



# Student Handbook

— 2021–2022 —

*The Pennfield School*



# **The Student Handbook of The Pennfield School**

It is important that every person in our school community understands the values, common practices, and expectations that make our school a safe and fun place to learn. We must keep these guidelines in mind each and every day that we come to school. This book is for you, as a student of The Pennfield School, and your parents to keep as a guide. If there are parts of it that you do not fully understand, please have a conversation with your parents or ask your teacher or Advisor to explain it to you.

The most important rule we have here at The Pennfield School is that *every person within our school community has the right to be treated with kindness and respect*. The following goals and expectations are related to that guiding principle.

Please note that as the Pandemic concludes there are many amendments to our normal operations, please use The Pennfield School's Re-Opening Guide as reference for these changes. We will revert back to normal operations when it is safe to do so.

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## **Mission of The Pennfield School**

The mission of The Pennfield School is to create an inclusive community of dedicated learners, where students are given a foundation and appreciation for the joyful pursuit of understanding, while fostering respect for oneself and others as a way of life.

## **Our Core Values**

We are committed to creating an environment in which everyone is treated with kindness and respect.

We are committed to being a joyful place, where students learn by example: the importance of honesty, integrity, generosity and humor.

We are committed to providing a challenging and balanced curriculum, enabling our students to succeed at a wide variety of secondary schools and beyond.

We are committed to fostering a strong partnership between faculty, students and parents.

We are committed to creating an inclusive culture that is diverse in make-up, is accepting of others, and helps develop a strong sense of social and community responsibility.

We are committed to embracing the uniqueness of every member of our community and providing the individual attention needed to help each student's talents unfold.

We are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in which students are encouraged to take academic, artistic and athletic risks.

## **The Pennfield School Song**

We the children of Pennfield School  
Ever thank thee for the memories of our youth.  
We are striving for new knowledge  
As we're growing and maturing through the years.  
Let our voices loudly praise thee,  
Ever thankful for the spirit you possess.  
As we grow unfold our special talents  
To prepare our hearts and minds for future years.

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**  
**Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**  
**SAFE SCHOOL ACT**  
**STATEWIDE BULLYING POLICY**  
**Effective: June 30, 2012**

This Statewide Bullying Policy is promulgated pursuant to the authority set forth in §16-21-34 of the General Laws of Rhode Island. Known as the Safe School Act, the statute recognizes **that the bullying of a student creates a climate of fear and disrespect that can seriously impair the student's health and negatively affect learning. Bullying undermines the safe learning environment that students need to achieve their full potential. The purpose of the Policy is to ensure a consistent and unified statewide approach to the prohibition of bullying at school.**

**State Definitions:**

**BULLYING** means the use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a student that:

- a. Causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- b. Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- c. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment for the student;
- d. Infringes on the rights of the student to participate in school activities; or
- e. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The expression, physical act or gesture may include, but is not limited to, an incident or incidents that may be reasonably perceived as being motivated by characteristics such as:

**Race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or mental, physical, or sensory disability, intellectual ability or by any other distinguishing characteristic.**

**Bullying most often occurs as repeated behavior and often is not a single incident between the bullying/cyber-bullying offender(s) and the bullying victim(s).**

**CYBER-BULLYING** means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication.

*Any form of bullying that occurs, while in or outside of school, on the weekend or over vacation, that is hurtful or mean-spirited toward any member of the Pennfield community or any other student will be viewed as a serious disciplinary infraction.*

*All Pennfield faculty, students and parents are expected to promptly report any knowledge of such activity to their division head or to the Head of School.*

# The Pennfield School

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[www.pennfield.org](http://www.pennfield.org)

## Administrator & Coordinator Contact Information

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# Daily Schedule

## Lower School Daily Schedule

8:00	First Bell
8:00 – 8:10	Homeroom (attendance)
8:15 – 8:25	Assembly
8:30 – 9:15	Period 1
9:15 – 10:00	Period 2
10:00 – 10:15	Recess
10:15 – 11:00	Period 3
11:00 – 11:45	Period 4
11:45 – 12:10	Lunch: K - 2 / Recess: 3 - 5
12:10 – 12:30	Lunch: 3 - 5 / Recess: K - 2
12:30 – 1:15	Period 6
1:15 – 2:00	Period 7
2:00 – 2:45	Period 8
2:45	Kindergarten - Dismissal
2:55	Grades 1 - 3 - Dismissal
3:00	Grades 4 - 5 - Dismissal

## Upper School Daily Schedule

8:00	First Bell
8:00 – 8:10	Homeroom (attendance)
8:15 – 8:25	Assembly
8:30 – 9:15	Period 1
9:15 – 10:00	Period 2
10:00 – 10:15	Recess
10:15 – 11:00	Period 3
11:00 – 11:45	Period 4
11:45 – 12:10	Period 5
12:30 – 12:50	Lunch
12:50 – 1:15	Recess (Wednesday advisory)
1:15 – 2:00	Period 7
2:00 – 2:45	Period 8
2:45 – 3:00	Independent Reading
3:00	Athletics Dismissal
3:05	Upper School Dismissal

## Special Assembly Schedule

Homeroom	8:00 – 8:15
Assembly	8:15 – 8:30
Period 1	8:30 – 9:05
Period 2	9:05 – 9:40
Period 3	9:40 – 10:15
Morning Recess	10:15 – 10:30
Period 4	10:30 – 11:10
SPECIAL ASSEMBLY	11:10 – 12:05
Period 5/LS Lunch	12:05 – 12:45
Period 6/US Lunch	12:45 – 1:25
Period 7	1:25 – 2:05
Period 8	2:05 – 2:45
Silent Reading/Dismissal	2:45 – 3:00



# General Information

## Absence from School

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If you are unable to come to school, your parents should phone the school before 8:10 a.m., when daily attendance is submitted.

