

Allendale Elementary School Handbook

2024-2025



Roaring with Pride and Excellence

Allendale Staff Directory

Administration:

Principal: Ms. Lynn Taylor

Dean of Students: Ms. Samantha Inman

School Adjustment Counselor: Ms. Sarah Beraldi

SPED Instruction & Accountability Coordinator: Ms. Sharon DiGrigoli-Couture

Building Support:

Secretary: Ms. Caryn Bertelli

School Nurse: Ms. Cynthia Helitzer

Custodial Staff: Mr. Kent Weatherwax and Ms. Jane Wallace

Cafeteria Manager: Ms. Donna Boland

Academic Support and Special Services:

Special Education Teacher: TBD

Reading Specialist: Ms. Michelle Johnson

Academic Interventionist: Ms. Andrea Tatro

Multilingual Learner Teacher: Ms. Heidi Tremlett

Speech Pathologist: Ms. Pamela Nichols

Occupational Therapist: Ms. Michele Webster

School Psychologist: Ms. April Carmichael

Specialist Teachers:

Music Teacher: Ms. Jennifer Teichert

Physical Education Teacher : Mr. Joseph Geurds

Physical Education Teacher: Mr. Matthew Stracuzzi

Art Teacher: Ms. Stephanie Van Bramer & Ms. Sarah Smith

Science Teacher: Mr. Christopher Conry

Strings Instructor: Ms. Juliet Wright

Band Instructor: Ms. Senta Brodeur

Paraprofessional: Ms. Kimberly Dragon

Paraprofessional: Ms. Jennifer Parker

Paraprofessional: Ms. Jaclyn Oakes

Special Education Paraprofessional: Ms. Tanya MacKay

Student Support Paraprofessional: Ms. Amy Anderton

Allendale Staff Directory

Pre-Kindergarten Teacher: Ms. Katrina Weider
Pre-Kindergarten Paraprofessional: Ms. Tannia Zradi
Pre-Kindergarten Paraprofessional: Ms. Dawn Burdick
Pre-Kindergarten Paraprofessional: Ms. Camren Hoffman

K-2 P.A.C.E. Program:
Classroom #1 Teacher: Ms. Tracey Murtha
Classroom #2 Teacher: Ms. Molly McCumber
Paraprofessionals: Maria Yong, Kelly Bruno, Amabelle San Marte, Katerina Njenga, Christine Zick, Danielle Shaw, Dylan LeSage, Tori McClure, Aubrey Proper

Kindergarten Teacher: TBD
Kindergarten Teacher: Ms. Kaitlin Pallos
Kindergarten Paraprofessional: Ms. Michelle Trong
Kindergarten Paraprofessional: Ms. Denise Billow

First Grade: Ms. Brittany Giambrone
First Grade: Ms. Jennafer Bailey

Second Grade: Ms. Renee Spizz
Second Grade: Ms. Morgan Zukowski
Second Grade: Ms. Kaytlin Barcus

Third Grade: Ms. Jill Holleran
Third Grade: Ms. Shannon Sievers

Fourth Grade: Ms. Caitlin Hanley
Fourth Grade: Ms. Jennifer Brinton

Fifth Grade: Mr. Drew Pearce
Fifth Grade: Ms. Diedra Lindsey

Message from the Principal

Dear Allendale Families,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! I am looking forward to working together with all of you to foster our students' academic and social-emotional growth throughout this upcoming school year.

The Allendale Elementary School staff strives to create an environment that allows every student to have the opportunity to engage in a high quality educational experience. At Allendale, we hold all students to high academic and behavioral expectations. Allendale educators remain committed to working collaboratively with their colleagues to plan in an effort to prepare and deliver engaging, rigorous and meaningful learning experiences. We are dedicated to encouraging and supporting all students so that they can access and actively participate in their learning so that they can ultimately reach their full learning potential.

The Allendale community is also dedicated to creating a positive and nurturing environment for all students and families. Therefore, it is imperative to have open lines of communication, so that we can have honest conversations and create meaningful partnerships that will ultimately benefit the education of our students.

This Allendale School Family Handbook is designed to provide you and your child with answers about various aspects of our school. Included within the handbook are important guidelines, procedures and general information. I invite you to review the pages together as a family to help you and your child better understand the routines and expectations of Allendale Elementary School.

I am grateful that we will embark on this new school year with a renewed sense of hope and commitment. I am looking forward to creating partnerships with all staff, students and families that will ultimately have a positive impact on our students' academic and social-emotional learning and growth. The entire Allendale staff looks forward to working together to make this a successful year. I am honored to be your principal and I thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Lynn Taylor

Lynn M. Taylor, Principal
Allendale Elementary School

Mission Statement

The mission of Allendale School is to provide a safe, inclusive learning environment so all students can acquire the academic, cultural, physical, and social fundamentals necessary to be productive citizens.

[2024-2025 Pittsfield Public School Academic School Year Calendar](#)

Allendale Daily Schedule

The instructional day begins at 8:55 a.m. and ends at 3:25 p.m.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures:

- Arrival: 8:45 a.m.
- Dismissal: 3:25 p.m.
 - Half-day dismissal: 11:45 a.m.

Arrival Procedures:

- If your child attends the YMCA Program: They will enter through the cafeteria door only. The YMCA Program is open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:40 a.m.
- If your child attends breakfast: They will enter through the cafeteria door only. Breakfast is open from 8:25 a.m. to 8:55 a.m.
- If your child is a walker: They will not be allowed to enter the building until 8:45 a.m. through the main entrance of the building. The only exceptions would be if they attend breakfast or the YMCA program. Then they would enter the cafeteria door at the times outlined in this section.
- If your child is coming by car: Cars must wait in the morning car line (extends down Connecticut Ave. and enters the property at the mouth of the driveway). You should always pull as far down the driveway as you can. When you are the lead car, you must always pull all the way down to the large orange traffic cone. Car line will begin no earlier than 8:45 a.m. You can contact the YMCA for childcare if needed at: 413-499-7650.
- If your child arrives by bus: They will line up in front of the building (if the bus arrives before 8:40) and enter the main entrance at 8:45 a.m. In the case of inclement weather, students will line up in the hallway of the main office until 8:45 a.m. The only exception would be if they attend breakfast or the YMCA Program. Then they would enter the cafeteria door at the times outlined in this section.

