

2026-2027

Student Handbook

Harold B. Dawson Jr. Middle School
2708 W. Rohmann Ave, Peoria, IL 61604
Ph:309-672-6506

Home of the Raiders

Every Raider. Every Day. We Are One.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL | WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5

Peoria Public Schools District Policies

The Board of Education policies governing the district are available at the district's administrative offices or online, under the Board of Education tab. This handbook may be amended throughout the school year without notice.

peoriapublicschools.org/policies

Parent and Student District Handbook

The link to the student/parent handbook below is a summary of the laws and policies governing Peoria Public Schools. This handbook may be amended throughout the school year without notice. Key points include:

- Enrollment Verification and Registration
- Medical Requirements
- Tuition and Fees
- Extracurricular Activities
- Student Rights, including Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Raising Complaints, and Disciplinary Measures
- Student Behavior
- Student Records
- Student Biometric Information Collection
- School Admissions/Transfers

peoriapublicschools.org/policy-handbook

Harold B. Dawson Jr. Mission and Vision

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to ignite student passion for learning through evidence-based teaching and student-centered environments—fostering excellence, growth, and a culture of safety and high expectations.

Vision Statement:

Foster a high-achieving, safe learning environment where students develop the skills and confidence needed for success in high school and beyond.



Welcome Letter

Dear HBD Families and Students,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year!

As Principal and Assistant Principal of Harold B. Dawson Jr. Middle School (HBD), we are honored to serve the Raider community and look forward to an exciting year of learning, growth, and achievement. Together, we are committed to fostering a safe, supportive, and engaging environment where every student is challenged to reach their full potential and are empowered to succeed.

We strongly believe that relationships, high expectations, and a shared commitment to excellence are the foundation of student success. We are excited to partner with our students, families, staff, and community as we continue building a culture of respect, collaboration, and opportunity for all.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with Family Core, Jaycees, Horizon's Club, Destination Technology, Teen Reach, and the city for West Peoria as we grow our support systems for students. As we build social-emotional support, individual learning plans, and student-led engagement activities in the classroom, we remain committed to closing the achievement gap and preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society. Also, we welcome the 21st Century afterschool program to our building which will provide many more opportunities for our youth.

We take pride in our tradition of building positive relationships within our Raider Family. Open communication between staff, families, and the community helps every student succeed, so please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher or our office with any questions throughout the year. Our PTO also welcomes new families who want to get involved.

We look forward to an amazing year together!

Every Raider, Every Day. We Are One!

Respectfully,

HBD Administration – Principal Mary Newman-Evans & Assistant Principal Kimberly Jones



First Day of School – Wednesday, August 5 – 7:30am-2:30pm



School Hours: School begins at 7:30 a.m. and dismisses at 2:30 p.m. Adult supervision begins at 7:15 a.m., so we ask that students arrive at or after this time.

Attendance: Regular attendance helps every student stay on track. If your child is sick, please contact the school before 10 a.m. and send a note when they return so the absence can be excused – we appreciate your help keeping our records accurate.

Uniform Policy: Included in this handbook and on our website – please review it together as a family. All students are expected to be in uniform every day, starting on the first day of school.

Homeroom: Students will learn their homeroom assignment on the first day of school.

Honoring the Legacy



Our school is named for Bishop Harold B. Dawson, Jr. who served the Peoria community across denominational, cultural, socioeconomic and spiritual boundaries.

Beyond pastoring at New Hope International Ministries and New Life Christian Church, Dawson served central Illinoisans through a variety of organizations. Dawson served on the Board of Directors of the NAACP; Peoria Ministers Economic Development Organization (PMEDO); Catholic Charities Peoria Community Area Project; Illinois One Family-One Child Board of Directors. He served on the Morehouse University School of Medicine Imani Project board, to address HIV/AIDS in the African-American community. He served as President of the Peoria Christian Leadership Council (PCLC), a collaboration of central Illinois pastors formed to address social-economic and political concerns of the community. He also served as a Commissioner for the Wayne A. Downing Metropolitan Airport Authority.

Dawson was born and raised in Peoria. He graduated from Jackson State University and received a Masters in Divinity from Virginia Union University Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology. He also studied at Lincoln Christian Seminary in Lincoln, IL and attended the distinguished Harvard Divinity School Summer Leadership Institute.

Dawson Days – August 5-7

It is our honor to continue the legacy of Harold B Dawson Jr. here at HBD with our dedication to student growth, character, development, and community service. Let's kick off the year together! Dawson Days runs Wednesday, August 5 through Friday, August 7, with special celebrations and attendance incentives all week long for students. We can't wait to celebrate the start of a great year with our Raiders!

