PUTNAM COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #535

2026-2027

PreK-5th Student Handbook

Primary & Elementary School

-Providing foundations together, Cultivating individual growth-

Updated: May 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

Administrative Welcome	3
Responsibilities	3-4
Equal Educational Opportunities	4

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Academic Standards	4-5
Artificial Intelligence Use	5
Asbestos Policy	6
Attendance & Truancy	6-7
Bicycle Rules	7
Bullying/Intimidation/Harassment and Title IX and Prevention and Response	7-9
Bus Information	9-12
Cell Phone	13
Class Parties	13
Controlled Substances and Look-Alikes	13
Discipline	13-18
Dismissal Procedures	18-19
Dress Code	19
Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities	20
Emergency Drills & Dismissal	20-21
English Language Learners (EL)	21
Homeless Students	21-22
Homework Policy	22
Internet/Technology Acceptable Use Policy/Use of AI	22-23
Lunch & Breakfast	23-24
Opt Out	24
Elementary & Secondary Education Act (formerly No Child Left Behind Act)	24
Non-School Sponsored Publications	24-25
Parent Teacher Conferences	25
Party Invitations	25
Pesticide Application	25
Physical Education	26
Preschool for All Home Connection Meeting	26
Preschool Screenings	26
Publishing Student ID/Picture/Information	26
Recess	26
Registration	27
Residency	27-28
Response to Intervention (RtI)	28
Retention/Promotion	28
Search & Seizure	28-29
Security Cameras	29
School Hours	29
Special Education - IDEA Child Find	29-32
Student Privacy Protections	32
Student Records	33-35
Suspicion-Based Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy	35

Targeted School Violence Prevention Program 35-37
Teacher Qualifications 37
Testing and Assessment 37
Title I 38-39
Violent Offender Community Notification 39-40
Visitors 40-41
Volunteer Opportunities (Prek-5th) 41
Weapons Prohibition 41-42
Withdrawal and Transfer 42
HEALTH/WELLNESS INFORMATION
Accidents/First Aid/Illness 42-43
Care of Students with Diabetes 43
Seizure Smart Care Act 43
Concussion Policy 44
Head Lice 44
Health Examination and Immunizations 44
Medication at School 44-45
Sex Education/Safety 45
Student Biometric Information 45
Students with Food Allergies and Chronic Illness 45-46
SCHOOL OPERATIONS DURING A PANDEMIC OR OTHER HEALTH EMERGENCY 46

2026-27 Handbook Committee

Chivohn Holocker, Board of Education Member
Amy Bell, 2nd Grade Teacher/Parent Representative
Amy Olson, 4th Grade Teacher
Katie Main & Jessica Harmon, School Nurses
Brenda Schmidt, Elementary School Secretary
Tara Treber, Primary School Secretary
Courtney Balestri, Elementary School Principal
Moriah Mott, Primary School Principal

Disclaimer: This handbook is not intended to create a contractual relationship with the students, rather it is intended to describe the school, its current practices, procedures, rules and regulations/code of conduct. Membership or participation in a school sanctioned activity is a privilege and not a right. This handbook may be amended during the school year without notice.

Belief Statements

Character Counts in school, at home and in our community. We believe that all students can become responsible, productive citizens of good character with support between the school, community and parents/guardians. The best educational decisions will be made for ALL students and with appropriate instruction, all students can learn. Education today is NOT limited to the classroom, but rather to all spaces that the child occupies. We know that a learning environment needs to be caring, supportive and promote mutual respect.

Parents/Guardians

A parent/teacher/board member committee was developed within school board policy guidelines for this student handbook which addresses most of the school functions, discipline, etc. for Putnam County Primary and Elementary Schools. The school furnishes a copy of the handbook to parents/guardians enrolling students within fifteen days after the start of school or a student transferring to the school during the school year. The committee, in cooperation with local law enforcement agencies, shall include policy guideline procedures to establish and maintain a reciprocal

reporting system between the school and local law enforcement agencies regarding criminal offenses committed by the student. (105 ILCS 5/10-20.14)
This handbook provides students and families an opportunity to be familiar with the rules and regulations, procedures and other relevant information necessary for the orderly function of the school. It has been structured to promote student progress academically and behaviorally. In addition, this handbook provides for the psychological and physical safety of the students through appropriate rules and regulations.

Administrative Welcome

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

We would like to welcome you to the 2025-2026 school year at Putnam County Primary School (PCPS) and Putnam County Elementary School (PCES). We are pleased that you have registered with the Putnam County School system and look forward to being partners in your child's learning this year. Teamwork is an expectation we have for ourselves and our families. We want to create a child-centered learning environment that focuses on the achievement of each student. Our students need your support, involvement and encouragement throughout the school year. We encourage you to provide opportunities for reading every night with your child and to help them develop good study habits at home. Let's work together to reach our students' education goals and make this year, and every one to follow the most rewarding we possibly can.

We have developed this handbook so that it may act as a guide to inform you about our schools, school environments, expectations and accomplishments. Please read your handbook and support us when rules and regulations need to be utilized for student learning. Contact us if any questions, problems or concerns arise. We want to work together and resolve issues quickly, fairly and with a learning purpose.

The faculty and staff of PCPS and PCES would like to extend a very warm greeting to you and your child(ren) and hope that the coming school year will be a positive and exciting learning experience for all of you.
Together in Education,

Moriah Mott	Courtney Balestri
Primary School Principal	Elementary School Principal

Responsibilities

Parental

A successful school experience originates in the home. It is the obligation of the parents by their teaching and examples set forth to develop their child's attitude and foundational learning. Parents will:

1. Instill a respect for authority, for the rights of adults and other children, and for property.
2. See that your child is clean, rested and in good health.
3. Ensure daily attendance and promptness.
4. Talk with your child about school activities, assignments, report cards, progress reports and other school communication that comes home with your child.
5. Provide supplies, time, and a place for homework that encourages completion and accuracy.
6. Maintain appropriate regular communication with the school regarding your child's progress, behavior, health concerns, or significant information that may be useful in making education decisions.
7. Understand and comply with rules of the school concerning student conduct and safety for all students of the building.

Student

A successful student wants to learn and improve himself/herself academically and behaviorally. Students will:

1. Follow three basic school expectations: Be Respectful, Be Responsible and Be Safe.
2. Take personal pride in their work, achievements and personal appearance. Students will be courteous and set high personal standards for him/herself.

3. Cooperate with all adults and peers.
4. Exhibit the type of behavior that shows respect for the school community. Students will accept diversity, regardless of religion, race, national origin, sex, or disability.

Staff

A supportive staff will create the best environment for learning for the whole school community. All staff will:

1. Follow three basic school expectations: Be Respectful, Be Responsible and Be Safe.
2. Be positive role models.
3. Provide a safe, happy and caring environment for learning and teaching.
4. Employ instructional strategies which encourage the development of self-discipline and self-respect.
5. Develop and maintain a school-wide behavior intervention system which facilitates student learning.
6. Seek conferences with parents in an effort to assist students academically, socially or emotionally.

Equal Educational Opportunities

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to color, race, nationality, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, gender identity, status of being homeless, order of protection status, actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy. The District will not knowingly enter into agreements with any entity or any individual that discriminates against students on the basis of sex or any other protected status, except that the District remains viewpoint neutral when granting access to school facilities under School Board policy 8:20, Community Use of School Facilities. Any student may file a discrimination grievance by using Board policy 2:260, Uniform Grievance Procedure with the building principal.

No Student shall, based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities.

Any student may file a sex equity complaint by using Board policy 2:260, Uniform Grievance Procedure. A student may appeal the Board's resolution of the complaint to the Regional Superintendent of Schools (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/3-10) and, thereafter, to the State Superintendent of Schools (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/2-3.8).

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Unless otherwise specified in the section, all of the following information pertains to both the Primary and Elementary schools.

Academic Standards

Formal parent/teacher conferences are held annually in the fall. Dates are listed on the official school calendar. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher any time if there are questions or insights they might wish to share. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher throughout the school year in an effort to build a partnership in support of the student's effort and progress.

Primary:

Curriculum and instructional practices are evaluated in a continuous manner so as to provide the best opportunity for each student to reach his/her potential. In order to accurately reflect the new standards and methods in which students are assessed, we developed a "standards-based" report card. The report cards will be issued every twelve weeks (trimester) of the school year in an effort to keep parents informed of the student's progress as well as sharing the Fall, Winter and Spring assessment results through the AIMSwebPlus assessments conducted in K-2nd grade. These assessments are intended to be one more piece of evidence on how the child is performing and learning with the instructional strategies used in the classroom. Adjustments are made to student settings and interventions as needed to gain the highest impact on their learning.

Report cards are distributed on the last school day of the week following the ending date of the grading period (trimester) or at parent/teacher conferences. During the 1st and 2nd trimesters, signed report card envelopes should be returned to the school on the next day of school.

ACADEMIC AREAS as follows:
Exceeds Core Standards - E
Meets Core Standards - M
Developing - D
Needs Support Core Standards - N

Elementary:
Academic excellence is the goal targeted through all instruction, both formal and informal assessment. Curriculum and instructional practices are evaluated in a continuous manner so as to provide the best opportunity for each student to reach his/her potential. Report cards are issued every twelve weeks (trimester) of the school year in an effort to keep parents informed of the student's progress.

ACADEMIC AREAS as follows:
A = 100% - 90%
B = 89% - 80%
C = 79% - 70%
D = 69% - 60%
F = 59% and below

ACADEMIC SPECIALS as follows:
E = Excellent
S+ = Very Good
S = Average
S- = Below Average
N = Failure

CHARACTER as follows:
O = Outstanding
S = Satisfactory
U = Unsatisfactory

ART as follows:
P = Pass
F = Fail

At the end of the trimester, any missing grades will be considered zeros in the gradebook. Late assignments will be accepted per the grade level homework policy. We encourage parents to regularly check their child's progress with the submission of assignments on TeacherEase.

Artificial Intelligence Use

"Artificial intelligence" or "AI" is intelligence demonstrated by computers, as opposed to human intelligence. "Intelligence" encompasses the ability to learn, reason, generalize, and infer meaning. Examples of AI technology include ChatGPT and other chatbots and large language models.

AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers, or complete schoolwork without permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited. The use of AI for these purposes constitutes cheating or plagiarism.

In certain situations, AI may be used as a learning tool or a study aid. In preparation for this use, students should be taught how to appropriately use AI prior to independent use. Students who wish to use AI for legitimate educational purposes must have permission from a teacher or an administrator in all subjects and matters related to the student's participation in their school or associated programs. Students may not use AI, including AI image or voice generator technology, to violate school rules or school district policies.

Students may use AI as authorized in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

In order to ensure academic integrity, tests, assignments, projects, papers, and other schoolwork may be checked by AI content detectors and/or plagiarism recognition software. A student's work may also be compared to previous student samples to determine if the work was produced or created using AI. Based upon the teacher's determination, the student may be subject to the school's policies on cheating and/or plagiarism.

Asbestos Policy

State statutes require school districts to update parents and employees annually on the presence of asbestos containing materials throughout its school buildings. In accordance with AHERA regulations, the buildings of Putnam County CUSD No. 535, have been re-inspected for asbestos containing building materials by an accredited inspector. Also, an Asbestos Management Plan has been prepared by an accredited Management Planner. Both the Inspection Report and Management Plan are on file in the Office of the Superintendent and are available for public review during normal business hours. Copies of these reports are available upon notification.

Attendance & Truancy

Illinois law requires that whoever has custody or control of any child between six (by September 1st) and seventeen years of age shall assure that the child attends school in the district in which he or she resides, is enrolled, and is attending school during the entire time school is in session.

There are two types of absences: excused and unexcused. Excused absences include: illness (including mental or behavioral health of the student), observance of a religious holiday or event, death in the immediate family, family emergency, situations beyond the control of the student, circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, attending a military honors funeral to sound TAPS, or other reason as approved by the building principal.

Additionally, a student will be excused for up to 5 days in cases where the student's parent/guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings. The Board of Education, in its discretion, may excuse a student for additional days relative to such leave or deployment. A student and the student's parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teachers prior to any excused absences and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by the student prior to his or her return to school.

Students who are excused from school will be given a reasonable timeframe to make up missed homework and classwork assignments.

All other absences are considered unexcused. Pre-arranged excused absences must be approved by the building principal. The school may require documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence.

In the event of illness or other excused absences, parents/guardians must call the school absentee reporting line, 1-815-882-2800 (Opt. #6), for their child by 9:00 a.m. on the day the student is absent. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.

A physician's note is required to return to school after any of the following: contagious diseases, rashes, surgery, illness requiring a physician, excuses from physical education class, and absences of five or more consecutive days. A student is considered tardy if they arrive after 8:15 a.m. In order to preserve the instructional time of students, children other than enrolled students, are not allowed to attend classes.

When it is necessary for a student to be released from school before regular dismissal time, the parent/guardian must send a dated, signed note explaining the reason for the early dismissal to the office. The student must be picked-up in the school office.

Excused Absences:

- Student illness
- Death in the family
- Medical and/or dental appointments that cannot be arranged outside the school day

Students will be allowed to take up to 5 excused mental health days. When a parent calls their child in, they must indicate if this option will be used. After accumulating two excused mental health days, the student will be referred to the school social worker for a screening.

