

**PYMATUNING VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL  
2023-2024 STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**PREFACE**

This booklet is an instructive guide for students. In the following pages you will find rules, advice, and suggestions which will be beneficial this school year. They are the result of the philosophy, aims, and curriculum of our school. Not all situations, rules, and expectations can be covered in the handbook format. If there are questions, the student should ask for direction or advice from a staff member.

Refer to your handbook frequently to refresh your memory and thereby help yourself to a fuller realization of school life at its best.

The spirit of the Pymatuning Valley High School is to be found within the hearts and minds of its pupils. You will receive from the school in proportion to what you give in honest, serious effort, and obedience to its rules and regulations, and loyalty to its purpose.

**GREETINGS FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

The high school staff welcomes all students to the current school year. We are delighted to have you back and we are looking forward to a productive and successful school year with you. We firmly believe that education can be enjoyable and rewarding if teachers and students work together harmoniously.

We believe we have prepared a fine curriculum and an extensive extra-curricular program that is designed to benefit you not only for the present but for the years ahead of you.

We, at Pymatuning Valley High School, stand ready to assist you and your parents with your educational concerns at any time.

**EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD OR OLDER**

All rules, regulations, and policies apply to eighteen-year-old and older students in the same manner as they do all students. All students must have notes or telephone calls from parent/guardian excusing their absence from school, granting permission to leave school, or to change a schedule. 18 year-old students are considered to be adults. Adult students may request to be considered as educationally independent (responsible for all of their actions). Forms are available in the Attendance Office.

**VISITATION**

All visitors must report to the Office as soon as they enter the building. Visitors must receive a visitor's name tag and sign in and out.

**FOOD SERVICES**

During the first week, we will send a notice regarding breakfast, lunch, and milk costs, as well as free/reduced meal applications. Free/reduced applications will be processed as soon as possible and notification of eligibility will be sent home. If you qualified for free or reduced meals last year then it will still apply for the first two weeks of the new school year.

Prepayments are welcomed and will be placed in your individual account for use for breakfast, lunch or milk. Checks are preferred whenever possible.

Charges are for emergencies only and are limited to five. All charges should be paid as soon as possible. They **MUST** be paid by the end of the year. If you abuse the privilege you will no longer be permitted to charge. All charges must be paid by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**LOCKERS**

Each student is assigned a locker with a combination lock. Students are reminded not to give this locker combination away to other students as their privacy and possessions will be at stake. Lockers are not to be defaced by students. Doing so may result in the student being fined an amount necessary to replace the locker to its proper state. Lockers are the property of the school district and may be inspected at any time when the health and/or safety of the school are at stake.

**GYM LOCKERS**

Gym lockers are provided as a convenience for the storage of clothing and valuables during gym class. Students wishing to use the lockers are responsible for providing their own locks and may only use them temporarily during gym class or sports. Items needing to be stored for an extended period of time must be stored in hallway lockers. If gym lockers become unavailable due to locks being left on them, the school reserves the right to cut the lock, thus making the locker available to students who need to use it during gym class. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

**VALUABLES**

You are advised not to bring valuables and large sums of money to school because of the possibilities of theft, extortion, or loss. Students engaged in fundraising activities or having an emergency need are to contact the office for proper disposition of large sums of money. The school cannot be responsible for the loss of any valuables or money which you carry with you or leave in your lockers or

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in classrooms. Items belonging to the school or school supporting groups, if lost, are the student's responsibility and must be paid for at an appropriate value. It is not the school's responsibility to search and locate missing or stolen items. Please do not leave items to charge in a non-secure location.

**RESTROOMS**

Restrooms and stalls are provided for student use. However, the restrooms are solely intended for use of the toilets or sink if needed. The restroom is not an area for students to congregate. Stalls are provided for privacy. Under no circumstance should more than one student be in a stall together (this is a violation of an unauthorized area).

**PUBLICATION OF SCHOOL EVENTS**

Any publication or other use of pictures, videos and accounts of school events without the express written consent of the Pymatuning Valley Local Schools is prohibited. Students that publish items that depict activities or events that take place on school grounds may be subject to a demand for removal and/or disciplinary action.

**BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE (B.Y.O.D) POLICY**

In an effort to embrace the positive communication, educational benefits, and technological advantages of mobile devices, Pymatuning Valley High School has established a Bring Your Own Device (B.Y.O.D.) policy for laptops, tablets, cellular phones, electronic readers, and other devices with educational features. It should be noted that gaming systems are not covered by this policy and should not be used during school hours.

Students may use their mobile devices in a non-disruptive manner before school, after school, during lunch, and in-between classes only. All communicative devices should be set to vibrate or silent during these times. Devices are explicitly prohibited from being on or out in classrooms, except for when permitted to be used by teachers for educationally beneficial purposes only. This restriction also applies to when a student is on a pass to leave a class, during classroom presentations in other rooms, or when under the supervision of a teacher to whom the student is not normally assigned. Only the supervising teacher may grant use for educational purposes, and students are not to disrupt class by debating the decision of the teacher. Devices must be off and away while in restrooms or locker rooms.

Students are strictly prohibited from using their devices to record, transmit or post photos or video of a person or persons on campus. Nor can any

images or video recorded at school be transmitted or posted at any time without the express permission of the Principal.

Students may not make or take phone calls. This is not an educational benefit. Students needing to call someone should get permission to use the office phone.