The community is welcome to join us on the morning of August 5th from 7:15-7:30 to celebrate the student's return to school!

Enrollment Verification and Registration

All returning students will be automatically registered for the 2026-2027 school year in Skyward Family Access. To verify enrollment, log in to Skyward at peoriapublicschools.org/skyward.

For help logging in, call 309-672-6761.

Have you moved? If so, please bring two forms of proof of address to the school office. Students new to the district can register online at www.psd150.org/enrollment.

Update Your Contact Info in Skyward: Please log in each school year to verify your contact information – you can do this from the Peoria Public Schools app or at peoriapublicschools.org/skyward.

For help, call 309-672-6761.

Family Survey:

We Want to Hear From You!
Our goal is simple: keep every Raider present, engaged, and supported all year long. Please take a few minutes to complete our family survey so we can connect you with resources and ensure your child's success.

The survey covers:
✓ Transportation needs
✓ Uniforms & school supplies
✓ Food & housing assistance
✓ Health & mental health support
✓ Academic support for your child
✓ Childcare for siblings

Scan the QR code to complete the survey today!

Scan Here!

Every Raider, Every Day, We are One!

Questions? Contact us at Harold B. Dawson Jr. Middle School (309) 672-6506 • 2708 W Rohmann Ave, West Peoria, IL 61604
Every Raider, Every Day. We are One.

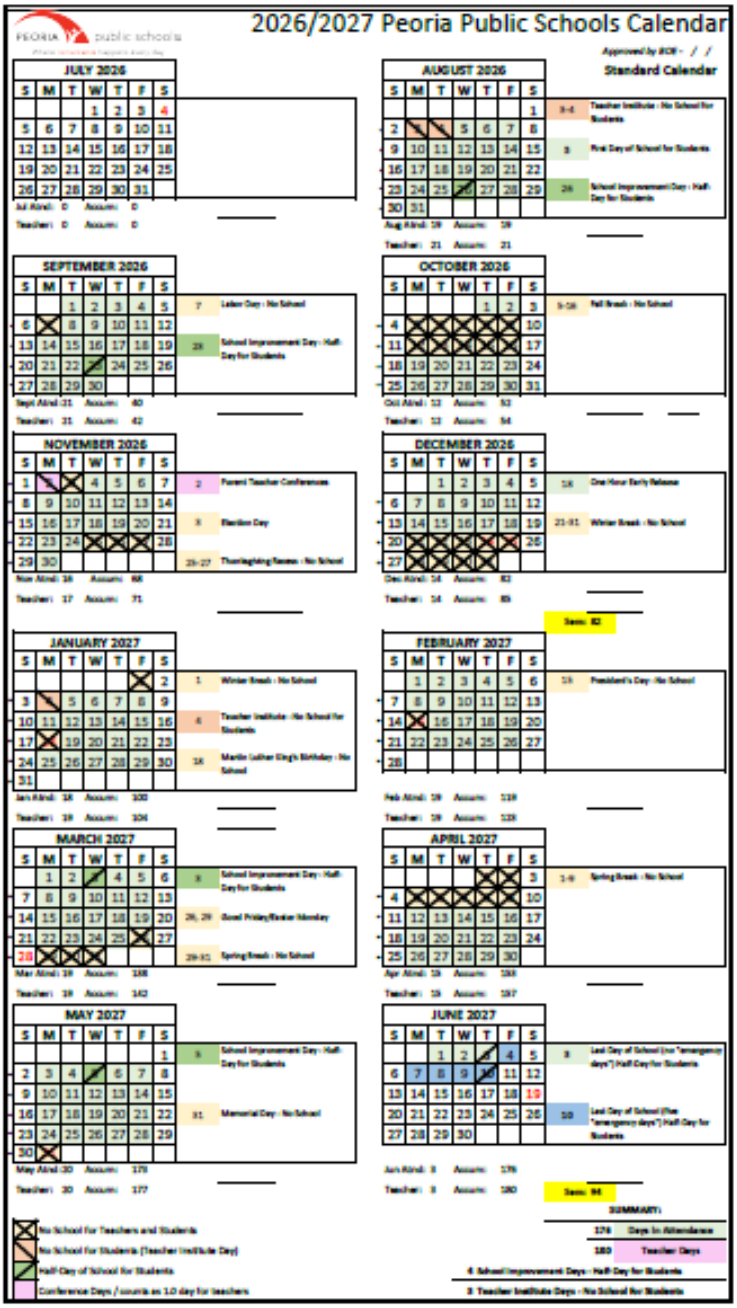
School Supply Lists

Shop online or in-store at your favorite major retailers: Target, Walmart, Office Depot, Staples, or Amazon. Find HBD's grade-level supply list at peoriapublicschools.org/backtoschool.