Unexcused Absences/Tardiness:

- Oversleeping
- Missing the bus
- Unexplained "personal reasons"

Any pre-arranged absence(s) (such as vacations, hunting/fishing, etc.) should be reported to the building principal prior to the absence date(s) for excused and/or unexcused considerations.

Excessive Absences/Truancy:

Student attendance is critical to the learning process. Students who miss 5% (9 days) or more of the prior 180 regular school days without valid cause (a recognized excuse by the school) are considered chronic truants. Students who are chronic truants will be offered support services and resources aimed at correcting the truancy issue. If chronic truancy persists after support services and other resources are made available, the school and district will take further action, including:

- Referral to the LaSalle/Marshall/Putnam County ROE Truancy Officer
- Hearing before the County Truancy Officer
- Reporting to officials under the Juvenile Court Act
- Referral to the State's Attorney
- Other school-based action to be decided by the principal.

The procedure outlined below has been developed to inform students and parents about possible attendance problems and to correct any problem before it results in a student losing the opportunity to receive credit.

Interventions:

Step 1: When a student has accumulated five (5) absences, excused or unexcused, a notice will be sent to the parents upon the occasion of the fifth absence.

Step 2: Upon the seventh (7th) absence, excused or unexcused, a notice will be sent to the parents from the principal's office. Additional steps may include a school/family conference, referral to a truancy officer, or a referral to community supportive services. In addition, students will be required to provide verification of further absences.

Step 3: On the (9th) absence, excused or unexcused, a notice will be sent to the parents from the principal's office. The principal will consider the reasons for these absences and if a referral has not been made to the county truancy officer, contact will be made at this time. Additional interventions will also be considered at that time.

Bicycle Rules

Students from all schools within Putnam County School District #535 may ride their bicycles to school. All bicycles should be properly parked and locked at the bicycle rack. The school is not responsible for damaged or stolen bicycles.

Students should walk bikes on and off the sidewalks and across intersections. Only one rider is permitted on a bicycle. Bicycle riders should obey all Rules-of-the-Road.

Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment and Title IX and Prevention and Response

Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important district and school goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge from military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender orientation, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, order of protection status, homelessness, actual or marital status, parenting status, pregnancy, parenting status, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic **is prohibited** in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

Bullying includes cyber-bullying and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes: (1) the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying; (2) the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying; and (3) the posting or distribution of an unauthorized digital replica by electronic means if the posting or distribution creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.[2]

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, posting or distributing sexually explicit images, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the building principal, nondiscrimination coordinator, district complaint manager or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. All school staff members are available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the district complaint manager or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted by phone call or in writing.

Prevention and Response Program

The District maintains a prevention and response program to respond to complaints of discrimination based on race, color, and national origin, including harassment, and retaliation. The program includes procedures for responding to complaints which:

1. Reduce or remove, to the extent practicable, barriers to reporting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation;
2. Permit any person who reports or is the victim of an incident of alleged discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to be accompanied when making a report by a support individual of the person's choice who complies with the District's policies and rules;
3. Permit anonymous reporting, except that an anonymous report may not be the sole basis of any disciplinary action;
4. Offer remedial interventions or take such disciplinary action as may be appropriate on a case-by-case basis;
5. Offer, but do not require or unduly influence, a person who reports or is the victim of an incident of harassment or retaliation the option to resolve allegations directly with the accused; and
6. Protects a person who reports or is the victim of an incident of harassment or retaliation from suffering adverse consequences as a result of a report of, investigation of, or a response to the incident.

Enforcement
Any District employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.
Any District student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion, consistent with the student discipline information in this handbook.
Any third party who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the District, e.g., vendor, parent, invitee, etc. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action.

Retaliation Prohibited
Retaliation against any person for bringing complaints, participating in the complaint process, or otherwise providing information about discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin is prohibited.
Individuals should report allegations of retaliation to the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

Complaint Manager:

Mrs. Moriah Mott, PCPS Principal
400 E. Silverspoon Ave., Granville, IL 61326
mottm@pcschools535.org
815-882-2800, opt. 1

Complaint Manager:

Mrs. Courtney Balestri, PCES Principal
326 S. 5th St., Hennepin IL 61327
balestric@pcschools535.org
815-882-2800, opt 2

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Mr. Cody Martzluf, Supt.
400 E. Silverspoon Ave., Granville, IL 61326
martzlufc@pcschools535.org
815-882-2800 opt. 5

Title IX Coordinator:

Mrs. Jodi Peterson
400 E. Silverspoon Ave., Granville, IL 61326
petersonj@pcschools535.org
815-882-2800 ex. 527

Anonymous Reporting: https://www.pcschools535.org/o/district/page/safe2help

Bus Information

The district provides bus transportation to and from school for all students living 1.5 miles or more from the school. Once a stop is set and assigned, students are not permitted to ride a bus other than the bus to which they are assigned unless residency changes.

Most buses are equipped with video cameras. Videotapes are viewed to investigate an incident reported by a bus driver, administrator, supervisor, student, or other person. Videotapes may also be viewed at random. Viewing of

videotapes is limited to individuals such as but not limited to the superintendent, principals, transportation director, bus driver, sponsor, coach, or other supervisor.

Buses are for transportation to and from school only. At registration students are assigned to their bus according to where they live in the community, or where their daycare provider living within district boundaries resides. Only students enrolled in PC schools may ride the buses.

Bus transportation is not to be used for recreational purposes, such as sleepovers, gatherings, or playdates.

Vehicles MAY NOT be parked or located in the bus lanes or fire lanes at ANY TIME. Bus lanes and fire lanes are clearly marked. Vehicles located in these locations may be ticketed and/or towed by the police.

Kindergarten and first-grade students must be met by an adult or an older student when getting off the bus. The driver will not release any kindergarten or first-grade student without one of the above present.

It is illegal to pass a school bus, from either direction, if the stop arm is extended and/or the lights are flashing. This includes buses on school grounds.

School Bus Safety Rules:
In the interest of the student's safety and in compliance with State law, students are also expected to observe the following:

1. Be aware of moving traffic and pay attention to your surroundings.
2. Dress properly for the weather. Make sure all drawstrings, ties, straps, etc. on all clothing, backpacks and other items, are shortened or removed to lessen the likelihood of them getting caught in bus doors, railings or aisles.
3. Arrive on time at the bus stop and stay away from the street while waiting for the bus.
4. Stay away from the bus until it stops completely and the driver signals you to board. Enter single file without pushing. Always use the handrail.
5. Take a seat right away and remain seated facing forward. Keep your hands, arms, and head inside the bus.
6. Talk quietly on the bus. No shouting or creating loud noises that may distract the driver. Tablets, computers, smart phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices must be silenced on the bus unless a student uses headphones.
7. Help keep the bus neat and clean. Keep belongings out of the aisle and away from emergency exits. Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus.
8. Always listen to the driver's instructions. Be courteous to the driver and other students. Sit with your hands to yourself and avoid making noises that would distract the driver or bother other passengers.
9. Wait until the bus pulls to a complete stop before standing up. Use the handrail when exiting the bus.
10. Stay out of the danger zone next to the bus where the driver may have difficulty seeing you. Take at least five giant steps (10 feet) away from the bus and out of the danger zone, until you can see the driver and the driver sees you. Never crawl under a bus.
11. If you must cross the street after you get off the bus, wait for the driver's signal and then cross in front of the bus. Cross the street only after checking both ways for traffic, even after the driver's signal.
12. Never run back to the bus, even if you dropped or forgot something.

Student Responsibilities:

1. Dress properly for the weather. Make sure all drawstrings, ties, straps, etc. on all clothing, backpacks and other items, are shortened or removed to lessen the likelihood of them getting caught in bus doors, railings or aisles.
2. Students must be at their regular bus stop at least five minutes prior to the scheduled stop time. The bus driver will not wait for students at the loading area.
3. Stay away from the bus until it stops completely and the driver signals you to board. Enter a single file line without pushing. Always use the handrail.

4. Take a seat right away and remain seated facing forward. Keep your hands, arms, and head and all objects inside the bus. Keep aisles and exits clear. Students are prohibited from turning into the aisle or kneeling on the bus seat when the bus is in motion.
5. Students must occupy the seat assigned to them by the bus driver/attendant.
6. Talk quietly on the bus. No shouting or creating loud noises that may distract the driver.
7. Students cannot use profane language or obscene gestures while on the bus.
8. Help keep the bus neat and clean. Keep belongings out of the aisle and away from emergency exits. Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus.
9. Always listen to the driver's instructions. Be courteous to the driver and other students. Sit with your hands to yourself and avoid making noises that would distract the driver or bother other passengers.
10. Students must not throw any item inside or outside the bus while boarding, riding, or leaving the bus.
11. Firearms, knives, explosives, breakable glass, or other dangerous objects are not permitted on the bus. Animals, except those animals authorized by an IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan, are not permitted on the bus.
12. The use, possession, or distribution of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substances is prohibited on the bus.
13. Students cannot open or close the bus windows without the permission of the bus driver/attendant.
14. Wait until the bus pulls to a complete stop before standing up. Use the handrail when exiting the bus.
15. Stay out of the danger zone next to the bus where the driver may have difficulty seeing you. Take five giant steps away from the bus and out of the danger zone, until you can see the driver and the driver sees you. Never crawl under a bus.
16. If you must cross the street after you get off the bus, wait for the driver's signal and then cross in front of the bus. Cross the street only after checking both ways for traffic.
17. Never run back to the bus, even if you dropped or forgot something.
18. Students and their parents/guardians will be held responsible for destruction to the bus, bus stop location, and/or private property.
19. Taking pictures or videos of any kind are prohibited on the bus. Any violation of this rule may result in an immediate suspension from the bus.
20. Be respectful, responsible and safe at all times

Bus Discipline

While students are on the bus, they are under the supervision of the bus driver. In most cases, bus discipline problems can be handled by the bus driver. In the case of a written disciplinary referral, student bus problems will be investigated and handled by the building principal.

Students are expected to follow all school rules while on the bus. Students may be suspended from riding the school bus for up to 10 consecutive school days for violating school rules or for engaging in other gross disobedience or misconduct. The school board may suspend the student from riding the school bus for a period in excess of 10 days for safety reasons. The district's regular suspension procedures shall be used to suspend a student's privilege to ride a school bus. Removal of bus privileges for the year and/or suspension from school attendance may result for such misconduct. Normal school attendance as outlined by the *Illinois School Code* is required of students; and students suspended from riding the bus must attend school or be considered truant.

Please note: Taking pictures or videos of any kind is prohibited on the bus. Any violation of this rule may result in an immediate suspension from the bus.
A student who is suspended from riding the school bus and who does not have alternative transportation to school shall be allowed the opportunity to make up all missed work for equivalent academic credit. It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to notify the school that the student does not have alternative transportation to school.
Please be advised that the rules for safe and efficient transportation of the students are fully supported by school district administration and the Board of Education. Guidelines regarding the continuum of interventions to be used for notice of misconduct are as follows:

- Student is notified, counseled, and may miss recess(es). Warning is sent home for parent notification with response requested.
- Student is notified, counseled, and will receive a detention or missed recess(es). Warning is sent home for parent notification with response requested.
- Student is notified, counseled, and given a 1-5 day bus suspension. Parent is notified of offense and written report is sent home with parent response requested.
- Student is notified, counseled, and given a bus suspension up to ten days. Parent is notified, written report sent home, with parent response requested.
- Student is notified of the offense, counseled, suspended up to ten days, and a bus expulsion may be recommended to the Board of Education. Parent is notified, written report is sent home, and parent response is requested.

Students are expected to follow all rules when riding the school bus. A student may be suspended from riding the bus for up to 10 consecutive school days for engaging in gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to, the following:

1. Violating any school rule or school district policy.
2. Willful injury or threat of injury to a bus driver or to another rider.
3. Willful and/or repeated defacement of the bus.
4. Repeated use of profanity.
5. Repeated willful disobedience of a directive from a bus driver or other supervisor.
6. Such other behavior as the building principal deems to threaten the safe operation of the bus and/or its occupants.

Preschool Bus Information

Although preschool busing is <u>not</u> a required state mandate, currently PC is able to provide limited transportations to the various communities of the district. Bus stops are established by administration and the bus company with allowable funds. Administration will establish stops with one in each town and at a daycare provider's residence (provided there are 3 or more students receiving daycare services from that location on a daily basis). Proof of students receiving daycare services will be required and if dishonorable practices are found the bus stop will be eliminated for the rest of the school year.

Parents or guardians must be at the stops at the scheduled time for pick-up and drop-off. Bus stops cannot be changed unless the change is permanent. Bus drivers will be instructed to proceed to the next stop after two minutes of waiting. This is to keep the bus on schedule for all of the other adults waiting to receive students off the bus. If no one is at the stop, the student will be brought back to the school and they will need to be picked-up from the office. If a parent misses picking-up their child three times, bus privileges will be revoked by the administration for a period of time.

Preschool Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

Please use caution when driving through our parking lot. A person, regardless of age, may not use a wireless telephone at any time while operating a motor vehicle on a roadway in a school speed zone. Parking spaces are provided because cars cannot be parked in the bus lane for safety purposes. Please be sure to hold your child's hand to and from the preschool door, which is door B. Remember that our behavior sets an example for our children.