You may need to be absent from school for an extended period of time for reasons not related to illness although special absence requests not related to illness or family emergency are strongly discouraged. In such instances, your parents should notify your Division Head and the Front Desk about such absences as far in advance as possible. In cases of extended absences not related to illness or family emergency, students should make arrangements to complete as much work as possible in advance, and allow classroom teachers at least one week of advance warning so they may prepare work to send along with you. You are ultimately responsible for making up any missed assignments within a specific time period after your return.

In the Primary Department and Lower School, parents must also notify their homeroom teacher. In the Upper School, students are responsible for notifying all of their classroom teachers and Advisor.

In all cases, you are responsible for collecting assignments in a timely manner and are responsible for completing all missed work during such absences. If you were absent due to illness, once you are back in school you will have a one-day grace period for every day of school you were absent in which to turn in the assignments you missed.

All classwork is assigned daily online using these web-based resources:

- Kindergarten use BLOOMZ
- Grades 1 - 2 use SEESAW
- Grades 4 - 8 use GOOGLE CLASSROOM

Calling a classmate or emailing a teacher is an excellent way to get additional information regarding any missed assignments that you cannot understand from the web-based resource. Any extra tutoring that may be needed to make up for lost class time, during such an absence, will be at your family's expense.

You may not leave school during the day, unless you have permission from your parents. If you have a special appointment during the day your parents must notify the Front Desk and homeroom teacher in advance, whenever possible. Otherwise, please bring a note from your parents and give it to the Front Desk.

## Use of the School Telephone

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The telephones in classrooms are for faculty use only. The Front Desk telephone is available to students for emergency use. For safety reasons, it is essential that the School is aware of any student phone calls to parents. If you need to use the phone to contact your parents, you must ask a faculty member for permission to go to the Front Desk.

## Cancellation of School

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In the event that school must be canceled because of snow or unusual weather conditions, that decision will be made by 6:00 a.m. and an email message will be sent to all members of the Pennfield student community.

In the event that weather conditions make transportation hazardous during the school day, your parents may choose to pick you up early.

Please check out at the Front Desk before departing.



## **Arrival and Departure**

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The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. each morning when the *John and Nancy Pedrick Academic Wing* opens. You should report to your homeroom at that time, ready to start the day. Students who need to be dropped off between 7:30 and 7:55 a.m. should report to the lunch room. All students and parents arriving at school shortly before 8:00 a.m. must also wait inside the lunch room. Unless meeting with a teacher for a scheduled tutoring session or other prearranged reason, students may not enter the academic wing, or go to their classrooms or lockers before the 8:00 a.m. bell.

We will meet for morning assembly in the gymnasium each day at 8:15 a.m. Students in K - 8 attend assembly each morning. Preschool and Pre-K students attend on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Assembly is a time for singing, announcements, presentations, and the sharing of information.

The academic day ends at 1:00 p.m. for the Primary (Preschool and Pre-K) department. Primary students eat lunch between noon and 12:30 p.m.

The academic day ends at 2:45 p.m. for Lower School and at 3:00 p.m. for Upper School. Dismissal occurs at 2:45 p.m. for Kindergarten students, 2:55 p.m. for Grades 1 - 3, 3:00 p.m. for Grades 4 - 5, and 3:05 p.m. for the Upper School. Some students may participate in sports or activities after school.

## **Forgotten Items**

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If you forget to bring to school any items you need for the day (your lunch, homework, books, sports equipment, etc.) your parents should drop them off at the Front Desk.

## **Afternoon Check-Out**

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It is very important that you get to your car quickly and safely at the close of school. Please proceed to the front entrance of the school promptly after your dismissal bell. Primary and Lower School students should be accompanied by their teachers.

Please remain outside the school in the bricked area under the awning, or on the sidewalk and benches in front of the school until you are called to get into your car.

If someone other than your parents will pick you up, or if you are planning to go home with another student, please ask your parents to notify us. Primary and Lower School students should bring a note to the classroom teacher; Upper School students must deliver their notes to the Front Desk.

## **Recess**

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Recess is a time for us to play together and to take a break from our academic work. Please go outside to recess only after the teacher on duty has dismissed you. When the bell rings at the end of recess, please line up by grade quickly, quietly, and safely and wait for the teacher on duty to send you back to class.

For your safety, hard balls may not be used during recess. Always use the swings and other playground equipment in a safe and appropriate manner. Any activities which involve throwing a ball at another person (including snow balls) are prohibited.

The "hands-off" rule is extremely important during recess. In addition, please be sure to allow all students to participate in games and activities during recess. Please do not say to anyone, "You can't play."

## **Lunch Time**

Students in Lower and Upper School eat lunch in the lunchroom during one of three separate lunch periods:

11:45 a.m. - 12:10 p.m. Kindergarten, First and Second Grade students

12:10 p.m. - 12:30 p.m. Third, Fourth and Fifth Grade students

12:30 p.m. - 12:50 p.m. Upper School students

Please sit at a lunch table when you eat and remain seated until you are dismissed by a duty teacher. The lunchroom should be a neat, quiet place to eat lunch. You will be asked to clean your table, bench, and the floor around you after you have finished eating. When your area is clean, sit and wait quietly until you are dismissed.

Each day, two Upper School students will be responsible for cleaning the lunchroom floor, under the supervision of the faculty member on duty.