Each student is solely responsible for care and security of their own device. The device must be in the owner's possession or stored in secured and locked storage (such as your locker, vehicle, or gym locker). The school is not responsible for the security of the device in any manner.

Students may only play music or sound from their device through headphones, which is limited exclusively to before or after school in a manner/volume that does not create annoyance or disruption.

Students using the Internet on personal devices are still subject to the PVLS Internet User Agreement and all students should be aware that all Internet usage may be recorded and their use of the Wi-Fi (including web browsing and downloads) may be recovered by NEOMIN.

If a staff member asks a student to power off their device and put it away, the student must comply with the request immediately.

Finally, the school reserves the right to inspect a student's personal device if there is reason to believe that the student has violated any School Board policies, administrative procedures, school rules or has engaged in other misconduct while using their personal device.

Violations of any Pymatuning Valley Local School Board policies, administrative procedures or school rules involving a student's personally owned device may result in the loss of the privilege to use a device in school, phone confiscation with a required parental retrieval, and/or discipline per the Student Code of Conduct.

**TELEPHONES**

All office and classroom telephones are to be used only in case of sickness and emergencies (e.g. cancellation of an extra-curricular activity). Permission must be granted by a staff member.

**PLAGIARISM**

Students are responsible for completing their own work. Only then will teachers be able to gauge student learning and be able to provide support when needed. Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and teachers will discipline students accordingly.

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**MEDICATION (Prescription AND Over-the-counter)**

Medications can only be given at school with the completion of the appropriate medication paperwork available in the office, which requires both parent AND physician signature. Once the appropriate forms have been filled out, the medicine must be transported to/from the school by a parent/guardian only (NOT the student), and will be kept in the office in a safe place. The medication will be administered to the student in the safety of the office. It should be noted that cough drops, aspirin, Tylenol, cough syrup, antacids, and ointments for poison ivy, etc., are all considered medicine by the Physician's Desk Reference Book and will be treated as such.

**DRUG ABUSE-GUIDING STATEMENT**

The Pymatuning Valley School District recognizes the problem of drug abuse as a matter of serious concern and reaffirms its commitment to cooperate with all responsible youth serving agencies to combat the abuse of drugs by the student population.

The school will endeavor in its instructional program to acquaint and teach students the proper use and what misuse and abuse of drugs constitutes. The high school administration recognizes the need for this information to be conveyed to the student body through various means, including the required health and science curriculum

In cases where students are allegedly using illegal drugs, the school may notify parents of the suspected problem and do what it can to assist the student in the rehabilitation process. Staff members have a responsibility to keep school officials alerted to suspected student experimentation in drugs or abuse of drugs. The school's main emphasis will be rehabilitation, not punishment for drug offenders.

**GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING SUSPECTED DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE OR ABUSE**

**Possession/distribution/sale of drugs**

1. In cases of student involvement in the possession or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs, look-alike drugs, synthetic drugs or misuse of legal over-the-counter drugs the student will be disciplined and the parents informed under normal disciplinary procedures.
2. The above may be reported to the local law enforcement agency for possible legal action where applicable. A repeated offense for possession or distribution will result in a suspension of the student with a recommendation for expulsion.

**Substance Abuse Assessment as Reduction of Suspension**

When a student is suspended for a violation of substance abuse policies, the district may offer the student a suspension reduction if the student agrees to attend a substance abuse assessment at an agency accredited by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. The purpose of the assessment is to allow trained professionals in the field of substance abuse an opportunity to alert the family if they determine the student shows the symptoms of dependency or has a need for counseling.

**GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION**

**School Closing or Delayed Starting Time**

Extreme, adverse weather conditions including heavy snow, drifting, ice, extremely cold temperatures, severe winds, extremely heavy fog or any combinations of these conditions which would endanger the safety of the students riding buses or walking to school, could bring about either the closing of school or delayed starting, whichever is deemed necessary. When severe weather conditions exist, an automated phone call will be made to the number the school has on file for making primary contact about a student. If you do not receive a call and believe you are the primary contact, please contact our attendance secretary.

**ATTENDANCE**

Ohio law requires students to be in attendance each day that school is in session. Therefore, it is the intention of the Pymatuning Valley Local Schools to hold students accountable for their attendance. The Board of Education also believes that good attendance is a vital part of academic success in the high school setting. To this end, it has established a policy whereby any student or parent of a student who is **Habitually Truant** or **Excessively Absent** may:

- Be cited to Juvenile Court;
- Be referred to Children's Services;
- Be referred to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles and have their driver's license suspended or revoked (students only).

**Habitually Truant** is defined as:

- 30 or more consecutive school hours absent without legitimate excuse;
- 42 or more school hours absent without legitimate excuse in any calendar month;
- 72 or more school hours absent without legitimate excuse in a school year;

**Excessively Absent** is defined as:

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- 38 or more hours in absent with or without legitimate excuse in any calendar month;
- 65 or more hours in absent with or without legitimate excuse in any school year;

The following excused absences ~~would~~ will contribute to a student's **Excessively Absent** total. In order to be excused, a note signed by a parent or doctor must be sent to the attendance officer or a phone call from home must be made to the school.