Please inform us with a note or phone call if someone other than those you have originally authorized will be picking up your child. The authorized person must be able to present a photo ID.

Please Note: It is unlawful to pass a school bus with its stop sign out, even in a parking lot.

Special Education Bus Information

Students with special needs that require transportation according to the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team will be accommodated according to their IEP.

Cell Phones

Cell phones and electronic device usage for any reason is prohibited during school hours. If students choose to bring their cell phone or electronic device to school, it must be turned off and kept in the student's bookbag. Any usage of cell phones or electronic devices will result in the item being confiscated. After the first offense, the student may retrieve the cell phone or electronic device from the principal at the end of the day. Subsequent violations will require a parent or guardian to retrieve the item. Students are encouraged to leave all electronic items at home as Putnam County Schools are not responsible for broken, lost or stolen items.
Smartwatches may be worn, however, students are prohibited from using its features throughout the school day. Students using their Smartwatch to use such features as calling, texting and recording are prohibited. Smartwatches will be confiscated and subject to the same consequences listed for cell phones and other electronic devices.

Class Parties

Due to health concerns and scheduling, treats and snacks for any occasion must be arranged in advance with the classroom teacher. All treats and snacks must be purchased/prepackaged. No homemade treats or snacks are allowed at school. Treats and snacks must have a clearly printed list of ingredients on the packaging. **We kindly ask that pizza is <u>not provided</u> for a birthday treat.**

While the help and support of parents with parties is encouraged and greatly appreciated, it is also necessary to restrict attendance at school parties to our students, staff, and parents. Younger siblings, or other children, should <u>not</u> attend school parties held during the school day. In order to ensure a safe environment for our students and staff, we will have a limited number of parents attending each of the classroom parties. We will kindly ask for donations of party supplies and three parent helpers to attend each classroom party. Under special circumstances, such as a significant food allergy or extreme medical condition, additional parents may attend parties per principal approval.

Controlled Substances and Look-Alikes

Students are prohibited from bringing any kind of alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, or look-alike substances to school or any school function.
"Look-alike substance" means a substance other than a controlled substance which:

(1) by overall dosage unit appearance, including shape, color, size, markings or lack thereof, taste, consistency, or any other identifying physical characteristic of the substance, would lead a reasonable person to believe that the substance is a controlled substance, or

(2) is expressly or implied to be a controlled substance or is distributed under circumstances which would lead a reasonable person to believe that the substance is a controlled substance.

For the purpose of determining whether the representations made or the circumstances of the distribution would lead a reasonable person to believe the substance to be a controlled substance, the court or other authority may consider the following factors in addition to any other factor that may be relevant:

(a) Statements made by the student in control of the substance concerning its nature, use or effect;

(b) Statements made to the recipient of that substance may be resold for profit;

(c) Whether the substance is packaged in manner normally used for the illegal distribution of controlled substances;

(d) Whether the distribution or attempted distribution included an exchange of or demand for money or other property as consideration, and whether the amount of the consideration was substantially greater than the reasonable retail market value of the substance.

Discipline

Efforts, including the use of positive interventions and supports shall be made to deter students, while at school or a school-related event, from engaging in aggressive behavior that may reasonably produce physical or psychological harm to someone else.

Conduct Rules
The grounds for disciplinary action also apply whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
4. Anywhere the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

Students may be disciplined for gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to the following:

1. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling or offering tobacco or nicotine materials, including electronic cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes, vape pens or other vaping related products.
2. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages. Students who are under the influence of an alcoholic beverage are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.

    - Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling or offering for sale:

    - **a.** Any illegal drug, controlled substance, or cannabis (including marijuana, hashish, and medical cannabis unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under Ashley's Law).

    - **b**. Any anabolic steroid unless it is being administered in accordance with a physician or licensed practitioner's prescription.

    - **c.** Any performance-enhancing substance on the Illinois High School Association's most current banned substance list unless administered in accordance with a physician or licensed practitioner's prescription.

    - **d.** Any prescription drug when not prescribed for the student by a physician or licensed practitioner, or when used in a manner inconsistent with the prescription or prescribing physician or licensed practitioner's instructions. The use or possession of medical cannabis, even by a student for whom medical cannabis has been prescribed, is prohibited unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under Ashley's Law.

    - **e**. Any inhalant, regardless of whether it contains an illegal drug or controlled substance: (a) that a student believes is, or represents to be capable of, causing intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system; or (b) about which the student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student intended the inhalant to cause intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system. The prohibition in this section does not apply to a student's use of asthma or other legally prescribed inhalant medications.

    - **f.** "Look-alike" or counterfeit drugs, including a substance that is not prohibited by this policy, but one: (a) that a student believes to be, or represents to be, an illegal drug, controlled substance, or other substance that is prohibited by this policy; or (b) about which a student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student expressly or impliedly represented to be an illegal drug, controlled substance or other substance that is prohibited by this policy.

- **g.** Drug paraphernalia, including devices that are or can be used to: (a) ingest, inhale, or inject cannabis or controlled substances into the body; and (b) grow, process, store, or conceal cannabis or controlled substances.

- **h.** Any substance inhaled, injected, smoked, consumed or otherwise ingested or absorbed with the intention of causing a physiological or psychological change in the body, including without limitation, pure caffeine in a tablet or powdered form.

Students who are under the influence of any prohibited substance are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they have the prohibited substance, as applicable, in their possession.

No disciplinary action shall be taken against any student that is based totally or in part on the refusal of the student's parent/guardian to administer or consent to the administration of psychotropic or psychostimulant medication to the student.

Disciplinary Violations:
Students who are under the influence of any prohibited substance are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they have the prohibited substance, as applicable, in their possession.

1. Using, possessing, controlling or transferring a "weapon" or violating the procedures listed below under the Weapons Prohibition section of this handbook procedure.
2. Using or possessing an electronic paging device.
3. Using a cellular telephone, smartphone, video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA), or similar electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat, or otherwise violate student conduct rules. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, creating and sending, sharing, viewing, receiving or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person through the use of a computer, electronic communication device or cellular telephone, commonly known as "sexting." Unless otherwise banned under this policy or by the building principal, all cellular phones, smartphones and other electronic devices must be kept powered-off and out-of-sight during the regular school day unless: (a) the supervising teacher grants permission; (b) use of the device is provided in a student's individualized education program (IEP); (c) it is used during the student's lunch period; or (d) it is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff, or other individuals..
4. Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member's direct supervision and in the context of instruction.
5. Disobeying rules of student conduct or directives from staff members or school officials. Examples of disobeying staff directives include refusing a staff member's request to stop, present school identification or submit to a search.
6. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, altering report cards and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
7. Engaging in bullying, hazing or any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to a staff person or another student or encouraging other students to engage in such behavior. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, any use of violence, intimidation, force, noise, coercion, threats, stalking, harassment, sexual harassment, public humiliation, theft or destruction of property, retaliation, hazing, bullying, bullying using a school computer or a school computer network or other comparable conduct.
8. Engaging in any sexual activity, including without limitation, offensive touching, sexual harassment, indecent exposure (including mooning) and sexual assault.
9. Engaging in teen dating violence.
10. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, stealing, or attempting to steal, school property or another person's personal property.
11. Entering school property or a school facility without proper authorization.
12. In the absence of a reasonable belief that an emergency exists, calling emergency responders (calling 9-1-1); signaling or setting off alarms or signals indicating the presence of an emergency; or indicating the presence of a bomb or explosive device on school grounds, school bus or at any school activity.
13. Being absent without a recognized excuse.

14. Being involved with any public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society.
15. Being involved in a gang or engaging in gang-like activities, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.
16. Violating any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism and hazing.
17. Engaging in any activity, on or off campus, that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.
18. Making an explicit threat on an Internet website against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel if the Internet website through which the threat was made is a site that was accessible within the school at the time the threat was made or was available to third parties who worked or studied within the school grounds at the time the threat was made, and the threat could be reasonably interpreted as threatening to the safety and security of the threatened individual because of his or her duties or employment status or status as a student inside the school.
19. Operating an unarmed aircraft system (AUS) or drone for any purpose on school grounds or at any school event unless granted permission by the building principal.

For purposes of these rules, the term “possession” includes having control, custody, or care, currently or in the past, of an object or substance, including situations in which the item is: (a) on the student’s person; (b) contained in another item belonging to, or under the control of, the student, such as in the student’s clothing, backpack, or automobile; (c) in a school’s student locker, desk, or other school property; (d) at any location on school property or at a school-sponsored event; or (e) in the case of drugs and alcohol, substances ingested by the person.

Efforts, including the use of positive interventions and supports shall be made to deter students, while at school or a school-related event, from engaging in aggressive behavior that may reasonably produce physical or psychological harm to someone else.

No disciplinary action shall be taken against any student that is based totally or in part on the refusal of the student’s parent/guardian to administer or consent to the administration of psychotropic or psychostimulant medication to the student.

When and Where Conduct Rules Apply

The grounds for disciplinary action also apply whenever the student’s conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event;
4. Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property; or
5. During periods of remote learning.

Disciplinary Measures

School officials shall limit the number and duration of expulsions and out-of-school suspensions to the greatest extent practicable, and, where practicable and reasonable, shall consider forms of non-exclusionary discipline before using out-of-school suspensions or expulsions. School personnel shall not advise or encourage students to drop out of school voluntarily due to behavioral or academic difficulties. Potential disciplinary measures include, without limitation, any of the following measures:

1. Notifying parents/guardians.
2. Disciplinary conference.
3. Withholding of privileges.
4. Temporary removal from the classroom.
5. Return of property or restitution for lost, stolen or damaged property.
6. In-school suspension.
7. After-school study or Saturday study provided the student's parent/guardian has been notified. (If transportation arrangements cannot be made in advance, an alternative disciplinary measure will be assigned to the student.)
8. Community service.
9. Seizure of contraband; confiscation and temporary retention of the personal property that was used to violate school rules.
10. Suspension of bus riding privileges.
11. Suspension from school and all school activities for up to 10 days. A suspended student is prohibited from being on school grounds.
12. Expulsion from school and all school activities for a definite time period not to exceed 2 calendar years. An expelled student is prohibited from being on school grounds.
13. Transfer to an alternative program if the student is expelled or otherwise qualifies for transfer under State law.
14. Notifying juvenile authorities or other law enforcement whenever the conduct involves criminal activity, such as, illegal drugs (controlled substances), "look-alikes," alcohol or weapons or in other circumstances as authorized by the reciprocal reporting agreement between the District and local law enforcement agencies.

The above list of disciplinary measures is a range of options that will not always be applicable in every case. In some circumstances, it may not be possible to avoid suspending or expelling a student because behavioral interventions, other than a suspension or expulsion, will not be appropriate and available, and the only reasonable and practical way to resolve the threat and/or address the disruption is a suspension or expulsion.

Disciplinary Measures-Engagement of Returning Students

The building principal or designee shall meet with a student returning to school from an out-of-school suspension, expulsion or alternative school setting. The goal of this meeting shall be to support the student's ability to be successful in school following a period of exclusion and shall include an opportunity for students who have been suspended to complete or make-up missed work for equivalent academic credit

In situations where a student refuses to cooperate with school staff in the proper execution of their duties, or participates in conduct which is disorderly, or which also may be a violation of criminal laws, the local police department may be called upon to assist staff members.

No employee of the school district shall participate in or arrange for the interrogation of a student of the District, without the express prior approval of the principal or his/her designee.

The school will comply with State law including, but not limited to, ensuring that a law enforcement officer, school resource officer, or other school security person detains and questions on school grounds a student under 18 years of years of age who is suspected of committing a criminal act, the Superintendent designee will:

a. Notify the student's parent/guardian and document the time and manner in writing;
b. Make reasonable efforts to ensure the student's parent/guardian is present during questioning or, if they are not present, ensure that school employees (including, but not limited to, a school social worker, psychologist, nurse, counselor, director of student services, or any other mental health professional) are present during the questioning; and
c. If practicable, make reasonable efforts to ensure a trained law enforcement officer promotes safe interactions and communications when the student is present during questioning.

The school will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Illinois State Board of Education's *Special Education* rules when disciplining students with disabilities. Behavioral interventions will be used

with students with disabilities to promote and strengthen desirable behaviors and reduce identified inappropriate behaviors. Any special education student whose gross disobedience or misconduct is not a manifestation of his or her disability may be expelled pursuant to the District expulsion procedures.

Disciplinary Measures-Isolated Time Out, Time Out and Physical Restraint
Isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint shall only be used if the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others and other less restrictive and intrusive measures were tried and proven ineffective in stopping it. The school may not use isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint as discipline or punishment, convenience for staff, retaliation, a substitute for appropriate educational or behavioral support, a routine safety matter, or to prevent property damage in the absence of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others. The use of prone restraint is prohibited.

Disciplinary Measures-Corporal Punishment
Corporal punishment is illegal and will not be used. Corporal punishment means a discipline method in which a person deliberately inflicts pain upon a student in response to the student's unacceptable behavior or inappropriate language, with an aim to halt the offense, prevent its recurrence, or set an example for others.
In addition to the rules outlined in the handbook, the principal may establish certain rules and regulations not inconsistent with those established by the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools.

Dismissal Procedures

Primary School:
Regular Dismissal:
Parent pick-up begins at 3:05 p.m. and crosswalk supervision begins at 3:00 p.m. on regular dismissal days.

