PIONEER ACADEMY

STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK

2026 – 2027 ACADEMIC YEAR

CURIOSITY · CREATIVITY · COMPASSION · COMMITMENT

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MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Pioneer Academy Community,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 academic year!

It is a privilege to welcome back our returning students and families and to extend a special welcome to those joining Pioneer Academy for the first time. We begin this year with deep gratitude for the accomplishments of our community and renewed enthusiasm for the opportunities ahead.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once wrote, “Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.” These words strongly reflect what we believe at Pioneer Academy: academic excellence and character development must go hand in hand.

We begin this school year building upon remarkable achievements, including our recognition as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence, designation as a State School of Character, and placement on the AP School Honor Roll at the Platinum level. Our students continue to demonstrate exceptional academic achievement and earn admission to many of the nation’s leading colleges and universities. These accomplishments reflect the dedication of our students, faculty, staff, and families and the strength of our entire Pioneer community.

Since our founding in 1999, Pioneer Academy has remained committed to providing an exceptional education grounded in academic excellence, strong character, and meaningful opportunities for growth. As we begin another year, we remain focused on creating an environment where every student is challenged, supported, and inspired to reach their fullest potential.

This Parent-Student Handbook serves as an important guide to the expectations, policies, responsibilities, and resources that support our school community. I encourage all students, parents, and guardians to review it carefully. Respect, responsibility, accountability, kindness, and partnership remain essential to maintaining the positive and productive learning environment we all value.

Thank you for your continued trust, partnership, and commitment to Pioneer Academy. Together, I am confident that 2026–2027 will be another year of meaningful growth, opportunity, joyful learning, and exceptional achievement.

Welcome to another exciting year at Pioneer Academy.

One Team, One Dream.

Sincerely,

Owen O. Akman, M.S
Head of School

Mission

Pioneer Academy fosters an inclusive environment with state-of-the-art facilities for students to grow in knowledge through a rigorous curriculum grounded in ethical principles and multicultural awareness inspired by engaging faculty. Our primary responsibility is to prepare young people for exceptional lives of purpose and accomplishment as global citizens, devoted to personal excellence and the greater good.

Vision

We aim to inspire curious, creative, compassionate, and committed global citizens through intellectual growth and personal excellence within an ethical framework. We celebrate the pursuit of knowledge as inseparable from the development of character.

Core Values: Four Pillars

Our philosophy of education is enabled by curiosity, creativity, compassion, and commitment, empowered by empathy, ethics, and community, open to everyone, regardless of race, color, religion, gender identity, or national origin.

CURIOSITY	CREATIVITY	COMPASSION	COMMITMENT

Curiosity, Creativity, Compassion, and Commitment — define the Pioneer Academy educational experience and community. They anchor our passion for learning excellence and guide our shared culture and identity as Pioneer Academy citizens. Fundamentally, they govern how we strive alone and together toward greater knowledge and a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable future.

Honor Code

Pioneer Academy's scholastic community is defined by and built upon a foundation of mutual trust, honesty, and integrity, as expressed within the Honor Code, a pledge that students sign upon matriculation and periodically reaffirm each academic year.

> "As a member of Pioneer Academy: I will let my moral compass and conscience guide my daily participation and contributions at Pioneer.
>
> I consider ethics and honesty as the foundation of our shared community: I hereby pledge my conscience and integrity to the Pioneer Academy community and similarly expect that my classmates do the same, in keeping with Pioneer's Four Pillars—Curiosity, Creativity, Compassion, and Commitment.
>
> I shall neither give nor receive any unauthorized aid, assistance, or advantage, as defined by my teachers, faculty, and administration, both explicitly and implicitly, from any source, with respect to school work, homework, exams, papers, or any other school matter or academic endeavor, whether scholarly, extracurricular or athletic.
>
> I shall neither steal nor violate other persons or their property, whether in the academic setting or not, whether intellectual or material. In all my work, the signature of my name reaffirms my honor and continuous commitment to this pledge."

