Silvio O. Conte Community School

Student & Family Handbook 2026-2027



CONTE CUBS

Care for Yourself, Others, and Our School

Use Your Best Effort

Be an Active Listener

Show Responsibility

Silvio O. Conte Community School · 200 West Union Street · Pittsfield, MA 01201 · Phone 413-448-9660 · Fax 413-448-9663

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Conte Community School Families,

I am so excited to join you and your students for the 2026-2027 academic year as your new Principal! Given my experiences in a variety of schools across the county, I am eager to share my passion for education, devotion to community building, and joy for creativity with all of you in an effort to cultivate a memorable school year rooted in academic gains, an increased sense of belonging, and Conte pride.

Throughout the course of the school year, I would like to present myself as a partner in your student's schooling by getting to know them in their classes and exploring their relationship with learning. In addition, it would be great to cultivate relationships with Conte's student's caregivers via school-wide events, family meetings, and other community happenings as I have a responsibility to serve you as well.

With this in mind, please keep an eye out for future communications that will announce open Principal Office Hours, school-wide and community events, and other gatherings that will present us with the opportunity to participate in joyous fellowship.

Outside of that, please explore this handbook for information regarding various policies and procedures that detail membership expectations and parameters within Conte's community. Additionally, I ask that you also review the listed points within this document as there have been adjustments worth noting and / or may be great to reflect on with your student(s).

- Important Dates
- School Directory
- Updated School Times
- Instructions for Morning Arrival & Afternoon Dismissal
- Attendance Policies
- Bullying Policies

In the meantime, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me either via email at jahamad@pittsfield.net or my office phone at (413) 448-9660 x1103.

Best,



Jamal Ahamad, Principal (he / him / his)
Silvio O. Conte Community School
jahamad@pittsfield.net | Office: (413) 448-9660 x1103 | Work Cell: (413) 449-6079
https://www.youtube.com/@misterahamad_c213

Conte Community School is a proud Business Partner of Berkshire Health Systems

Berkshire Health Systems
www.berkshirehealthsystems.org

2026-2027 IMPORTANT DATES

AUG 2026 - DEC 2026
ALL DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Aug 19, 2026	**Community Kindergarten Kickoff at The Common from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM**
Aug 26, 2026	**First Day for Staff**
Aug 28, 2026	**Popsicle Meet & Greet at Conte Community School from 2:00 PM to 2:30 PM**
August 31, 2026	**First Day of School for Grades 1 thru 4** **PreK & Kindergarten Orientation from 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM**
Sept 2, 2026	**First Day of School for PreK & Kindergarten**
Sept 7, 2026	**NO SCHOOL - Labor Day**
Sept 24, 2026	**Open House for Grades 1 thru 4 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM**
Oct 2, 2026	**NO SCHOOL - Faculty & Staff Professional Development Day**
Oct 12, 2026	**NO SCHOOL - Indigenous Peoples' Day**
Oct 20, 2026	**School Picture Day**
Nov 3, 2026	**NO SCHOOL - Faculty & Staff Professional Development Day**
Nov 11, 2026	**NO SCHOOL - Veteran's Day**
Nov 24, 2026	**Elementary Trimester 1 - Report Cards - Grades Close**
Nov 25-27, 2026	**NO SCHOOL - Fall Holiday Break**
Dec 3, 2026	**School Picture Day (Make Up)**
Dec 10, 2026	**Caregiver Conferences from 3:30 PM to 7:30 PM**
Dec 11, 2026	**HALF DAY** **Caregiver Conferences from 12:30 PM to 3:00 PM**
Dec 23, 2026 - Jan 1, 2027	**NO SCHOOL - Winter Holiday Break**

2026-2027 IMPORTANT DATES

JAN 2027 - JUNE 2027
ALL DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Jan 18, 2027	**NO SCHOOL - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**
Jan 22, 2027	**Elementary Trimester 2 - Progress Reports**
Feb 15-19, 2027	**NO SCHOOL - Presidents' Day / Winter Recess**
Mar 11, 2027	**Elementary Trimester 2 - Report Cards - Grades Close**
Mar 26, 2027	**NO SCHOOL - Good Friday**
Apr 19-23, 2027	**NO SCHOOL - Patriots' Day / Spring Recess**
Apr 30, 2027	**Elementary Trimester 3 - Progress Reports**
May 31, 2027	**NO SCHOOL - Memorial Day**
June 11, 2027	**Last Day of School for PreK & Kindergarten (unless Snow Days occur)**
June 17, 2027	**Elementary Trimester 3 - Report Cards - Grades Close** **Last Day of School for Grades 1 thru 4 (unless Snow Days occur)**
June 19, 2027	**NO SCHOOL - Juneteenth (if school is still in session)**

2026-2027 SAFETY DRILL SCHEDULE

ALL DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Aug 28, 2026	**Staff Safety & Emergency Review & ALICE Drill**
Sept 10, 2026	**Hold In Passing Drill**
Sept 17, 2026	**Weather Emergency Drill**
Sept 22, 2026	**Secure / Shelter In Place Drill**
Week of Sept 28, 2026	**Medical Emergency Drill**
Sept 30, 2026	**Student Emergency & Safety Review (ALICE Review)**
Oct 1, 2026	**Relocation Drill**
Week of Oct 5, 2026	**ALICE Drill #1**
Week of Jan 11, 2027	**ALICE Drill #2**
Week of Mar 15, 2027	**ALICE Drill #3**
TBA	**ALICE Drill #4**

2026-2027 CONTE STAFF DIRECTORY

Principal Jamal Ahamad	**Assistant Principal of Teaching & Learning** Courtney Meisberger	**Dean of Students** Ryan Kennedy	**Instruction & Accountability Coordinator** Gillian Voight
Principal's Secretary Kayla Auger	**School's Secretary** Lisa Furciniti	**School Nurse** Kaitlin Murray	**Family Engagement Coordinator** Sean Timpane
School Adjustment Counselor Sarah Ouellette	**School Adjustment Counselor** Emily Borosody	**School Adjustment Counselor (Intern)** TBA	**School Psychologist** Lujana Berry
Restorative & Accountability Facilitator Taylor Negri	**Restorative & Accountability Facilitator** Sean Soper	**Conte Kids' Club Staff** Delores Moore	**Conte Kids' Club Staff** Terry Kelleher