2:05 Dismissal:
Bus students should arrive home one hour earlier on these days. Parent pick-up begins at 2:05 p.m and crosswalk supervision begins at 2:00 p.m.

Below are some reminders about student drop-off and pick-up:

1. No one is at the school to supervise the children until 7:15 a.m.
2. Parents/Guardians need to be very careful when using the front of the school building to drop students off. This is a very busy time for the buses, and it is not the best place to drop-off and pick-up students.
3. It is strongly suggested that parents/guardians use the crosswalk located at the corner of Silverspoon and Colby or the back parking lot of the school to drop-off and pick-up students. A crossing guard is on duty from 7:15 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. to help the students in the morning, and a crossing guard will walk the students from the Primary School to the crosswalk at the end of the school day.
4. Parents/Guardians wishing to speak with the office or teachers, and parents/guardians waiting for students at the front of the school, will need to park in the front lot. The back lot is used for drop-off and pick-up only.
5. All students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must be dropped off in the front of the school at the main entrance. Please watch for late buses. They have the right-of-way.
6. Pick-up begins at 3:05 p.m. in the back lot. Please pull-up to door entry E not door entry C. Please have your family name tag displayed. No car pick-ups can be made in the front of the school because of the buses.

If your child is a walker, he/she will be walking from the school with the crossing guard to the corner of Silverspoon and Colby.

Any changes to a student's regular dismissal procedure should be noted in a signed and dated note or in an emergency situation, by telephone, **before 2:30 p.m.** A courtesy email or Dojo message to your child's teacher is appreciated, however a parent/guardian **must** still call the office to report any absences. Again, due to safety concerns, students cannot be routinely dismissed from the classrooms or office. Your understanding and cooperation is much appreciated.

Elementary School:
Students will enter and exit school using the North Door (North/Flagpole). Parents may drop off students in the morning at the designated drop off area at the West end of the School only. A crossing guard will be on duty at the corner in the afternoon only.

Bus riders will be supervised by staff members and dismissed at the appropriate times through the North Door. Early Walkers will be dismissed at approximately 3:05 p.m. and Late Walkers will be dismissed at approximately 3:15 p.m. ALL walkers will be escorted by supervisors to the four corners (Intersection of Fifth and Sycamore St.).
Any changes to a student's regular dismissal procedure should be noted in a signed and dated note or in an emergency situation, by telephone, **before 2:30 p.m.** A courtesy email or Dojo message to your child's teacher is appreciated, however a parent/guardian **must** still call the office to report any absences. Again, due to safety concerns, students cannot be routinely dismissed from the classrooms or office. Your understanding and cooperation is much appreciated. All parents must stop by the office if picking up a child directly from the classroom.

SAFETY NOTE: For the safety of our students and staff, parents (or any adult picking up a student after school) will refrain from entering the building to pick up their child. All students will be escorted to the four corners with early or later walkers for pick-up.

Dress Code

A student's appearance, including dress and hygiene, must not disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety. The school does not prohibit hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists. Students who disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety must modify their appearance. Students and their parents are encouraged to select respectable styles of dress that are appropriate for a healthy educational environment and that support the achievement of the educational goals of the community. While the responsibility for appropriate attire at school rests with the student and his/her parents, students should maintain an appearance that will not impair or endanger their health or safety. A complete list of attire that is inappropriate for school and which might cause a disruption of the educational process would be impossible, but the following examples will serve as guidelines:

- Clothing students wear should cover them from at least the shoulder to mid-thigh. Short shorts, spaghetti strap tank tops, transparent clothing, bare midriffs and items with holes in inappropriate places are not allowed. Students that wear leggings or other form fitting pants must wear a shirt that completely covers their bottom.
- Coats, jackets, capes, and hats are not to be worn in the building during the day; additionally sports bags, book bags, etc, may not be carried during the day.
- Clothing that displays or communicates drug or alcohol advertisements/names, profane language, vulgar statements, hate messages, sexual innuendo, tobacco ads, suicide or other violent messages are not allowed.
- Any clothing or symbols that relate to gang symbols, gang membership, etc., may not be worn.
- Shoes must be worn. Sandals, high heels and flip-flops are discouraged due to injuries. Students may be asked to change into their PE shoes for safety.
- In the Primary building students spend a lot of time on the carpet, girls are encouraged to wear shorts under skirts and dresses.

Students who dress in an inappropriate manner will be allowed to correct the situation and parents will be notified of the school's concern.

Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

In order to participate in an extracurricular activity after school, (ie – concerts, sports, class parties, book clubs, etc.) a student must be in attendance by 9:00 AM of that school day. (An exception to this would be prior approval to be granted by the school principal (ie., Doctor's appt., ortho appt. etc.)

Athletic Extracurricular Activities:

A student must meet all academic eligibility requirements and have the following fully executed documents on file in the school office before being allowed to participate in any athletic activity:

1. A current certificate of physical fitness issued by a licensed physician, an advanced practice nurse or physician assistant. The preferred certificate of physical fitness is the Illinois High School Association's "Pre-Participation Physical Examination Form.
2. A permission slip to participate in the specific athletic activity signed by the student's parent/guardian.
3. Proof the student is covered by medical insurance.
4. Signed documentation agreeing to comply with the School District's policies and procedures on student athletic concussions and head injuries.

A student who receives an unexcused absence from school may not participate in the next scheduled practice or contest. A student who quits during the season will not be permitted to participate in that activity for the remainder of the season. If a student is absent on the last day of school of the week (typically Fridays), the student will not be allowed to participate in weekend tournaments/games.

Eligibility is checked every week. In order to remain eligible, a student may have no failing grade in any academic and/or academic special subject. If one failing grade is received, the student may NOT participate in practices or meetings and may NOT participate in any scheduled activities until the next eligibility check. If a student is ineligible for a third time during the same activity, he/she will be declared ineligible for the remainder of that activity. This eligibility applies to all extracurricular activities.

The district allows a student to modify his or her athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of his or her religion or his or her cultural values or modesty preferences. A student is not required to receive the prior approval of the school board for such modification.

Sports Concussion

Student athletes must comply with Illinois' Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act and all protocols, policies and bylaws of the Illinois Elementary School Association before being allowed to participate in any athletic activity, including practice or competition.

A student who was removed from practice or competition because of a suspected concussion shall be allowed to return only after all statutory prerequisites are completed, including without limitation, the School District's return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols.

Emergency Drills & Dismissal

Emergency Management Plan

The Putnam County School District's Emergency Management Plan is available in the District & Principal's office and is updated annually with all appropriate emergency agencies involved in the review process.

Emergency Dismissals - In case of an emergency dismissal, children should have an alternate place to go should a parent not be at home. Parents are asked to discuss an alternative plan with their child(ren) and to make appropriate arrangements for use of the plan.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted periodically during the school year as required by State Code. Students are instructed in proper evacuation procedures. Local and state officials annually visit the school to inspect fire hazards or conduct a fire drill.

Tornado Drills/Warning

Tornado drills are conducted annually at PCPS/PCES. Students practice several times where and what to do in the event that an announcement is given. These procedures are also taught for multiple locations in the building depending on where the students are during the initial announcement.

In the event of a tornado warning, children will be told to go to an assigned area for their class. Periodic drills are conducted for these routines. If an actual tornado warning occurs near the end of a school day, the children will not be dismissed until the "all clear" signal is given. No student will be dismissed prior to the all-clear unless the parent/guardian signs the student out at the school's office. By signing the sheet, the parents/guardians are indicating to the school that they are taking the child(ren) from the school premises and assume all responsibility for what may happen, regardless of the warning.

Law Enforcement Drill

A law enforcement drill is required annually with our local and/or county officials. This drill allows administration and law enforcement to cooperatively and safely practice procedures in case of a threat inside or outside of the school building. Students are present for the drill but know it is a drill through announcements and their teachers preparing them. Parents will also be notified of these drills in advance.

School may be closed unexpectedly due to severe weather, power failure, or other reasons. Parents are advised to listen to local radio stations for information about the closing of school during inclement weather conditions. If there is no radio announcement, school will be in session. Please do NOT call the school office. School phone lines must remain open for instructions and staff communications. The school's Thrillshare system will be used to contact parents. Please make sure the school has your contact number.

All announcements concerning adjustments in the school schedule due to inclement weather will be made using the district's messaging system and your local radio stations.

English Language Learners (EL)

The school offers opportunities for English Learners to develop high levels of academic attainment in English and to meet the same academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to attain. Students are tested to determine eligibility and services after the Home Language Survey form is completed at registration. If students qualify for language support services, these services are provided until the student demonstrates sufficient skill to exit the program based upon the State ACCESS test, or until a parent withdraws them from the program.

Parents/guardians of English Learners will be: (1) given an opportunity to provide input to the program, and (2) provided notification regarding their child's placement in, and information about, the District's English Learners programs.

For questions related to this program or to express input in the school's English Learners program, contact Courtney Balestri, Principal at PCES.

Homeless Students

When a child (PK-12th) loses permanent housing and becomes a homeless person as defined by law, or when a homeless child changes his or her temporary living arrangements, the parent or guardian of the homeless child has the option of either:

1. Continuing the child's education in the school of origin for as long as the child remains homeless or, if the child becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year during which the housing is acquired; or
2. Enrolling the child in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

The Putnam County CUSD #535 homeless liaison is Jodi Peterson. She can be reached by calling 815-882-2800 or by email at petersonj@pcschools535.org.

Homework Policy

Primary/PCES - Each grade level will communicate homework procedures PreK-5th grade. The school's "Homework Policy" is intended to (1) foster informative and supportive communication between school and home, (2) continue the development of individual responsibility, and (3) increase academic performance.

Requests for homework will be honored for students who are absent. Teachers will address the length of time a student has to complete and return the homework to school. Requests for homework should be made by contacting the school before 9:00 a.m. A minimum of a week's notice is required if requesting homework in advance for known absences such as vacation.

Internet/Technology Acceptable Use Policy/Use of AI

Please see the Student Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Networks and Device Use Agreement located on the district website.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

"Artificial intelligence" or "AI" is intelligence demonstrated by computers, as opposed to human intelligence. "Intelligence" encompasses the ability to learn, reason, generalize, and infer meaning. Examples of AI technology include ChatGPT and other chatbots and large language models.

AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers, or complete schoolwork without permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited. The use of AI for these purposes constitutes cheating or plagiarism.

In certain situations, AI may be used as a learning tool or a study aid. In preparation for this use, students should be taught how to appropriately use the AI prior to independent use. Students who wish to use AI for legitimate educational purposes must have permission from a teacher or an administrator in all subjects and matters related to the student's participation in their school or associated programs. Students may not use AI, including AI image or voice generator technology, to violate school rules or school district policies.

Students may use AI as authorized in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

In order to ensure academic integrity, tests, assignments, projects, papers, and other schoolwork may be checked by AI content detectors and/or plagiarism recognition software. A student's work may also be compared to previous student samples to determine if the work was produced or created using AI. Based upon the teacher's determination, the student may be subject to the school's policies on cheating and/or plagiarism.

General Principles for AI

The following are principles acquired from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Technology and serve as a basis for the use of AI in schools:

- The use of AI must fit within the educational goals of a lesson or unit.
- AI models should not limit the vision for learning.
- Educators and students should be centered in the use of AI, meaning tools must be inspectable, explainable, and provide human alternatives to AI suggestions.
- Educators and students retain all professional judgement and override of AI.
- At the elementary level, AI will likely be teacher-led experiences. At the junior high and high school levels, AI may transition to student-led experiences.
- The goals of learning and use of AI will change as systems evolve.
- Data privacy and security must be ensured when using AI.

Lunch & Breakfast

The meal and milk prices for the 2026-2027 school year are as follows: Breakfast $1.85, Lunch $2.90, and extra milk $.45. Meal and milk prices are subject to change after review by the Board of Education. All can be purchased by the day, week, or month. Students are not permitted to charge breakfast or lunch. Teachers will send breakfast, lunch money, and any of your instructions to the office every morning. Funds may also be deposited into a student's account on Teacher Ease. All record keeping for the hot lunch program is maintained in the office. Putnam County Schools follow established policies and criteria for determining eligibility for free and/or reduced lunch or breakfast.

Breakfast is served from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. To ensure students have enough time to eat before going to class, we prefer they arrive no later than 7:50 a.m. for breakfast. Lunch is served per building schedule.

A parent, adult or special guest is welcome to join a student for lunch beginning in October. This is limited to once a month at the Elementary School. Primary School guests will have an assigned lunch days per homeroom for special guests at lunch. If you plan on eating hot lunch, the office needs to be notified by 10:00 a.m.

Parents are welcome to bring lunch for their child or children during the lunch period but cannot bring lunch to any other student. Lunch from fast food restaurants is discouraged as it may cause animosity among students. If you bring your child lunch, please consider packing them a cold lunch.

The lunch program operates as a debit account, not a credit account. However, no child is ever allowed to go without lunch. Students who bring a cold lunch are encouraged to avoid “junk food” and other non-nutritious items. Carbonated beverages such as soda are not permitted in the cafeteria. For safety reasons, glassware should not be used. Trading of lunches and/or lunch items is not permitted. During the first 10 minutes students eat (no talking to encourage eating at this age) and the second 10 minutes students can talk quietly.