## **Peanut/Tree Nut Policy**

Students in preschool and pre-kindergarten will be notified by the school if there is a child in the class who has a peanut and/or tree-nut allergy. No student names will be shared without parental permission. If there is a nut allergy within the class, no food containing those ingredients will be allowed into those classrooms. For grades kindergarten – 3; if there is a child with a nut allergy, the students in that class will not be allowed to bring food containing nuts in to eat for snack time, since snack is eaten in the classroom at this age level.

Students in K-8 may bring peanuts and tree nuts into the lunchroom. For those with nut allergies and for their friends, a nut free table is located in the lunchroom. This table is closely monitored by faculty.

Products with peanuts and tree nuts are not allowed at any school events. This includes, but may not be limited to, upper and lower extended day, field trips, bus rides to and from sporting events, nor will they be sold during the Valentine's Day bake sale or be distributed at Trunk or Treat, class parties, PSA Friday breakfasts, Upper School dances, etc.

The safety and well-being of students and faculty are our first priority.

## **After School Programs**

Supervised after school programs are open to all students. If you are going to participate in an after school program you should report directly to that activity. The Extended Day program is open to all students. Students in Preschool through Third Grade report to the the Extended Day classroom. Fourth, Fifth Grade, and Upper School students report to the library. The program ends at 5:00 p.m. After 3:00 p.m., students pay a separate fee for the Extended Day program.

Certain sports, club and other extracurricular activities are also open to students in grades K through 8. When your activity ends, wait inside the atrium or out in front of the school with the supervising teacher until your ride arrives.

## Academic Information

We want you to take advantage of a variety of learning experiences. We hope that you will try new things and take some risks in a safe environment. Use this time to challenge yourself, demonstrate your strengths, and improve your skills and understanding. We understand that we all have different learning styles and that we learn best in different situations. It is our goal to provide such situations for everyone. Your teachers maintain high standards and expect you to work hard. We want you to leave The Pennfield School with self-confidence and the ability to solve new problems.

Every student at The Pennfield School is expected to do his or her best. When you have questions about your work, or when you do not understand, ask your teacher to assist you; your teachers will always be available to help you when you need them.

### Academic Reports and Parent/Teacher Conferences

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From time to time during the school year, your parents and teachers will meet to talk about your progress. The first scheduled meeting is Fall Parent Conference Day, which occurs in October, and there will be no classes for students that day while parents meet with teachers and advisors. This coincides with the fall interim report, detailing your progress during the first half of the fall term. You will also receive full academic reports, including individual teacher assessments and comments at the end of each term, that will explain how you are doing.

Questions about academic progress may be addressed at the end of each term, or sooner if the need arises. In addition to comments, students in grades 4 - 8 receive letter grades. If you or your parents have any academic

concerns during the term; call or email your classroom teacher, Upper School Advisor, or Division Head.

Several times a year, grades and comments are distributed from teachers reporting on student's academic progress. Individual meetings with Advisors occur at these times to discuss recent academic achievement. These conversations are important because they will help students take personal responsibility for progress and, if necessary, work out a strategy for addressing any problems.

Advisors are there to help students become more responsible for themselves. You may discuss any issues confidentially with your Advisor. However, issues involving your safety or the safety of others may not be held in confidence.

### Homework Policy

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Beginning in the first grade, your teachers will sometimes assign homework. The purpose of homework is to help you further your understanding of the material that you learned in the classroom.

In addition, homework helps you to develop organizational skills, study skills, and the ability to follow directions. Students work on assignments at different speeds, but the following guidelines generally apply with regard to homework:

#### **Nightly Homework and Additional Reading Expectations**

GRADE	HOMEWORK MINUTES	MINIMUM READING MINUTES	FREQUENCY PER WEEK
I	15	15	4 nights
II	30	20	4 nights
III	45	25	5 nights
IV	60	30	5 nights
V	75	30	5 nights
VI-VII	90	30	5 nights
VIII	110	30	5 nights

This list should be used as a guideline. If you find that you are spending considerably more or less than the allotted homework time, you should speak with your teacher or Advisor.

## **Library**

The library, in addition to serving as a classroom space for Primary and Lower School library classes, is available for use by all students and teachers. You are allowed, with permission, to check out books, to conduct research, and to learn about how to use the materials in the library. Please do not remove any materials from the library without properly checking them out.

## **Computers, Laptops and iPads**

The school provides one-to-one iPads for students in Grades 1 - 4 to use while in school only. For Grades 5 - 8, students must provide their own iPads.

All students are expected to observe the following General Technology Acceptable Use Policy while using technology in school. In addition, students must abide by the school's separate iPad Acceptable Use Policy.

## **General Technology Acceptable Use Policy**

The use of Pennfield's technological resources is an integral part of the students' academic experience. However, the right to use them is a privilege that must be respected. While using technology, students must act in a responsible and appropriate manner, and each student must agree to abide by the following guidelines:

- Students must be considerate of others while using iPads or other technology in classrooms, and abide by the same guidelines of conduct that are specified elsewhere in the "Pennfield Student Handbook."

- Students may not enter any internet site that would be offensive to any other student or teacher.
- Students may not send emails, instant messages, use chat rooms, or solicit correspondence that would be offensive, harassing, or hurtful to others.
- Spanish students may not use online or electronic dictionaries or translators.
- Students must protect themselves and each other by not issuing any home addresses, telephone numbers, or other personal information over the Internet.
- Students may not use technology at school to access social network websites. (ex. facebook, instagram, twitter, etc.).
- No gaming is allowed on technology in school.
- Students must appropriately cite any information (photographs or text) that is downloaded off the Internet for academic purposes. Your teachers can provide you with the proper format for citing electronic sources.