PreK 3 Teacher Mary Ann Manning	**PreK 4 Teacher** Taylor Manning		
Kindergarten Teacher Nickole Halvorsen	**Kindergarten Teacher** Christine Zdon	**Kindergarten Teacher** Lisa Labonte	**Kindergarten Teacher** Kaleigh Kundla
Grade 1 Teacher Janice Carnute	**Grade 1 Teacher** Mickie Turner	**Grade 1 Teacher** Stephanie Londergan	**Grade 1 Teacher** Karen Maffuccio
Grade 2 Teacher Meghan Crocker	**Grade 2 Teacher** Erin Bassi	**Grade 2 Teacher** Tierney Crocker	**Grade 2 Teacher** Kristen Cogswell
Grade 3 Teacher Sara Esko	**Grade 3 Teacher** Jocelyn Sommers	**Grade 3 Teacher** Rachelle Therrien	**Grade 3 Teacher** Kathy Bowe
Grade 4 Teacher Bill Kane	**Grade 4 Teacher** Dani Taylor	**Grade 4 Teacher** Sheila Atiemo	**Grade 4 Teacher** Lara Smith
Art Teacher Abbey Laurin	**Science Teacher** Britt Francisco	**Physical Education Teacher** Richard Girdler	**Physical Education Teacher** TBA
Music Teacher Judith "Suni" Lowe	**Instrumental Music Teacher** Senta Brodeur	**Instrumental Music Teacher** Juliet Wright	
English Language Learners Irina Cardoso	**English Language Learners** Kimberly Bilotta	**Special Education** Matt Behnke	**Special Education** Kendra Edmonds
Literacy Coach Anne Marie Hines	**Reading Interventionist** Carole Castonguay	**Reading Interventionist** Michaela Penna	**Reading Interventionist** Dana Siegel
Math Interventionist Renee Kelly	**Academic Interventionist** Tanya Silvestro-Dias	**Teacher of the Deaf** TBA	**Teacher of the Visually Impaired** Lynn Shortis
SEAMS Academic Interventionist TBA	**SEAMS Restorative & Accountability Facilitator** TBA	**SEAMS Paraprofessional** TBA	**SEAMS Paraprofessional** TBA

PreK 3 Paraprofessional Sam Jones	**PreK 3 Paraprofessional** Norayda Roa Pinzon	**PreK 3 Paraprofessional** Soleil Hanger	
PreK 4 Paraprofessional Tonya Wheeler	**PreK 4 Paraprofessional** Arieanna Williams		
Kindergarten Paraprofessional Janna Wood	**Kindergarten Paraprofessional** Daniel Johnson	**Kindergarten Paraprofessional** Savannah White	**Kindergarten Paraprofessional** Jakayla Sims
Grade 1 Paraprofessional Josie Mossetty	**Grade 1 Paraprofessional** Sandy Trimble	**Grade 2 Paraprofessional** Kevin Klein	**Grade 2 Paraprofessional** Julie Castagna-Baran
Grade 3 Paraprofessional TBA	**Grade 3 Paraprofessional** TBA	**Grade 4 Paraprofessional** Kim Bolio	**Grade 4 Paraprofessional** TBA
Special Education Paraprofessional Bonnie Sammon	**Special Education Paraprofessional** TBA		
Occupational Therapy Donna Smith	**Physical Therapy** Stephanie Davis-Osterberg	**Physical Therapy Assistant** Monica Hilton	**Speech Assistant** TBA

1st Shift Custodial Staff Joe Armstrong	**2nd Shift Custodial Staff** Manuel Zambrano	**3rd Shift Custodial Staff** Mark Kilbary	
Cafeteria Staff Debra Rooney	**Cafeteria Staff** Julie Chamberland	**Cafeteria Staff** Caitlyn Gagnon	**Cafeteria Staff** Brian Phillips
Cafeteria Staff Fengyi Chen			

All faculty and staff can be reached by email.
For example, to reach the Attendance Office, the email address would be: **lfurciniti@pittsfield.net**

All other contacts follow that same format.

The best time to contact teachers is right before school starts or immediately after school finishes.
If you would like to have your student's teacher contact you, please consider leaving a message on their extension via our phone system. However, please note that in the event of a dismissal change, you will need to contact the school secretary.

Please visit our website for up-to-date information on school information and events at: **conte.pittsfield.net**

Silvio O. Conte Community School Contact Information
School Telephone Number - 448-9660 (Press 0 to speak to the School Secretary).
Conte Fax Number - 448-9663
Conte Kid's Club - 448-9660 Ext #6

Before and After School Care
There is a *fee-based* before and after school daycare on site provided by 18 Degrees: Conte Kids' Club. Childcare is also available when students have half-days of school and during holiday and summer breaks. For more information about this program, please contact Pamela Preston at 413 448-2997, ext. 324 or Danielle Butler at 413-242-8821.

SILVIO O. CONTE COMMUNITY SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

Our vision at Silvio O. Conte Community School is to provide a safe, engaging learning environment where improvement is continuous, all members have an active voice, and there is a strong sense of community, so that all members of the community move forward and are well prepared and confident to meet their future challenges.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our vision will be accomplished through:

1. Promoting partnerships with families and community organizations.
2. Applying student data to drive instruction and using research based practices to develop best teaching.
3. Celebrating and honoring successes.
4. Exploring and explaining cultural differences to foster empathy and acceptance.
5. Modeling and educating healthy choices throughout life.
6. Providing a safe, secure learning environment.
7. Supporting high academic standards and fostering individual growth

SCHOOL HOURS / SCHEDULE

As noted in previous district-wide communications, students are required to arrive at school at 8:50 AM for a 9:00 AM start and 3:30 PM end, whereas half days are scheduled for 8:50 AM to 11:50 AM. Full details can be found below. *Please keep in mind that students are not allowed to be dropped off prior to 8:30 AM unless they are going in for breakfast or morning programming with 18 Degrees' Conte Kids' Club as there is no supervision until 8:50 AM.*