1. Student Illness\*
2. Illness in the immediate family\*
3. Death in the immediate family (administrative decision for outside the immediate family)
4. Emergency at home (validity determined by the principal/designee)
5. Seasonal farm work which must be performed for the family\*
6. Medical appointment
7. Driver's license exam
8. Extended vacation\*
- 9. Religious reasons
10. College Visit\*
11. Any other reason for not attending must be approved by the principal or superintendent

*\*It should be noted that once a student has been declared Excessively Absent, medical documentation will be required for a student to be excused for a Student Illness or Illness in the Immediate Family. They will also no longer be excused for Seasonal Farm Work, Extended Vacations, or College Visits. Such student absences will be deemed unexcused.*

Prior to any parent/student being cited to Juvenile Court or referred to Children's Services for attendance, a mandatory attendance intervention meeting must be held at the school with the parent(s)/guardian(s). The district will make three attempts to contact the parent to attend the meeting. If the parent does not attend, intervention will proceed without parental involvement. If the student fails to comply with the intervention plan, the student/parent may be cited to Juvenile Court or referred to Children's Services.

#### **Absence Procedures and Rules**

1. When returning to school after being absent, students are required to present to the attendance office a note dated and signed by the parent or

guardian stating the dates and reason of absence. A phone call from parents would also suffice. The school is required by law to determine if an absence is excused or unexcused. If a note or phone call is not produced within the day the student returns, the absence will be considered unexcused and credit will not be given for makeup work.

2. Students who are absent from school or leave school early without returning are not allowed to be on school grounds or attend any school events. This would include events held that night. Exceptions will be made for an official doctor's visit or prior-approved excused absence.
3. All students leaving the building for any reason must have parental permission and sign out in the attendance office. This also applies to students 18 years or older, unless they have approved paperwork indicating that they are an adult-status student.
4. In order to participate in any athletic or extracurricular activity the student must be in school by 10:35 AM. Exceptions would be made for an official doctor's visit with a signed, dated note from the doctor's office and approval by the principal or a prior-approved excused absence.

#### **TARDY TO SCHOOL**

Students are counted tardy to school if they are not in their classroom by **7:35 AM**. Students who are late to school and drive, may have their privilege revoked and be required to ride the bus to school.

- 4-7 tardy offenses – SMR referral
- 8-9 tardy offenses – Saturday School
- 10+ tardy offenses – Office referral

#### **TARDY TO CLASS**

Students who are tardy to class will be assigned:

- 4-7 tardy offenses – SMR referral
- 8-9 tardy offenses – Saturday School
- 10+ tardy offenses – Office referral

#### **SATURDAY SCHOOL**

Saturday School program hours are from 8:30 - 12:00 in the high school.

The following are the guidelines for behavior:

1. Students are required to be on time.
2. Students are to bring study materials or acceptable leisure reading materials.
3. Students are not permitted to communicate with other students, eat, or sleep.

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4. Students are required to be cooperative with the instructor at all times.

Students who do not comply with the rules will be removed from the program and be given an out-of-school suspension. Students are assigned a Saturday School for minor offenses of the conduct code. Students who are assigned more than five (5) Saturday Schools within a year will be deemed habitually incorrigible and may be assigned out-of-school suspensions, in lieu of further Saturday School assignments.

Once a Saturday School is assigned it **MUST** be served on that date or a medical excuse must be provided giving reasons why the student was unable to attend. Saturday Schools will not be rescheduled for any other reasons. Students who fail to serve the Saturday School as assigned may be suspended for 3 days.

Students cannot be assigned a second Saturday School before the first has been served. Two Saturday School offenses within one session will cause the second offense to result in a three (3) day out-of-school suspension and the first Saturday School will still need to be served. Students who are suspended from school at the time of a scheduled Saturday School must still serve the Saturday School.

If school is cancelled on Friday, Saturday School will also be closed and students will be rescheduled for the next available date.

### **COLLEGE VISITATION**

Students will be permitted a maximum of three College Visits per school year. Upon return the student must produce a signed and dated note or letter from that college validating the visit. There will be no college visitations permitted during End of Course Exams. Students who have been deemed excessively absent may not be excused from school for a college visitation.

### **HUNTING POLICY**

It is possible for a student to be excused from school for **ONE** day for reason of hunting provided that prior permission is granted by the high school principal and assignments are turned in on the day the student returns to school.

Students may be excused for more than one day by following the guidelines set forth in the family vacation policy. To qualify under this policy, students must be hunting with family members out of state and would require the student to stay overnight away from home. Students who have been deemed excessively absent may not be excused from school for hunting.

### **ACCEPTABLE DRESS AND GROOMING**

The Board of Education believes that responsibility of proper attire and good grooming should rest primarily with the home. However, school authorities are required to reserve the right to intercede in cases where the health, welfare, and safety of students and others are affected.

Proper attire and good grooming will help to insure a desirable learning atmosphere and help students practice proper habits for the workplace. Clothing and hair styles that are distracting or hazardous to health and safety interfere with the educational process. Hair should be clean. Clothing must be clean and orderly, and students must wear appropriate footwear (bedroom slippers are not permitted) throughout the day.

The following attire would be examples of dress **unfit** (including but not limited to) for school: T-shirts of the undershirt style, sleepwear, bathing suits, excessively unbuttoned shirts and blouses, muscle shirts, baggy pants, halter tops, off the shoulder tops, spaghetti straps, bare midriff (a good shirt or blouse length guideline would be if the shirt or blouse can be tucked in), see-through clothing and sunglasses (unless prescribed by a physician). No head-gear of any kind (for males or females) will be permitted in the school or in the classroom. Outdoor coats, jackets, and hats will be stored in assigned lockers. Clothing advertising any alcohol or tobacco products or making reference to any illegal products will not be permitted. Shorts may be worn throughout the school year. All shorts, skirts, and dresses must be at a minimum of fingertip length with relaxed shoulders and arms.