Violations of this acceptable use policy or any unauthorized use of computers will be viewed as a serious disciplinary infraction.

## **Cyberbullying Policy**

The use of any form of electronic communication, while in or outside of school, on the weekend or over vacation, to convey a message that is hurtful or mean-spirited toward any member of the Pennfield community or any other student will be viewed as a serious disciplinary infraction.

All faculty, students and parents are expected to promptly report any knowledge of such activity to their Division Head.

## **Audio Music and Video Policy**

During the academic day, at teacher discretion, students may be permitted to listen to appropriate music only (no videos) through their iPad headphones. This includes after school programs: Extended Day, Athletics, Upper School Play, and club activities. Occasionally, coaches and chaperones may permit personal audio/video devices only when traveling to distant away games or field trips.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

Students may not carry or use cell phones during the academic day, including Extended Day and Athletics. During these times, your cell phone must remain turned off and in your locker or book bag. The only exception is after your academic and athletic obligations are complete and you are in either the glass atrium or on the entry sidewalk in front of the school. For numerous safety reasons, if you need to contact your parents or carpool, you must ask permission to use the Front Desk telephone. Failure to abide by this policy may result in cell phones being confiscated.

## **Social Expectations and Conduct**

### **Safety in School**

We need to be sure that you are safe at all times when you are at school. For that reason, an adult must be present when you are in the gymnasium, locker room, library, computer lab, lunchroom or any other space in school buildings or on the campus. As a matter of kindness and safety, please hold doors for adults and smaller children. Jabbing, poking, and pushing can be hurtful to others. The general rule is “hands-off”, which is especially important in hallways and classrooms. In the hallways and on stairways, please walk on the right side. Please do not run in school. Do your part to keep the hallways and other places where people walk clear and free of garbage, books, bookbags, and clothing.

### **Respectful Language**

Never use language that might offend or hurt someone else’s feelings. Teasing will not be tolerated.

### **Dealing with Conflict and Solving Problems**

We must treat others just as we would like to be treated ourselves. When problems arise, we must solve them without violence or disrespect toward others. The best way to solve a problem with another student is to talk about it with the student and an adult. It is very important that we find solutions to problems through good communication and not by hurting others with unkind words or actions.

# The Pennfield School iPad Acceptable Use Policy

***Students and Parents sign an official copy at the beginning of the school year.***

iPads are required for all students in grades 5 through 8.

Use of iPads at school is not a right, but a privilege that students must respect. Any student who violates these policies may lose this privilege. Faculty members will monitor all technology resources. We retain the right to collect and inspect any student's iPad at any time.

In addition to Pennfield's Technology Acceptable Use Policy, students using iPads must agree to abide by the following additional guidelines:

- Use of games and social media on their iPad while at school is not permitted
- Students may not communicate with others using any messenger service (including, but not limited to: Messages, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram) on the iPad. Email use is only permitted for school-related tasks.
- Students must fully charge the iPad each night in a common family area (such as living room, office, kitchen).
- Students may only download applications with consent of teachers or parents.
- We require the iPad to remain in its protective case, both labeled with the student's name. Students will refrain from eating & drinking while using their iPad.
- Students may not use a passcode on their iPad.
- Students may only turn on their iPad in class when specifically designated by a teacher.
- The iPad is the personal property of each individual student, and may never be used by another student.
- Students may only access video or audio content and use the microphone/camera with specific teacher permission (Major School Rule).
- Students may not use the iPad to access or create inappropriate material (Major School Rule).
- Please notify a faculty member or parent if you observe or have knowledge of any violations to these guidelines.

***The Pennfield School determines which applications and electronic content are appropriate.***

## **Consequences for Behavior in Violation of this Document**

Any student who does not comply with these guidelines will have their iPad confiscated for a period of time and may be subject to further disciplinary action.

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THIS CONTRACT**

v. 9.4.2018



# The Pennfield School

## Dress Code

Our dress code is designed to help students be better prepared for school, because we believe that students' appearance influences their learning. School should be fun, interactive, and engaging, but within that context, it is also a serious endeavor. We expect that our students and their parents will honor the spirit as well as the letter of the dress code. Students must arrive and remain in dress code from 8:00 a.m. until dismissal.

Questions concerning the dress code should be directed, by department, to either the Head of Upper School or the Head of Lower School.

All Pennfield students should wear practical and neat clothing. Clothes should be appropriately warm in the winter months. Proper coats should be worn outside for recess during cold weather. Camouflage clothing, shoes with built-in wheels and flip flops are never permitted.

Students should be dressed modestly and appropriately for school; midribs and undergarments may not be exposed, and only the top two buttons of shirts may be unbuttoned. Shorts may only be worn during specified portions of the fall and spring terms. The school dress code is to be followed on field trips, unless students are otherwise notified.

## Additionally for Fourth through Eighth Grade

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Students **may wear** the following clothes:

- Collared shirts with finished hems
- Dresses
- Dress shirts or blouses
- Pants or capris
- Skirts, dresses and shorts must not exceed 4 inches above the knee
- Fleeces or sweaters

Students **may not wear** the following:

- Tee shirts, tank-tops, mini-skirts, jeggings, strapless or spaghetti strap tops, clothing that is oversized, overly tight or revealing
- Clothing displaying messages or images
- Jeans or denim clothing of any color (with or without rivets)
- Clothing that is ripped or torn
- Hats in the building
- Athletic wear (including gym or sports shorts; Pennfield or team sportswear, sweats or tee shirts)

## Special Occasions

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For concert presentations or on other special events "Concert Dress" is worn by all students. The dress code guidelines regarding tank-tops, straps, dress/skirt length, and tucking-in, all still apply.