Dismissal (Early): All dismissals **must** occur before 3:00 p.m. Every effort is made to minimize classroom interruptions. Therefore, if your child needs to be dismissed before 3:00, a note must be sent into school in the morning.

Dismissals (Regular): Your child's safety and well being are responsibilities that the school takes very seriously. Please observe the following practices to ensure that everyone returns home as expected.

- **Bus:** If your child takes the bus home, they will be accompanied by school personnel to the bus. No child is ever allowed to ride a bus home that isn't their initially determined bus for any reason.
- **Walker lines:** If your child walks home we will provide supervision until the end of the school property. Your child is expected to walk to and from school in an orderly and safe manner using sidewalks where possible, and respecting private property and the rights of others.
- **Car Line:** All vehicles will line up down Connecticut Avenue with the lead car at the entrance of the semi-circle driveway. When directed by a staff member, pull into the driveway and proceed down as far as you are able to go. A staff member will be present to direct your child to your vehicle. When leaving the driveway, please turn left down Connecticut Avenue when there are still buses being boarded to the right. If all buses are clear, feel free to turn right down Connecticut Avenue.

*A note to the homeroom teacher is required if routine dismissal procedures are altered and your child will not be going home their usual way.**

Academic Focus: Students will engage daily in rigorous learning experiences and tasks that are meaningful and adaptable to accommodate diverse learning needs and promote the growth of all students.

- ELA: Core reading program: HMH Into Reading. This comprehensive curriculum provides instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and writing. All students receive instruction using the core program. Into Reading also provides support for tiered small group instruction which allows for the varied learning needs of all students to be targeted.
- Math: Core math program: Reveal Math. This math program builds a strong sense of numbers in the primary grades that helps the students achieve greater success in algebra and geometry later on. Students are encouraged to investigate and explore math concepts and skills, while explaining their thinking. Many strategies are incorporated so that students have opportunities to learn different ways to solve problems. Reveal Math allows children to develop deep conceptual understanding, and then practice, apply, and discuss what they know with skill and confidence.

Allendale administration, faculty, and support staff value the importance of student growth in reading and mathematics. These skills are routinely monitored for progress. Formal benchmark reports will be sent home three times a year in grades 1-5.

- ELA blocks vary in length per grade level but generally are 120 minutes and Mathematics is between 60-90 minutes. Students will also have time in their daily schedule to engage in learning that is specifically designed to meet their current learning level. In both Math and ELA, students are strategically grouped, according to assessment data, so that learning in both of these content areas can be targeted and focused on areas of specific need. These targeted instruction blocks (W.I.N. Blocks) are 30-45 minutes in duration.
- Instructional decisions and areas of focus are guided by the Massachusetts State Standards and supported through various district-approved instructional programs and curriculum.

Specialist Classes: All students will go to a Specialist class each day. Specialist blocks of study include: Physical Education, Art, Music and Science.

- Instrumental Music Program: Instrumental music classes are offered to third, fourth and fifth graders. Students may choose from strings, woodwinds, brass or percussion. If your child does not own his/her own instrument, they may be rented locally or through School Department approved vendors. At the beginning of each school year, notices will be sent home regarding where and when you can rent instruments.

Retention of Students: Parents/Guardians of students in danger of retention are informed of this possibility by February 1st. The primary criteria for considering retention are:

- Academic achievement in all subject areas, especially basic skills mastery, as determined by tests and other assessments.
- Developmental readiness for the next grade.
- The professional staff and administration work closely with families in monitoring student progress, discussing appropriate options, and making the final decision.

Homework Policy:

- Grades K-2: No more than 30 minutes total, per class per week (Math and ELA). Specialists will not give assignments outside the instructional day.
- Grades 3-5: No more than 30 minutes total, per class per week (Math, Science, and ELA). Specialists will not give assignments outside the instructional day. Instrumental music assignments will be given on an individual basis.

Make-up Work: In an effort to ensure students remain engaged and prepared for daily instruction, make-up work will be given and students will be expected to complete the work. If a student is going to be absent for one or two days, the teacher will give the make-up work to be handed in upon the return to school. For absences of three or more days, the teacher and office should be given 24 hour notice of the extended absence. At that point, work can be picked up in the Main Office. Make-up work will be sent home for no more than one week at a time.

Attendance: Coming to school every day is critical to learning. It's also very important that your child get to school on time each day. If you need support with getting your child to school on time each day, please feel encouraged to contact our School Adjustment Counselor, Ms. Sarah Beraldi at sberaldi@pittsfield.net.

- **Excused Absences:** Students must bring in a note after each day they are absent. The note must include the date absent, the reason for the absence, a phone number where a parent or guardian can be reached, and the parent/guardian's signature. Students will be given the opportunity to make up work for excused absences. A note from a parent or guardian does not automatically excuse the absences. Excused absences may include the following:
 - An illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school. The illness or injury must be verified by a healthcare provider, school nurse, or parent.
 - A death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin) or other significant personal family crisis.
 - Required court appearances.
 - Medical or psychological tests during the school day. The parent must show evidence (such as a note from a health center) that the tests could not be scheduled after school.
 - Specified religious holidays.
 - Other extraordinary situations approved by the school principal.
- **Unexcused Absences:** Below are a few examples of absences that are unexcused even if the parent sends in a note.
 - Repetitive and chronic absence due to illness or injury. In these cases, the parent must submit a letter from a health care provider verifying that the student was too sick or injured to go to school.
 - Cutting class.
 - Family vacation.
 - Extension of a religious or cultural holiday beyond the designated day or days.