Students should understand that these are minimum guidelines for both academic and extracurricular activities, and that hair styles and clothing may have to be more strictly regulated when the health or safety of student is endangered. Examples would be when working on or near machinery, in a laboratory, working in a food preparation class, or extracurricular activities such as some sports. Any type of attire which attracts undue attention to the student is not acceptable (To be determined by the administration).

Students in violation of these guidelines may face disciplinary action and may be denied admission to classes until they can meet this responsibility.

### **RULES FOR SMR**

1. A Student Management Room (SMR) will be used throughout the day. Students sent to SMR will receive working lunches.
2. Students in SMR may not do any of the following:
  - a. Communicate with others in any form
  - b. Leave the assigned seat without permission from the supervisor
  - c. Leave the room without permission from the supervisor

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- d. Sleep
- 3. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of his or her own working lunches. Forgetting is not acceptable.
- 4. Repeated SMR Referrals will result in the following:
  - 5 SMR Referrals within one quarter – Saturday School
  - 8 SMR Referrals within one quarter – Saturday School
  - 12 SMR Referrals within one quarter – 3 Day Out-of-School Suspension
- 5. A missed/refused working lunch will result in a Saturday School.

**LOST AND DAMAGED TEXTBOOKS/CHROMEBOOKS**

All textbooks/Chromebooks are owned by the Board of Education and are assigned to the students for their use. The Board is responsible for every book and computer, which it purchases and in turn the student is responsible for when issued to them. Lost books/computers will be paid for by the students. The school may assess reasonable damage charges against the book. Report cards and high school diplomas will be held until fees are paid.

**DRIVING TO SCHOOL/RIDING WITH STUDENT DRIVERS**

It is the policy of the school to provide parking areas for students' licensed and insured motor vehicles. However, any student who chooses to utilize said parking areas will be required to permit the interior of the vehicle they own, operate, or have control of to be inspected.

All students who drive may be asked to register their vehicle with the principal or his designee. This is done for the safety and security of all concerned.

Students who fail to comply with the principal's request will be subject to discipline in accordance with this handbook.

Students will be permitted to drive to and from school as long as the following rules and regulation are not abused:

- 1. No vehicle is to be moved until the student's daily schedule is completed.
- 2. No one is to enter the automobile during school hours unless they have obtained permission from the office.
- 3. Reckless operation of vehicles near or on the school grounds will not be tolerated.
- 4. Students who leave school early in cars without proper authorization may lose driving privileges. Students who are found to be habitually tardy may also have their driving privileges revoked.

**ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible to participate in an athletic extracurricular activity, the student must meet the OHSAA guidelines for eligibility and must have a minimum of a 2.00 GPA during each grading period immediately preceding the period of athletic participation.

**MAKE-UP WORK**

The teachers are required to offer sufficient time to make up work missed for an **excused** absence. All makeup work is the responsibility of the student. Work must be made up by the student in the same number of school days as you have been absent. For example, if you have been out for three days, you will have three school days to make up the work missed, starting the day of your return. If you are present the day before an announced test is to take place and absent the day of the test, the test is to be made up on the day you return. Makeup work must be given to students with unexcused absences, but no credit will be awarded.

**WORK PERMITS**

Working permit applications are available in the office. Every person, in school or out, less than eighteen years of age must have a working permit for any regular job, either part time or full time. Working permit cards must be filled out as follows: Application Card - to be filled in and signed by parent, employer, and physician, then returned to the school to be completed by the school attendance officer.

**HONOR AND MERIT ROLLS**

A student must obtain a 3.5 to 4.0 grade point average to be on the honor roll and a 3.0 to 3.49 grade point average to be on the merit roll. Any students with a grade lower than a "C" will not earn honor or merit roll status.

**PRINCIPAL'S ROLL**

It is important to reward student achievement as a means of encouraging further accomplishment. As such, it has become tradition for the Principal and Academic Boosters to host an event each year rewarding the members of the Principal's Roll. In order to be eligible to attend, students must meet the following criteria:

- 1) Honor Roll for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> grading periods.
- 2) 95% Attendance Rate
- 3) Clean Discipline (No Saturday Schools or Suspensions)

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**GRADING**

In the Pymatuning Valley Local Schools, the pupils in grades 9-12 are graded by the following letter system:

A- Superior or excellent	100-93 %
B- Good or excellent	92-85 %
C- Fair or average	84-74 %
D- Poor but passing	73-65 %
F- Failing work	0-64 %

**GRADE AVERAGING AND CREDITS**

A minimum of 5 quality points must be earned in order to pass a course for the year. The following scale applies to individual nine weeks and final exams:

9 Week and Exam Quality Points	Quality Points for First Semester	Quality Point for Final Grades
A = 4	A = 18-20	A = 35-40
B = 3	B = 13-17	B = 25-34
C = 2	C = 8-12	C = 15-24
D = 1	D = 3-7	D = 5-14
F = 0	F = 0-2	F = 0-4

Semester averages will be calculated by doubling the quality points for the quarter and adding the quality points for the exam. Quarter grades are worth 40% and the exam is worth 20% of the semester average. In order for a student to get credit they may not fail two out of three grades in the last semester of the course (FF Rule). This is regardless of the number of quality points earned.