**Sneakers** of any kind **may not be worn** with concert dress.

Dress slacks, jackets and ties with dress shirts and proper dress shoes.

Dresses, skirts/dress slacks with collared blouses and appropriate dress shoes.

**N.B.** Some concerts or special events may have an altered dress code. Students and parents will be notified well in advance of any changes.

# **The Pennfield Upper School**

## **A NOTE TO UPPER SCHOOL STUDENTS**

As sixth through eighth grade students at Pennfield, this final section of the handbook is specifically devoted to you, the students of the Upper School.

As members of the Upper School, you are the leaders of the student body. You have earned new freedoms and independence. However, with this increasing independence also comes added responsibilities. As leaders of the school you need to set the example for conduct for the rest of the student body. You also need to take on added responsibility for communicating important announcements and information about school to your parents.

It is our goal as Upper School teachers to help equip you with skills for continuing academic success and social growth. While you are encouraged and expected to take on an increasing amount of independence and responsibility, there are many adults in the Pennfield community to assist and guide you through times of difficult decision-making that you are sure to encounter. The most important of these adults is your Advisor.

Your Advisor can help you to set individual goals, to organize yourself, to get the information you need and to help you to solve problems.

The Upper School portion of this handbook identifies additional academic requirements, extracurricular offerings, social expectations, and other issues that are specific to Upper School students. After you have re-read this entire handbook at the start of each new school year, we ask that you and your parents sign the separate Upper School Personal Responsibility Agreement. Please return the completed agreement to your advisor during the first week of school. This will serve as a contract between you and the school regarding your conduct anytime you are on school grounds or representing Pennfield in the community, on field trips, or at school athletic events.

NB. Some sections will also refer to Lower School Discipline.

# Upper School Guidelines

## Advisory

Each Upper School student has a faculty Advisor; each Advisor interacts closely with a small group of students throughout the school year. Advisors work with the students on personal expectations, study skills, organization, goal setting, as well as other important aspects of student life. Each Advisory group also coordinates a community service project during the school year. Advisors assist their Advisees in choosing and preparing appropriate assembly speech material. Advisors will also conduct timely discussions on issues that are important to the community. This weekly meeting allows Advisors to become much more familiar with their individual Advisees. Whenever possible, a student will remain a part of the same Advisory group for all three years of Upper School.

Regular weekly Advisory meetings take place in lieu of the Wednesday recess period after lunch, from 12:50-1:15 p.m. Advisors work with students individually and as a group, and keep Advisees informed if additional meeting times are necessary during the year.

Students with any concerns or problems – academic, extracurricular, or social – should speak with their Advisor. Advisors provide support, serve as a student’s primary advocate, and help with any school-related problem. Consulting with the Advisor as soon as issues arise prevents them from growing into major problems. Advisors can accompany students when meeting with a teacher if they feel the need for additional support.

If a teacher feels a student is having difficulty in a particular course, the teacher speaks both to the student and the Advisor. Advisors then help to determine how best to remedy the situation.

If there are any disciplinary issues, Advisors always are involved in any discussion of the matter and the determination of consequences.

A student’s Advisor will typically be the faculty member who speaks most frequently with parents. Both classroom teachers and Advisors will contact parents whenever necessary to provide updates about student progress and successes, as well as, any struggles or areas where additional work may be needed. Parents should feel comfortable contacting their child’s Advisor at any time during the academic day. Parents may also email or call Advisors at home, after school, if there is a pressing issue or concern that cannot wait until the next school day.

Several times a year, grades and comments are distributed from teachers reporting on student’s academic progress. Individual meetings with Advisors occur at these times to discuss recent academic achievement. These conversations are important because they will help students take personal responsibility for progress and, if necessary, work out a strategy for addressing any problems.

Advisors are there to help students become more responsible for themselves. You may discuss any issues confidentially with your Advisor. However, issues involving your safety or the safety of others may not be held in confidence.

## **Academic Information**

In Upper School, students move from class to class in a departmentalized system. Their belongings are stored in lockers and a backpack room. Support systems will remain in place, but students are given an increasing amount of independence in preparation for secondary school.

## **Pennfield Prep and the Independent Reading Period**

All Upper School students are assigned to a special study hall period called Pennfield Prep. This class meets twice a week for students in Grades 6 and 7, and once each week for

Grade 8. During this class time nearly every Upper School teacher is available to meet individually or with small groups of students for additional academic assistance. The purpose of this class is to provide increased instruction, practice and support to our students. Opportunities for augmented review and reinforcement in preparation for classroom assessments and standardized tests, in addition to special multi-class and cross-curricula projects are some exciting possibilities offered by the Pennfield Prep class time. 8th Grade students will participate in Yearbook class during one of these two periods throughout the fall and winter terms.

The independent reading period takes place in your last period classroom. At the 2:45 p.m. bell, students in Upper School put away their class work and take out an independent reading book. This time every day will allow each student to slow down and spend quality time enjoying reading from a book for pleasure. Books may be traditional or digital on the students' iPads or other approved e-readers. At 3:00 p.m., students must collect the necessary materials for the evening's assignments from their lockers, pack their backpacks and will be dismissed from school at 3:05 p.m.

## **Upper School Report Cards and Interim Reports**

Report cards will be distributed to parents at the end of each term. They will include letter achievement grades, behavior and effort grades, and comments from each teacher. In addition, an interim report will be generated for a student who is earning a C- or below in any class. Interim reports, issued at the midpoint of each term, provide a brief summary of student progress in a particular class. During the winter and spring terms, only those students whose academic performance or behavior has dramatically changed since the previous term's grade report will receive an interim report.