Whenever possible, parents should check with the principal before allowing a child to miss school if they are not sure the absence will be excused. The school is not required to provide make-up work due to unexcused absences.

- **Tardiness:** A student is tardy if they arrive at school late (after 8:55 a.m.) without an excuse, and does not have sufficient time to be prepared for when instruction begins. In cases of patterns of regular or excessive tardiness, the child's parent/guardian will be required to attend a meeting with school administration or designee. Please refer to the Pittsfield Public Schools Policy Handbook (STU-6) for a more detailed list of excused and unexcused absences and for elaboration on all Pittsfield Public Schools attendance policies.

Daily Lunch and Recess Schedule

Lunch Schedule					
Grades K/2		Grades 1/3 & Pre-K		Grades 4/5	
11:15 - 11:45		11:45 - 12:15		12:15 - 12:45	
Recess Schedule					
Grade K	Grade 2	Grade 5	Grade 1	Grade 3	Grade 4
11:45	11:45	11:45	12:15	12:15	12:45

Breakfast, Lunch and Recess:

Breakfast and Lunch: Breakfast is served from 8:25 – 8:55 (walkers and car drop-off) and 8:40 for bus transportation students.

- Allendale School will be participating in Community Eligibility Provision. Under Community Eligibility Provision only full meals can be considered a no charge meal.
 - Each student may receive one free breakfast and one free lunch per school day.
 - Students who wish to buy 1 or 2 food items or an additional meal must have funds at hand: either cash or sufficient positive balance on their meal account.
 - No charging of additional meals or food items will be allowed.
 - Parents can access www.myschoolbucks.com to fund meal accounts.
- For safety reasons, we request that students who bring beverages to school should transport them in non-breakable containers. We encourage students to bring healthy foods.
- Lunch menus are sent home monthly and displayed on the Pittsfield Public Schools website.
- If a child has a food allergy, a doctor's note is necessary. This must be updated annually. There is one designated table in the cafeteria for students with peanut allergies.

Recess: All students should be appropriately dressed for daily outside recess. Closed toe shoes are best for running on the playground. When snow covers the ground, students should have a coat, snow pants, snow boots, hat and gloves or mittens. If students do not have proper snow clothes, they will not be able to go sledding or play in the snow. No sweatshirts/sweaters, shirts or jackets should have string cord closures, which can be caught on playground equipment putting your child in a potentially dangerous situation.

Children are sent outside for recess when the temperature is 15 degrees Fahrenheit or above, and the wind chill is 15 degrees Fahrenheit or above, and playground conditions permit safe play.

We understand that children with asthma or those returning after a serious illness may need to occasionally stay in.

General Playground Rules:

- Run only on the grass and walk on climbing equipment.
- Slide down slides feet first
- Share the toys and equipment that you bring to recess.
- Sliding down the hill is only allowed with snow on the ground and for students wearing appropriate snow gear. Slide sitting forward, one person at a time.
- Stay in the designated areas and line up at the correct door when the whistle/bell is blown.
- One person on a swing at a time. Swinging and sitting only.

Bus Transportation

Student Transportation 499-9525

The Pittsfield Public Schools (PPS) view conduct on the school bus as an extension of classroom behavior. In order to promote the health and safety of each student, the following are the accepted norms:

- Students wait in an orderly manner at their designated bus stops.
- Students board and exit the buses in an orderly manner at the direction of the driver.
- Students remain seated with voices controlled, in order to enable the driver to fulfill their responsibilities.
- Windows are to be opened or closed only by the driver except in an emergency.
- Only authorized students will be allowed to ride the bus to and from school.
- In order to promote the safe transportation of students, video and/or audio may be used to monitor students' behavior on buses.

MISCONDUCT ON SCHOOL VEHICLES

Please refer to the Pittsfield Public Schools Code of Character, Conduct and Support.

[PPS Code of Conduct, Character, and Support](#)

GENERAL RULES FOR AVAILABILITY

Students are eligible for transportation to and from school if they live more than:

- 1/2 mile from their elementary school for kindergarten
- 1.5 miles from their elementary school for grades 1-5
- 1.5 miles from their middle school (grades 6-8)
- 2 miles from their high school (grades 9-12)

When parents/guardians register their child for school, they will be told if their child is eligible for transportation. If the child is eligible, they will receive a notice in the mail with the bus stop location, time of pickup and drop off, and bus number. See District Policy for more information

Bicycle, Scooter and Skateboard Riding Policy

Allendale Elementary welcomes the use of bicycles, scooters and skateboards as transportation for students. In order to be eligible to ride your bicycle, scooters and skateboards, students need to be in grade 4 or 5. Riders should observe traffic and other safety laws and rules, and display courtesy toward drivers of motor vehicles. Students must have a signed permission slip from a parent/guardian that will be kept on file. All students must wear helmets strapped to their heads while riding the bicycle, scooter, or skateboard. Bicycles must be locked to the rack that has been provided by our school. Bicycles, scooters, and skateboards are only for use to and from school. Bicycles, scooters and skateboards are to be walked on school grounds, being mindful of the safety of the walking students, bus students and all cars and buses around the school at drop off and dismissal times. The district is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged bicycles, scooters, skateboards or safety helmets. Violation of any of the above expectations could lead to the termination of this privilege.

After School Activities:

Students participating in school-sponsored activities such as PTO events, dances, concerts, and athletics must attend at least the equivalent of 4.5 hours of school that day in order to be eligible to participate. Parents may appeal emergency cases to the school principal.

Dress Code:

Below you will find the official dress code guidelines for all Pittsfield Public Schools. We believe they are reasonable and reflect a common sense approach to what is/is not appropriate for the school setting.

