

PERSHING HILL ELEMENTARY



Parent Handbook 2021-2022

This handbook was prepared for you to use as a quick information guide whenever you have questions concerning school policies and programs at Pershing Hill Elementary.

The 2021 - 2022 Anne Arundel County Public Schools Parent Handbook is an excellent source of detailed information about School Policies, Procedures, Regulations, and other services. It is available online at www.aacps.org.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Anne Arundel County Public School does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs. Questions regarding nondiscrimination should be directed to Anne Arundel County Public Schools, 2644 Riva Road, Annapolis, Maryland 21401, (410) 222-5500.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

All students enter the building at the **main entrance** and report to their classrooms. Doors open at 8:15 a.m. Morning announcements begin at 8:30 a.m. We want all students to be in their rooms by 8:30 a.m. ready to begin school.

Students who get to their classrooms after 8:30 a.m. or later are considered late and will be marked tardy.

Students should not arrive to school prior to 8:10 a.m. unless they are eating breakfast. Students who are eating breakfast will be allowed to enter beginning at 8:00 a.m.

- When dropping off or picking up students, please pull up and use the car lane only.
- When visiting during the school, do not park in the bus or car lanes. Please park in a space in the lot.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is important for school success. Legal absences include illness, death in the family, observance of a religious holiday, state emergencies, and court summons.

Notes to excuse Absence or Tardy are required

- Days Absent – A student is counted present for a ½ day if in attendance for at least 2 hours. A student in attendance for more than ½ the school day is counted for a full day.
- Tardy – A student is tardy if arriving after the school day has begun, but before the school day is one-half completed. If the student arrives at half day or later than one-half day, the student is absent one-half day.

- Early Dismissal – A student is considered to be an early dismissal if the student is dismissed for less than one-half of the school day. If the student is dismissed for one-half or more of the school day, the student is absent one-half day.
- For each absence, a note stating the reason for the absence must be written by the parent/guardian, and sent to the child’s teacher upon returning to school. AN ABSENCE OF 5 OR MORE DAYS REQUIRES A DOCTOR’S NOTE UPON RETURN TO SCHOOL. When these procedures are not followed, the absence code is assumed to be unlawful.
- Attendance is part of the criteria monitored by the Maryland State Department of Education for each school’s performance report card. Excessive absences are reported to the Pupil Personnel Worker for investigation. The term “excessive absences” is defined as more than 12 days absent each school year, or 3 days each marking period.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Due to our healthy school initiative, **edible birthday treats are not permitted, please do not send or bring them to school.**

Additionally, **we will not distribute birthday or playdate invitations in school.** These should be handled by the parent outside of the school day.

BREAKFAST TIMES

Students who wish to eat breakfast are allowed to enter the building at 8:00 a.m. Breakfast ends @ 8:25 a.m.

CONNECT ED MESSAGES

We use the Connect Ed system to communicate with parents about important events throughout the year. Most of our messages are sent via email. Please make sure that the office has two email addresses on file so that you don’t miss out on being informed.

DELAYED OPENINGS

When there is a one-hour delayed opening, children should arrive at school by 9:15 a.m. When there is a two-hour delayed opening, children should arrive at school by 10:15 a.m.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Walkers, bike riders, and car riders are dismissed at 2:55 p.m. **Unless there is an emergency situation, we will be unable to dismiss students from the office after 2:30 pm.** If you have an unexpected change for your child’s dismissal, please contact the office before 2:00 p.m.

For the safety of everyone, car riders must cross at designated walkways. **Do not cross through the car rider pick-up lane, except at the crosswalks where staff can assist you.** Please exercise patience during dismissal so that all students may exit school in a safe and orderly manner.

Do not leave your car unattended in the pick-up lane.

EARLY DISMISSALS (Scheduled and Unscheduled)

When children are dismissed one or two hours early, it is important for them to know what they are to do. Please tell your child where s/he is to go if you will not be home (neighbor’s house, etc.). You should also practice this plan with your child, as it will ensure their safety when s/he returns home earlier than usual.