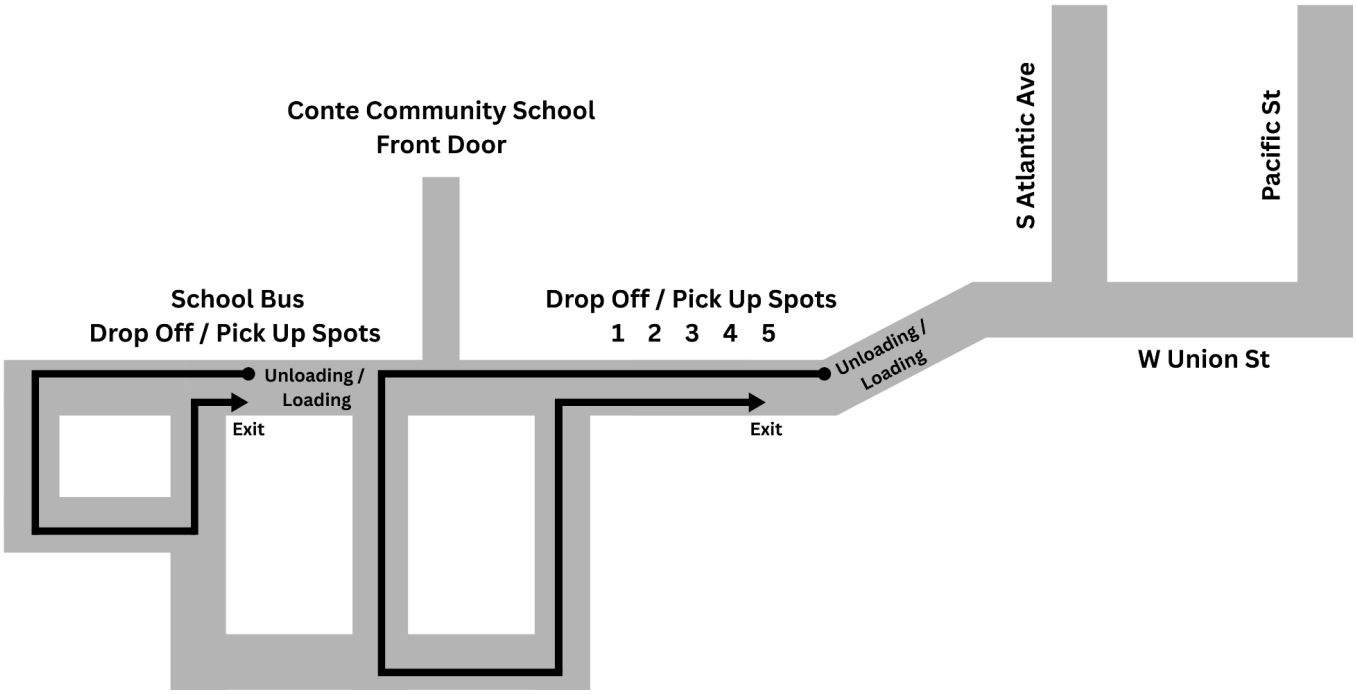
Elementary School	Full Day	Half Day
Breakfast	8:30 AM	8:30 AM
Staff Reporting Time	8:45 AM	8:45 AM
Student Reporting Time	8:50 AM	8:50 AM
Start of Instructional Day	9:00 AM	9:00 AM
End of Instructional Day	3:30 PM	11:50 AM
End of Staff Work Day	3:40 PM	3:40 PM

Additional scheduling notes include the following:

- Instructional time begins at 9:00 AM; a student arriving after 9:00 AM will be considered tardy.
- Any students who arrive at school between 8:50 AM and 9:10 AM are able to get a bagged breakfast.
- Please do not dismiss your students between 2:50 PM and 3:30 PM (11:10 AM and 11:50 AM on a half day) as doing so can / will create a disturbance for both end-of-day instruction and logistics.

MORNING ARRIVAL / AFTERNOON DISMISSAL

In an effort to make both Morning Arrival and Afternoon Dismissal safer for our students, we are adjusting the Drop Off and Pick Up process so that they mirror each other. Caregivers will be directed to a spot within the Drop Off / Pick Up line to (un)load their students on the right-hand side of the driveway; after which, they will be moved along to take a left down the middle row of the parking lot before looping around to exit. Similarly, school buses will (un)load further up the road and use the furthest loop to exit. See below.



Additional Morning Arrival / Afternoon Dismissal notes include the following:

- Please do not drop students off at the front of the building and leave them unattended.
- Students who ride bicycles to and from school are expected to follow safe cycling practices, such as wearing helmets, to park and lock their bicycles as required, and to walk their bicycles while on school property sidewalks.
- Walkers will be dismissed from the playground.
- Bus students will be dismissed from the lobby door to board the buses in the front driveway of the school.
- Students should not stay on school grounds after dismissal unless accompanied by an adult.

As a major note, South Atlantic Avenue is a one-way street. We are asking families to turn on Pacific Street, take a left onto Taubert Avenue, and another left onto South Atlantic Avenue. Once on South Atlantic Avenue, families will need to pull over to the right side. We ask that families wait in their cars and proceed up the street given staff directions to proceed. Students will be called in an orderly process and will walk to meet families in their cars. Upon leaving South Atlantic Avenue, cars will take a left turn to exit. There will be personnel directing traffic to make this dismissal procedure as smooth and safe as possible. *Please be patient. Be sure to pull off to the side and be mindful to not block traffic behind you or block any residents' driveways. Cars are encouraged to follow this traffic pattern and not park on Pacific Street.*

ABSENCES & ATTENDANCE

As stated in the Pittsfield Public School Student / Parent Handbook, regular school attendance is essential to the total education of the student. Punctual arrival at school and at each classroom activity is essential to minimize disruptions, promote a positive class climate and maximize time on learning. It is a joint responsibility of the staff of the Pittsfield Public Schools and parents/guardians to encourage students to take school attendance seriously. In the interest of promoting school attendance, provisions shall be established for commending students for exemplary attendance.

We encourage parents to schedule dental, physical, and other appointments during non-school hours, whenever possible. The scheduling of family vacations during times when school is in session is discouraged and will be marked as an unexcused absence. Teachers are not required to prepare work for students who miss school because of a family vacation.

When a child has accrued 5 absences the student's classroom teacher will contact with his/her caregiver. If absences continue the Family Engagement and Attendance Coordinator (FEAC) will begin contact with the caregiver. If a student accrues 10 absences, a letter will be sent home and a meeting with the FEAC and a designee from administration will be requested to develop a plan to support the student and family. In accordance with the law, should any student accrue 15 or more absences, it is the school's responsibility to report this to the Department of Children and Families and/or the Berkshire Juvenile Court.

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. Absence for any of the following reasons will be classified as excused provided that the school receives verification from the parent/guardian within 3 school days of the student's return from absence:

- An illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school. A health care provider, school nurse or parent must verify the illness or injury.
- A death within 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

Here are a few examples of absences that are unexcused even if the parent sends 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.
- Student needed to babysit
- Skipping 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 does not have to help a student make up work due to unexcused absences.

Tardiness
A student is tardy if he/she arrives at school late (after 9:00 AM) without an excuse. 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.

Dismissal (Early)
Every effort is made to minimize classroom disruption. Please help us with the following guidelines:

If your child needs to be dismissed before 2:50 PM a note must be sent into school in the morning indicating the time and the reason for the early dismissal. **No child will be allowed to be dismissed after 2:50 PM. On half-days, the time for this will be 11:10 AM.**

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.

PARENTS' LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ENSURING STUDENTS' ATTENDANCE
(M.G.L. c. 76 2) Parents or legal guardians are required to see that their children attend school regularly. Failure to do so may result in the school filing a Failure To Send with the Juvenile Court and the Department of Children & Families, or seeking juvenile court fines pursuant to M.G.L. 76 2 or criminal charges pursuant to M.G.L. c.119 63.

ACADEMICS

Conte administration, faculty, and support staff know how important it is for your child to grow in reading and mathematics. In fact, successful learning of basic early literacy and math skills at a young age is probably the most important factor in a child's learning.