In addition, all students must complete all requirements of a class as outlined by individual teachers. Regardless of the quality points earned, credits will not be issued until all basic requirements of the course are met. The classroom teacher and high school principal will make a final decision on matters of course completion.

**DROPPING COURSES**

When students indicate a desire to participate in a class, they accept this not only as a challenge to further their academic knowledge, but also to take pride

in the fact that they wish to reach another level in their learning. It is understood that there are cases where students sincerely want to succeed in a course, but despite their best efforts, the course simply proves overwhelmingly difficult. In these situations, it is in the best interest of the student to move to a lower level course in that subject.

However, some students who are capable of success in more challenging coursework choose to withdraw from such a course in order to protect their grade point average or to have a less difficult year academically. This is NOT the Laker Way.

Therefore, in certain situations laid out below, a WD code will appear on student transcripts if they choose to withdraw from a course. This WD code will not in any way affect the GPA of a student or their class rank. However, the WD code will be visible on the transcripts of a student for anyone who may need to review the transcript as an indicator of student success and effort.

Below is the timeline and criteria for dropping courses and the codes that will be seen on the transcript:

- If a student drops any AP, Dual Credit, or Honors course prior to the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> day, no notations will be made on their transcript.
- If a student drops any AP, Dual Credit, or Honors course between the 6<sup>th</sup> day of school through the 5<sup>th</sup> day after interim reports go home, a WD code will appear on their transcript.
- If a student drops an elective course at any time prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> day after interim reports go home and replaces it with another elective, no notations will be made on their transcript.
- If a student drops an elective course at any time prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> day after interim reports go home and replaces it with only a study hall, a WD code will appear on their transcript.
- Any student who drops any course after the final day for scheduling changes (the 5<sup>th</sup> day after the first interim report for the course) will receive a Withdrawal Failure on their transcript, which will count as an F in terms of GPA calculation.

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

- **English Language Arts – 4 Credits**
- **Social Studies – 3 Credits** (Must include one credit American History, one credit American Government)

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- **Science – 3 Credits** (Must include one credit Physical Science, one credit Biology)
- **Mathematics – 4 credits** (Must include one credit of Algebra II or its equivalent)
- **Health and Physical Education – 1 Credit**
- **Electives – 5 Credits**
- **Business, Fine Arts or Foreign Language – 1 Credit**
- **Total – 21 Credits & must pass all state-required examinations.**

These are local graduation requirements for class credit only. The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) requires that High School Students also complete a variety of other measures that are state-wide requirements related to assessments and pathways/seals. More information can be found on these options at the ODE website: <http://education.ohio.gov>

**GRADUATION CEREMONIES**

*The graduation ceremony is considered a monumental event in a student's life and is to be treated as a formal occasion. Students dress should be business casual or business. Sandals, boots, tennis shoes, blue jeans and shorts are not appropriate attire for the ceremony. Students MAY be denied the privilege of marching in the commencement ceremony for inappropriate behavior and/or dress. Decorating of caps must be appropriate, non-disruptive, and not contain any profanity, drug innuendo, and/or offensive statements.*

*The State of Ohio requires students to meet the Pymatuning Valley Local Board of Education requirements and multiple state-level pathways/options to receive a high school diploma. Students who do not meet the Pymatuning Valley Local Board of Education requirements ARE NOT permitted to participate in the commencement ceremony. Students who meet the Pymatuning Valley Local Board of Education requirements but fail to meet the State of Ohio requirements are permitted to participate in commencement ceremonies but WILL NOT receive a diploma until they pass the Ohio Graduation tests.*

**STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

These student rules and consequences are general in nature. The administration reserves the right to use its discretion in enforcing the rules and the consequences. The administration will use its flexibility in this Code of Conduct to make genuine attempts at behavior modification. It should be noted that any actions that are deemed to have a nexus to the school and/or its environment fall under the

jurisdiction of this Code of Conduct.

**Rule 1: Disruption in School:** A student will not, by use of violence, force, coercion, threat, harassment, insubordination or repeated acts of misbehavior cause disruption or obstruction to the educational process or any investigation in the school, including all curricular and extracurricular activities. Order and respect will be shown at the appropriate times, in order for learning to occur. It should be noted that refusing to participate in class is a disruptive act. Any student inciting mass chaos or panic will be suspended and cited to the Ashtabula County Sheriff's Department.

**Rule 2: Destruction of School or Private Property:** A student will not cause or attempt to cause willful destruction or defacement of school or private property. This includes deleting computer files or knowingly introducing a computer virus. Students may be held financially responsible for damages at the discretion of the Principal.

**Rule 3: Fighting, Unauthorized Touching, and/or Threat:** A student will not physically attack, touch, or threaten any person, including themselves.

**Rule 4: Dangerous Weapons, Instruments, Fireworks, or Objects:** A student will not possess any objects which are considered dangerous or threatening (Administrative Discretion) See Dangerous Weapons Section. Students may also not use otherwise permissible objects as a weapon.

**Rule 5: Narcotics, Alcoholic Beverages, and Drugs:** A student will not possess, use, transmit, show evidence of consumption, or conceal any alcoholic beverage, dangerous drug, drug paraphernalia, narcotic or any substance that is classified as a look-alike drug or that causes physical or mental change.

**Rule 6: Smoking/Tobacco/Vaping:** Students shall not use, transmit, conceal, or be in possession of tobacco or any tobacco product look-alikes at school or any school function. Students will not be permitted to use tobacco in school buildings, on school grounds, or at any school-related activity. Examples of tobacco product look-alikes include, but are not limited to, electronic cigarettes/vapes, candy cigarettes, beef jerky or mint cans, etc.