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

It is essential that the school health staff be notified of current phone numbers for health or injury emergencies. Please be sure to notify the school throughout the year, if your phone number changes. You may send a note with your child or call the school office at (410) 222-6519. These changes will be noted.

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips are planned by the teachers as part of the instructional program. Notices are sent home in advance outlining the details and cost of the trip. All reservations are made in advance, so we are obligated to pay for our reservations. We are not able to refund money should your child miss the trip. Parents are often asked to help supervise/chaperone field trips and are asked not to bring other children with them. Children are not denied a field trip experience because they cannot afford the price of the trip. Please call the school office if you need help or have any concerns regarding a field trip.

Field trips are an extension of the AACPS educational environment and are generally defined as any activity or excursion away from the school property taken by groups of students under sponsorship of the school, and under the guidance and supervision of professional staff members on school days and/or non-schools days.

Unauthorized persons in the educational environment create a disruption for AACPS personnel who are responsible for the safety of all students. **Persons who have not been designated as chaperones for an AACPS-sanctioned activity will not be allowed to contact or communicate with any students in the District's care while on a field trip.** Any unauthorized person who attempts to 'shadow', or follow AACPS students, will be instructed to move away from the group and remain away. If they refuse, venue management will be notified to intervene. If necessary, police will be called.

AACPS does not condone any effort to circumvent the required criminal history background check process. We would not allow random strangers off the street to infiltrate and/or interact with our student groups. **The presence of unauthorized adults around students in the District's care creates an unacceptable safety risk and must be avoided to every extent possible.**

HEALTH ISSUES

Health Room – Students will be sent to the Health Room when they appear ill or injured. The health staff will assess the student for injury or illness and necessary care will be provided. They may be sent back to class, allowed to rest and sent back to class, or the parent may be called to discuss what action should be taken or request that the child be picked up. (See Emergency Phone Numbers). The majority of health room visits are minor in nature and are handled with basic first aid and comfort measures.

Medical Conditions - If your child has a medical condition that may affect their time at school, please contact the school nurse to discuss the student's condition.

If your child reports illness prior to coming to school, please keep your child home. Children must remain home from school if they experience vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever greater than 100 degrees. **Children should be fever free for 24 hours (without medication) before returning to school.** If your child sees a doctor for an illness and is absent from school, please obtain a doctor's note for that visit.

School Health Staff – A Registered Professional Nurse is responsible for supervising all health room activities. The nurse is also a contact between the school and other community agencies, including the Health Department. The nurse is present in the school 2-3 days per week.

A Health Assistant is available in the health room 5 days per week and is the person who has the most direct contact with you and your child when there is an illness or injury at school. The health assistant is trained by the Health Department in First Aid Procedures and CPR. She/he is supervised by the school health nurse.

Medication Administration at School- If your child's physician feels there is a medical necessity to administer medication at school, the following guidelines will be strictly adhered to:

1. Students must not bring any medication to school. An adult must bring all medication to the health room. This includes all prescription and non-prescription medication as well as cough drops, lozenges, nose spray, and Tylenol or aspirin.
2. An official form entitled "Parent's Request to Administer Medication at School", must be signed by the parent or guardian and completed by the physician for EACH medication the child is to take during school hours. The forms are available in the health room. No medication will be administered without this completed form.
3. Prescription medication must be brought to school by an adult in a pharmacy-labeled bottle with the student's name, date, name of medication, dosage, date prescription was filled, time of administration and pharmacy name clearly visible.
4. Non-prescription medications, including cough drops, must be brought to school by an adult in a new SEALED package with the child's name clearly written on the outside, and with the proper form completed.
5. Medication will be administered by the school health staff only. In rare instances, a designated school staff member who has been trained and supervised by the school nurse will administer medication.
6. Please pick up remaining medication when treatment is ended by the physician, or at the end of the school year. All unclaimed medication will be destroyed at the end of the school year.
7. A new order form must be submitted each year for all students taking medication, as well as for any change in dosage or times of administration.