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Pioneer Academy is wholly committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism—we consider this commitment not only a moral imperative that unites us but crucial to student success and fostering a learning community that empowers all its members. Guided by the Four Pillars of our core values and our Honor Code, we condemn and do not tolerate exclusion, bias, racism, prejudice, or bullying in any matter, shape, or form.

Pioneer Academy is a place where we honor and celebrate the inherent dignity and worth of every human being, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin—where we affirm the dignity of all people, embrace our common humanity, and one another's differences and diverse perspectives.

CALENDARS, BELL SCHEDULES, BEFORE/AFTER CARE

Bell Schedule

Please follow the link below for an updated bell schedule. Pioneer Academy Bell Schedule

School Calendar

Please follow the link below for an updated school calendar. Academic Calendar

Before and After School Care Information

Please visit our website for an updated list of prices and detailed information. Before & After-School at Pioneer

⚑ *Two different URLs are used for this same link across the document — please confirm the current one.*

Hours and Notification

Before-school care is available from 7:30 AM to 8:10 AM on a regularly scheduled school day. After-school care is available between 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM on a regularly scheduled school day. Hours of care will vary, depending on student participation in school clubs and before/after-school care options.

Registration

Parents must register more than 24 hours in advance for before-school and after-school care. Families that know they will require care can register their children early in the school year. To notify the school that a student will need care, parents can email care@pioneeracademy.org at least one day before care is needed. Please visit our website for a list of prices and further registration information.

After and Before-School Care Drop-Off / Pick-Up and Fees

An updated list of prices can be found on our before/after-school care website: Before & After-School at Pioneer

⚑ *This URL differs from another instance of the same link elsewhere in the document — please confirm the current one.*

Students registered for before care can be dropped off at the school's entrance no earlier than 7:30 AM. To observe proper safety precautions, no student is permitted to be dropped off before 8:00 AM. Although faculty members may be present, students will not be permitted to enter the building before 8:10 AM unless they are under the supervision of a before-school care faculty member.

Students registered for after-school care must be picked up by 6:00 PM or a late fee will be assessed to your account. Late fees are charged per child for every minute that exceeds 6:00PM. All late fees are required to be cleared before a student is allowed to return to after/care and can be paid the next time a student is dropped off.

Before and after-school care is not provided on Saturdays, Sundays, Holidays, or on days when the school is closed per the academic calendar.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

TARDINESS AND ABSENTEEISM

Pioneer Academy will be guided by all state laws governing the school attendance of all students. For a more detailed description of these laws, families can visit the State of New Jersey Department of Education website: NJ Department of Education — Attendance Requirements

Pioneer Academy will also enforce its own rules regarding the attendance of all enrolled students as documented in this handbook. Attendance shall be required of all enrolled students during the days and hours that the school is in session unless it is shown to the satisfaction of the Administration that an acceptable cause exists to justify the student's absence. In accordance with statute, the school shall require from the parent of each child who has been absent from school a written statement detailing the dates of and the reasons for each absence. The school will contact the parents of a student who is absent without notification. Absences may be excused only under extenuating circumstances for which clear documentation and dates are provided. Pioneer Academy reserves the right to verify such statements and documentation and to investigate the cause of each absence or tardiness. The school administration will contact the families of students with excessive tardiness or absences to assist in developing a plan to improve attendance. Students may lose course credit, suffer academic consequences or not matriculate to the next grade level for chronic tardiness and/or absenteeism. Students exhibiting absenteeism with difficulty in communication regarding their absences may be questioned more in depth regarding their absences and the school reserves the right to refer to the proper authorities regarding the student's safety and well being.

Tardiness

Student attendance will be taken immediately within the first 10 minutes of classes by all teachers. Tardiness is defined as any instance in which a student does not arrive in the appropriate homeroom or class on time as defined by the school bell schedule. Students arriving within 10 minutes after the start of class will be marked tardy and penalized accordingly. Every 3 tardies will result in a behavior notice and appropriate disciplinary points. Health and Physical Education classes are not exceptions. Students arriving more than 10 minutes late to class will be marked absent for that class. Completion of academic assignments, including assessment, will be at the teacher's discretion. See the ABSENCE section below.