**~~ALL STUDENTS UNDER AGE 18 WILL BE CITED TO COURT FOR FINE AS REQUIRED BY OHIO LAW!~~**



**Rule 7: Profanity, Offensive Language, Indecency, and/or Obscenity:** A student will not, by written, verbal, gesture, or other means, annoy or humiliate others or disrupt the educational process by using profanity, offensive language, being indecent, or using obscenities. Profanity towards a staff member will be deemed a more serious offense.

**Rule 8: Truancy and Tardiness:** A student will comply with the compulsory school attendance laws. When a student is absent from school without a legal excuse, it constitutes truancy or tardiness. This includes unexcused absences from study hall, class, or any other properly assigned activity. Repeated tardiness is also considered a serious offense.

**Rule 9: Insubordination:** A student will comply with directions of authorized school personnel during any period of time the student is properly under authority of the school. Failure to abide by other rules which may be established will also be considered insubordination.

**Rule 10: Inappropriate Dress:** A student will not dress or appear in a fashion that interferes with the student’s health or welfare or that of others and, causes disruption or interferes with the educational process. (See Acceptable Dress and Grooming Section)

**Rule 11: Extortion:** A student will not obtain or attempt to obtain another person’s property, whether by implied or expressed threat.

**Rule 12: Forgery:** A student will not falsify in writing the name of another person, times dates, grades, addresses or other data on school forms or correspondence directed to the school. This also includes computer hacking or other unauthorized entry into computers or information databases.

**Rule 13: Trespassing:** A student will not be present in a school building or on school grounds at unauthorized times or when their presence may cause disruption of an activity, function, or the educational process.

**Rule 14: False Identification:** A student will not use or attempt to use false identification to mislead school personnel.

**Rule 15: Breaking and Entering:** A student will not break and enter, or attempt to break and enter, school or private property either on school grounds or at any school activity, function or event off school grounds.

**Rule 16: Theft:** No student, while on school property or in attendance at any school-sponsored activity, shall steal, attempt to steal, or knowingly possess stolen property, which is to include either private or school property.

**Rule 17: Harassment/bullying/Cyber bullying:** Any intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student exhibits toward any person in the Pymatuning Valley Schools more than once, and the behavior both (1) causes mental or physical harm to the other student, and (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other person. All instances will be documented.

**Rule 18: Missed/Skipped Detention or Working Lunch or Saturday School:** All students who are assigned a detention or Saturday School must report on time and follow all rules and regulations.

**Rule 19: Public Displays of Affection:** A public display of affection is distasteful to some people and generally unacceptable. Students using poor judgement in this matter will be subject to disciplinary action. There will be no kissing or inappropriate touching. This rule also prohibits unwanted displays of affection or romantic contact.

**Rule 20: Unauthorized Area:** Students shall not be in any area that they are not assigned or authorized or have permission to be. This includes, but is not limited to, buildings, classrooms, shops, vehicles (upon arriving on school property), and more than one student in a bathroom stall. Students moving outside of their assigned classroom area must have a hall pass.

**Rule 21: Reckless Driving:** Students drivers must be cautious and in control of their vehicle on the road to school, home from school, and in the parking lot at school.

**Rule 22: Safety Equipment/Personal Safety** - Students shall not make unauthorized use of any school safety equipment, including but not limited to, fire extinguishers, eye rinses, fire and burglar alarms, etc. Students must wear safety glasses and safety shoes when in areas that require them, when performing tasks that

require them, or any such times an instructor or staff member asks a student or group of students to comply with safety regulations. Students are not to engage in conduct that violates established safety practices or places themselves, or others, in immediate potential for harm. Repeated violations of safety rules in any particular class or environment may result in the removal of the student from that class or the prohibition of the student from being in that environment at the discretion of the Principal

**SCHOOL-SPONSORED EVENTS**

All students are to view any school-sponsored events, home or away, as having the same rules and regulations in effect as guide them during the official school day. The conduct code is in effect during all extracurricular events and field trips.

**STUDENT SUSPENSION PROCEDURE**

In all instances of student behavioral problems, school personnel are encouraged to work in a positive manner in bringing about desirable behavior by the student. Recognizing that in some instances the student's behavior exceeds tolerable limits, action by school officials must be taken for the general good of the school operation.

Students not in compliance with the adopted Board Policy of the Students' Conduct Code may be suspended by the principal or superintendent for not more than (10) school days. During a suspension, the student is not to be in the building, on school property, or to attend any school activity whether at home or away. The only exception is that administration may require a student to be present.

Prior to suspension, the principal or superintendent shall give the pupil written notice of the intention to suspend him/her, the reason for the intended suspension, and provide due process at an informal hearing before the principal, assistant principal, or superintendent.

On decisions to suspend, the superintendent or principal shall within twenty-four (24) hours after the time of the pupil's suspension, notify in writing the parent, guardian, or custodian of the pupil, and the Clerk of the Board of Education of such suspension. The notice shall include the reasons for the suspensions and shall also include notification of the right of the pupil or his parent, guardian, or custodian to appeal such action to the Board of Education or its designee, to be represented in all such appeal proceedings, to be granted a hearing before the Board or its designee in order to be heard against such suspension, and to request that

such hearing be held in executive session.