Please review the information provided and assist us in promoting appropriate dress with the students. Thank you so much for your cooperation! A committee of parents, teachers, administrators, and students for Pittsfield Public Schools determined the following dress code:

- The bottom of the top overlaps the top of the bottoms.
- Spandex and Lycra are acceptable only when worn over or under less revealing articles of clothing.
- Obscene, vulgar, racist, sexist or other offensive pictures, words, or slogans are prohibited.
- Hemlines of skirts or shorts must fall below fingertips when arms are relaxed at sides.
- Shoes/sandals must be worn at all times
- Hats (caps, berets, scarves) of a non-religious nature may not be worn in the school.
- Undergarments should not be visible.
- Any other dress that distracts, disrupts, intimidates or provokes can be deemed inappropriate by the principal or designee.

Student/Parent Concerns

We value input from all members of the school community to keep our school on the path of continuous improvement. Therefore, when expressing a concern or sharing a suggestion, we invite you to be a part of the solution. It is so important to bring our collective best thinking to the table when problems arise. To that end, when communicating with us about an issue, we encourage you to first contact the person who has the closest knowledge of your child's day-to-day progress at school: your child's teacher. As teachers are busy in their classrooms for nearly the entire school day, the best way to get in touch with your child's teacher is to leave a message with the school office with a phone number where you can be reached. The teacher will then contact you when they have some time available outside of classroom responsibilities. Please refer to the list of all staff members at the beginning of this document.

If the issue is not resolved at that level, or you wish to connect with us about a school-wide issue, you may contact the principal or designee. Please know that if this is a classroom or child specific issue, you will first be asked if you have already spoken with the teacher as this is where the first round of conversation needs to take place. Often, many issues are clarified and resolved through a parent-teacher conversation.

Technology Use: Please refer to the Pittsfield Public School's Code of Conduct, Character and Support.

PPS Policy STU-38: Portable Communications Devices

POLICY

The first responsibility of a school system is to ensure students and their parents of an orderly safe environment in which effective teaching and learning can take place. Toward this end, the following process is effective immediately.

Portable Communications Devices

The School Committee recognizes that cell phones and other kinds of portable communication devices (PCDs) may play an important part in the safety as well as the convenience of students. Cell phones and PCDs are defined here as products of current and emerging technology that are wireless, and that send or

receive electronic communications, including pictures, text, graphics, and sound, by means of analog, digital, or other format of data transmission. The School Committee establishes the following rules for students' use of cell phones and other kinds of PCDs.

- A. Students may carry or otherwise possess cell phones and other kinds of PCDs on school grounds and at school-sponsored or school-related events or activities; except that students shall keep any such devices turned off and shall not use or operate any such device during the instructional day, or at any other time during any school-sponsored activity or program, or in any location, when their use would reasonably be expected to disrupt or interfere with instructional activities or the academic climate of the school or its programs or services.
- B. The term "instructional day" as used in paragraph A, above, means the times established for regular academic instruction. The term "instructional day" shall also refer to activities or programs that occur outside the time when regular academic instruction is provided and when students are obliged to be in attendance, such as for Saturday detention, in which case the restriction on the use or operation of cell phones or other kinds of PCDs shall apply to the students involved in such activities or program.
- C. No cell phone or other kind of PCD shall be used at any time during or in conjunction with any school-sponsored activity for the purpose of, or in a manner that facilitates cheating, sexual or other harassment or discrimination, bullying or demeaning acts, violation of any person's privacy, interference with or disruption of any Pittsfield Public Schools activity, violation of a criminal or other statute, or otherwise in a manner that violates a Pittsfield Public Schools policy or rule of conduct for students.
- D. A student who violates the restrictions set forth in this policy on the use of cell phones or other kinds of PCDs may face disciplinary action. Absent a circumstance that exacerbates the offense, such as the use of a cell phone or other kind of PCD in violation of paragraph C, above, violation of the restrictions set forth in this policy shall be deemed insubordination under the student rules of conduct, and shall be treated as such in taking disciplinary action. **Rules pertaining to student cell phone use are attached to this policy.**
- E. School officials, including classroom teachers, may confiscate a cell phone or other kind of PCD that is used by a student in violation of the restrictions set forth in this policy. The student's parent or guardian shall be notified of the infraction and advised that he/she may claim the confiscated device at the school.
- F. Although the Pittsfield Public Schools shall make a reasonable effort to ensure the security of any cell phone or other kind of PCD confiscated pursuant to the preceding paragraph, it shall be the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to claim any such confiscated device in a timely way, thereby ensuring that the device is in the safekeeping of the parent or guardian as soon as possible.

G. Electronic devices lost or stolen while at school are not the responsibility of the Pittsfield Public Schools.

H. The principal or his/her designee may, at his/her sole discretion, grant exceptions to the prohibition on the use of cell phones and other kinds of PCDs. The principal or his/her designee may require suitable documentation of a critical need for such an exemption before granting the exemption.

Regulations

Infraction 1 - *Educator supported*: - Students are asked to place their phones in the classroom holder for the duration of the period. The educator documents the incident that day, notes it as a first infraction, and contacts the caregiver by phone or email to inform them.

Infraction 2 - *Educator and administrator supported*: The educator requests assistance, and the phone is held in the main office for the day. The educator completes the incident log and contacts the student's caregiver by phone or email. **The student may retrieve their phone at the end of the school day.**

Infraction 3 - *Administrator supported*: The educator requests assistance, and the phone is held in the main office for the day. The educator completes the incident log, and the school administrator contacts the caregiver by phone and email. The student is assigned a half day of RISE. **The student may retrieve their phone at the end of the school day.**

Infraction 4 - *Administrator supported*: The educator requests assistance, and the phone is held in the main office for the day. The educator completes the incident log, and the school administrator contacts the caregiver by phone and email. The student is then assigned one day of RISE. **Parents or caregivers are required to pick up the cell phone.**

Continued Infractions - *Administrator supported*: An educator requests assistance, and the phone is brought to the main office. The student is assigned either RISE or OSS. **Parents or caregivers are required to pick up the cell phone.**

*Refusal to hand over the phone to an administrator would result in a full day in RISE and may include OSS for subsequent infractions.