Late Arrivals

Students who arrive anytime after the first period bell (8:15 a.m.) must check in with the front lobby to be marked present for the day before reporting to any class. Students should not report to class until their attendance is updated by the front desk receptionist or the Dean of Students. A pass will be issued to allow the student to enter their classes if they are late.

School Absences- With Documentation (excused) or without documentation (unexcused)

An absence is defined as any instance in which a student does not report to the appropriate homeroom or class within the first 10 minutes of that class. Such absences will be recorded and penalized accordingly. A notice from a parent or guardian must be provided to the administration each time a student is absent. Parents/ guardians will be notified through a Veracross SIS notification when a student is absent without a notice

A student is not permitted to miss more than 18 class periods for any given course. These absences are combined absences that occur with or without documentation. Medical absences may present an exception in rare cases. Students are not permitted to miss more than 4 class periods per day. If a student misses more than 4 class periods any given day, they will be marked absent for all their classes on that day and they will not be permitted to enter their classes on that day.

Students are permitted no more than 9 class absences per semester and 18 per year. Documented (excused) absences will be referenced to determine when submission of make-up work is permitted. Students absent more than 4 times per quarter will have their attendance placed under review and will be required to complete a Saturday detention as scheduled by the administration.

If a student has met the limit for absences, requests for additional absences will be denied. If the student exceeds the allowed number of unexcused absences, he or she will fail any courses due to excessive absences as outlined. Students should refer to individual class syllabi and communicate with their teachers regarding missed assignments. Please note that “Study days” or “Rest days” are not permitted. However students are excused from classes on the day of their scheduled AP Exam only.

Parent Notification and Medical Absences: Approved medical absences may excuse you from an attendance review or disciplinary action. Medical notes will not be documented for more than three days in a row or 4 per quarter. If a student experiences a long-term (more than three days) medical concern, as determined by a medical professional, they must notify the Dean of Students or the School Nurse for approval for a medical leave of absence. These requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Parents may email nurse@pioneeracademy.org and the appropriate school level Dean of Students.

With proper notification and documentation, students may be granted a documented (excused) absence, which allows them to complete school work, but does not permit them to exceed the absence limits.

A visit to a medical professional: Students should ask the location for a school note that can be submitted to their 1st period teacher or Dean of Students. Medical notices must include the student’s name, date of birth, date of visit, and professional letterhead with contact information. Medical notices submitted after one week of an absence will not be accepted to excuse an absence.

Long term home-care illness: Families can inform the school of a student’s chronic illness by contacting the dean of students or emailing the school nurse at nurse@pioneeracademy.org. Following the approval of long term medical leave, which requires proper documentation, the administration will determine the student’s course of action.

Bereavement or serious illness of an immediate family member

Required visits to any government agencies, as determined appropriate by the administration.

Mandated Court Appearances: Documentation must be provided by the court indicating the date of the student’s appearance in court.

Motor Vehicle Driver’s Tests: Scheduled appointments will be documented

College visits for current 12th graders are limited to a maximum of 4 (four) days and limited to 2 (two) days for 11th grade. All college visits must be pre-approved by the dean of students. Students must return with certification from the college/university indicating the days and times of the visit.

Special or Recognized Religious Holidays: Such absences are based on the faith of the student/family and require notification prior to absence.

Weather or Environmental Conditions: Inclement weather or environmental conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to the student’s health or safety as deemed necessary by the school administration.

Classes missed due to authorized, school-sponsored athletics and extracurricular activities will not be counted as a school absence. However, a student may be withheld from an activity if they are experiencing an academic, disciplinary or attendance concern.

Other extenuating cases as deemed appropriate by the administration

If the absence has been pre-approved, absences not exceeding a total of 2 days (six) days per school year shall be excused for the following reasons:

College Acceptance or Scholarship interviews

Internship or Need-Based Employment Interviews

Exceptional educational excursions or experiences

Graduation or wedding of an immediate family member

Visit with a parent or guardian who is on leave from or is being deployed to military service overseas (limited to 5 days per year)

Other circumstances that are mutually agreed upon by both parents and school administration

Parental visits for international boarding students: Absences for visitation must be approved by the administration. Requests must be made at least one week prior to the desired excused absence.