These skills are routinely monitored for progress. Formal reports called Benchmarking will be sent home three times a year in grades K-5.

Instruction is always guided by the Massachusetts Standards and supported through various instructional programs.

Reading and Literacy

CKLA is our core ELA program - providing instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and writing. All students receive instruction in the core program.

Mathematics

The Pittsfield Public Schools is using Reveal Math as their core math program for elementary schools. Derived from the latest research on how students learn best, Reveal Math is strategically designed to fuel active student engagement and deepen students' conceptual understanding.

Specialist Classes

All students will attend a 45 minute Specialist class each day. Specialist blocks include: Art, Physical Education, Music, and Science. **As a note, students MUST have sneakers to participate in Physical Education.**

Instrumental Music Program
Instrumental music classes are offered to students in Grades 3 and 4. 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.

Canvas Learning Management System

In an effort to organize and manage student learning activities and various tasks, students will have a Canvas account. Canvas is a learning management system that allows students one place where they can access their materials, messages, grades, etc. All elementary educators will maintain a Canvas page as the primary/only digital source to communicate with parents and caregivers. Email and phone calls are still encouraged. Teachers in Grades K-2 and elementary specialists may use Canvas if they choose but are not required to. Teachers in grades 3-4 will introduce students to the Canvas platform. Any digital assignments that integrate with Canvas, such as Google Docs and Slides, will be pushed to students solely through the teacher's Canvas page.

For more information regarding Canvas, please visit the District's Remote & Hybrid Learning page.

AFTER SCHOOL / EVENING EVENTS

Students participating in after school activities such as NAC events, dances, concerts and athletics must attend the equivalent of 4.5 hours of school that day in order to be eligible to participate in relevant after school, weekend, or vacation events. Parents may appeal emergency cases to the school principal.

- All students who remain on school grounds after school or attend After School Programs must follow the same rules as they do during the school day.
- Participating in evening school events is a positive way to build our school community. When you accompany your children to such events, we ask that you take primary responsibility for their supervision. We need your cooperation to make each event a safe and happy experience for everyone. We know that positive adult models can have a powerful influence on our children. Let's model the appropriate, positive behaviors and courtesies that we expect our children to learn.

BULLYING

Included are selected portions from the 2026-2027 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Please refer to the complete document posted on the District's Bullying Prevention & Intervention page for further information.

Principal: Jamal Ahamad
Dean of Students: Ryann Kennedy
School Adjustment Counselors: Sarah Oullette, Emily Borsody, Lara Diederich Conry (Intern)

PRINCIPAL GUIDELINES ANTI-BULLYING 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.

IV. 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. Also, a web based system will allow users to file anonymous reports electronically. 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. Anonymous reports can be made from a link on the district website. 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 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 or 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.

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.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

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 should wait in an orderly manner at their designated bus stops.
- Students should board and exit the bus in an orderly manner at the direction of the driver.
- All students must obey the rules of safety. They should remain seated with voices controlled, in order to enable the driver to fulfill his/her responsibilities.
- For the safety of all, 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

If a student endangers his or her own safety or the safety of others while on a school bus or van, the principal or designee may deny school provided transportation to the student. Buses are equipped with video cameras and/or audio equipment. The principal or designee may use the video and/or audiotape as evidence of a student's misbehavior. Transportation may be denied. In all cases, the principal or designee must inform the parent before keeping the student off the bus. The student is expected to come to school on the days when he or she is not allowed on the bus unless the student has also been suspended from school. Specific details can be found in the regulations and policy STU31.

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 1-4
- 1.5 miles from their middle school (grades 5-8)
- 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. Information regarding this policy may be obtained at the Transportation Office by telephoning **499-9525** or on the Pittsfield Public Schools website. See District Policy for more information.

CANCELLATION / EMERGENCY CLOSINGS / DELAYED DISMISSALS

If school must be closed early or opened late for any reason, if buses are delayed, or if school is closed, your family will receive a phone call from our Parent Square service. **It is very important that we always have the correct phone number in our records.** Local radio stations also announce school closings.

CELL PHONE POLICY

Students may carry or possess cell phones on school grounds and at school-sponsored or school-related events or activities; except that students shall keep phones turned off and shall not use or operate these during the instructional day, or at any other time during any school-sponsored activity or program.

No cell phones or other kind of portable electronic device 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.

A student who violates the restrictions set forth above on the use of cell phones may face disciplinary actions.

School officials, including classroom teachers, may confiscate a cell phone 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.

Elementary School Cell Phone Response

CODE OF CONDUCT & EXPECTATIONS
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORT

School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS) is a district-wide approach that is implemented in all Pittsfield Public Schools. The approach is based on building proactive multi-level behavioral supports that include defining, teaching, modeling, practicing, but most of all, acknowledging appropriate student behavior in order to create a positive school culture.

It is the expectation that we create a positive school climate where students can be successful both socially and academically by having a supportive environment where expectations are clear and behaviors are managed in a positive and proactive way.

Social and behavioral skills need to be taught explicitly to all children just as academics need to be taught. The expectations we chose for Conte form the foundation for the school-wide positive behavior interventions & support plan at our school.

From this fundamental framework, we have created specific expectations for the common areas of the school – the hallways, the cafeteria, and the playground - giving students examples of what we expect from them in each area of the school. We all practice these together at the beginning of the school year and practice them again as needed during reminder sessions known as "boosters" throughout the school year.

Conte has adopted the Conte Cubs as their PBIS symbol and school mascot.

All students are expected to do the following throughout the school building:

Care for Yourself, Others, and Our School

Use Your Best Effort

Be an Active Listener

Show Responsibility

When a student "gets caught" following the Conte Expectations, students can earn a Cub ticket. These tickets can be turned in to earn special prizes each week. CCS also holds monthly boosters where staff and students reteach and practice the specific school-wide expectations. During these weeks each month, students have the opportunity to earn special booster tickets. At the end of the booster weeks, individual student tickets are pulled and these students are able to participate in the booster celebration.

In addition, at Conte, each week we announce our Superstar Students of the Week. One student per grade level is selected; their names are announced every Monday at the end of the day. These students receive both a certificate and a school store gift certificate. Their picture is then posted on a special board in the second floor hallway.

In addition to Superstar Students of the Week, we also recognize Superstar Staff of the Week. Nomination forms are housed in each classroom for students and staff to fill out. It is suggested that the student who takes the daily lunch count also takes any nomination forms to the upstairs office. On the counter is a bucket for nomination forms. Names are pulled from this bucket to award staff.

Teachers also hold monthly grade level assemblies where they recognize a student of the month, students who follow the Conte expectations (one student per expectation), and students with perfect attendance. During these monthly grade level assemblies, all members of the Conte Community School are modeling and reviewing School-Wide Expectations.