A pupil or his parent, guardian, or custodian may appeal his/her suspension by a superintendent or principal to the Board of Education or to its designee. Such pupil or parent, guardian, or custodian may be represented in all such appeal proceedings and shall be granted a hearing before the Board or its designee in order to be heard against the suspension. At the request of the pupil, or his parent, guardian or custodian, or attorney, the Board or its designee may hold the hearing in executive session but shall act upon such suspension only at a public meeting. The Board may, by a majority vote of its full membership or by the action of the designee, affirm the order of suspension or may reinstate such pupil, or otherwise reverse, vacate, or modify the order of suspension.

The Board of Education or its designee shall make a verbatim record of the hearings held. The decision of the Board or its designee may be appealed under Chapter 2506 of the Ohio Revised Code.

In the rare occurrence that school is cancelled on a day that a student is suspended, the student's return date remains unaffected, and the day counts as being suspended.

**STUDENTS' RIGHTS PHILOSOPHY**

The Board of Education of the Pymatuning Valley Local School District believes that it is the Board's responsibility to encourage the student body of all its schools to take full advantage of the educational programs, the school facilities and talents of the school personnel, to develop the individual's full mental and physical abilities.

It is essential that in accomplishing this goal, every student is protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution within certain limitations; the right of free speech, symbolic speech, freedom of assembly, right of privacy and person appearance. The development of a STUDENT CONDUCT CODE provides the necessary restraints so as to not frustrate the good intentions of the majority of the student body. NOTE: All students are required to have due process before penalties are imposed.

**STUDENT EXPULSION PROCEDURE**

Students not in compliance with the adopted Board policy of the Student Conduct Code may be expelled by the superintendent for a period of time as determined by the superintendent within the guidelines of the law. No pupil shall be expelled unless prior to his/her expulsion the superintendent:

1. Gives the pupil and his parent, guardian, or custodian written notice of the intention to expel the pupil and
2. Provides the pupil and his parent, guardian, custodian, or representative an opportunity to appear in person before the superintendent to challenge the reasons for the intended expulsion or otherwise to explain the pupil's actions.

The notice in (1) above shall include the reasons for the intended expulsion, notification of the opportunity of the pupil and his parent, guardian, custodian, or representative to appear before the superintendent to challenge the reasons for the intended expulsion or otherwise to explain the pupil's actions and notification of the time and place to appear. The time to appear shall not be earlier than three (3) nor later than five (5) days after the notice is given, unless the superintendent grants an extension of time at the request of the pupil, his parent, guardian, custodian, or representative. If an extension is granted, the pupil and parent/guardian /custodian will be notified of the new time and place to appear. (cont'd.)

The superintendent shall, within twenty-four hours after the decision to expel a student, notify in writing the parent, guardian, or custodian of the pupil, and the clerk of the Board of Education of such expulsion. The notice shall include the reason for the expulsion and shall also include notification of the right of the pupil or his parent (et al), to appeal such action to the Board of Education to be represented in all such appeal proceedings, to be granted a hearing before the Board in order to be heard against such expulsion, and to request that such hearing be held in executive session.

### **DANGEROUS WEAPONS IN THE SCHOOLS**

The Pymatuning Valley Local Board of Education is committed to providing the students of the District with an educational environment which is free of dangers of firearms, knives, and other dangerous weapons in the schools.

The definition of a firearm shall include any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or any destructive device (as defined in 18 U.S. C.A. sections 921-924.), which includes but is not limited to any explosive, incendiary, or poisonous gas: bomb, grenade, or rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine or device similar to any of the devices described above.

Students are prohibited from bringing a firearm on school property, in a

school vehicle, or to any school-sponsored activity, the Superintendent shall expel this student from school for a period of one calendar year. Any such expulsion shall extend, as necessary, into the school year following the school year in which the incident occurred. The Superintendent may reduce this requirement on a case-by-case basis in accordance with State law.

Students are also prohibited from bringing knives on school property, in a school vehicle, or to any school-sponsored activity. The definition of knife includes but is not limited to a cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade fastened to a handle. If a student brings a knife on school property, in a school vehicle, or to any school-sponsored activity, the Superintendent may, if authorized by the Board, expel the student from school, with the same expulsion implications as noted above.

The Board may extend the right to expel a student for reasons beyond the possession of a firearm or knife. Students who possess or use other dangerous weapons, which are defined but not limited to metal knuckles, heavy chains attached to clothing, straight razors, explosives, noxious irritation or poisonous gases, poison, drugs or any other items possessed with the intent to use, sell, harm, threaten, or harass students, staff members, parents or community members, may be subject to expulsion.

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

School personnel reserve the right to search lockers and contents, cars and contents, as well as student computer files whenever the health and/or safety of the students or staff may be in jeopardy. The administration may without any additional notification solicit the assistance of law enforcement agencies and the canine teams for reasons of conduction random searches of the buildings.

### **BUS REGULATION FOR PUPILS**

#### **BY ORDER OF PYMATUNING VALLEY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

1. Immediately upon entering the bus, pupils shall take their assigned places.
2. Pupils shall not be loud or use improper language at any time.
3. Windows and vents shall not be adjusted without the permission of the driver.
4. No pupil shall attempt to get on or off the bus until it comes to a full stop.
5. Pupils should be ready when the school bus approaches.
6. Pupils should not stand in the middle of the road while waiting for the school bus.
7. Pupils should not talk to the driver unnecessarily while on the route.
8. Pupils shall conduct themselves on the bus approximately as they would in classroom, except that reasonable visiting and conversation are permissible.