Clear Backpacks

Clear backpacks (no tinting) are required for middle and high school students starting on Day 1 of school. A limited supply will be available for purchase at school offices for $20, cash only. Clear backpacks are also available at local retail stores.

2026-2027 Standard School Year Calendar



School Uniforms

All PPS primary and middle school students wear black, navy blue, or khaki pants, skirts, jumpers, or shorts, with a solid-color, collared shirt (short or long sleeve). High school students follow their school's dress code rather than a uniform.

HBD Dress Code & Uniform Expectations

On school days, students stay in uniform on school grounds and on the bus, including after-school events (unless performance attire is required). The guidelines below help families know what to expect; administration may make additional requests to support a positive, productive learning environment. A student who needs a uniform adjustment will be asked to change clothes or call home for appropriate attire.

Uniforms are required for every student every day.



Headphone Use



As a reminder, students are not allowed to use headphones from home during the school day. All headphones (and smartwatches) are to be locked in their lockers or turned into their teachers with their phones in the morning.

If ... ne appropriate next steps and ensure the student is able to meet dress code expectations.

Dress Code Guidelines

Tops



- Any color collared shirts only.
- Logos on polos must be no larger than 1 square inch.
- HBD spirit wear is permitted.

Sweatshirts & Sweaters

- Crewneck, pullover, and cardigan styles are permitted.
- Hoodies are not permitted during the school day, except for HBD spirit hoodies.

Bottoms



- Solid navy, black, or khaki.
- Must fit appropriately at the waist.
- Shorts, skirts, and jumpers must extend beyond the student's fingertips when arms are at their sides.

Footwear





- Closed-back shoes or shoes with an ankle strap are required.
- Crocs must be worn in sport mode. **Sneakers are required for P.E. clas**
- Roller shoes (Heelys) are not permitted.

Accessories

- Hats, bandanas, sweatbands, scarves, ski masks, bonnets, skullcaps, and sunglasses are **not permitted** to be worn inside the building.
- Coats, jackets, vests, purses, bags, and book bags must be stored in lockers during the school day.
- Headphones, earbuds (except hearing aids) and personal electronics (smartwatches and gaming devices) are not allowed, and the school is NOT responsible for any personal items.

If families need assistance with uniforms, please contact the office at (309) 672-6506.

2026-2027 Bell Schedule & Attendance

HBD Bell Schedule: Tier 1, 7:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Every Raider. Every Day.

Having students in school and in class every day is one of our biggest goals. Regular attendance helps students feel confident and connected, and good habits built now – arriving on time, every day – set students up for success in high school, college, and beyond.

Both excused and unexcused absences mean lost learning time, and being late disrupts the start of class for everyone. School starts at 7:30 a.m.

A few simple habits make a big difference:

- Talk with your child about why school attendance matters.
- Help them get 8–10 hours of sleep each night.
- Schedule appointments outside the school day when possible.
- Call the school first thing if your child must miss school or will be unavoidably late.
- Reach out to your school administrator, counselor, or teacher – or Project TARGET at 309-672-6086 – if attendance challenges come up.

Helping Families Stay Ahead of Absences

For each absence, the school will call home, and parents have 48 hours to send a note so it can be marked excused.

As absences add up, the school's outreach increases:

- teacher phone call
- letters home
- Family Core and/or Project Target home visit
- meeting with an administrator to build a support plan together.

Our goal at every step is to partner with families and connect students with the resources (like Project TARGET) that help them get back on track.

Attendance Matters – Every Raider, Every Day

NEW FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2026-27 - At Harold B. Dawson, Jr. Middle School, we know that students achieve their best when they are present, engaged, and learning each day. Our focus is reducing chronic absenteeism and ensuring every Raider has the opportunity to succeed.

A student is considered chronically absent when they have missed 10% or more of the school year, whether the absences are excused or unexcused. Students at Peoria Public School should attend 180 per academic year to meet the State of Illinois requirement. Attendance is reviewed regularly, and families will be notified if their student is approaching or has reached this threshold.

Students who are chronically absent may be ineligible to participate in after-school activities, athletics, clubs, and other extracurricular events until their attendance improves, and they are no longer considered chronically absent.

