 or who are otherwise able to enter into an enforceable contract may sign the *User Agreement* without additional signatures. Students who do not have a *User Agreement* on file with the district may be granted permission to use district technology by the superintendent or designee in unusual situations.

### **Employee Users**

No employee will be given access to the district's technology resources before the district has a signed *User Agreement* on file.

Authorized employees may use the district's technology resources for reasonable, incidental personal purposes as long as the use does not violate any provision of district policy, regulation or procedure, hinder the use of the district's technology for the benefit of its students or waste district resources. Any use which jeopardizes the safety, security or usefulness of the district's technology is considered unreasonable. Any use which interferes with the effective and professional performance of the employee's job is considered unreasonable.

All employees must model the behavior expected of students, exhibit the same judgment as expected of students and serve as role models for students. Because computers are shared resources, it is not appropriate for an employee to access, view, display, store, print, or disseminate information via district resources, including e-mail or Internet access, which students or other users could not access, view, display, store, print or disseminate, unless authorized by the district.

### **Board Member Users**

Members of the School Board may be granted user privileges, including an electronic mail address, upon completion of a *User Agreement*. Board members will set an example of responsible use and will abide by district policies, regulations and procedures.

### **External Users**

Consultants, counsel, independent contractors, and other persons having professional business with this school district may also be granted user privileges at the discretion of the superintendent or designee, subject to completion of a *User Agreement* and for the sole, limited purpose of conducting business with the school. External users must abide by all laws, district policies, regulations and procedures.

### **Privacy**

A user does not have a legal expectation of privacy in the user's electronic communications or other activities involving the district's technology resources.

All district technology resources are considered school property. The district may maintain or improve technology resources at any time. The district may remove, change or exchange hardware or other technology between buildings, classrooms, employees, students or any other user at any time, without prior notice. Authorized district personnel may load or delete new programs or information, install new equipment, upgrade any system or enter any system to correct problems at any time.

The district may examine all information stored on district technology resources at any time. The district may monitor employee and student technology usage. Electronic communications, all data stored on the district's technology resources, and downloaded material, including files deleted from a user's account, may be intercepted, accessed or searched by district administrators or designees at any time.

### **Violations of Technology Usage Policies and Procedures**

Use of the district's technology resources is a privilege, not a right. A user's privileges may be suspended pending an investigation concerning use of the district's technology resources. Any violation of district policy, regulations or procedures regarding technology usage may result in temporary, long-term or permanent suspension of user privileges.

The administration may use disciplinary measures to enforce district policy, regulations and procedures. Students may be suspended or further disciplined for violating the district's policies, regulations and procedures. Employees may be disciplined or terminated for violating the district's policies, regulations and procedures. Any attempted violation of district policy, regulations or procedures, regardless of the success or failure of the attempt, may result in the same discipline or suspension of privileges as that of an actual violation.

### **Content Filtering and Monitoring**

The district will monitor the on-line activities of minors and operate a technology protection measure ("filtering/blocking device") on all computers with Internet access, as required by law. The filtering/blocking device will protect against access to visual depictions that are obscene, harmful to minors and child pornography, as required by law. Evasion or disabling, or attempting to evade or disable, a filtering/blocking device installed by the district is prohibited.

The superintendent or designee, or the district's Director of Technology may disable the district's filtering/blocking device to enable an adult user access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes. In making decisions to disable the district's filtering/blocking device, the administrator shall consider whether the use will serve a legitimate educational purpose or otherwise benefit the district.

### **General Rules and Responsibilities**

The following rules and responsibilities will be followed by all users of the district technology resources:

1. Applying for a user ID under false pretenses is prohibited.
2. Using another person's user ID and/or password is prohibited.
3. Sharing one's user ID and/or password with any other person is prohibited.
4. A user will be responsible for actions taken by any person using the ID or password assigned to the user.
5. Deletion, examination, copying or modification of files and/or data belonging to other users without

their prior consent is prohibited.

6. Mass consumption of technology resources that inhibits use by others is prohibited.
7. Unless authorized by the district, non-educational Internet usage is prohibited.
8. Use of district technology for soliciting, advertising, fund-raising, commercial purposes or for financial gain is prohibited, unless authorized by the district.
9. Accessing fee services without permission from an administrator is prohibited. A user who accesses such services without permission is solely responsible for all charges incurred.
10. Users are required to obey all laws, including criminal, copyright, privacy, defamation and obscenity laws. The school district will render all reasonable assistance to local, state or federal officials for the investigation and prosecution of persons using district technology in violation of any law.
11. Accessing, viewing or disseminating information using district resources, including e-mail or Internet access, that is pornographic, obscene, child pornography, harmful to minors, obscene to minors, libelous, pervasively indecent or vulgar, or advertising any product or service not permitted to minors is prohibited.
12. Accessing, viewing or disseminating information on any product or service not permitted to minors is prohibited unless under the direction and supervision of district staff for curriculum-related purposes.
13. Accessing, viewing or disseminating information using district resources, including e-mail or Internet access, that constitutes insulting or fighting words, the very expression of which injures or harasses other people (e.g. threats of violence, defamation of character or of a person's race, religion or ethnic origin); presents a clear and present likelihood that, because of their content or their manner of distribution, will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities; or will cause the commission of unlawful acts or the violation of lawful school regulations is prohibited.
14. Any use which has the purpose or effect of discriminating or harassing any person or persons on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, pregnancy, or use of leave protected by the Family and Medical Leave Act or the violation of any person's rights under applicable laws is prohibited.
15. Any unauthorized, deliberate, or negligent action which damages or disrupts technology, alters its normal performance, or causes it to malfunction is prohibited, regardless of the location or the duration of the disruption.
16. Users may only install and use properly licensed software, audio or video media purchased by the district or approved for use by the district. All users will adhere to the limitations of the district's technology licenses. Copying for home use is prohibited unless permitted by the district's license, and approved by the district.
17. At no time will district technology or software be removed from the district premises, unless authorized by the district.
18. All users will use the district's property as it was intended. Technology or technology hardware will not

be lifted, moved or relocated without permission from an administrator. All users will be held accountable for any damage they cause to district technology resources.