Delinquent Charges for Meals Provided by the District

The Building Principal and District staff will work jointly to prevent meal charges from accumulating. Every effort to collect all funds due to the District will be made on a regular basis and before the end of the school year. Contact your Building Principal or designee about whether your child(ren)’s charges may be carried over at the end of the school year, i.e., beyond June 30th.

Unpaid meal charges are considered delinquent debt when payment is overdue as defined by Board policy 4:45, Insufficient Fund Checks and Debt Recovery and the Hunger-Free Students’ Bill of Rights Act (105 ILCS 123/). The District will make reasonable efforts to collect charges classified as delinquent debt, including repeated contacts to collect the amounts and, when necessary, requesting that the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) apply for meal benefits to determine if the student qualifies for such benefits under Board policy 4:130, Free and Reduced-Price Food Services. The District will provide a federally reimbursable meal or snack to a student who requests one, regardless of the student's ability to pay or negative account balance.

When a student's funds are low and when there is a negative balance, reminders will be provided to the staff, students, and their parent(s)/guardian(s) at regular intervals during the school year. State law allows the Building Principal to contact parents(s)/guardian(s) to attempt collection of the owed money when the amount owed is more than the amount of five lunches. If a parent/guardian regularly fails to provide meal money for the child(ren) that he/she is responsible for in the District and does not qualify for free meal benefits or refuses to apply for such benefits, the Building Principal or designee will direct the next course of action. Continual failure to provide meal money may require the District to notify the IL Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and/or take legal steps to recover the unpaid meal charges, up to and including seeking an offset under the State Comptroller Act, if applicable.

Opt Out: Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs; Ability to Opt-Out of Certain Course Content and Programs

Parents or guardians have the right to inspect all instructional materials used as a part of their child's education. If you believe that curriculum, instructional materials, or programs violate rights guaranteed by any law or Board policy, you may file a complaint under the District's uniform grievance policy.

Parents or guardians with other suggestions or complaints about curriculum, instructional materials, or programs should complete a Curriculum Objection Form, which is available from the school office. A parent or guardian may also request that their child be exempt from using a particular instructional material or participating in certain course content or programs by completing a Curriculum Objection Form.

Exempting a child from using instructional material or refusing to allow a child from taking or participating in course content or a program that allows parents or guardians to object in writing and/or opt their child out of participation shall not be reason for disciplinary action or academic penalty to the student.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Formerly Known as: No Child Left Behind Act)

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001,* signed into law on January 8, 2002, is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. This update vastly increases the federal government's role in the operation of public schools and imposes many new and complex obligations on local school districts. Of particular interest to parents is the assurance that all our teachers are duly certified and highly qualified and that you have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s).
A parent will also be notified if your child is being taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not considered "highly qualified" under the ESEA guidelines. As well as its comprehensive provisions on school improvement, teacher quality, and instructional programs, ESEA also has numerous other requirements, such as regulations concerning student privacy, military access to student directory information, community access to school facilities and guidelines for the exercise of religious freedom in the schools. As required by ESEA, Putnam County Community Unit School District No. 535 certifies that no policy of the district prevents, or otherwise denies participation in, constitutionally protected prayer in public elementary and secondary schools.

Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed On Campus

Creating, distributing, and/or accessing non-school sponsored publications shall occur at a time and place and in a manner that will not cause disruption, be coercive, or result in the perception that the distribution or the publication is endorsed by the School District.

Students are prohibited from creating, distributing, and/or accessing at school any publication that:

1. Will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities;
2. Violates the rights of others, including but not limited to material that is libelous, slanderous or obscene, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright;

3. Is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to maturity level of the students, including but not limited to material that is obscene, pornographic, or pervasively lewd and vulgar, contains indecent and vulgar language, or sexting as defined by School Board policy and the Student Handbook;
4. Is reasonably viewed as promoting illegal drug use;
5. Is distributed in kindergarten through eighth grade and is primarily prepared by non-students, unless it is being used for school purposes. However, material from outside sources or the citation to such sources may be allowed, as long as the material to be distributed or accessed is primarily prepared by students; or
6. Encourages or incites students to violate any Board policies.

Accessing or distributing on-campus includes accessing or distributing on school property or at school-related activities. A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for: (1) accessing or distributing forbidden material, or (2) for writing, creating, or publishing such material intending for it to be accessed or distributed at school.

Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed Off-Campus

A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for creating and/or distributing a publication that: (1) causes a substantial disruption or a foreseeable risk of a substantial disruption to school operations, or (2) interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Formal Parent/Teacher conferences are held District-wide once during the school year, as noted in the District calendar. In addition to the District-wide scheduled times, teachers in grades PreK-5 hold conferences on an “as needed” basis, either on the phone or in person. Parents are encouraged to contact their child’s teacher at any time if they have a question or concern.

Party Invitations

The classroom teacher, with approval of the principal, may distribute invitations to personal parties only when they include every student in the classroom or all of the boys or all of the girls in the classroom. Invitations to personal parties may not be distributed directly by students or parents at school. The distribution of party invitations during the school-day can often cause problems in the classroom for the teacher as well as for the students. We encourage distributing party invitations outside of the school day. Note: Birthday balloons are not allowed to be delivered to school due to the distraction to the learning environment.

Pesticide Application

Putnam County CUSD #535 is committed to providing students a safe environment. It seeks to prevent children from being exposed to pests and pesticides. Therefore, an Integrated Pest Management Plan has been adopted.

Even though pest control practices may involve a variety of chemical and non chemical methods, insecticide baits and rodenticide baits are most commonly used at each school rather than chemical applications. However, there may be situations where chemical control of pests may be used. If such a control is used, parents and staff members can be informed of such prior to an application.

The school district is committed to use the least hazardous chemical control methods after non chemical control methods have been applied. However, written prior notice shall not be required if there is an imminent threat to health or property. If there are any questions pertaining to the Integrated Pest Management Plan, contact the school office.

Physical Education

In order to be excused from participation in physical education, a student must present an appropriate excuse from his or her parent/guardian or from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act. The excuse may be based on medical or religious prohibitions. An excuse because of medical reasons must include a signed statement from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act that corroborates the medical reason for the request. An excuse based on religious reasons must include a signed statement from a member of the clergy that corroborates the religious reason for the request. Upon written notice from a student's parent/guardian, a student will be excused from engaging in the physical activity components of physical education during a period of religious fasting.
A parent may provide a handwritten and dated note to excuse their child for up to two days of physical education due to a physical ailment. Anything beyond two days will require a note from a medical practitioner.

Preschool for All Home Connection Meeting

The purpose of the classroom connection meeting is to make a connection between the teacher, child and family. The preschool teachers meet all new students and their families. Meetings will last about 30 minutes and they will be scheduled at the beginning of each school year. The teacher provides information about the program, answers parental questions and has an activity to play with the family.

Preschool Screenings

Putnam County Primary School screens students entering preschool to identify and serve the most at-risk children. The screening instruments and activities measure each child's development in the areas of vocabulary, visual-motor integration, language and speech development, English proficiency, fine and gross motor skills, social skills, and cognitive development. Due to children growing and developing over time, a student's screening data cannot be older than six months upon enrollment into the Preschool for All program (PFA).

The screening is conducted on a community-wide basis and is developed and implemented with cooperation from the LaSalle/Putnam County Educational Alliance for Special Education.
Putnam County provides two screenings a year during the months of August and March. A third screening is scheduled if deemed necessary. Children may be screened by LEASE at locations other than Putnam County and request the screening results be shared with Putnam County to determine eligibility for PFA. Fall enrollment for the next school year is determined after each screening. If the program is full, a wait list is started and used throughout the year as availability allows.

Publishing Student ID/Picture/Information

A parent or guardian must notify the office in writing, at the beginning of each year, if they do NOT want their child's picture, name, other directory information or work published. This will include electronically, in the newspaper, and on the district website. Due to other students' public media restrictions, no one is allowed to take/post pictures of any child(ren) but their own.

Recess

Weather permitting, students have recess outside after lunch. When the weather is inclement, including a wind chill factor of 25 degrees or lower, recess is held in the school gym. Please be sure a coat, hat/scarf, boots, and mittens/gloves are used on any given day when the weather is cold.

When it is believed to be in the best interest of the student for behavioral reasons, recess may be withheld at the discretion of the teacher and/or principal.

Registration

Preschool Registration/Enrollment Information

The Preschool For All program serves only 3-5 year old children who are not age-eligible for kindergarten (i.e., age 5 on or before September 1 of the school year in which the program is implemented).

Those children currently enrolled in the program remain in the program until they become eligible for kindergarten. When there are openings in the program, children are enrolled based on their at-risk status. The most at-risk children are enrolled first as determined to be the most at-risk by a screening identifying circumstantial risk factors, eligibility criteria, and information from the parent interview. At risk enrollment includes children from Early Intervention, Early Head Start, and Prevention Initiative.

Students enrolled in the District's State-funded preschool program(s) may be temporarily removed or transitioned to a new program in accordance with federal and State law. State law prohibits the expulsion of students from the program(s).

Waiting List for Preschool

When the Preschool program for Putnam County identifies more children who are in need of services than we have available spots, a waiting list is created.

At the time children are screened, points are assigned through the screening process and parent interview. Those children with the most at risk points are admitted into the program. If we have more children than spots, a waiting list is created and children with the most points are placed at the top of the list. After the most at-risk children are considered, then consideration is given to those at-risk children who will be attending kindergarten the following yea As seats become available in the program, the parent of the child with the most points will be contacted to discuss admission into the program.

Fee Waivers

The Superintendent will recommend to the Board for adoption what fees, if any, will be charged for the use of textbooks, consumable materials, extracurricular activities, and other school fees. Students will pay for loss of school books or other school-owned materials.

Fees for textbooks, other instructional materials, are waived for students who meet the eligibility criteria for fee waiver contained in this policy. In order that no student is denied educational services or academic credit due to the inability of parent(s)/guardian(s) to pay, the Superintendent will recommend to the Board for adoption what additional fees, if any, the District will waive. Students receiving a fee waiver are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, materials, supplies, and equipment.

The Superintendent shall ensure that applications for fee waivers are widely available and distributed according to State law and ISBE rule and that provisions for assisting parents/guardians complete the application are available.

A student shall be eligible for a fee waiver when:

1. The student is currently eligible for free or reduced lunches or breakfasts pursuant to 105 ILCS 125/1 et seq.; or
2. The student or student's family is currently receiving aid under Article IV of The Illinois Public Aid Code (Aid to Families with Dependent Children).

Residency

Proof of residency is required every year. Three forms of proof are required at the time of registration. Examples of acceptable forms are: Driver's license, utility bill, phone bill, or a lease agreement. If there is a residency change during the school year, the parent must provide the updated contact information to the building secretary.

Change of Residence Due To Military Service
If a pupil's change of residence is due to the military service obligation of a person who has legal custody of the pupil, then, upon the written request of the person having legal custody of the pupil, the residence of the pupil is deemed for all purposes relating to enrollment (including tuition, fees, and costs), for the duration of the custodian's military service obligation, to be the same as the residence of the pupil immediately before the change of residence caused by the military service obligation. A school district is not responsible for providing transportation to or from school for a pupil whose residence is determined under this condition.

Response to Intervention or Multi-Tiered System of Support (RtI or MTSS)

Response to Intervention (RtI) integrates assessment and intervention within a 3-tiered system to maximize student achievement. During the fall, winter, and spring universal screening of core content is reviewed to help determine students' strengths and weaknesses in the areas of reading and math.

All students receive Tier I RtI as part of the classroom curriculum. If universal screening, along with classroom data, indicates a student is significantly below grade level in reading or math, then they will receive Tier II RtI support. This support will be given in addition to Tier I instruction. This instruction is a supplement, not a substitute for the reading or math instruction received from the classroom teacher. When students receive Tier II RtI support they will be progress monitored every two weeks and their progress will be reviewed by a team every six to eight weeks. A student may receive Tier III RtI support if they have not made significant progress as determined by the team.

The focus of instruction during PreK-5th grade RtI will be early writing strategies, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, number sense, math facts, concepts and application, and computation to name a few. Communication is very important, so parents will be kept well informed of their child's growth and progress through reports and/or graphs depending on the level of intervention received.

Retention/Promotion

In compliance with School Board Policy 7.30, the building principal shall assign students to classes. Placement, promotion, or retention shall be made in the best interest of the student after a careful evaluation of all factors relating to the advantages and disadvantages of alternatives. The building principal will direct and assist teachers in their evaluation of students and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards. No student shall be promoted to the next grade level based solely upon age or any other social reasons not related to the student's academic performance. In accordance with the Illinois Education Reform Act and in compliance with School Board Policy 6.280, both quantitative measures and qualitative assessment will be used to determine placement/promotion/retention. Such decisions will be reached with the support and involvement of the parents within the prescribed time frame. If a student is currently part of a case study evaluation or receiving Special Education services, placement decisions shall be determined by the student's educational team.

Elementary:
In most cases, promotion of a student to the next grade will not take place if the student has more than one final yearly grade of "F" in the academic subjects of Reading, English, Math, Science and Social Studies. Parents of students, who are in danger of non-promotion, will be notified by registered mail by May 1st, including notification throughout the year of failing grades.