*Students with sensory disabilities and/or medical needs may need to have cell phone access as an accommodation. For example, hearing-impaired students use phone-mediated Bluetooth listening devices, and visually impaired students listen to text read aloud.

 24-25 Pittsfield Public Schools Cell Phone Regulations Graphic

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports - PBIS

PBIS is a broad range of systematic and individualized strategies designed to promote positive behavior with all students so that they can achieve important social and learning outcomes.

[Link to 24-25 Allendale PBIS Handbook](#)

Allendale students will be explicitly taught the school-wide expectations (Triple A's). The Triple A's outline the expected behaviors (Act Respectfully, Act Responsibly, Act Safely). Students demonstrating

positive behaviors will be recognized and acknowledged. Expectations will be reviewed regularly and consistently.

School-Wide Systems are developed to create a school environment that is:

- Predictable: Common language for all staff and families.
- Common vision & understanding of expectations.
- Positive: Ongoing teaching and recognition for positive behavior.
- Safe: Consistent process for addressing problem behavior.
- Consistent: All staff members use similar expectations through all school environments.

School Wide PBIS Commitment and Reasoning:

Positive Behavior Support benefits students. Research on PBIS demonstrates:

- Reduction in problem behavior
- Increased student engagement
- Risk and protective factors improve
- Students see school as a safe, supportive environment
- Improved academic performance, when coupled with effective instruction
- Improved family involvement

Students are regularly recognized when they are noticed following the Triple A's. Students receive PRIDE points and have multiple opportunities to exchange the points for a reward from the school store.

Included are selected portions from the 2022-25 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Please refer to the complete document posted on the website at www.pittsfield.net for further information.

PITTSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROHIBITION OF BULLYING, CYBER-BULLYING AND RETALIATION:

Bullying, including cyber-bullying, and retaliation as defined in this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (BPIP), is not acceptable conduct and is prohibited within the Pittsfield Public Schools. Bullying of any type has no place in a school setting. The Pittsfield Public Schools leadership and staff will strive to maintain learning and working environments that support positive personal relationships between students and between students and staff and are free of bullying. Any student who engages in conduct that constitutes bullying shall be subject to disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension or expulsion in accordance with state law, district policy and student handbooks. In addition to disciplinary consequences, a student engaging in bullying behavior will also receive other interventions intended to build increased competence in relationship-building and other necessary social emotional learning skills.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses bullying or has reliable information about an incident of bullying is also prohibited.

Any form of bullying is prohibited:

- *in any school building and on all school grounds*
- *in district provided virtual learning environments and learning management systems*
- *on property immediately adjacent to school grounds*
- *at a bus stop or on a school bus or any other school sanctioned transportation, such as another vehicle whether owned, leased, or used by the school district*

- *at a school-sponsored or school related activity, function or program whether it takes place on or off school grounds*
- *through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by the school district or school*
- *at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school*

As the District's Anti-Bullying Policy (STU-80) states, it is not the District's intent to prohibit students from expressing their ideas, including ideas that may offend the sensibilities of others, or from engaging in civil debate. However, the District does not condone and will take both disciplinary and remedial action in response to conduct that creates a hostile environment and interferes with students' opportunity to learn.

III. DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS:

The following language and definitions are applied throughout this BPIP and are to be used consistently within the Pittsfield Public Schools in relation to incidents of bullying/cyber-bullying:

A. Bullying: *The repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyber-bullying. (Reference M.G.L. c.71, s. 37O)*

B. Cyber-bullying: *Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages and Internet postings, including, but not limited to blogs, websites, and social networking. (Reference M.G.L. c.71, s. 37O)*

C. Retaliation: *Any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student or staff member who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.*

D. Aggressor: *A student or staff member who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliatory behavior. (The use of the term aggressor varies from the term "bully" in the Act to Prevent Bullying, yet is being used in the plan under the guidance of the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.)*

E. Target: *A student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation is directed.*

F. Hostile Environment: *A situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education. (Reference M.G.L. c.71, 37O)*

G. Staff: *School staff is defined as including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity and paraprofessionals.*

Students with Possible Increased Vulnerability: The plan recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics.

REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others and may be in oral or written form. Reports made by a staff member must be submitted in writing by the person making the report. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members can be written on the same reporting form or may be made anonymously. Oral or anonymous reports made by a parent and/or student shall be scribed by a staff member in circumstances where a written report was not submitted. Click here for a copy of the [Suspected Bullying Reporting and Determination Form-2](#)

Use of a “Suspected Bullying Reporting and Determination Form” (see Appendix B) is required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will:

- *Annually provide information on how to access the [Suspected Bullying Reporting and Determination Form](#) posted on the website or from their child’s school building.*
- *The Suspected Bullying Reporting and Determination Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.*
- *Annually, the school or district will provide the school community, including administrators, educators and other staff, students and parents or guardians with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation as parts of district and school handbooks. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, will be included in these handbooks, on the school and district website, and in information made available to parents or guardians.*

B. Reporting by Staff

Every school or district staff member, including but not limited to, central office administrators, building principals and administrators, school adjustment counselors and school psychologists, teachers and related service providers, paraprofessional staff, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodial staff, bus drivers, athletic coaches and extracurricular advisors is required to monitor and address student behavior and to intervene when unkind behavior occurs. This includes immediately ensuring that any need for student safety in the present moment is restored. Concern about any bullying or retaliatory conduct must also be reported as soon as possible to the principal or the administrator designated to investigate suspected bullying behavior.

In addition, if any adult suspects that a student is being targeted and bullied, they are required to fill out the district suspected bullying determination form and submit it to the building administrator. As the person who has witnessed the behavior it is most effective if that staff member makes contact with the family of the target and the aggressor to give the clearest description of the bullying behavior and the steps planned to take to promote respectful behavior in your classroom.

The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority and the responsibility of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

C. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians and Others

The school or district asks students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or administrative designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. [Suspected Bullying Reporting and Determination Form-2](#). Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report or may report orally. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member or with the principal or designee. A student who knowingly makes a false allegation of bullying or retaliation shall also be subject to disciplinary action.

D. Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation

Safety First

Before fully investigating allegations of bullying or retaliation, the staff member, principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but are not limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The staff member, principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting the following persons from bullying or retaliation: a student/staff member who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student/staff member who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student/staff member who provides information during an investigation, or a student/staff member who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

Notification Requirements

Notice to Parents or Guardians: Upon investigation and determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor and will review response protocols. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

Notice to Another School or District: If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

Notice to Law Enforcement: At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement

agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and in compliance with school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer or another member of the Pittsfield Police Department in the absence of a school resource officer and/or other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

Investigation

The following provides general guidelines for responding to a report of bullying or retaliation. Note that the guidelines should be modified as necessary to respond appropriately to the individual complaint.

Pre-Investigation: *Before fully investigating allegations of bullying or retaliation, school personnel will assess the level of need and take immediate steps to support the alleged target and/or protect the alleged target from further potential incidents of concern. If the initial report is to or by a staff member, the staff member will complete an initial review of the situation and intervene as necessary. The staff member will make a referral to the principal or administrative designee if further administrative investigation is needed.*

Investigation: *The investigator will seek to determine the basis of the complaint, gather information from the complainant, including such matters as what specifically happened, who committed the alleged acts, who was present or may have information about the events, when the events occurred and where the events occurred.*

The principal or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and could result in disciplinary and/or restorative actions in alignment with the Student Code of Conduct, Character, and Support.

The principal or administrative designee and other staff members, as determined by the principal or administrative designee, may conduct interviews. To the extent practical, given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal, designee and any other interviewers will maintain a written record of the investigation. Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for other investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

Determinations: *The principal or designee will make a determination based upon the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted from participating in school or from school activities. The principal or designee will, one, determine what remedial action is required, if any, and, two, determine what response and/or disciplinary and restorative actions are necessary as guided by the Student Code of Conduct, Character, and Support.*

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development and/or mental health interventions.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor orally about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken with other students unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

Responses to Bullying

Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-Building

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the school principal or designee will decide upon a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior and restore/repair relationships. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v). Some skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- *Offering individualized skill-building or restorative sessions;*
- *Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students in consultation with guidance and/or school adjustment counselors and other appropriate school personnel;*
- *Implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral interventions and supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;*
- *Meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;*
- *Developing individual behavior plans to include a focus on specific social skill development; and*
- *Making a referral for counseling or other mental health services for targets, aggressors and family members.*

Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of information gathered through investigation by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the BPIP and with the district and school's Code of Conduct, Character and Support. Discipline up to and including suspension and expulsion may be applied by the school principal. All suspensions or expulsions are subject to review by the Superintendent and his/her designee with the student and parents afforded full due process rights. Updated in 2022, amended G.L. c. 71, §37H³/₄ now requires, before suspension, that school officials consider alternatives to suspension and support disciplinary decisions with written documentation.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and state laws regarding student discipline. A manifest determination will be completed to determine the connection between a student's bullying behavior and his/her disability. As necessary, a special education team will be reconvened to review the student's IEP.

Students with disabilities are known to be considered to be a vulnerable population for both being bullied and, in some disability categories, for engaging in bullying behavior. The risk for this will be reviewed at all IEP

initial, reevaluation and annual meetings as part of the IEP process to determine appropriate interventions, both universal for all students and individualized.

Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well.

Supportive services will be assessed and offered to the target. These services may include safety planning, school adjustment counselor services and mental health referral, as well as, increased use of Tier 1 classroom strategies that promote safe and supportive learning environments.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures or other responses are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

Discipline and Student Conduct

Please refer to the Pittsfield Public School's Code of Conduct, Character and Support.

- [Code of Conduct Character and Support](#)

Building Assistance Team (BAM)

Allendale has established a cooperative, interdisciplinary team that addresses the academic and behavioral needs of students. Building Assistance Meetings (BAMs) usually include the principal, school adjustment counselor, school psychologist, reading specialist, special education teacher, speech and language pathologist, classroom teacher, and the parent of the referred child. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a specific concern that a teacher or parent may raise regarding the student's performance academically or socially, to brainstorm possible solutions, and to develop an action plan.

DISCIPLINE OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS (Includes Special Education and Section 504 Students)

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook.

Procedure: Procedures for suspension of students with disabilities when suspensions exceed 10 consecutive school days or a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative days; responsibilities of the Team; responsibilities of the district

1. A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive days or a series of suspensions that are shorter than 10 consecutive days but constitute a pattern are considered to represent a change in placement.
2. When a suspension constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities, district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team, as determined by the parent and the district, convene within 10 days of the decision to suspend to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial

relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP—"a manifestation determination."

3. If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, then the suspension or expulsion may go forward consistent with policies applied to any student without disabilities, except that the district must still offer:
 - a. a. services to enable the student, although in another setting, to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward IEP goals; and
 - b. as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, to address the behavior so that it does not recur.
4. Interim alternative educational setting. Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (as determined by the Team) for up to 45 school days
 - a. on its own authority if the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance or the infliction of serious bodily injury on another person while at school or a school function or, considered case by case, unique circumstances; or
 - b. on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is "substantially likely" to injure him/herself or others.
 - c. Characteristics In either case, the interim alternative education setting enables the student to continue in the general curriculum and to continue receiving services identified on the IEP, and provides services to address the problem behavior.
5. If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, then the Team completes a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan if it has not already done so. If a behavioral intervention plan is already in place, the Team reviews and modifies it, as necessary, to address the behavior. Except when they have been placed in an interim alternative educational setting in accordance with part 4, the student returns to the original placement unless the parents and district agree otherwise or the hearing officer orders a new placement.
6. Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with the written notice of procedural safeguards. If the parent chooses to appeal or the school district requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise.
7. Any student who is suspended on the day of a graduation or promotion ceremony will not be permitted to participate in the event. This policy ensures that disciplinary actions are consistently upheld, even during significant school events, emphasizing the importance of maintaining appropriate behavior at all times.