Specialist Expectations

Our five Specialist teachers (Art, Music, PE, PE/Health, and Science) have developed consistent Specialist Class Expectations. Each class has the opportunity to earn five Specialist tickets for the expectations below. At the end of each week, these tickets are counted up and the class with the most tickets earns the Specialist Trophy for the week.

Expectation #1: Enter quietly and ready to learn
Expectation #2: Be respectful to classmates, teachers, materials
Expectation #3: Listen and follow directions quickly
Expectation #4: Raise your hand before speaking or leaving your seat
Expectation #5: Line up quietly, safely, facing forward

DRESS GUIDELENS & ATTIRE FOR STUDENTS

Below you will find the official dress code guidelines for all Pittsfield Public Schools. We are particularly concerned with:

- T-shirts that may be inappropriate for school
- Spring/Summer clothing that exposes midriffs or might be too short (shorts/skirts)
- Corded outerwear and sweatshirts that can be caught on playground equipment causing potentially dangerous situations

Please review the information provided and assist us in promoting appropriate dress with the students. Thank you so much for your cooperation!

STUDENT ATTIRE

Personal appearance is an individual matter. No one, however, has the privilege of disregarding the norms of reasonable dress. Attire that could interfere with the learning process is not allowed. Students will be counseled on an individual basis if their attire is improper. Parents will be contacted if there is a question regarding a student's attire. Clothing must always conform to safety standards of the particular class.

- The bottom of the top overlaps the top of the bottoms.
- Spandex and Lycra are acceptable only when worn over or under less revealing garments.
- 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. (Flip-flops are not recommended for safety purposes.)
- Hats (caps, do-rags, berets, scarves) of a non-religious nature may not be worn in the school.
- Undergarments should not be visible.
- Spaghetti straps, crop tops, halter tops, and net football shirts are not considered appropriate for school.
- Any other dress that distracts, disrupts, intimidates or provokes can be deemed inappropriate by administration.

DISCIPLINE OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION & 504 STUDENTS)

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

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 he or she has 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.

State Requirements Federal Requirements 34 CFR 300.530-537

For a discipline flow chart, see:

http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/IDEA2004/spr_meetings/disc_chart.doc

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Education Regulations, Conte Community School has an emergency management plan. For emergency purposes, it is extremely important that any changes in the 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' designated safe area. If a student or staff are out of the classroom for any reason, they should report to the nearest designated safe area. Please note that we will practice lock-down drills every quarter, at a minimum.

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 Conte school grounds. If needed, students will then relocate via the back path where they will walk to our designated evacuation site, Taconic High School.

"Hold in Passing" – Medical Emergency and Disruption
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 on with instruction. If a student or staff is out of the classroom for any reason, they should report to the room nearest to them.

"Shelter In Place"
Something is happening outside the building. Building doors and windows are secured and blinds or shades drawn. Hold students in the classroom and continue instruction unless told otherwise. No one enters or leaves the building until the Shelter in Place has been lifted.

Reunification Procedure
For safety purposes, parents/guardians are not allowed to go to Taconic High School for pick-up. Parents/Guardians will be reunified with their child(ren) at the Fire Station on West Housatonic Street. 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 fire station and released to the authorized individual at the Fire Station.

"Drop, Cover, Hold"
During a hurricane or earthquake students and staff are asked to drop to the floor, under or by a desk, and hold your hands over your head.

Emergency Forms
Students will be given emergency forms at the beginning of each school year. It is important that this form be completely filled out and returned promptly. Three adult emergency contacts should be listed other than the parent/guardians. These contacts should be easily accessible in the parent/guardians' absence. Babysitters, daycare providers, and neighbors should also be listed. If any change in the information occurs during the school year, please notify the Main Office in writing immediately.

CONTE TITLE I PROGRAM HOME SCHOOL COMPACT

The Conte Community School and the families of the students participating in the activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA) agree that this compact outlines how families, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and families will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards.

The Conte Community School will strive to:

- Provide high quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as follows:
    - Core programs that are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework
    - Through a formative assessment cycle process that provides both intervention and enrichment
- Hold parent/guardian conferences at least each November during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.
- Provide families with frequent reports on their children's progress. Specifically the school will provide report cards at least three times per year & progress reports when needed.
- Provide families reasonable access to staff. Specifically, please email, or phone, the staff to arrange a meeting.
- Provide families opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and to observe classroom activities as follows: parent/teacher organizations, School Council, Parent Liaison events, academic celebrations, "fun" nights, to name a few.
- Respect and value the uniqueness of each child and his/her family.

We, as families, will support our children's learning in the following ways:

- Monitoring attendance.
- Making sure that homework is completed.
- Helping my child to read each day.
- Volunteering in the school.
- Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my child's education.
- Promoting positive use of my child's extracurricular time.
- Staying informed about my child's education and communicating with the school promptly.
- Reading all notices from the school or the district.
- Serving, to the extent possible, on policy advisory groups such as the School Council and district Curriculum Advisory Board.
- Assisting my child in the implementation of Conte's School-Wide expectations.

As a student I will strive to:

- Show respect for myself, my school and other people around me.
- Work cooperatively with other students and staff.
- Do my homework every day.
- Read at least 30 minutes every day outside of school time.
- Accept responsibility for my own actions and resolve conflicts peacefully.
- Comply with our school expectations: Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be There, Be Ready.
- Seek assistance from my teacher(s), the School Principal, the School/Community Coordinator, or the School Adjustment Counselors when I have a problem with school work.

Accessibility

Conte Community School provides opportunities for the participation of all Title I parents/guardians, including parents/guardians with limited English proficiency, parents/guardians with disabilities, and parents/guardians of migratory students. Information and school reports are provided in a format and language that parents/guardians understand.

CONTE COMMUNITY SCHOOL
TEAM: TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Conte Community School has developed a written Title I parent/guardian involvement policy with input from Title I parents and guardians. Input was solicited during a School Council Meeting and electronically. The electronic communication gave families the opportunity to provide input if they were not able to attend the School Council Meeting. The policy was distributed to parents/guardians via paper format and is also available on the school website.

Involvement of Parents/Guardians in the Title I Program

To involve parents/guardians in the Title I program at Conte Community School, the following practices have been established:

- The school convenes an annual meeting to inform parents/guardians about Title I requirements and about the right of parents to be involved in the Title I program. This year the annual meeting will be held with the September School Council Meeting, as well as a May School Council Meeting..
- The school offers a flexible number of meetings for Title I parents/guardians. NAC Meetings and School Council Meetings are held on various Mondays throughout the school year.
- The school involves parents/guardians of Title I students in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's Title I programs and the Title I parent/guardian involvement policy through electronic communication, School Council, and school website.
- The school provides parents//guardians of Title I students with timely information about Title I programs.
- The school provides parents/guardians of Title I students with an explanation of the curriculum used at the school, the assessments used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet. Quarterly report cards and benchmark results are sent to families. Meet the Teacher Night is held in the fall and then in November parent/guardian conferences are held. Periodic family events are held throughout the year as well to help reinforce and enrich curriculum. Parents and guardians also have the opportunity to serve on the District Curriculum Advisory Committee which meets quarterly.
- If requested by parents /guardians of Title I students, the school provides opportunities for regular meetings that allow the parents to participate in decisions relating to the education of their children.