Advisors will meet with students at the time of interim reports and report cards, to evaluate progress and to help set goals and establish strategies, as needed. If students feel that they have received an inaccurate grade, or do not understand a comment made by a teacher, they are encouraged to speak to the teacher and the Advisor.

## **Academic Probation**

A student who finishes the term with two or more grades of C- or below will be placed on Academic Probation. Students on Academic Probation will receive progress reports from their teachers every week. Advisors will work closely with any student on Academic Probation, to create an action plan to address any specific areas of concern. Students who are on Academic Probation for two consecutive terms may not be invited back for the following academic year. If a student fails a course, an individualized program will be developed for the student in order to receive credit for the class.

## **Exams, Other Assessments, and the Upper School Calendar**

During the school year students have the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding in a variety of ways. Assessments may take the form of traditional tests and quizzes, papers, projects, or of exhibitions, performances, or presentations.

During the last full week of spring term classes, blocks of time may be built into the Upper School schedule for final exams and other assessments. Typically, one exam will be given each day, and no additional homework will be assigned that week, with the exception of preparation for any remaining exams, or final projects. Mid-year exams, projects, or papers are also assigned by individual teachers for the third week in January, after we've returned from winter holidays.

There are several purposes for these assessments. They provide an opportunity to develop preparation skills that will be useful in subsequent academic careers. In addition, they help students to organize time and materials and to solve new problems using learned skills and understanding, while demonstrating comprehension of the course material.

Quizzes, tests and long term assignments will be posted by teachers on the large wall calendar hanging on the Upper School Bulletin board outside the Head of Upper School's office. Parents and students are encouraged to consult this calendar on a weekly basis and make note of any updates.

## **Assembly Speeches**

Each Upper School student will be required to present a speech during morning assembly. Assembly speeches represent a tremendous opportunity to develop confidence and skills in public speaking. They also provide each Upper School student an opportunity to share a topic that is of personal interest with the rest of the student body.

Advisors will assist students in choosing topics, preparing, and organizing speeches. Speeches should be no longer than 2-3 minutes in length. Specific guidelines and assigned speech dates will be posted on the Upper School bulletin board. It is every student's responsibility to begin preparing for their speech well in advance, and making arrangements to rehearse with their Advisors. Students who require use of their iPad and the school digital projector for their speech must make prior arrangements with Mr. Bottone. In addition, public speaking is practiced during class presentations in various subjects throughout the year.

## **Community Service**

Numerous in-house community service opportunities occur throughout the year. This may involve volunteering for various activities and projects within, around and sometimes outside the school. Members of the Student Council are instrumental in spearheading and coordinating many of these events. Each year, Upper School Advisory groups create service projects to benefit our community.

During the summer preceding the eighth grade year, each eighth grade student completes a community service project, as a prerequisite for graduation. A minimum of twenty hours of work must be performed for an organization in the community. Students will work with Mr. Bottone on choosing and completing an appropriate project. Eighth grade assembly speeches will focus upon the students' volunteer experiences and, in addition, each student will write an essay for their English teacher reflecting upon their community service project.

## **Extracurricular Opportunities**

Pennfield offers a number of extracurricular activities to Upper School students. Students are encouraged to try new things, not just those activities at which they excel. Achieving a comfortable balance is important. Upper School students participate in at least one season of an after school activity.

Many activities, such as Student Council, Ecco Club, Rolling Tones, Upper School play, sports and club activities involve an after school commitment.

## **Upper School Play**

Every spring a play involving Upper School, 4th, and 5th Grade students is performed for parents, students, faculty, and friends. Because Upper

School Play rehearsals occur after school during an athletic season, students will usually not be able to participate in both programs.

## **Athletics**

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Upper School sports function in accordance with the general Upper School policy of encouraging students to try new things without fear of failure.

Every student who wishes to participate in sports may do so. Upper School students may participate during any or all of the three sports seasons. The athletic seasons include soccer and cross country in the fall, basketball and ski and snowboard club in the winter, and lacrosse in the spring.

Good sportsmanship, teamwork, integrity and self-confidence are the primary goals of the athletic program. You do not need prior experience in playing a sport in order to go out for the teams; coaches stress the fundamental skills of learning how to play, and properly prepare the students to confidently participate in games.

Practice for team sports takes place Monday - Thursday from 3:00-4:30 p.m., with pickup at 4:45 p.m. A game schedule will be distributed to families and posted on the school website at the beginning of each season; most games will run past 4:30 p.m. During the winter season, boys and girls basketball practices are staggered, and will run later in the evening, with the second practices ending at 6:00 p.m. Up-to-date practice and game schedules may be found on the school website. Students or parents with questions pertaining to athletics should contact the Athletic Director for more information.

NOTE: The required medical forms MUST BE ON RECORD in the School office in order for students to participate in sports or start classes.

## **Upper School Social Events**

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The Upper School faculty chaperone social events, such as dances, for Upper School students. The dates for these events will be provided at least two weeks in advance; the Student Council will help to decide when to hold these events and will plan for them. Attendance at these events is optional. If students decide to attend one of these events, they are responsible for arranging their own transportation and they must remain until they are picked up by a parent. Students' cell phones are not permitted at dances.

## **Respect for School Community**

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Kindness and consideration also extend from the treatment of others in the community to caring for and taking care of your school and its facilities. You need to take care of your belongings and be careful not to damage the belongings of others.