Search & Seizure

In order to maintain order, safety and security in the schools, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects. "School authorities" includes school liaison police officers.

School Property and Equipment as well as Personal Effects Left by Students
School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as lockers, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects left there by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there.

The building principal may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs.

Students
School authorities may search a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession (such as, purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) when there is reasonable ground for suspecting that the search will produce evidence the particular student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's student rules and policies. The search will be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to its objective of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the student's age and sex, and the nature of the infraction.

School officials may require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates the school's disciplinary rules or school district policy. In the course of the investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order for the school to make a factual determination.

Seizure of Property
If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's policies or rules, evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

Social Networking Website Notification
School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination.

Security Cameras
All Putnam County Schools are equipped with security cameras. Putnam County Schools maintain 24-hour video security with cameras placed at entrances and in hallways. Videotapes are reviewed when a safety or security issue is reported. They may also be reviewed at random. Viewing of videotapes is limited to individuals having a legitimate educational or administrative purpose. Those individuals with a legitimate educational or administrative purpose are the Superintendent, building administrators, or educational personnel. Videotapes will be reused or erased unless needed for an educational or administrative purpose.

School Hours
The office is open from 7:30 a.m to 4:00 p.m. Teachers are in the building from 7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. daily. Students may not be dropped off at school until 7:15 a.m. at the earliest and breakfast is not served until 7:30 a.m.

Preschool class times are 8:15-10:45 a.m. or 12:15-2:45 p.m. Daily attendance is expected at the Preschool level. Failure to attend can jeopardize the student's enrollment in the state grant program.

Students who are transported to school by bus arrive at various times, with the last bus arriving at approximately 7:50 a.m. Classes begin at 8:00 a.m. Students will be considered tardy after 8:15 a.m.

Special Education - IDEA Child Find
It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate educational services.

The School provides a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and necessary related services to all children with disabilities enrolled in the school. The term "children with disabilities" means children between ages 3 and through the school year of which the student turns 22 for whom it is determined that special

education services or 504 accommodations are needed. It is the intent of the school to ensure that students with disabilities are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services based on identified individual needs.
Putnam County School District #535 has special education programs and services available either in our district or in the districts within our special education joint agreement, the La Salle County Education Alliance for Special Education (L.E.A.S.E.). These services are available for students with all types of disabilities and/or exceptionalities. Within the L.E.A.S.E. Cooperative, all member school districts establish, maintain or have access to special education instructional programs, resource programs and related services which meet the educational needs of children with the following exceptional characteristics: auditory; visual; physical/health impairments; speech/language impairments, deficits in the essential learning processes of perception, conceptualization, memory, attention or motor control; deficits in intellectual development and mental capacity; educational maladjustment related to social or cultural circumstances; affective disorders or adaptive behavior which restricts affective functioning.

Referrals of students for special education programs and/or services may be made by parents in writing, as well as by local school certified teachers after following the district's RTI process. Written referral requests should be submitted to either the Building Principal or the Director of Student Services.

Parents may also request a copy of the Illinois Administrative Code, Part 226 - Special Education Rules and Regulations, by writing to the:

Illinois State Board of Education
Department of Special Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001

It is also available on their website at www.isbe.net.

A copy of the publication "Explanation of Procedural Safeguards Available to Parents of Students with Disabilities" may be obtained from the school district office. For more information, please contact the Director of Student Services, at 815-882-2800, ext. 8.

A booklet entitled, "Parents' Guide - The Educational Rights of Students with Disabilities," may be obtained by writing to:

L.E.A.S.E.
1009 Boyce Memorial Drive
Ottawa, IL. 61350

https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Special-Education-Parent-Rights.aspx&sa=D&source=editors&ust=1620243398301000&usg=AOvVaw0CuTVzynTrjQQi49z7rhve

The parent/guardian of a student receiving special education services, or being evaluated for eligibility, is afforded reasonable access to educational facilities, personnel, classrooms, and buildings.

This same right of access is afforded to an independent educational evaluator or a qualified professional retained by or on behalf of a parent or child.For further information, please contact the Director of Student Services 815.882.2800 opt 8.

PUNS
New requirements for Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Service (PUNS) were effective January 1, 2024. PUNS is a statewide database that records information about individuals with developmental disabilities who are planning for or seeking services through the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Division of Developmental Disabilities. At each annual review for a student with a disability, the IEP (Individualized Education Program) team must determine if the student is registered for PUNS and, if not, refer the family to a designated employee who has completed the PUNS training. For information on PUNS, please contact one of the following trained employees:
Jodi Peterson, Director of Student Services, (815)882-2800 or, petersonj@pcschools535.org.

Discipline of Special Education Students
The District shall comply with the Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and the Illinois State Board of Education's Special Education rules when disciplining special education students. No special education student shall be expelled if the student's particular act of gross disobedience or misconduct is a manifestation of his or her disability.

Section 504
Federal law protects students from discrimination due to a disability that substantially limits a major life activity. If your student has a qualifying disability that is substantially limiting and is significantly impacting the student's educational performance, an individualized 504 Plan may be developed and implemented to provide the needed accommodations so the student can access his or her education as effectively.

Not all students with a medical diagnosis, life-threatening allergies and/or life-threatening chronic illnesses may be eligible under Section 504. This determination is made through a review of multiple sources including present and past data, teacher input, parent input, and student performance.

A copy of the publication "Explanation of Procedural Safeguards Available to Parents of Students with Disabilities" may be obtained from the school district office. For more information, please contact the Director of Student Services, at 815-882-2800, ext. 8.

Related Service Logs
For a child with an individualized education program (IEP), the school district must document related service logs that record the type of related services administered under the child's IEP and the minutes of each type of related service that has been administered. The school will provide a child's parent/guardian a copy of the related service log at the annual review of the child's IEP and at any other time upon request.

Homeless Child's Right to Education
The district ensures the enrollment of homeless children is ongoing and will not be delayed due to scheduling issues, residency requirement documents or the lack of legal guardianship or student records. The district does not charge tuition nor will it refuse enrollment for homeless students.
When a child loses permanent housing and becomes a homeless person as defined at law, or when a homeless child changes his or her temporary living arrangements, the parent or guardian of the homeless child has the option of either:

1. continuing the child's education in the school of origin for as long as the child remains homeless or, if the child becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year during which the housing is acquired;
2. enrolling the child in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

The district's homeless liaison is Jodi Peterson, Director of Student Services . To contact Mrs. Jodi Peterson please email petersonj@pcschools535.org or call 815.882.2800 opt 1.

Home or Hospital Instruction
A student who is absent from school, or whose physician, physician assistant or licensed advanced practice registered nurse anticipates his or her absence from school because of a medical condition may be eligible for instruction in the student's home or hospital.

Appropriate educational services from qualified staff will begin no later than five school days after receiving a written statement from a physician, physician assistant, or licensed advanced practice registered nurse. Instructional or related services for a student receiving special education services will be determined by the student's individualized education program.

A student who is unable to attend school because of pregnancy will be provided home instruction, correspondence courses, or other courses of instruction before:

1. the birth of the child when the student's physician, physician assistant, or licensed advanced practice nurse indicates, in writing, that she is medically unable to attend regular classroom instruction, and
2. for up to 3 months after the child's birth or a miscarriage.

For information on home or hospital instruction, contact: Mrs. Jodi Peterson please email petersonj@pcschools535.org or call 815.882.2800 opt 1.

Student Privacy Protections

Surveys Requesting Personal Information:
School officials and staff members will not request, nor disclose, the identity of any student who completes any survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the school or district) containing one or more of the following items:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
3. Sexual behaviors or attitudes.
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships.
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
8. Income other than that required by law to determine program eligibility.

The student's parent/guardian may inspect the survey or evaluation, and refuse to allow their child to participate in the survey. The school will not penalize any student whose parent/guardian exercised this option.

A student's parent/guardian may inspect, upon their request, any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum within a reasonable time of their request.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:
Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

Student Records

A school student record is any writing or other recorded information concerning a student and by which a student may be identified individually that is maintained by a school or at its direction or by a school employee, regardless of how or where the information is stored, except for certain records kept in a staff member's sole possession; records maintained by law enforcement officers working in the school; video and other electronic recordings (including electronic recordings made on school busses) that are created in part for law enforcement, security, or safety reasons or purposes, though such electronic recordings may become a student record if the content is used for disciplinary or special education purposes regarding a particular student.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Illinois Student Records Act afford parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's school records. They are:

1. **The right to inspect and copy the student's education records within 10 business days of the day the District receives a request for access.**
   The degree of access a student has to his or her records depends on the student's age. Students less than 18 years of age have the right to inspect and copy only their permanent record. Students 18 years of age or older have access and copyrights to both permanent and temporary records. A parent/guardian or student should submit to the building principal a written request that identifies the record(s) he or she wishes to inspect. Within 10 business days, the building principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. In certain circumstances, the District may request an additional 5 business days in which to grant access. The District charges $.35 per page for copying but no one will be denied their right to copies of their records for inability to pay this cost.
   These rights are denied to any person against whom an order of protection has been entered concerning the student.

2. **The right to have one or more scores received on college entrance examinations included on the student's academic transcript.**
   Parents/guardians or eligible students may have one or more scores on college entrance examinations included on the student's academic transcript. The District will include scores on college entrance examinations upon the written request of the parent/guardian or eligible student stating the name of each college entrance examination that is the subject of the request and the dates of the scores that are to be included.

3. **The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/ guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper.**
   A parent/guardian or eligible student may ask the District to amend a record that is believed to be inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper. Requests should be sent to the building principal and should clearly identify the record the parent/guardian or eligible student wants changed and the specific reason a change is being sought.
   If the District decides not to amend the record, the District will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise him or her of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

4. **The right to permit disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the FERPA or Illinois School Student Records Act authorizes disclosure without consent.**

5. Disclosure without consent is permitted to school officials with legitimate educational or administrative interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board. A school official may also include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or educational technology vendor); or any parent/guardian or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility or contractual obligation with the district.
   Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student has enrolled or intends to enroll, as well as to any person as specifically required by State or Federal law. Before information is released to these individuals, the parents/guardians or eligible student will receive prior written notice of the nature and substance of the information, and an opportunity to inspect, copy, and challenge such records.
   Academic grades and references to expulsions or out-of-school suspensions cannot be challenged at the time a student's records are being forwarded to another school to which the student is transferring.
   Disclosure is also permitted without consent to: any person for research, statistical reporting or planning, provided that no student or parent/guardian can be identified; to another school district that overlaps attendance boundaries with the District, if the District has entered into an intergovernmental agreement that allows for sharing of student records and information with the other district,[2] any person named in a court order; appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons; to the Ill. Department of Human Services (DHS) for the sole purpose of assessing or evaluating the student's eligibility for Medicaid waiver benefits consistent with the rules adopted by the DHS; and juvenile authorities when necessary for the discharge of their official duties who request information before adjudication of the student.

6. **The right to a copy of any school student record proposed to be destroyed or deleted.**
   The permanent record is maintained for at least 60 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. The temporary record is maintained for at least 5 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. Temporary records that may be of assistance to a student with a disability who graduates or permanently withdraws, may, after 5 years, be transferred to the parent/guardian or to the student, if the student has succeeded to the rights of the parent/guardian. Student temporary records are reviewed every 4 years or upon a student's change in attendance centers, whichever occurs first.

7. **The right to prohibit the release of directory information.**
   Throughout the school year, the District may release directory information regarding students, limited to
   a. Name
   b. Address
   c. Grade level
   d. Birth date
   e. Parent/guardian names, addresses, electronic mail addresses, and telephone numbers
   f. Photographs, videos, or digital images used for informational or news-related purposes (whether by a media outlet or by the school) of a student participating in school or school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics that have appeared in school publications, such as yearbooks, newspapers, or sporting or fine arts programs
   g. Academic awards, degrees, and honors
   h. Information in relation to school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics

i. Major field of study
j. Period of attendance in school

Any parent/guardian or eligible student may prohibit the release of any or all of the above information by delivering a written objection to the building principal within 30 days of the date of this notice.

8. **The right to request that military recruiters or institutions of higher learning not be granted access to your student's information without your prior written consent.**[3]
   Federal law requires a secondary school to grant military recruiters and institutions of higher learning, upon their request, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers, unless the student's parent/guardian, or student who is 18 years of age or older, submits a written request that the information not be released without the prior written consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student. If you wish to exercise this option, notify the building principal.

9. **The right contained in this statement: No person may condition the granting or withholding of any right, privilege or benefits or make as a condition of employment, credit, or insurance the securing by any individual of any information from a student's temporary record which such individual may obtain through the exercise of any right secured under State law.**

10. **The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.**

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

U.S. Department of Education
Student Privacy Policy Office
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington DC 20202-8520

Suspicion-Based Drug and Alcohol Testing

Board Policy 7:241 – The Board of Education recognizes that drug and/or alcohol testing of an individual student may be appropriate when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the student is violating the Board of Education's policy prohibiting the possession or use of drugs or alcohol while on school grounds or at a school-related activity.

The Board of Education authorizes drug and alcohol testing of students based upon such reasonable suspicion of drug and alcohol use.
The Administration shall establish rules and regulations to implement this policy (Board Policy 7:241 – R) in compliance with applicable laws governing drug and alcohol testing of students.