Home/School Compact

Conte Community School distributes to parents/guardians of Title I students a home/school compact. The compact, which has been jointly developed with parents/guardians, outlines how parents/guardians, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. It describes specific ways the school and families will partner to help children achieve the State's high academic standards. It addresses the following legally required items, as well as other items suggested by parents of Title I students.

- The school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction
- The ways parents/guardians will be responsible for supporting their children's learning
- The importance of ongoing communication between parents/guardians and teachers through, at a minimum, annual parent-teacher conferences; frequent reports on student progress; access to staff; opportunities for parents to volunteer and participate in their child's class; and opportunities to observe classroom activities

The compact draft was reviewed with the School Council.

Building Capacity for Involvement

Conte Community School engages Title I parents/guardians in meaningful interactions with the school. It supports a partnership among staff, parents/guardians, and the community to improve student academic achievement. To help reach these goals, the school has established the following practices.

- The school provides Title I parents/guardians with assistance in understanding the State's academic content standards, assessments, and how to monitor and improve the achievement of their children.
- The school provides Title I parents/guardians with materials and training to help them work with their children to improve their children's achievement.
- With the assistance of Title I parents/guardians, the school educates staff members about the value of parent contributions, and in how to work with parents as equal partners. All staff in the building, including paraprofessionals receive cultural competency training each school year.
- The school coordinates and integrates the Title I parent/guardian involvement program with other programs, and conducts other activities, such as parent resource centers, to encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
- The school distributes Information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities to Title I parents/guardians in a format and language that the parents/guardians understand.

Accessibility

Conte Community School provides opportunities for the participation of all Title I parents/guardians, including parents/guardians with limited English proficiency, parents/guardians with disabilities, and parents/guardians of migratory students. Information and school reports are provided in a format and language that parents/guardians understand.

ESSA & TITLE I "RIGHT TO KNOW" COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

The Pittsfield Public Schools, in accordance with Title I, hereby informs all parents/guardians that they have the right to know the following information regarding their child's classroom teacher(s):

- Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he/she teaches
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances
- The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

The Pittsfield Public Schools, in compliance with federal law, will provide you with the above information in a timely manner, if you request it in writing.

FAMILY CONFERENCES

Conte Community School will be holding family conferences in December. In order to make your conference a positive experience, we would like to suggest some things to talk with the teacher about.

You May Want To Ask The Teacher:
1. Does my child participate in classroom activities?
2. Does he/ she exhibit self-control in school?
3. How does my child get along with others?
4. Can my child handle the learning materials of his/ her grade?
5. Does he/ she seem to enjoy reading?
6. How does my child read orally?
7. Can my child express thoughts and ideas clearly?
8. How is his/ her written communication?
9. Does he/ she seem happy in school?
10. Is he/ she accepted by the other students?

You May Want To Tell The Teacher:
1. School activities your child talks about at home.
2. What responsibilities your child handles at home.
3. Anything that may affect your child's performance in school.
4. Your child's favorite activities at home.
5. The strengths and weaknesses of your child.

Sharing information with the teacher will enable us to provide the best learning environment for your child.

FIELD TRIPS

Throughout the year the students at each grade level attend various field trips to supplement the educational program. These trips are usually closely aligned with units of study in social studies, science or language arts. The trips provide an experience that is impossible to duplicate in the school. Financial support is available and parents/guardians should contact the Principal, designee, or classroom teacher. No student will ever be denied going on a trip due to financial difficulties.

Before students go on field trips, the classroom teacher will send a notice home to parents/guardians so you will know where they're going and why. The notice has a place for a parent/guardian to sign.

Students may not go on the trip unless it's signed!

If your child takes medication during the school day, arrangements for administration of the medication will be made in collaboration with the school nurse, teacher, and family. If you would like to chaperone a field trip, a CORI check form must be filled out in order to participate in the field trip.

We expect students to follow all school rules and expectations when on field trips.

FOOD SERVICES

Conte School will be participating in Community Eligibility Provision. Under Community Eligibility Provision only full meals can be considered as a no charge meal.

- Each student may receive one free breakfast and one free lunch per school day.
- Students who wish to buy one or two food items or an additional meal, must have funds at hand: either cash or a 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.

School lunch menus can be found on the school and district 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/nut allergies.

For safety reasons, we request that students who bring beverages to school should transport them in non-breakable containers. We do not permit students to drink soda and we encourage students to bring healthy snacks for their classroom snack time.

HEALTH SERVICES

The goal of the School Health Program of Pittsfield Public Schools is to promote, protect, maintain, and improve student health. The school nurse is a health advocate for all students and coordinates the health services of school, home and community. The school nurse implements state laws, local board policies and administrative procedures relative to health services in assigned schools. Students who feel ill or are injured in school should report to the nurse after obtaining permission from their teacher.

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 413-448-9660.

Allergies - Severe and Life Threatening Allergy Policy

The Pittsfield Public Schools is committed to providing a safe and healthy school environment for all students. Allergies can be a significant health problem or even life threatening for some students. We recognize that it is not possible to eliminate all possible exposures. The purpose of these guidelines is to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students in the Pittsfield Public Schools, provide all students, through necessary accommodations where required, the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities, and to educate the school community about severe or life-threatening allergies. The focus of this district-wide allergy policy is prevention, education, awareness, communication and emergency response.

Health Screening

All students are scheduled for vision, height, weight, and hearing screenings each year.

Illness

If your child feels ill in the morning, please keep him/her home. Although good attendance is desirable, 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.

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 of MMR
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.

HOUSELESSNESS 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 walking distance of your child's school. For help, call the Deputy Superintendent's office, which serves as the district's homeless liaison, at 413-499-9510.

HOMEWORK

Homework is any assigned activity done outside of school which relates to any phase of learning. It should be an enrichment, a refinement, and a reinforcement of learning activities. It should be a positive experience. It should not be used to teach something new, to fulfill a time requirement, or to punish.

Purposes of Homework:
1. To supplement and reinforce skills and work done in class.
2. To enrich the child's school experience.
3. To provide opportunities to use skills/knowledge learned in school in creative ways outside of school.
4. To promote individual responsibility.
5. To teach children how to budget time and organize materials.
6. To promote independent study and research skills.
7. To develop leisure interests in learning that will enhance later experiences in life.