Rights under Section 504: A student with a disability recognized under the federal statute known as Section 504 (29 USC §794[a]) is entitled to accommodation of that disability to the extent that it interferes with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from any educational or other program of the Pittsfield Public Schools. Section 504 also prohibits discrimination against any student based on such a disability. A student whose disability is recognized under special education law, known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA: see USC §1401[3]) is entitled to educational programs and assignments that are designed to develop her/his educational potential. [M.G.L. c. 71B §1] Section 504 accommodation plans and special education individualized education programs (IEPs) must be developed in accordance with procedures set out in federal and Massachusetts law and regulations. The 504 Coordinator is responsible for assuring compliance with Section 504. She can be reached at 413-499-9515.

For a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Education Special Education *Parents' Rights Brochure* and the *Section 504 Handbook*, available in many languages, visit www.doe.mass.edu/sped/parents on the Web.

Multilingual Learner (MLL) Support

A student whose home language is not English, as shown on the district home language survey, is administered an English language proficiency assessment. If deemed necessary based on the assessment results, the student is placed in an appropriate MLL program.

For information regarding the MLL program, entrance and exiting procedures, and the rights of families of Multilingual Learner students, please call the MLL Coordinator, Ms. Nicole Kosiorek, at 413-499-6304.

Emergency Plans

In accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Education Regulations, Allendale Elementary School has an emergency management plan. For emergency purposes, it is extremely important that any changes in contact information be reported to the school office.

- Fire drills: In cooperation with the Pittsfield Fire Department, fire drills are held several times throughout the school year. Each classroom has a designated primary fire exit and an alternate exit.
- Lock-Down: Lock-Down drills are utilized if a crisis occurs outside of the school and an evacuation would be dangerous and/or if there is a crisis within the building and movement inside the school would put students in jeopardy. This could include an intruder/threatening person either inside or outside of the building. These drills are for the safety and protection of all individuals within the school building. In these cases, students and staff report to each class's designated safe area. If a student or staff member is out of the classroom for any reason, they should report to the nearest designated safe area. Lock down drills will be practiced throughout the school year.
- Evacuation/Site Relocation: In the case of an emergency evacuation, students will leave the building by way of designated fire exits and proceed to their specific grade level sites on Allendale school grounds. If needed, students will then relocate via the back path where they will walk to our designated evacuation site, SABIC.
- "Hold in Passing:" This is utilized when there is no time to evacuate the building and/or it may be harmful to leave the building. This is commonly used during a time in which an area of the school needs to be secured for student/staff confidentiality, severe weather, or hazardous material spills. All teachers and students are asked to remain in their classrooms and can continue with instruction. If a student or staff member is out of the classroom for any reason, they should report to the room nearest to them.
- "Severe Weather Shelter-In-Place:" During a severe weather emergency, all students and staff will

report immediately to a safe area determined by the Principal or designee.

- Reunification Procedure: For safety purposes, parents/guardians are not allowed to go to SABIC for pick-up after an evacuation. Parents/Guardians will be reunified with their child(ren) at the Fire Station on Somerset Avenue. Parents/Guardians will need to fill out forms and produce proper identification. Once verification is made, a member of the Emergency Team will retrieve the students and they will be bussed to the reunification site.
- “Drop/Hold:” During a hurricane or earthquake, students and staff are asked to drop to the floor, move under or by a desk, and hold their hands over their heads.
- A.L.I.C.E. Drills: In the event of an active intruder, students and staff will respond using the skills and knowledge acquired through A.L.I.C.E. training (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate).

Field Trips

Field trips are planned enrichment adventures to further broaden the scope and knowledge learned within the classroom. Parents will be notified in advance and asked to sign permission slips for these trips. There may be a nominal fee to pay for the busing costs. Parents are encouraged to join the class as chaperones.

Legal Custody

If you are divorced and have custody of your child, please provide us with a copy of the legal decree. In this way we can ensure that your child is released on the permission of their legal guardian. Without such a decree in our files, we must legally release a child to either parent. If you are divorced/separated and do not have physical custody of your child, but want to receive copies of report cards, your request to the principal must be put in writing each year. (Be sure to include your current mailing address in this request.) Please note that the school is not responsible for notifying the non-custodial parent of concerts, plays or other school functions. Information is available on the school website.

Mandated Reporting

Public school teachers, principals, nurses, psychologists and counselors are mandated by law to report any signs of possible child abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities.

Medical Policies

Immunizations: An up-to-date immunization record is required for every student. Each student’s record is reviewed by the School Nurse to ensure compliance with Massachusetts State Law.

The following immunizations need to be in place by the first day of school:

REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS TO REGISTER FOR KINDERGARTEN – GRADE 12*	
Hepatitis B	3 doses
DtaP/DTP/DT/Td	5 doses (1 Td booster gr. 7-11)
Polio	4 doses
Hib	(3 or 4 doses for pre-school)
MMR	2 doses for measles; 1 for mumps; 1 for rubella

Varicella (Chickenpox)	2 doses for kindergarten entry
*Immunization requirements vary by grade.	
Please contact the nurse at your child's school if you have questions.	

Medications: Massachusetts Law requires that all medication that must be administered during school hours be brought directly to the School Nurse by a parent/guardian. All medication must be in a properly labeled pharmaceutical container. The School Nurse will dispense the medication as directed by the physician. A written order from the doctor and written parent permission must accompany the medication. Long-term medications require a special form to be completed by the physician and parent. This form may be obtained from the School Nurse.

Medical Exemption from Physical Education: If physical activities are restricted for a medical reason, a signed note from the doctor or the parent/guardian must be presented to the Health Office. If the exemption is to be for an extended period of time, written documentation must be presented from the physician.

Health Screening: All students are scheduled for vision, height, weight, and hearing screenings each year. Fifth grade students are also screened for scoliosis.