- Keep your possessions in your locker or in a designated place. Do not leave your belongings in classrooms, hallways, or bathrooms.
- Put your name on all of your belongings.
- Never take another person's belongings without permission.
- Never enter another person's locker or bags.
- Treat the school with respect by helping to keep the grounds clean.
- Clean up after yourself; trash and recyclables should be deposited in the appropriate receptacles.



## **Pennfield Recycling and Composting Program**

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The Pennfield community is constantly working to become much more conscious of limiting the amount of waste we produce. Much of the class materials you use are recyclable and care should be exercised to dispose of all recyclables appropriately. Each room in the school has bins for paper, plastic, metal, glass, as well as regular waste. Recyclables from your lunch should be emptied and rinsed, if necessary, before placing them into the correct bin in the lunchroom. Likewise, we compost all food scraps, hot lunch paper plates, and napkins. We aspire to have a zero-waste lunchroom.

## **Standards of Conduct**

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The Upper School community is a close and caring group of students, families, advisors, and faculty. We value our relationships with each other and strive to develop an atmosphere of trust, respect for differences, support, and understanding. We expect that students will behave responsibly and with consideration for the feelings of other students, family members, faculty, and staff. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own behavior anywhere on or off campus.

It is essential that students conduct themselves in ways that are in keeping with the School's standards of good conduct. All members of The Pennfield School community have the right to be treated with kindness and respect. Furthermore, each member of the community should be afforded an environment in which he or she can feel safe, both physically and emotionally.

Upper School is a time when students should be accepting more responsibility for their behavior. Students are expected to uphold the qualities of honesty, in personal and academic matters, and kindness, or acting at all times with consideration for the feelings of others. We have few stated

rules because we take your honesty and good judgment for granted. We expect that each member of the community will be helpful and supportive of other members of the community and show respect for others at all times.

While school is in session and students are on campus, at a school function held elsewhere, or on a school sponsored trip, we expect students to behave responsibly at all times.

We welcome the cooperation and support of parents in helping us to uphold these standards. If parents and the School work together to try and establish the appropriate balance of freedom and responsibility for Upper School students, we should have few discipline problems and will develop a strong sense of trust and community for both students and families.

## **Major School Rules: Upper and Lower School**

### **Kindness and Treatment of Others**

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Treating others with kindness and respect is the most important value and expectation of a Pennfield student. This is an important area in which students should strive to take a leading role. We expect that all students will treat others with consideration both in and out of the classroom. Students' treatment of each other must be respectful at all times whether or not an adult is present. Pennfield encourages students, faculty, and parents to accept, embrace, and welcome differences.

Teasing, putting down, or ridiculing another student or students is not acceptable behavior and will be considered a serious offense. These offenses constitute harassment and are punishable as such. Pennfield, as a school community, abhors and prohibits bullying, ethnic, racial, sexist, or gender orientation abuse, or any sort of cruelty, and regards such acts as Major School Rules Violations.

## **Honesty**

Honesty in all matters is a basic expectation in the Upper School.

## **Cheating and Plagiarism**

Cheating and plagiarism are serious Major School Rules Violations. The faculty would like to trust the word of every student at Pennfield and assume that, when a student hands in work, the work has been completed by that student to the best of his/her ability. If a student claims to have done work that he/she has not done, this act constitutes cheating. It is also cheating to help another student to be deceptive. In some cases, working together with a classmate or classmates is acceptable and can encourage cooperative learning. Keep in mind, however, that if you claim to have done work that was actually done by a classmate, you could be accused of cheating.

Plagiarism is literary theft. It involves attempting to pass off the ideas or words of another person as your own. In some cases, you will inadvertently fail to use proper forms of citation. Honest mistakes happen. Learning how to give proper credit to sources is an important part of your education. This form of plagiarism will be dealt with as part of the curriculum. The intentional attempt to steal someone's writing is an unacceptable breach of our Major School Rules.

## **Lying**

Being untruthful compromises trust within the community and cannot be tolerated. Even small issues of dishonesty, such as asking to go to one place and going to another, can earn you a reputation for dishonesty. We value honesty among students and expect that when asked a question, even in a difficult situation, you will tell the truth. Lying is considered a violation of a Major School Rule.

## **Stealing and Damage to Property**

Willfully taking that which does not belong to you, or intentionally damaging what belongs to another person, undermines the trust we share in our community. Stealing and/or damaging property is considered a serious violation of a Major School Rule.

## **Harassment**

If a student feels that he/she is being harassed, the student should speak with his or her advisor as well as a trusted adult in the community immediately. The Pennfield School's harassment policy continues the school's long-standing conviction that everyone must be treated with kindness and respect regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

Harassment is misconduct which uses behavior or words - spoken or written - nonverbal body language, or any deliberate actions to convey disrespect for the human dignity of another person; thereby creating a hostile and offensive school and working environment. Students, faculty, and staff are accountable for their personal behavior and for supporting the rights of others to be free from improper treatment by anyone. Harassment is a Major School Rules Violation and will not be tolerated.

## **Use of Tobacco, Drugs, and Alcohol**

The use or possession of tobacco products, alcohol, illegal or dangerous drugs is considered a serious offense which may result in suspension or expulsion.

## Summary of Major School Rules

Major School Rules Violations may include the following:

- Repeated minor rule violations
- Blatant dishonesty
- Lying, cheating or plagiarism
- Improper use of computers or other technology
- Stealing or damaging property
- Harassment, bullying, or violence
- Threats or inappropriate language
- Blatant disrespect to faculty or staff
- Use of tobacco, vaping products, illegal drugs or alcohol

## **Lower School Discipline**

In the event of a major school violation (listed on p. 22-23), the following steps will be taken:

Parents will be informed that a Lower School discipline committee will meet to discuss and thoroughly review the disciplinary matter.