19. All damages incurred due to the misuse of the district's technology will be charged to the user. The district will hold all users accountable for the damage incurred and will seek both criminal and civil remedies, as necessary.

### **Technology Security and Unauthorized Access**

All users shall immediately report any security problems or misuse of the district's technology resources to a teacher or administrator. No person will be given access to district technology if he/she is considered a security risk by the superintendent or designee.

1. Use of district technology resources in attempting to gain or gaining unauthorized access to any technology system or the files of another is prohibited.
2. Use of district technology to connect to other systems, in evasion of the physical limitations of the remote system, is prohibited.
3. The unauthorized copying of system files is prohibited.
4. Intentional or negligent attempts, whether successful or unsuccessful, to interfere with the ability of others to utilize any district technology are prohibited.
5. Any attempts to secure a higher level of privilege on the technology resources without authorization are prohibited.
6. The introduction of computer "viruses," "hacking" tools, or other disruptive programs into a school computer, the school network, or any external networks is prohibited.

### **On-Line Safety: Disclosure of Personal Information**

1. All students will be instructed on the dangers of sharing personal information about themselves or others over the Internet.
2. Student users are prohibited from sharing personal information about themselves or others over the Internet, unless authorized by the district.
3. Student users shall not agree to meet with someone they have met on-line without parental approval.
4. A student user shall promptly disclose to his/her teacher or another school employee any message the user receives that is inappropriate or makes the user feel uncomfortable.
5. Users shall receive or transmit communications using only district-approved and district- managed communication systems. For example, users may not use web-based e-mail, messaging, videoconferencing or chat services, except in special cases where arrangements have been made in advance and approved by the district.
6. The use of social networking web sites, chat, email, text messaging, or other communications

technologies not owned by or contracted formally with the district and administered by district technology support staff is forbidden.

7. District employees may not communicate with students (e.g., texting, social networking) by using any technology that is not owned by or contracted formally with the district and administered by district technology support staff. Any exception to this must be approved by district administration.
8. All district employees will abide by state and federal law and Board policies and district rules, when communicating information about personally identifiable students.
9. Employees shall not transmit confidential student information using district technology, unless designated for that use. Employees will take precautions to prevent negligent disclosure of student information or student records.
10. No curricular or non-curricular publication distributed using district technology will include the address, phone number or e-mail address of any student without permission.

### **Electronic Mail**

A user is responsible for all electronic mail ("e-mail") originating from the user's ID or password.

1. Forgery or attempted forgery of e-mail messages is illegal and prohibited.
2. Unauthorized attempts to read, delete, copy or modify e-mail of other users are prohibited.
3. Users are prohibited from sending unsolicited electronic mail to colleagues per day, unless the communication is a necessary, employment- related function, or an authorized publication.
4. All users must adhere to the same standards for communicating on-line that are expected in the classroom, and consistent with district policies, regulations and procedures.

### **Exceptions**

Exceptions to district rules will be made for district employees or agents conducting an investigation of a use which potentially violates the law, district policy, regulations or procedures. Exceptions will also be made for technology administrators who need access to district technology resources to maintain the district's resources or examine and delete data stored on district computers as allowed by the district's retention policy.

### **No Warranty/No Endorsement**

The district makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the services, products or access it provides. The district's technology resources are available on an "as is, as available" basis.

The district is not responsible for loss of data, delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions. The district does not guarantee the accuracy or quality of information obtained from the Internet, or use of its technology resources. Access does not include endorsement of content or the accuracy of the information obtained.

## **Required Employee Postings**

As required by the state and federal government, the Parsippany-Troy Hills Township School District publicly posts the following employee information in all school buildings:

### **Employee Postings Required By the New Jersey State Government**

1. Family Leave Insurance provisions of the NJ Temporary Disability Benefits Law
2. New Jersey SAFE Act
3. New Jersey Child Labor Law Abstract
4. Workers' Compensation
5. Employer Obligation to Maintain and Report Records
6. Discrimination in Places of Public Accommodation
7. Chapter 173, Laws of NJ, 1965; Relating to Payment of Wages

### **Employee Postings Required By United States Federal Government**

1. Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law
2. New Jersey State Wage and Hour Law Abstract: Your Rights Under the Fair Labor Standards Act - Federal Minimum Wage
3. Employee Rights under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
4. Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)
5. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
6. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
7. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

### **Additional Employee Information**

Additional employee information is attached in the following Board policies:

1. Affirmative Action Program – *Policy 1140*
2. Americans with Disabilities Act – *Policy 1510*
3. Sexual Harassment- *Policy- 3362*
4. Substance Abuse – *Policy 3218*
5. Comprehensive Equity Plan – *Policy 1523*

## **District Board Policies**

[http://www.ptbsd.k12.nj.us/board/policies\\_and\\_regulations](http://www.ptbsd.k12.nj.us/board/policies_and_regulations)