Targeted School Violence Prevention Program

Threats and acts of targeted school violence harm the district's environment and school community, diminishing students' ability to learn and a school's ability to educate.

Providing students and staff with access to a safe and secure environment is an important goal of the School and District. While it is not possible to completely eliminate threats, the school and District maintain a Targeted School Violence Prevention Program and a Threat Assessment Team to reduce these risks to its environment.

Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to report any expressed threats or behaviors that may represent a threat to the community, school, or self. Reports can be made to any school administrator, law enforcement authorities, or the Safe2Help Illinois helpline (www.safe2helpil.com).

Students and parents are urged to participate in behavioral threat assessment and intervention programs if the Behavioral Threat Assessment Team believes that intervention is necessary to prevent a student from harming themselves or others. However, if for some reason there is a reluctance to participate in the process by the threat maker(s) or parent/guardian(s), the threat assessment process will continue in order to ensure a safe and caring learning environment for all.

For further information, please contact the Building Principal.

Targeted School Violence Prevention and Threat Assessment Education

Student safety is our District's top priority. To maximize safety, the District uses a threat assessment process to identify threats and prevent targeted school violence. This process is part of the Targeted School Violence Prevention Program. For more information, see Board policy 4:190, Targeted School Violence Prevention Program. The Program is part of the preparedness and response phases of the School Emergency Operations and Crisis Response Plan, which in turn is part of the District's Comprehensive Safety and Security Plan.

The District wishes to create a climate that encourages sharing any information about a safety concern with a trusted adult who can help. Sharing information about threats and safety concerns is everyone's responsibility: students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members. The question-and-answer section below is designed to help students, parents/guardians, and staff understand when school officials want individuals to share information about a safety concern.

What Is a Threat?

A threat is a concerning communication or behavior that indicates that an individual may pose a danger to the safety of school staff or students through acts of violence or other behavior that could cause harm to self or others. It may be expressed/communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or in another way.

Threats may be direct ("I'm going to beat you up" or "I'm going to blow this place up!") or indirect ("Come and watch what I am going to do to her."). A threat can be vague ("I'm going to hurt him.") or implied ("You better watch out.") Any possession of a weapon or mention of one is a possible threat.

A threat is a threat regardless of whether it is observed by or communicated directly to the target of the threat or is observed by or communicated to a third party; and regardless of whether the target of the threat is aware of the threat. Sometimes students make threats that may seem funny or "joking", but sometimes a threat is very serious and/or criminal. When you are in doubt as to whether the statement is kidding or serious, the responsible thing to do is to tell the principal or other responsible staff member.

What Is Targeted School Violence?

Targeted School Violence includes school shootings and other school-based attacks where the school was deliberately selected as the location for the attack and was not simply a random site of opportunity.

Individuals who have committed targeted violence did not "just snap" but engaged in a process of thought and escalation of action over days, weeks, months, and even years.

In the majority of incidents of targeted violence, perpetrators did not directly threaten their targets, but they did communicate their intent and/or plans to others before the violence. This indirect expression or third-party communication of intent to cause harm is often referred to as leakage. Reporting leakage is key to preventing targeted school violence.

Who Is Required to Report Threats?
All District staff, volunteers, and contractors are required to report any expressed threats or behaviors that may represent a threat to the community, school, or self to the building principal. Parents/guardians and students are also encouraged to report any such threats to the building principal.

Reported threats are assessed by the school's Threat Assessment Team (TAT). Each TAT includes people with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, and law enforcement. The goal of the threat assessment process is to take appropriate preventive or corrective measures to maintain a safe and secure school environment, to protect and support potential victims, and to provide assistance, as needed, to the individual being assessed.

The threat assessment process does not preclude anyone from acting immediately to address an imminent threat.

What Can Staff and Parents/Guardians Do?
The Threat Assessment Team will provide guidance to students and staff regarding recognizing concerning, aberrant, threatening, and prohibited behaviors to be reported. While there is no one list of behaviors that may cause concern, examples include, but are not limited to:

- Threatening statements or gestures
- Persons with ongoing, unresolved grievances with members of the school community
- Atypical, unusual, or bizarre communications or behavior
- Significant changes in behavior
- Increased focus or fixation on aspects of violence, harm, or death
- Information about someone expressing thoughts, plans, or preparations for violence
- Concerns that someone may harm themselves
- Behavior that significantly disrupts the learning or working environment
- Behavior that seems troubling or disturbing
- Persons seeming isolated and alienated from others
- Anyone unknown to the school

Staff and parents/guardians can reinforce this guidance by discussing with students what a threat is, encouraging students not to make threats or "joking" statements in the first place, and reiterating that seeking help to prevent someone from getting hurt or hurting another by reporting threats is appropriate.

Teacher Qualifications
Parents/guardians may request information about the qualifications of their child's teachers and paraprofessionals, including:

- Whether the teacher has met State certification requirements;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency permit or other provisional status by which State licensing criteria have been waived;
- The teacher's college major;
- Whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees; and
- Whether any instructional aides or paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact the school office.

Testing and Assessment
Regular and on-going classroom assessment is used to monitor student progress and guide instruction. In addition to such local testing, students in grades 3rd through 5th take the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) test. Additionally, 5th grade students take the Illinois Science Assessment (ISA). This testing is required by the State of Illinois and is given in the spring on the dates determined by the State. In addition, PCPS & PCES students complete AIMSweb Plus testing in reading and math three times a year.

Title I

Title I is a federally funded program that provides instructional support for students experiencing difficulties in reading. Putnam County Schools provide a Title I program for students with an identified need in the area of reading. As of the 2016-2017 school year, the Primary and Elementary Schools will be approved for “schoolwide” status with the Board and State. Students PreK-5th grade can be served by the grant.
Students are screened with a multiple-step process to determine eligibility for Title I and must have parent permission to participate in the program. Once eligibility is established small groups of students go to the Title I classroom with a certified Reading Specialist. The Reading Specialist will work on reading skills such as: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Comprehension and Writing. Each student is periodically assessed and progress information is sent home to the parents at least quarterly. Students remain in the program until meeting established exit level criteria. Each year the criteria has to be reestablished for the grant program.

Parental Involvement
The school and its teachers provide meeting times, including parent/teacher conferences, at flexible times to accommodate a variety of parent schedules. Parents/Guardians will be given notice of meeting availability at the beginning of each year, and at least two weeks before conferences or other regularly scheduled meetings, to provide sufficient opportunity to schedule and attend meetings with teachers. Additionally, teachers are available regularly to meet with parents/guardians to discuss the success of their child. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to inquire about available meeting times, and to work with teachers. Parents/Guardians will be involved in an organized and timely way when any programs are created, considered, or altered, and will be continually involved in the ongoing development of programming, curriculum, and policy.

School programs, in addition to the standard educational curriculum, in which Parents/Guardians may wish to become involved include:

Parent Advisory Council	Contact: Mr. Martzluf, Superintendent of Schools
Preschool for All Grant	Contact: Moriah Mott, Primary School Principal
Title I Annual Improvement Planning	Contact: Moriah Mott, Primary School Principal

The school provides Parents/Guardians with access to:

- School performance profiles required by Federal law and their child's individual student assessment results, including an interpretation of such results;
- A description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet;
- Opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions, share experiences with other Parents/Guardians, and participate as appropriate in decisions relating to the education of their children if such Parents/Guardians so desire; and
- Timely responses to suggestions.

Parents/Guardians of participating children have a right to appeal the contents of this policy. The district will submit any parent comments when this plan is submitted to the State. Any questions or concerns should be directed to Moriah Mott, Primary School Principal.
The state’s resources on parental involvement can be located at http://illinoisparents.org/. The state’s website on parental involvement provides information, training, and support for parents and schools on various websites which may be useful or interesting to parents and students, and provides advice and information about how to get involved and participate in the educational process. Resources are provided by search, by county, and by categorical query.

Assurances
Putnam County’s Title I program has been designed and implemented in accordance with all requirements of the grant. The programming for the schools is coordinated by the Title I director. All instructions of the Title I program consult with the classroom teachers on a regular basis in order to ensure a coordinated effort exists in the buildings.

Comparability of Services
The required comparability documents are housed at Putnam County Primary School in the superintendent's office. These documents include: comparability report, the district wide salary schedule, board policy on salary and material equivalence among schools. PC pays its Title I teachers according to his/her position on the negotiated salary schedule. At this time, PC has two title one teachers to serve the two buildings with K-5th grade students.

Allowable Costs Requirement
Information pertaining to allowable costs is housed at Putnam County Primary School in the superintendent's office. Documents may include the following: class schedules, purchase orders, teacher schedules, excess program cost calculations and teacher contracts.

Needs Assessment
Putnam County Primary and Elementary conduct an annual Title I needs assessment survey in the spring. The survey is based upon needs teachers identify to improve teaching and learning. The results of the survey can be found in the office of the Primary School or Elementary School.
Student performance will be measured utilizing AIMSweb Plus at the Primary School and Elementary. Results are presented to parents during parent/teacher conferences or they are sent home with the student three times a year. Assessment data is utilized to determine if students are making adequate progress or if their intervention needs to be changed.

Student Selection Criteria
Student selection may be based on any or all of the following multiple criteria: classroom performance, AIMSweb Plus, running records or a teacher's common assessments. Copies of the criteria are maintained by the classroom teacher or the Title I teacher.

Program Improvement and Evaluation
Local evaluation of the Title I programming plan is an ongoing process. The Title I instructors may conduct pre and post tests on individual students. The assessment of the students in Kindergarten are a combination of local benchmarking and classroom assessment. Title I teachers are also responsible for gathering all information pertinent to effective evaluation of student progress while enrolled in the program. Instruments such as AIMSweb Plus, Fountas and Pinnell, etc., will assist in assessing decoding skills, fluency and comprehension.

Program Quality
PC makes every effort to provide documentation of the quality of this program. Examples of this documentation may include any of the following:

- Minutes from data team meetings for student movement in the tiered levels of intervention
- Notes and records from conferences attended by those associated with Title I programming will be kept and housed in the teacher's classroom.
- Desired outcomes as outlined on the Title I application under program goals and objectives represent broad program goals. Specific goals and objectives for students enrolled in Title I can be found outlined in the teacher's lesson plans.
- Title I teachers maintain individual student progress folders which are located in the Title I classrooms.

Violent Offender Community Notification

State law prohibits a convicted child sex offender from being present on school property when children under the age of 18 are present, except for in the following circumstances as they relate to the individual's child(ren):

1. To attend a conference at the school with school personnel to discuss the progress of their child.
2. To participate in a conference in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to their child's special education services.
3. To attend conferences to discuss issues concerning their child such as retention or promotion.

4. In all other cases, convicted child sex offenders are prohibited from being present on school property unless they obtain written permission from the superintendent or school board.
5. Anytime that a convicted child sex offender is present on school property, including the three reasons above, he/she is responsible for notifying the principal's office upon arrival on school property and upon departure from school property. It is the responsibility of the convicted child sex offender to remain under the direct supervision of a school official at all times he/she is in the presence or vicinity of children.
6. Convicted sex offenders are required to submit a visitation form to the building principal, no less than 24 hours prior to the day of the school event.

A violation of this law is a Class 4 felony
Information about sex offenders or violent offenders against youth is available to the public on the Illinois State Police (ISP) website. The ISP website contains the following:
Illinois Sex Offender Registry, https://isp.illinois.gov/Sor/Disclaimer
Illinois Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry, https://isp.illinois.gov/MVOAY/Disclaimer
Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Sex Offenders, https://isp.illinois.gov/Sor/FAQs

You may find the Illinois Sex Offender Registry on the Illinois State Police's website at: http://www.isp.state.il.us/sor/.

You may find the Illinois Statewide Child Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry on the Illinois State Police's website at: http://www.isp.state.il.us/cmvo/.

Visitors

All doors to the buildings are kept locked during the day, including the main entrance. All persons entering the building during the school day are required to stop in the office for a visitor pass before proceeding to a classroom or other area of the building.

Classroom visits should be pre-arranged at least 24 hours in advance with classroom teachers so as to not interrupt teaching and allow time to prepare as necessary.

Visitors are expected to abide by all school rules during their time on school property. A visitor who fails to conduct himself or herself in a manner that is appropriate will be asked to leave and may be subject to criminal penalties for trespassing and/or disruptive behavior.

No person on school property or at a school event shall perform any of the following acts:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, board member, sports official or coach, or any other person.
2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner or use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Unless specifically permitted by State law, possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device.
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.
5. Damage or deface school property.
6. Violate any Illinois law or municipal, local, or county ordinance.
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.
8. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug.
9. Be present when the person's alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other unlawful product, or illegal drug consumption is detectible, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
10. Use or possess medical cannabis, unless he or she has complied with Illinois' Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Act and District policies.

11. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner).
12. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the board.
13. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in violation of an authorized district employee's directive.
14. Engage in any risky behavior, including rollerblading, roller-skating, or skateboarding.
15. Violate other district policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or district employee.
16. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the district or a school function.

Any person who engages in prohibited conduct may be ejected from or denied admission to school property in accordance with state law. The person may also be subject to being denied admission to school athletic or extracurricular events for up to one calendar year.