Immunizations- Vaccine Requirements For Children Enrolled in Maryland Schools:

1. If DT vaccine is given in place of DTP or DTaP, a physician documented medical contraindication is required.
2. Proof of immunity by positive blood test is acceptable in lieu of vaccine history for hepatitis B, polio and measles, mumps, rubella and varicella.
3. Hib and PCV (PevnarTM) are not required for children older than 59 months (5 years) of age.
4. All doses of measles, mumps, rubella and varicella vaccines should be given on or after the first birthday. However, upon record review for students in preschool through 12th grade, a preschool or school may count as valid vaccine doses administered less than or equal to four (4) days before first birthday.
5. One dose of varicella (chickenpox) is required for a student younger than 13 years old. **Two doses of varicella vaccine are required for students entering kindergarten, 1st, or 2nd grade and for previously unvaccinated student 13 years of age or older.** Medical diagnosis of varicella disease is acceptable in lieu of vaccination. Medical diagnosis is documented history of disease provided by a physician or health care provider. Documentation must include month and year.
6. Four (4) doses of DTP/DTaP are required for children less than 7 years old. Three (3) doses of tetanus and diphtheria containing vaccines (DTP, DTaP, Tdap, DT or Td) are required for children 7 years of age and older. One dose of Tdap vaccine received prior to entering 7th grade is acceptable and should be counted as a dose that fulfills the Tdap requirement.
7. Polio vaccine is not required for persons 18 years of age and older.
8. Two doses of Hepatitis B vaccine is acceptable only if the student was vaccinated with the Merck & Co. brand vaccine **RecombivaxTM HB Adult Formulation.** RecombivaxTM HB Adult Formulation vaccine is licensed for use in adolescents 11 - 15 years of age as a two-dose series.

The State of Maryland Immunization Regulation requires students enrolled in school to show proof of immunizations. PLEASE NOTE - If the school has not received proof of immunizations by the beginning of the school year, **YOUR CHILD MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO ENTER SCHOOL.**

INTERIM REPORTS

Interim reports are distributed midway through each nine-week grading period. An interim is a notice of your child's progress in a particular subject, dropping two grades in a marking period, or having difficulty with conduct, social development, or work habits. Teachers are encouraged to send positive interim reports as well. If you have any questions about interims or want to know some ways to help at home, feel free to talk to your child's teacher.

LUNCH PRICES

	<u>Regular</u>	<u>Reduced</u>
Breakfast	\$ 1.50	\$ 0.00
Lunch	\$ 2.75	\$ 0.00

Ice Cream may be purchased for \$ 0.60; milk for \$ 0.55.

All students are required to enter their six-digit student identification number to purchase school meals and/or a la carte items. This is required for cash sales as well.

It's the same number you use for:

- School Lunch
- School Breakfast
- School Technology
- School Testing
- Media Center



<https://www2.mypaymentsplus.com/welcome>

MyPaymentPlus® provides an easy-to-use, efficient way to make payments quickly and securely anytime using a simple Internet connection. You can say goodbye to the hassles of sending in multiple checks to multiple locations for multiple students. It can all be done with one payment on MyPaymentPlus. MyPaymentPlus also allows the ability to receive free low balance emails and in most cases view the purchases made in the cafeteria online.

MONEY

Money should be sent to school in an envelope or Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name, six-digit ID number, the teacher's name and a note for its purpose (field trip, lunch, etc.).

NEWSLETTER

Our school newsletter, *General News*, is distributed to parents on the first day of each month via email. A calendar of events and other important information is included. Please visit our school webpage for additional information at: <https://www.aacps.org/Page/4838>

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ITEMS AT SCHOOL

Students are to keep non-instructional belongings at home. Examples of these items include: toys, games, electronics, and extra money. These items could be lost, stolen or damaged during school hours. Non-instructional items may be taken away from students. PHES is unable to assume responsibility for any lost items or money.