Students experiencing a personal emergency or another serious issue that they feel should excuse them from classes should report to the Dean of Students or the Nurse for a consultation before missing classes.

Notification of Anticipated Absence/Tardiness

If a day student (non-boarding student) is unable to travel to school because of inclement weather, illness, or any other reason, parents must notify the School Office before the start of the first period. Boarding students feeling too ill to attend the first period must notify their dorm adviser and visit the school nurse before missing any class.

Request for extended (more than 3 days) excused/approved absence

Any requests for extended (more than 3 days) excused/approved absences for any reason such as medical procedures, domestic or international travel, independent programs…etc must request preapproved. The school may request further documentation or proof of occurrence may be requested. Prolonged absences, regardless of reason may not be approved, Failure to seek approval prior to the absence can result in a course failure due to loss of instructional time and attendance infractions.

Making-Up Work and Missed Assessments

All absences accumulate towards a student's attendance. The term "excused or unexcused" is used to determine if the student is able to complete any missing work. Documented absences in line with approved reasons will be permitted to complete assignments while non-documented absences will cause a student to be unable to complete missed work. Students with documented absences should contact teachers within 24 hours of their absence to make arrangements to complete missed assignments.

Students with undocumented absences are responsible for communicating with teachers regarding any missed assignments or assessments upon return to school. The opportunity to make up work and assessments and the according deadlines are at the discretion of the teacher and administration.

Students that are found to have cut class may not make up work that has been missed during the period of absence. These students may receive a grade of zero for all homework, tests, quizzes, and other assignments due during the period of the unexcused absence. The school administration, parent/guardian, and teachers will be notified of the class missed and appropriate discipline action will be taken.

Cutting Class

Deliberately choosing not to arrive on time or deliberately not attending a class while that class is in session without permission or a legitimate excuse for the absence is considered cutting class.

Arriving to class unprepared or out of uniform is not a legitimate reason to miss class, as it is the responsibility of students to arrive prepared to learn and in full uniform. Regardless of the time the student arrives at class, any student leaving prior to the end of class without permission will be recorded and penalized for having cut the class.

Students have a responsibility to attend all classes every school day unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevent attendance. Students should arrive prepared for learning and in full uniform. Students do not have the "right" to cut classes simply because they have not yet accumulated enough absences to fail due to attendance. Any students found cutting classes or cutting school will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include detention or suspension, loss of credit, and class failure, depending upon the number of unexcused absences the student has at the time of the infraction.

Absences Due to Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

For students who are official participants in athletics, academic competitions, or other approved extra-curricular activities, participation may entail travel and an unavoidable absence from classes. Under such circumstances, these absences will not be counted. However, students must communicate with teachers and make up all work missed in all classes according to the excused absence regulations detailed above.

Participation in Extracurricular Activities when students are Absent or Tardy

If a student is absent or late due to illness or disciplinary action, that student will not be permitted to take part in extracurricular or athletic activities on the same day. If the absence or tardiness is due to reasons other than illness or disciplinary action, the school reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of that student's participation in extracurricular activities and grant permission accordingly.

Leaving Campus Early or during non-class hours

Students who must leave campus between 8:10 am and 3:45 pm should be picked up by an authorized guardian listed on the student's Veracross SIS account. The guardian should arrive in the front lobby and sign the student out. The receptionist will call the student from class. Student drivers will need an email from a parent granting permission for the student to leave early. Students leaving with other students, or non-listed guardians also need an email to grant permission. These students will sign themselves out after the email is received and approved. The email can be sent to plainez@pioneeracademy.org and/or suzanas@pioneeracademy.org.