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9. The driver has the same authority over passengers on the school bus as the teacher has over students in the classroom.
10. Waste paper and rubbish should never be dropped on the floor of the bus.
11. Never throw anything within or out of the bus.

**PUPIL AND PARENT BUS RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Parents and pupils must assume that school bus transportation is a privilege to the student, not a right.
2. Pupils will ride on assigned buses. Parents must request in writing to permit deviation from this rule. Request shall be made to the principal and/or transportation supervisor.
3. Pupils will ride their assigned bus both to and from home to school unless a written request asking permission to be let off the bus at some other stop is represented to the bus driver and signed by parents and counter-signed by the building principal.
4. Parents are responsible for the safety of pupils while going to and from pick-up points and for their meeting the bus on schedule.
5. Buses operate on a time schedule as outlined by the transportation supervisor.
6. Parents will be responsible for any damage to a bus by their children.
7. Eating and littering are not permitted on buses.
8. Noise on a bus shall be kept to a minimum at all times to assure safety of operation.
9. Absolute quiet must be maintained at railroad crossings or other danger areas.
10. Nothing shall be thrown out of the bus, nor anything held so it extends out the window.
11. All parts of the pupil's bodies shall be kept inside the bus at all times.
12. Pupils shall be waiting at the curb side of the road to board the bus for morning pick up.
13. Pupils shall sit three to a seat and no standing shall be allowed as long as seats are available. Seats are assigned by the driver to maintain order and for evacuation purposes.
14. Band instruments or special equipment which blocks the aisle of the bus are not permitted on a bus.
15. Knives, animals, dangerous articles, etc., are not permitted to be on the bus.
16. The driver has the authority to enforce the above regulations. The pupils shall conduct themselves on the school bus as they would in the classroom except that reasonable visiting and conversation are permissible. Continued disorderly conduct or refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be

sufficient reason for refusing transportation service to any student. When it becomes necessary to refuse transportation to a pupil due to misconduct the school administration (transportation supervisor) shall notify the parents of such refusal in writing with a full explanation for this action. The bus driver then shall not permit the pupil to board the bus at his or her home until the parent gives assurance future good conduct on the part of the pupil.

**CREDIT FLEXIBILITY PROGRAM**

Guidelines for PVHS students wishing to pursue supplemental/remedial educational opportunities:

1. **STUDENT:** Must be currently enrolled at Pymatuning Valley High School
2. **OPTIONS:** Alternative methods to earn credit toward Graduation requirements shall be considered.
3. **DEADLINE:** Written request for proposed credit flex option must be turned into the guidance office before June 1<sup>st</sup> of each school year. Credit flexibility programs will be reviewed and granted/denied for the next academic school year.
4. **METHODS:**
  - a. **TEST-OUT:** Student needs to demonstrate preparation in order to utilize a Department developed "test out" assessment.
  - b. **PORTFOLIO:** Accumulation of work provided by the student, which is preapproved/reviewed by related department personnel, Principal and/or Guidance Counselors.
  - c. **OTHER ALTERNATIVE METHODS:** On-line courses, independent study and or any other means deemed supplemental/remedial that will enable the student to demonstrate mastery. Department personnel, Principal and/or Guidance Counselors will approve.
5. **GRADING/CREDIT:** Letter grade or Pass/Fail will be given and appropriate credit applied to the student transcript as well as toward Graduation requirements.
6. **RESERVING THE RIGHT:** The Administration, Department Personnel and Guidance Office does reserve the right to approve or deny proposed options that do or do not meet the acceptable level of mastery.

**EARLY GRADUATION**

The Board strongly believes that twelve years of formal education provides the best foundation and preparation for the demands of adulthood. It further believes that every attempt should be made to encourage and make this possible. However, it also recognizes that in unusual and extenuating circumstances

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there exists a need for students to complete their schooling in three years at the secondary level. Reasons that may be considered are:

1. Early entrance to college, business school, trade or technical school only if the student has completed all courses in their chosen field.
2. Economic distress and/or family needs.
3. Chronological age of the student.

Students wishing to be considered for this must meet with the high school counselors and principal for their recommendation with final authority to grant this request resting with the Board. Such approval must be given by the May Board meeting of the sophomore year.

**STUDENT EVACUATION/RENDEZVOUS POINTS**

The local safety forces and Pymatuning Valley Local School District Safety Committee have identified the location below should there be an emergency situation that requires that students be evacuated from the school buildings to an off-campus site.

- Pymatuning Valley Primary School – The Andover Christian Church
- Pymatuning Valley Middle School – The Andover Christian Church
- Pymatuning Valley High School – The Andover Christian Church

In the event of an evacuation situation to this site, *please do NOT come to the school*. Parents will be notified by robo-call, posting to the school website, and text message should they need to pick up their students.

The Andover Christian Church can be found at 200 Stillman Ave., Andover, OH

**TITLE IX**

Title IX Complaints and reports can be submitted in writing, through email or via telephone (24/7) to the compliance officers of the Pymatuning Valley Local Schools. The Compliance Officers are:

- Mrs. Wendy Tisch, Pymatuning Valley Middle School Principal  
Email: wendy.tisch@pvschools.org  
Phone: 440-293-6981
- Mr. Benjamin Schade, Director of Pupil Services  
Email: benjamin.schade@pvschools.org  
Phone: 440-293-6488

Training for Compliance Officers was conducted by Ennis Britton Attorneys at Law.