The LS discipline committee will consist of the Head of Lower School, the Admission Director, and an additional LS faculty member.

The LS discipline committee will make recommendations to the Head of School regarding appropriate corrective or disciplinary actions.

The approved decision by the Head of School will be communicated to the student's parents.

## **Upper School Discipline**

In the Upper School, we firmly believe that all students can learn from their mistakes. Our goal is to assist students in choosing behaviors that support kindness, understanding and respect, thus enhancing the learning environment for others.

Upper School years are a time of growth, both academic and social. As a community, we understand that as students grow, develop value systems, and test limits of authority, they sometimes make mistakes. It is our goal to help them learn from these mistakes, while teaching the importance of accountability, responsibility and consequences. We try to administer consistent consequences, when necessary, with firmness and compassion.

It is our ultimate goal to encourage students to take responsibility for their conduct and behavior. We employ a progressive system of consequences that the students are aware of and understand. In any incident we will consider, however, the needs and age of the individual student as well as the circumstances of the incident, and the student's previous record of conduct.

## Detention Slips

The vast majority of disciplinary matters are minor and are appropriately handled by faculty and staff on an individual basis. These are often great "teachable" moments for students. In most of these cases, no documentation is necessary - the issue is resolved and we move on. However, when a student's Advisor and parents need to be informed of a minor rule infraction which warrants a disciplinary response, a teacher will issue a Detention Slip. Typically, this occurs when a student has not heeded our previous warnings, or if the nature of the infraction is more serious.

In those situations, students will be assigned a Morning Detention (as indicated in the lower portion of the Detention Slip) for an infraction. Detentions are primarily given for:

- Failure to follow Pennfield's Standards of Conduct
- Disrespectful behavior to students, faculty or staff
- Repeated Dress Code violations

Detentions may be assigned, and the inappropriate behavior documented, by any faculty member. Additional consequences may also be indicated on the Detention Slip.

Generally, since Detentions are prearranged, there are no excuses for missing Detention. Detentions are served before school, from 7:30 - 8:00 a.m. Prompt arrival is expected. Any student arriving to a detention after 7:30 a.m. will incur an additional Detention.

Students must return their completed Detention Slips - signed by themselves and their parents - on the morning of the Detention. Failure to do so will result in another Detention.

## **Consequences of Multiple Detention Slip Infractions**

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### ***2nd Detention Slip***

If, during the course of a single academic year, a student receives two (2) Detention Slips, a parent meeting will be scheduled. The parents and student will be required to promptly meet with the Head of Upper School and the student's Advisor to formalize an action plan to ensure that the behavior and disciplinary issues are properly addressed.

### ***3rd Detention Slip***

Receiving a 3rd Detention Slip will necessitate another parent meeting with the student, the student's Advisor, and the Head of Upper School. The student may also be placed on behavioral probation by the Head of Upper School.

### ***4th Detention Slip***

Any student receiving a 4th Detention Slip during the course of a single academic year may not participate in afternoon athletics or other extracurricular activities until further notice.

Additionally, receiving a 4th Detention Slip for minor rules violations during the course of the school year is considered a Major School Rule Violation. The student's repeated improper behavior requires a meeting of the Disciplinary Committee, and a Green Slip will be issued. (See below for details.)

## **Green Slips**

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Although it is quite unlikely to occur, a student may break a major school rule. In those circumstances, a Green Slip will be issued.

When a student receives a Green Slip, the Disciplinary Committee will be convened to review all the details of this serious infraction, after which the Head of Upper School will make a recommendation to the Head of School regarding an appropriate course of action.

Students in violation of a major school rule may be placed on Behavioral Probation, suspended, or dismissed from Pennfield. If a student commits a major school rule violation, parents will be notified immediately about this disciplinary process.

## **Disciplinary Committee**

The Disciplinary Committee is convened by the Head of Upper School, and consists of four faculty members including the Head of Upper School and the Student Life Coordinator. The student's advisor will also be present during the Disciplinary Committee meeting to represent the student. The Disciplinary Committee's role is to review all pertinent information. The Disciplinary Committee discusses the matter, identifies the behavioral infraction(s), and makes appropriate disciplinary recommendations to the Head of Upper School.

## **Behavioral Probation**

Students who commit a major school rule violation may be placed on Behavioral Probation. The length of this probationary period will be determined by the Disciplinary Committee and the Head of Upper School.

If a student commits another major school rule violation while on Behavioral Probation, the student will be subject to dismissal.

## **Dress Code Violations**

Upper School students are expected to uphold the spirit and letter of the dress code. In those instances when a student arrives at school wearing inappropriate clothing, he or she will be required to change before attending classes and the student's parents will be called. Dress code infractions are considered a minor school rule violation, however, repeated infractions will warrant that the student also receive a Detention Slip.

If a change of appropriate clothing is not available, the student's parents must deliver alternate clothing to school before the student will be permitted to attend class. For this reason, students are encouraged to always keep a spare change of dress code clothing in their lockers.

When a student is deemed to be out of dress code, she or he will also meet with the Head of Upper School and write a note to take home, which must be signed by the student's parents and returned the following morning. Failure to return this note will result in a Detention Slip.

Repeated violations of the dress code will result in additional consequences, as well a meeting between the student and student's parents, Advisor and the Head of Upper School.

Any student receiving multiple Detention Slips for dress code violations during the course of a single academic year may not participate in afternoon athletics or other extracurricular activities until further notice. A Green Slip for repeated minor rule violations may also be issued, and the Disciplinary Committee will be convened to address this issue.

For specific descriptions of the dress code, please consult page 14 of this Student Handbook.

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