Homework should be assigned depending on the grade level, the teacher's judgment of the academic needs, and the ability and the interests of the student.

MAKE-UP WORK GUIDELINES

The following are guidelines for making up work a student might have missed because he/she was absent from school. It is important that students make up for missed work so they can continue to learn. If a student is going to be absent for one or two days, the teacher will provide the make-up work upon return to school. If a student is going to be absent for three or more days, a family member can pick up the work in the Main Office. The family member should contact the Main Office at least 24 hours before they wish to pick up the work. The secretary in the Main Office will contact the teacher who will send the work to the office by the morning of the next day. Families may pick up work from the office at any time that day. Make-up work will be sent home for no more than one week at a time.

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 his/her 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 at conte.pittsfield.net.

LOST & FOUND

Please label all layered clothing. Lost and Found is most often kept in the front lobby, and sometimes in grade levels. When there appears to be a large collection of items, reminders will go home to search for missing items. Unclaimed items will be donated.

MANDATED REPORTING

Public school staff are mandated by law to report any signs of possible child abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities.

NON-PROMOTION

Non-Promotion to next grade level. Where movement to the next grade is concerned, the following shall apply:

Retention at a grade level will be an acceptable course of action when it has been determined by the principal that passing to the next grade level would be detrimental to the educational progress of a student. In such cases, an educational plan will be developed for the student by the principal in collaboration with the teachers who will be delivering the instructional program in the next year. The educational plan cannot be a simple repetition of the entire grade but will address the specific needs of the retained student. Students moving to the next grade level who have demonstrated academic deficiencies will be scheduled appropriately to address their development needs. Parents are contacted midyear if there is a concern over non-promotion. This mid-year mark is determined to create a support plan to be reviewed in May or June in order to recommend retention or confirm promotion. Parents are involved in each step of the process.

PARENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Newsletters

Conte Newsletters are sent home with students once a month as well as published on our website each month. These newsletters give information about class events and reports from principal and professional staff. Please encourage your family to read these newsletters so they can know what's going on in our school! Classroom teachers typically send home a weekly newsletter filled with all kinds of information as well.

Berkshire Health Systems: Partners in Education

Conte's business partner, Berkshire Health Systems supports our school in numerous ways. In the past, volunteers from Berkshire Health Systems have participated in Movie Nights and other special events like our community coat drive and holiday tag sale. Berkshire Health Systems participated in our Read Across America Day by sending volunteers to read in classrooms. They also have hosted Quarterly Citizenship Award Ceremonies for students in grades 3-5 and invited these students to tour the Simulation Center at the hospital In turn, students and teachers from Conte have contributed to this thriving partnership by creating holiday cards for patients as well as displays for the hallways and bulletin boards.

Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC)

The NAC is an organization that represents the parents/guardians and community members of the Conte school district. It was designated to do so by the Mayor and the City Council. The NAC replaces a PTO at Conte Community School. Studies show that children who have family members involved in their education do better in school. Thus, this is a wonderful reason why individuals should become involved in this organization. Parents, grandparents, guardians, community members, the Principal, the School Community Coordinator, teachers and staff members attend the meetings. Everyone is welcome! We value everyone's comments and opinions. The NAC is here for you and your children. ***NAC Meeting dates and times are TBA.*** lease note that if there is inclement weather, meetings may be held via Zoom. If so, a meeting link will be sent via Parent Square to families.

School Council

The Conte School Council consists of parent representatives, teacher representatives, and representatives from our business partnership (Berkshire Health Systems), and the Principal. The school council is a forum for site-based decision making. The team is responsible for developing the school improvement plan, overseeing the budget, advising the Principal on school operations and procedures, and engaging in strategic planning. The School Council will meet at the same time as NAC. ***School Council Meeting dates and times are TBA.*** Please note that if there is inclement weather, meetings may be held via Zoom. If so, a meeting link will be sent via Parent Square to families.

PARTIES

Celebrations are special times in all our lives and we do celebrate at our school throughout the year. With this in mind, individual birthday parties are not permitted in classrooms. Birthdays are celebrated once a month in the cafeteria during lunches. The cafeteria provides cake for all students and the entire grade sings "Happy Birthday." When planning birthday celebrations outside of school, please be sensitive to the fact that most young children are easily hurt if left out of such events. Therefore, invitations are not to be distributed in school unless all class members are included. Also, it is a district policy that we cannot provide addresses and/or phone numbers of students. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding when dealing with this situation.

PEER MEDIATION

Have a conflict? Want to work it out? Try mediation. Mediation is voluntary, confidential, and is staffed by professional mediators who are trained to listen and help students come up with their own solutions to their problems. See the Dean of Students to schedule a mediation.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Student safety and learning are very important to us. There are some things that we believe may interfere with safety and learning, so the following items should not be brought to school:

- Knives (including Swiss Army style pocket knives), toy guns, "popper" explosives, laser pointers will result in suspension.
- CD players, beepers, cell phones, Ipods, MP3 players
- Expensive toys, video games, trading cards

The school cannot be responsible if a favorite personal property is lost, damaged or stolen while at school or on the school bus. So, please leave them home!

PHOTOGRAPHS

We take lots of pictures of exciting events at Conte. These pictures are often posted on our website for you to share with friends and family. There are also times when the local newspaper or the district newspaper visits to write an article on a special event at Conte.

Each family receives a district and building photograph release **OPT OUT** form. Returning this form will state that you do not want your child's photograph published. Please be advised that student names are not posted with pictures on the web site.

RECESS

All students should be properly clothed for daily outside play. Closed toe shoes are best for running on the playground. When snow covers the ground, students should be prepared with 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 play in the snow.***

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.

REPORT CARDS

Conte has standards based report cards for the 2026-2027 school year. Students will receive report cards three times a year (trimester).

Kindergarten - Grade 4
November 24, 2026
March 11, 2027
June 17, 2027

RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS & STAFF RESTRAINT TRAINING

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has specific regulations concerning the use of physical restraint of students in public schools (603 C.M.R. 46.00). These regulations apply to all students whether in regular education or special education. Pursuant to the regulations, Pittsfield Public Schools personnel will use physical restraint with two goals in mind, and only after other less intrusive methods have been attempted or considered:

- To protect a student or member of the school community from imminent, serious physical harm
- To prevent or minimize any harm to the student when a restraint is deemed necessary

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

The Pittsfield Public School Committee is committed to safeguarding the right of students to an educational environment that is free from all forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is illegal and will not be tolerated. Complaints will be investigated promptly and corrective action will be taken where appropriate.

SPECIAL SERVICES

504 PLANS
A 504 Plan is written when a child has an impairment which "substantially limits" one or more of the child's major life activities. A school team determines if the child meets the eligibility criteria in accordance with the definition of a disability under Federal Statute 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 is NOT an aspect of "special education".