Volunteer Opportunities (PreK - 5th)

Parents/guardians are welcome to volunteer for class parties, field trips, or other school functions at the request of a teacher and/or availability of volunteer positions open. Parents/guardians can also volunteer to help teachers prepare materials for class, such as making copies and cutting things out. The invited individual/volunteer will be the only one permitted in the building. Please refrain from bringing siblings and/or other children while volunteering.
For the safety and accountability of all students, only a parent or legal guardian may sign out and take their child home directly from the field trip location. Transportation with anyone else is not permitted. Students who are not signed out by a parent or guardian must return to school on the bus provided.

We want this day to be a special experience for our students, so we kindly ask that younger siblings not attend the trip. This allows chaperones to focus fully on their assigned group and ensures a smooth and safe experience for everyone.

Weapons Prohibition

A student who is determined to have brought one of the following objects to school, any school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school may be expelled for a period of not less than one year but not more than 2 calendar years:

(1) A firearm, meaning any gun, rifle, shotgun, weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act, or firearm as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code of 1961. The expulsion period may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.

(2) A knife, brass knuckles or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a billy club, or any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm, including "look a-like" of any firearm as defined above.

The expulsion requirement may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.

Gang & Gang Activity Prohibited

"Gang" is defined as any group, club or organization of two or more persons whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts. No student on or about school property or at any school activity or whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to a school activity, shall: (1) wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, paraphernalia or other items which reasonably could be regarded as gang symbols; commit any act or omission, or use either verbal or non-verbal gestures, or handshakes showing membership or affiliation in a gang; or (2) use any

speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interest of any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to, soliciting others for membership in any gangs; (3) request any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidate, harass or threaten any person; (4) commit any other illegal act or other violation of district policies, (5) or incite other students to act with physical violence upon any other person.

***Conceal & Carry is not permitted on school property**.

Withdrawal and Transfer

When a family moves from the District, please notify the school office at least one day in advance. The district observes the statutory regulations that require the forwarding, within 10 days of the receipt of request, an unofficial record of the student's grades to the school to which the student is transferring. The school shall then forward written information relative to the grade levels, subjects, and record of academic grades achieved, current health records, and a most current set of standardized test reports, if applicable. The district, within 10 days after the student has paid all of his/her outstanding fines and fees, forwards an official transcript of the scholastic records of each student transferring.

Upon receipt of a Release of Records form from the new school, which must be signed by the parent/guardian(s), student records will be sent to the new school. Please remember that all books and other items belonging to the school must be returned to the teachers and any remaining fees (ie, lunch) must be paid in the school office.

HEALTH/WELLNESS INFORMATION

Accidents/First Aid/Illness

Safety is a top priority for students in Putnam County. Students are under close supervision throughout the school day. We are equipped to provide only minor first-aid when accidents do happen, and are prohibited by law from doing more than this.
Parents of students who are injured or who become ill (ie, fever) at school will be contacted to come for the student. The Registration Form contains a section which provides the office with emergency information, part of which must be the phone number of a person who preferably lives in Putnam County and could come to school for your child in an emergency. Current information is imperative; **please keep the office informed of any changes**. In the event of an emergency, the schools will always try to contact the parent/guardian FIRST. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency information section on the registration form will be followed.

Deciding to keep your child home from school is not always easy. It is important for children to attend school; but when a child is truly sick, they need to stay home to get well and prevent spreading illness to others. Your child should not attend school if they have an illness that could potentially be contagious. This includes:

- any temperature at or above 100 degrees (**your child can not return to school until they are fever free for 24 hours without the help of fever reducing medication**)
- new or unusual wide-spread rash that could be contagious
- an open, draining wound that cannot be covered
- vomiting and/or diarrhea stools (if your child has either vomiting or diarrhea they should not return for 24 hrs after symptoms have stopped)
- continuous, hacky cough
- pink or red eyes with white or yellow drainage; matted after sleep

The school will observe recommendations of the Illinois Department of Public Health regarding communicable diseases.

1. Parents are required to notify the school nurse if they suspect their child has a communicable disease.
2. In certain cases, students with a communicable disease may be excluded from school or sent home from school following notification of the parent or guardian.
3. A student excluded because of a communicable disease will be permitted to return to school only when the parent or guardian brings to the school a letter from the student's doctor stating that the student is no longer contagious or at risk of spreading the communicable disease.

In the case of any illness, the school nurse shall determine the appropriate return date especially in extenuating circumstances.

Care of Students with Diabetes

DIABETES CARE ACT

In accordance with the Care of Students with Diabetes Act, parents are required to provide Putnam County School District #535 with a Diabetes Care Plan signed by the parents and their child's health care provider and must be submitted to the School Nurse (Katie Main - PCPS/PCHS // Jessica Harmon - PCES/PCJH):

(a) at the beginning of the school year,
(b) upon enrollment,
(c) as soon as practicable following the student's diagnosis, or
(d) when a student's care needs change during the school year.

This Diabetes Care Plan shall specify the diabetes-related services needed by a student at school and at school-sponsored activities and identifies the appropriate staff to provide and supervise these services. The services and accommodations specified will then be documented within a 504 plan and shall be reasonable and reflect the current standards of diabetes care.

Parents are responsible for providing all necessary supplies to care for their child's condition during school hours including but not limited to diabetic testing supplies, sources of rapid acting carbohydrates, snacks, etc.

Seizure Smart Care Act

Effective July 1, 2020, the Seizure Smart School Act requires the development of a Seizure Action Plan and documented within a 504 plan for students with epilepsy on how to best care for students with the disorder. A seizure action plan must be submitted to the student's school nurse (Katie Main - PCPS/PCHS //Jessica Harmon - PCES/PCJH):

(a) at the beginning of the school year,
(b) upon enrollment,
(c) as soon practicable following the student's diagnosis, or
(d) when a student's care needs change during the school year.

A student's parent or guardian is responsible for informing the school, in a timely manner, of any changes to the student's seizure action plan and emergency contact information. It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to share the health care provider's instructions on the student's epilepsy management during the school day, including a copy of any prescriptions and the methods of administering those prescriptions.

Concussion Policy

See Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

Head Lice

The school will observe recommendations of the Illinois Department of Public Health regarding head lice. Procedures are the following:

1. Parents are required to notify the school nurse if they suspect their child has head lice.
2. Infested students will be sent home following notification of the parent or guardian.
3. The school will provide instructions to parents or guardians regarding appropriate treatment for the infestation.
4. A student excluded because of head lice will be permitted to return to school only when the parent or guardian brings the student to school to be checked by the school nurse or building principal and the child is determined to be free of the head lice and eggs (nits). Infested children are prohibited from riding the bus to school to be checked for head lice.

Health Examinations and Immunizations

All students are required to present appropriate proof of a health examination and the immunizations against, and screenings for, preventable communicable diseases within one year prior to:

1. Entering preschool and kindergarten;
2. Entering the sixth and ninth grades; and
3. Enrolling in an Illinois school for the first time, regardless of the student's grade.

The exam must be completed on the Illinois Certificate of Child Health Examination form, which includes a lead screening for students under seven and a diabetes screening. Immunizations must be obtained as required by the Illinois Department of Public Health Rules and Regulation (Title 77, Part 665, Section 665.240).

Failure to comply with the above requirements by October 15th of the current school year will result in the student's exclusion from school until the required health forms are presented to the school, subject to certain exceptions. New students who register mid-term have 30 days following registration to comply with the health examination and immunization requirements.

Eye Examination-All students entering kindergarten or the school for the first time must present proof by October 15 of the current school year of an eye examination performed within one year.
Dental Examination-All students entering kindergarten, second, sixth, and ninth grades must present proof by May 15 of the current school year of having been examined by a licensed dentist within the last 18 months.

Please check with the school nurse if you have questions regarding immunization and health requirements.

Medication at School

Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21 states, "It shall be the policy of the State of Illinois that the administration of medication to students during regular school hours and during school-related activities should be discouraged unless absolutely necessary for the critical health and well-being of the student."
When a student's licensed health care provider and parent/guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child by completing a "School Medication Authorization Form."

No school or district employee is allowed to administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed School Medication Authorization Form is submitted by the student's parent/guardian. No student is allowed to possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this procedure.

- All medications must be be transported to and from school by an adult
- Medication must be in original container with student's name clearly marked
- All medication forms must be renewed yearly
- The parent/guardian is responsible for picking up extra medication at the end of treatment and/or school year. Medication left at the end of the school year will be disposed of properly by the school
- Antibiotics or other short-term medication that is given 3 times a day or less will not be given at school

Self-Administration of Asthma Inhalers and Epinephrine Auto-injector:
A student may possess an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen®) and/or an asthma inhaler prescribed for use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form and Asthma Inhaler or Epinephrine Auto-injector Authorization Form. An Asthma Action Plan should also be requested from your child's doctor. The school and district shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-administration of medication or epinephrine auto-injector or the storage of any medication by school personnel. A student's parent/guardian must agree to indemnify and hold harmless the school district and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine auto-injector and/or asthma inhaler, or the storage of any medication by school personnel.

Forms to complete the above requirements are available in the office of each school and on the school website.

Medications-Undesignated
The school may maintain the following undesignated prescription medications for emergency use: (1) Asthma medication; (2) Epinephrine injectors; (3) Opioid antagonists; and (4) Glucagon. No one, including without limitation, parents/guardians of students, should rely on the school or district for the availability of undesignated medication. This procedure does not guarantee the availability of undesignated medications. Students and their parents/guardians should consult their own physician regarding these medication(s).

Sex Education/Safety
According to Illinois School Code: 105 ILCS 5/27-13.2, all Illinois public schools, grades K-8 are required to provide five days advance notice to parents or guardians of when instruction is being presented to students regarding the recognition and avoidance of sexual abuse. Additionally, students are not required to participate in such instruction and parents or guardians, upon written request, may disallow their child from this instruction.
Students will not be required to take or participate in any class or course in comprehensive sex education if his or her parent or guardian submits a written objection. The parent or guardian's decision will not be the reason for any student discipline, including suspension or expulsion. Nothing in this Section prohibits instruction in sanitation, hygiene or traditional courses in biology.

Parents or guardians may examine the instructional materials to be used in any district sex education class or course.

Student Biometric Information
Before collecting biometric information from students, the school must seek the permission of the student's parent/guardian or the student, if over the age of 18. Biometric information means information that is collected from students based on their unique characters, such as a fingerprint, voice recognition or retinal scan.

Students with Food Allergies and Chronic Illness
State law requires our school district to annually inform parents of students with life-threatening allergies or life-threatening chronic illnesses of the applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other applicable federal statutes, state statutes, federal regulations and state rules.

If your student has a life-threatening allergy or life-threatening chronic illness, please notify the building principal or school nurse at (815) 882-2800.

Federal law protects students from discrimination due to a disability that substantially limits a major life activity. If your student has a qualifying disability, an individualized Section 504 Plan will be developed and implemented to provide the needed support so that your student can access his or her education as effectively as students without disabilities.

Not all students with life-threatening allergies and life-threatening chronic illnesses may be eligible under Section 504. Our school district also may be able to appropriately meet a student's needs through other means.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS DURING A PANDEMIC OR OTHER HEALTH EMERGENCY

A pandemic is a global outbreak of disease. Pandemics happen when a new virus emerges to infect individuals and, because there is little to no pre-existing immunity against the new virus, it spreads sustainably. Your child's school and district play an essential role, along with the local health department and emergency management agencies, in protecting the public's health and safety during a pandemic or other health emergency.
During a pandemic or other health emergency, you will be notified in a timely manner of all changes to the school environment and schedule that impact your child. Please be assured that even if school is not physically in session, it is the goal of the school and district to provide your child with the best educational opportunities possible.

Additionally, please note the following:

1. All daily decisions regarding changes to the school environment and schedule, including a possible interruption of in-person learning, will be made by the Superintendent in consultation with and, if necessary, at the direction of the Governor, Illinois Department of Public Health, local health department, emergency management agencies, and/or Regional Office of Education. Any long term changes would be established in conjunction with the Board of Education.
2. Available learning opportunities may include remote and/or blended learning. Blended learning may require your child to attend school on a modified schedule.
3. Students will be expected to participate in blended and remote instruction as required by the school and district. Parents are responsible for assuring the participation of their child. Students who do not participate in blended or remote learning will be considered truant.
4. All school disciplinary rules remain in effect during the interruption of in-person learning. Students are subject to discipline for disrupting the remote learning environment to the same extent that discipline would be imposed for disruption of the traditional classroom.
5. Students and parents will be required to observe all public health and safety measures implemented by the school and district in conjunction with state and local requirements.
6. During a pandemic or other health emergency, the school and district will ensure that educational opportunities are available to all students.
7. School personnel will work closely with students with disabilities and other vulnerable student populations to minimize the impact of any educational disruption.
8. Students who have a compromised immune system, live with an individual with a compromised immune system, or have a medical condition that may impact their ability to attend school during a pandemic or other public health emergency should contact school officials.
9. During a pandemic or other health emergency, teachers and school staff will receive additional training on health and safety measures.
10. In accordance with school district or state mandates, the school may need to conduct a daily health assessment of your child. Parents and students will be notified of the exact assessment procedures if this becomes necessary.
11. Parents should not send their child to school if their child exhibits any symptoms consistent with the pandemic or other health emergency.
12. Please do not hesitate to contact school or district officials if you have any concerns regarding your child's education, health or safety.