Our goal is to partner with families—not to penalize students. If your family is experiencing challenges with transportation, health concerns, scheduling, or other barriers to regular attendance, please contact the HBD office immediately at 309-672-6506. We are committed to working together to connect you with resources and support.

Every Raider. Every Day. Every Opportunity Counts.

Thank you for partnering with us to ensure your child is present, prepared, and ready to learn each day.



Transportation & Walking Safely to School

Transportation is provided for students residing more than 1.5 miles from their school. For students who walk, bike, or get a ride, the PPS Transportation and School Safety Departments have identified safe routes for many of our buildings.

- Walk the route together so your student knows the way and talk about safety while discouraging shortcuts.
- Bright, reflective clothing and backpacks help drivers see students more easily.
- Walking with classmates and setting a return home time both add an extra layer of safety.
- Keep your emergency contact list updated at your student's school.

PPS Transportation Department: 1525 W. Northmoor Rd., Peoria, IL 61614 | (309) 693-4418

WALKERS	CAR RIDERS	BUS RIDERS
✓ Walk on sidewalks (not in the street)	✓ The north side of Rohmann is a no parking zone. Vehicles should only be parking on the school-side of the street.	✓ Remain seated
✓ Respect our neighbors and local businesses	✓ Use the crosswalk to cross Rohmann.	✓ No food or drink
✓ Keep hands and objects to themselves (no horse play or throwing items)	✓ Watch for students and other vehicles before pulling out.	✓ Use respectful language at all times
✓ Use respectful language at all times	✓ The speed limit is 20 mph when students are present.	✓ Keep hands and objects to yourself

Phone-Free Middle School – Yondr Pouches

HBD is a phone-free space so students can stay fully engaged with teachers and classmates. Every student is assigned a personal Yondr pouch, which the staff will hold until the end of the school day.

Daily process:

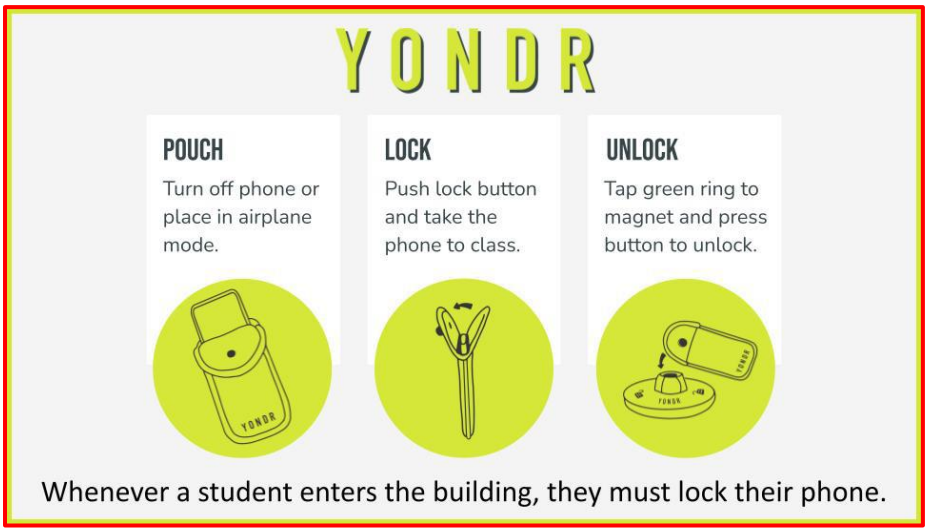
- Turn the phone off
- Place it and any other electronics (headphones) in the pouch and secure it in front of staff
- Keep the pouch with their homeroom teacher for the day
- At the end of the day, students' pouches are returned for them to open and remove their items.

Need to reach your child? Please contact the main office – we'll make sure your student gets the message.

School emergency? Students follow our emergency preparedness protocol and are directed to safety first.

A few things to know: A forgotten pouch means the phone is held safely in the office for the day. A damaged or lost pouch carries a $30 replacement fee. Accommodations are available for students with IEP/504 plans, and teachers can unlock a pouch for an approved classroom activity.

No personal electronic devices and/or headphones of any kind are to be brought to school. HBD is not responsible for personal items/devices.



2026-2027 Board of Education Meetings

All board meetings are held on Mondays beginning at 6:30pm at the district office at 3202 N. Wisconsin Ave, Peoria IL, 61603.

Meetings are scheduled for the following dates:

- July 13, 2026
- August 24, 2026
- September 14, 2026
- November 9, 2026
- December 14, 2026
- January 25, 2027
- February 22, 2027
- March 22, 2027
- April 26, 2027
- May 24, 2027
- June 14, 2027