PARENT – TEACHER ASSOCIATION – PTA

The Parent-Teacher Association is a valuable asset to the school. The PTA exists to promote the education and welfare of our children. All parents are encouraged to join and participate in the activities.

PBIS

PBIS AT PHES– What's it all about? PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) is a nationally recognized proactive systems approach for creating and maintaining safe and effective learning environments in schools. PBIS Maryland focuses on data-based decision making around discipline and academics at school, system and state levels, integrating related school improvement initiatives and structures.

At Pershing Hill, we want to reward students for their positive behaviors. Some of the ways we recognize positive behavior is through DOJO tickets, power tickets, monthly, quarterly and classroom incentives, positive referrals, etc. Students earn these rewards by following our school rules.

School Rules
Be Respectful
Be Responsible
Be Safe

Our mission is to use *Positive Interventions and Supports* to empower students to make appropriate choices to avoid conflicts and accept responsibility for their own actions and decisions.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued four (4) times a year in order to report student progress. Because of the importance of this report, please review the following suggested guidelines:

1. Avoid comparing your child's performance with that of others.
2. When reviewing your child's report card, remember to praise academic growth and effort as well as discuss weaknesses or lack of progress.
3. Contact your child's teacher for additional information, or if you have questions or concerns. When parents and teachers work together, students experience more academic success in school.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL REGISTRATION

Children must be six (6) years old by September 1 to enter first grade in September. The following information will be needed when you register your child:

1. Your child's birth certificate
2. Your child's immunization record
3. Your child's social security number (optional)
4. Proof of residence mandatory requirement – Deed/Mortgage/Lease Form plus a bill
5. Documentation showing legal custody
6. Emergency telephone numbers
7. I.D.

STUDENT INFORMATION FORMS

Each student must have a completed Emergency Notification form on file in the school office. The form contains all current emergency phone numbers, email addresses, home addresses, and contacts. Should any of the information change during the school year, please call the school office with the information or request a new form to complete.

STUDENT TRANSFER/WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Please notify the office by telephone or note at least 48 hours in advance, if you are going to be moving from the PHES attendance area. Teachers and office personnel must complete transcripts for the student to take to the new school. All students must take the Anne Arundel County "Transfer Form" with them in order to register at another school. Without this form, registration will be denied. The receiving school must then request the official records to be sent.

TEXTBOOKS/EQUIPMENT – STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Textbooks are an integral part of the instructional program. They are assigned to students for in-school instruction and take-home study as necessary. Reading books are issued to students on a daily basis for teacher-directed instruction. Supplementary readers are available to use at home. Students are responsible for the careful use and protection of books,

equipment and materials assigned to them. All books require an appropriate cover. Failure to adequately take care of textbooks, equipment or materials will result in paying for the lost or damaged school material.

VISITING THE SCHOOL

The doors to the building will always be locked to ensure the safety of everyone. Please be patient while you await access to the building. **All persons entering the building must check in at the school office, present their driver's license (every visit) or government ID for scanning and receive a visitor's badge if they are entering the instructional areas.** This policy will be strictly enforced to ensure the safety of our students and staff. Even though we may know who you are, we hope you will appreciate and follow these safety procedures.

Personal discussions with teachers while students are in the building are not allowed during instructional hours unless you have scheduled a conference. All staff have specific responsibilities throughout the school day including instruction and supervision. If they are speaking to parents, they cannot teach or monitor student safety.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are parents, grandparents, or members of the community who contribute their time and talents toward the enrichment and support of our education program. **All volunteers will be required to attend an orientation/training and pass an AACPS background check.** For further information, you may contact the school to speak to our volunteer coordinators at (410) 222-6519.

Sign In/Out

Volunteer hours are 8:30 a.m. – 2:55 p.m., daily. For security reasons, all volunteers must stop in the **office to sign in/out after being buzzed in.** In addition, volunteers must also present their driver's license to one of the secretaries to log in and log out of the building.