Students are expected to leave campus after their final class. If students must wait for pick-up, they may remain in the designated student areas. Students in grades 9 and 10 are not permitted to leave campus while they wait for pick-up. If a 9th and 10th-grade student has a campus activity after dismissal they will be informed where they can wait until the program begins. Most often, they will be given information by the adviser. Students in grades 11 and 12 may leave campus and return for a school-sponsored activity only with permission of the

faculty member advising that program. This includes club activities, academic programs, and teacher-monitored academic activities such as group projects or peer tutoring.

Attendance during Group Assemblies

School assemblies are held for the benefit of the students and the faculty. Students are required to attend group assemblies unless otherwise specified by a teacher or administrator. Students are to sit with the teacher of the class which they are missing to attend the assembly. Courtesy will be shown to all speakers and individuals associated with the program. Disciplinary actions will be administered for misbehaving students and students may be removed and may lose their privilege to attend assemblies in the future.

Excuses from Participation in School Activities or Events

During the school year, students will be required to participate in athletic activities or other school activities as part of their classes. Some students may, under certain circumstances, be able to opt-out of participation in such activities and events for medical or religious reasons. For these special cases, parents must provide the administration with proper documentation from a doctor or a clergy member stating the reason the student should be excused from the relevant activities or events.

Course Failure Due to Chronic Absenteeism

The maximum number of unexcused absences is 18 for a full-year course and 9 for a half-year course. If a student accumulates more than 18 (eighteen) absences for any

full-year class, or more than 9 (nine) total absences for any half-year class, the student will be denied credit and will fail the course for the year. Requests for medical excuses must be pre approved by the administration.

Credit Recovery Courses

Students will be notified of their attendance record throughout the school year. Students in jeopardy of failing a course due to absenteeism will be scheduled for a parent-teacher conference with the Dean's office. These students must communicate with their academic counselor to discuss and plan for a credit recovery course. Students who fail classes in this manner must still report to the class failed and complete all work assigned to be eligible for any available

credit-recovery options. Unexcused absences from any class for which credit has been denied will be considered a waiver of the student's right to credit recovery options for that class. Such options will be detailed by the Dean of Academic. Seniors denied credit due to insufficient attendance in courses required for graduation will not receive their diplomas and may not be permitted to participate in any commencement events until all necessary course recovery has been completed.

Students that fail a course during the first semester due to absenteeism must complete an online recovery course prior to March 15th of the following calendar year. Students who fail a course during the second semester due to absenteeism must complete an online recovery course prior to July 15th of that calendar year. Students completing a recovery course will be required to independently complete the online course, in person, on campus over the course of four Saturdays 9am-1pm as scheduled by the administration. These Saturday sessions will be self-study sessions where the student can dedicate their time to completing the course. If the course is not completed within this time the opportunity to recover that course will be forfeited and the failure will be reflected on the student's academic record and may prevent the student from completing the school year or graduating on time.

Instructional Time Recovery Session and Recovery

Students may be assigned an Instructional Time Recovery Session (ITRS) as a consequence of excessive absences or accumulating five (5) tardies in the same class. ITRS will consist of an 80-minute supervised session. Students assigned to ITRS are required to attend and use the time for silent academic work. Although absences are accumulated throughout the academic year, recovery opportunities occur only once a semester. Students who successfully complete an assigned ITRS may have one (1) absence removed from their attendance record. This attendance credit recovery opportunity is available once per semester. Failure to attend an assigned ITRS may result in the loss of the attendance credit recovery opportunity and additional administrative consequences.

A parent/guardian conference will be required when a student receives a second ITRS during the school year. Continued attendance concerns and absences beyond established attendance limits may result in additional administrative action, including denial of course credit and/or a failing grade for the course.

Attendance Records and Disputes

Attendance records are tracked in the Dean's office and through the Veracross information system. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of their attendance records. Disputes or errors regarding attendance must be brought to the Dean of Students with documentation within one week of the student's return to school. Students who arrive late to school, any time after 8:15 a.m. must check in at the front desk or with the Dean of Students before attending any classes.