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
Conte offers an education program to meet the needs of students who are English Language Learners in Kindergarten through Grade 4.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PLANS (IEP)
An IEP is an individual educational plan tailored for each child's unique difficulties. An IEP is written in order to comply with the state requirements listed in Public Law 94-142 for each child who meets certain criteria for special education services. There are two (2) types of IEPs. The first is the "initial" IEP, which is formulated and written by the team upon entrance to a special education program. The second type of IEP is the "annual review". This IEP is formulated after the resource teacher has worked with a student and becomes more familiar with his/her strengths, weaknesses and needs.

Related services include Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Teacher of the Deaf.

RESOURCE SERVICES
The resource teacher provides services to special needs students as specified in their Individual Educational Plans. The nature and extent of the services provided varies from assistance within the regular classroom in an inclusion model, to a pull out arrangement supplementing regular classroom instruction.

INTERVENTION SERVICES
Intervention staff provide services to those children determined to be "at risk" for academic or social/emotional difficulties or those children who could benefit from short-term intervention. The type and length of remedial service depends entirely upon the grade level and the difficulty that the child is encountering.

TRANSLATION SERVICES
We have interpreters available to help us improve the communication between home and school.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES
A school psychologist and a school adjustment counselor provide services to the school on a regular weekly basis. Services from the occupational therapist, physical therapist, and speech & language pathologist are provided as specified by a child's 504 Plan or IEP.

BUILDING ASSISTANCE MEETING (BAM)
A Building Assistance Meeting (BAM) is a preventive and proactive problem solving system designed to formulate targeted interventions to deal with student's difficulties in order to increase success in school. A teacher or parent, who has concerns regarding a student, presents them to the team to explore various strategies and options to develop a measurable course of action. Many times a collaboration of people can offer more solutions than one or two people. The Building Assistance Meeting is made up of several people, including the principal, teachers, support staff, school adjustment counselor, and school psychologist. Our office will contact you with a date and time to schedule a BAM.

Contact Information for these services is as follows:

Special Education Director
413-499-9515

English Language Learners Coordinator
413-499-6304

RIGHTS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Federal law guarantees every student the right to a free and appropriate public education regardless of handicap or disability. State regulations (603 CMR 28.00) further guarantee the right to an education in the "least restrictive environment," in typical settings with students without disabilities.

Every Pittsfield public school offers Resource/Learning Center services. These programs provide specialized instruction for eligible students in the area of documented disability.

The PPS also offers services in a substantially separate setting for students with developmental delays, intellectual impairments, autism, and behavioral disorders. These programs provide specialized instruction in a structured and predictable learning environment.

If you believe that your child is having difficulty making progress in a regular classroom due to a suspected disability, you have the right to seek through the Special Education Administrator, an evaluation of your child to determine if she or he does have a disability and is eligible for special education services. For more information contact Instruction & Accountability Coordinator, Gillian Voight, at 413-448-9660.

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.

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.

English Language Learner (ELL) 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 ELL program.

For information regarding the ELL program, entrance and exiting procedures, and the rights of families of English Language Learner students, please call the ELL Coordinator at 413-499-6304.

Testing

Parents will be notified before the administration of all standardized tests. The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests are mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and portions are given in grades 3 and 4 at the elementary level. These tests are administered in the areas of Language Arts, Math and Science & Technology. The results of these tests indicate how well a student has mastered the basic skills at the grade level tested in relation to other students throughout the state.

STUDENT RECORDS & PRIVACY

Except for those authorized by federal or state law, no individuals or organizations but the parent, student, and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent.

ACCESS OF NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS TO STUDENT INFORMATION

Massachusetts regulations (603 C.M.R. 23.07[5]) make a non-custodial parent eligible to obtain access to her/his student's records unless the school or district have been given documentation that (1) the non- custodial parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the student or the custodial parent, (2) the non-custodial parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation, or (3) the non-custodial parent's access to the student or the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the order or any subsequent court order specifically allows access to student record information.

TECHNOLOGY / COMPUTER USE

All students at Conte Community School have opportunities to use technology during the instructional day. Students are expected to use technology with care and respect at all times. Students are only to use the technology at Conte for the purpose that the teacher or principal dictates.

VACATIONS

We strongly urge parents to plan vacations that don't conflict with the school calendar whenever possible. No matter what make-up work is completed, we cannot fully duplicate the classroom learning experience that is lost by going on vacations of a week or more. Keep in mind that some students have a very difficult time catching up with their classes when they return from such vacations. If you must take your children out of school for an extended vacation when school is in session, please make the office and classroom teacher aware. Work will be sent home during vacation and will need to be made up upon the student's return. After returning to school, check with your child's teachers to see if any of the children is experiencing difficulties.

VISITOR POLICY

We welcome visitors 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.

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 he/she deems necessary in order to secure the safety of students and district personnel. The principal or his/her 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 does not follow School Committee policy by any visitor, will result in the visitor being asked to leave the school premises immediately and he and she 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 his/her 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 his/her 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.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Anyone who wishes to volunteer time to work with our students and is likely to have access to students who, at times, may be unsupervised, either on school premises or while participating or assisting in school-sponsored programs or activities, must register with the district for a Criminal Offender Records Information (CORI) check before engaging in volunteer activities. The opportunity to volunteer may be denied if the check reports evidence of criminal conduct deemed by the Superintendent or designee to create a credible risk to students, staff, or the public. M.G.L.c. 71, §38R and PER-10A.

In order to initiate a C.O.R.I check, fill out the required paperwork in the school office or Human Resources Office of the School Administration Center (269 First Street, 499-9505), bringing a driver's license or other valid photo ID with you. It can take one to three weeks for the process to be completed. Requested schools are informed of approvals.

WELLNESS POLICY

The Pittsfield Public School district is committed to affording students and staff with school environments that promote and protect children's health, well being, and ability to learn by supporting good nutrition, physical activity, and overall wellness. For more information or greater detail, please refer to the complete Wellness Policy (STU-79) at www.pittsfield.net (Policy).

The school district will follow the Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools (105 CMR 225.000) as well as Pittsfield Board of Health and the Pittsfield Public Schools' Severe and Life-Threatening Allergies policies to address all foods and beverages sold/provided to students, including those available outside of school meal programs on school grounds.

School lunch menus and prices as well as suggestions for healthy snacks and fundraisers are available at www.pittsfield.net.

The Pittsfield Food Service department has assisted the schools and parents with birthday celebrations. Each elementary school celebrates "Birthday Friday" once per month with a special treat provided by the food service department for all students with a school lunch. Pittsfield Public Schools shall limit celebrations that involve food to no more than one per class per month. Pittsfield Public School employees and volunteers shall not use foods or beverages as rewards in the classroom for academic performance or good behavior.