Illness: If your child feels ill in the morning, please keep him/her home. Although good attendance is imperative to student success, a sick child should never be sent to school. Please call the school if your child will be absent. Since we are not equipped to function as an infirmary, but as a first aid station, students who are ill cannot remain at school for any length of time. Please be sure that the school has names and up-to-date telephone numbers of the persons to be contacted in the event of illness or emergency. We want to provide each child with a safe and healthy environment. The nurse should be made aware of any pertinent medical information, i.e., allergies, medications, and/or physical restrictions. Any parent/guardian who has a health related concern should feel free to contact the School Nurse at 413-499-2637.

Family Participation

Family members can be a valuable resource for the classroom teacher. It is our desire to promote greater involvement of families in school activities. To this end, we encourage family members to participate in the following ways:

- Serving on School Council
- Accompanying your child's class on field trips
- Attending PTO meetings, assisting PTO sponsored events

Parent Teacher Organization

The Allendale Parent Teacher Organization (P.T.O.) supports Allendale Elementary School's mission to provide a safe learning environment in which all students can acquire the academic, cultural, physical, and social fundamentals necessary to be productive in society. The P.T.O. meets regularly to provide activities to the students and their families in the Allendale community, after school and in the evening, as well as financial support for cultural and academic enrichment and advancement for our students.

- The objectives and guiding principles of the P.T.O. are:
 - A. To promote the physical, mental and social educational welfare of children in the school.
 - B. To provide a forum where parents, principal, and teachers may share ideas and carry out

- projects for the benefit of our children and our community.
- C. To give parents a meaningful voice in the operation of their school and to give the principal and teachers a source of information for community interest and needs and vice versa.
 - D. To plan, organize, and conduct informational, social, fundraising, and other appropriate activities to improve community awareness and involvement.

Visitor Policy

We welcome visits to our school, but to ensure the safety and security of our students we require all parents, volunteers, and visitors to report to the office to sign-in and receive a visitor's badge. When delivering a "forgotten" item to school for your child, please leave the material at the office. A member of the staff will see to it that the item is promptly delivered.

Please see the Visitor's Policy for the District below.

PITTSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Pittsfield, Massachusetts
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

Recognizing that access to the schools is an important benefit to the community, and also that the physical safety of the students and staff of the Pittsfield Public Schools is a matter of paramount importance, the School Committee established that the Superintendent of Schools shall develop regulations that allow parents, members of the community, and other interested parties to visit the district's schools under circumstances that will preserve the safety of students and staff and will not disrupt classes or other educational activities occurring in the schools.

The Superintendent shall see to it that those regulations are posted conspicuously in all the district's schools. All those with business in the schools, and all other persons, shall adhere to those regulations.

The principal is authorized by the Superintendent, pursuant to School Committee policy, to take any action they deem necessary in order to secure the safety of students and district personnel. The principal or their designee has the authority to authorize visitors to be present on school grounds as defined in the policy regulations below. Unauthorized visitors or use of the school facility or grounds that do not follow School Committee policy by any visitor, will result in the visitor being asked to leave the school premises immediately and they will be subject to arrest and prosecution for trespassing if they refuse.

REGULATIONS (Visitors to the Pittsfield Public Schools shall be governed by the following rules):

1. No unauthorized persons shall be allowed on school grounds from sunset until 6:00 p.m. the next evening except if attending official school activities or other activities recognized and approved by the School System administration or individual school administrators. On weekends and holidays, no unauthorized persons shall be allowed on school grounds from sunset until sunrise except if attending official school activities or other activities recognized and approved by the School System administration or individual school administrators.
2. No unauthorized person shall be allowed in any gated area at any time.

3. All visitors wishing to enter the inside of a school building shall report to the Main Office of the school, sign in, and be issued a visitor's permit, which shall be displayed at all times during the visit. The permit shall be returned to the Main Office, and the visitor shall sign out, upon completion of their business in the building. The principal shall establish procedures to effectuate the purposes of the regulations.
4. Any parent or guardian wishing to speak with a specific teacher about the progress of that person's child must make an appointment with the teacher. Scheduling appointments must not interfere with instructional time.
5. Registration such as is described in #3 shall not be required for school functions that are open to the public, whether admission is to be charged or not.
6. Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit the principal, guidance counselors, school nurses, school psychologists, and other support personnel, by appointment, in order to discuss any problems or concerns the parent may have regarding the student, whether school related or not.
7. All visitors, including the press, wishing to inspect school records or wishing to interview students on school premises and other media, shall comply with all applicable School Committee rules, regulations, and policies. In any questionable case, the visitor shall be referred by the principal or their designee to the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, in order to obtain written permission for such a visit. The Superintendent's determination in any such case will be final.
8. Motorcycles, snowmobiles, or any other types of motorized transportation vehicles are prohibited on school property except those used for transportation and from school activities and authorized by the school administration.
9. Security should mean not only maintenance of secure buildings from a locking standpoint, but also being secure from fire hazards and faulty equipment. Security should also extend to safe practices in the use of electrical, plumbing, and heating equipment. Records should be in a safe place and under lock and key as required.
10. Automobiles, trucks, and other vehicular conveyances that are authorized to be on school property are not permitted to travel off the paved roadways, except for those official vehicles authorized to do so in the performance of their responsibilities.
11. All types of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, tobacco (smokeless included) are prohibited on school grounds.

Homeless Assistance

Consistent with the Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, homeless students are defined as those who lack a regular, fixed nighttime residence including supervised temporary accommodations (see definition, Policy STU-14). Students have the right to stay in their school of origin for the entire time they are homeless, even if they move to a different school district. Students who move into permanent housing during the school year can still finish the year in the same school. They may also choose to enroll in a school within the new zone, town or city where they live temporarily. Transportation will be provided unless your new address is within the walking distance of your child's school. For help, call the Assistant Superintendent Ms. Jennifer Stokes' office, as she serves as the district's homeless liaison, at 499-9510.