ID/Security

All volunteers are issued a visitor's sticker which **must be worn on the upper body** at all times when working in the school.

Non-School Aged Children

To prevent disruption to our learning environment, please arrange for child care for young children while working as a volunteer. **Non-school aged children are not permitted in the instructional areas** of the building.

Work Area

C104 is a designated work area for volunteers. There you will find the laminator, paper cutter, and the accu-cut machine. The teacher or staff member you are helping will also have suggestions on where your volunteer work can be completed.

Copier Use

Please yield to teachers and other staff members when working with the copy machines. Teachers and staff have limited amounts of time to prepare materials needed for instruction and must take priority.

Contacting a Teacher

For all questions or comments to a teacher, please leave a note in their mailbox, rather than interrupting instruction. If a completed project must be delivered directly to a classroom, you are asked to enter quietly and leave the materials on the counter top.

Telephones/Staff Lounge

School telephones are reserved for school business. In an emergency, please ask for assistance in the office. Space in the staff lounge is limited and set aside for teachers and school personnel. Volunteers will be directed to work in other areas.

Absences

Please let us know if you are unable to help out on your day to volunteer. Teachers look forward to your visit and worry when you do not show up. Please call 410-222-6519 to leave a message. If you are tutoring or mentoring a student, please call PHES in the morning prior to your visit to be sure your student is present!

Volunteer Code of Ethics

All volunteers are regarded as members of the Pershing Hill team. When working with students, it is important that:

- I understand that all information concerning children, teachers and the school is confidential and should remain in the school setting.
- I shall maintain the dignity necessary to gain the respect of pupils and set a good example at all times.
- I will show high regard for each child by being courteous, impartial and fair.
- I will respect those with whom I work.

WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS

When it becomes necessary to close or alter school hours due to weather, (heat, snow, power failure, loss of water, etc.) a broadcast of the adjustment will be made over major radio and television stations. One hour and two-hour delayed openings or early dismissal will also be announced.

Please do not call the school office for this information, or to speak to your child or have a message relayed. The telephone needs to be available to receive messages from the central office. Your child should be aware of a plan that you have established and practiced. Everyone should know what to do and where to go in the event of an early dismissal or delayed school opening.

WELLNESS POLICY

As a Bronze recipient from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, Pershing Hill is dedicated to the health and wellness of students, staff and community members. Pershing Hill will build awareness and knowledge by addressing three goals; Nutrition Education, Physical Activity and Other School Based Activities. A Wellness Committee will meet to discuss progress and further develop health and wellness initiatives at Pershing Hill.

Nutrition Education

- Nutrition guidelines, food pyramid charts, suggestions for healthy food choices and/or other messages related to health and nutrition will be posted in or near the school cafeteria
- School lunch periods will be scheduled so as to provide nourishment within a reasonable time frame from the start of the school day
- Working snack breaks will be scheduled for students as needed to maintain energy levels
- Participate in Farm to School activities (ex. Tasting of the Green, Tasting of the Rainbow)

Physical Activity

- All students will participate in the school's physical education program
- All classes will have access to recess according to the school's schedule
- Discipline will be administered in ways other than depriving a student of recess
- Student will be encouraged to participate in physical activity outside of school
- Provide opportunities before-school and after-school for students to participate in physical activity (ex. Running Club, Yoga Club)

Other School-Based Activities

- The school will encourage the use of non-food rewards for student behavior
- The school further encourages teachers and parents to provide healthy snacks and to minimize sugary treats for classroom celebrations
- Classroom parties will be limited to serving only healthy snacks and drinks
- Class cupcakes and other edible treats will not be permitted for birthday celebrations due to food allergies and the PHES wellness initiative
- Pershing Hill will participate in healthy food or non-food fundraisers
- The school will provide parent education on nutrition and the benefits of physical activity through newsletters and parents meetings (ex. Wellness Night) during the course of the school year.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate movement throughout the school day (ex. Brain boosts)