PARENTAL REQUESTS FOR EARLY DISMISSAL

Parents wishing to have their child dismissed early must notify the school office or Dean of Students via email or phone call. Parents are asked to send the request prior to the day of early dismissal, when possible. Parents/Guardians must sign the student out in person before the student can be dismissed. Parents must notify the school if someone other than themselves will be signing the student out. Student drivers who request to leave early must also have a parent email the request.

In all cases, students must return with valid documentation of their presence at the relevant appointment or event to be excused. Students are limited to three (3) such early dismissal requests per year; additional early dismissals by request will be deemed unexcused absences for all missed classes. *In case of a family emergency, parents must sign their children out at the Main Office.

Please read the guidelines for signing a student out, detailed in the "Early Dismissal/Pick-Up" Section of the handbook.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Students are required to wear the official full school uniform at the start of the school year. The uniform must be the appropriate color for your grade level. The official uniform can be purchased through the Tommy Hilfiger website listed below but can also be found at other retailers with the logo attached elsewhere. Every Pioneer Academy student is required to arrive at school ready for the day. Uniforms should be clean, ironed, and students should be presentable and neat. Any student that is considered to be untidy or lacking in personal hygiene will be notified discreetly and will be asked to prepare more adequately for school and a public space.

The following guidelines are required for all Middle and Upper School students.

Embroidery and School Logo

The school logo must be placed on all daily uniform tops grades K-12, including polos, button-downs, and sweaters. The logo is not necessary for Middle and Upper School Physical

Education-PE clothing. If you purchase through the Globalwear website, the option to embroider is provided for you. If you purchase elsewhere, you can visit any vendor that provides the service to apply the school's logo onto a polo shirt or sweatshirt. These locations are not affiliated with Pioneer Academy and will have their own service times and prices.

Our logo is provided here for you to take to any retailer:

Instructions for ordering your official uniform can be found here:

Instructions for ordering PA uniform

Official Pioneer Academy uniform items can be found online at:

https://www.globalschoolwear.com/.

The official school uniform consists of:

Polo Shirt with the school logo on the left-hand side

Upper School: White and/or light Blue Middle School: White and/or Royal Blue Lower School: White and/or Royal Blue

Professional pants:

Upper School: Black, Navy and/or Khaki Middle School: Khaki and/or Navy Lower School: Khaki and/or Navy

Navy sweaters are optional. They must have a school logo on the left-hand side. (Sweaters do not substitute a polo shirt. They are to be worn over a polo shirt)

The modest option for uniform polos is also available, and a logo must be on the left-hand side.

Alternative Options for Students requesting modest options

Upper School students requesting a more modest top may purchase these items from other retailers. These items are made to be longer and loose-fitting. There is no reason to order larger sizes. Similar items can be purchased by our families from other vendors if they wish; however, they must closely resemble what is seen here, and they must have the logo embroidered on the left side. Pull-over sweaters or oversized clothing will not be permitted as part of the uniform. Links to those items will be provided by the dean of students office.

Physical Education Uniforms

The school logo is required for lower school Physical Education but not for Middle and Upper School Physical Education. Students are required to wear appropriate athletic gear in the solid colors indicated on the Globalwear website. Athletic footwear is required. Students that are not in appropriate athletic wear will not be permitted to participate and this may affect their overall grade. The colors permitted for Physical Education are gray, navy blue and royal blue.

K-12 Facial hair, makeup, and accessories:

Students are required to arrive at school clean-shaven. No facial hair is permitted except in cases where medical permission is granted by the Dean of Students.

Only natural hair colors are permitted. Browns, blonde, blacks, and neutral reds are permitted. Students' hairstyles should always be appropriate for their participation in school activities where they are representing our school in an appropriate and professional/ academic manner.

Make-up/nails, and jewelry.//accessories must all be appropriate for a school setting. Excessively long nails, large jewelry or distracting make-up will not be permitted. The administration reserves the right to ask a student to remove or adjust any clothing, make up, or accessory that is deemed unsafe or distracting. Makeup and personal styling are to be applied at home, prior to the start of the day, not during the school day. Faculty may confiscate any material or student belongings that are causing distractions from learning.

Footwear

All footwear must be closed-toe and closed-heel. Heel and sole heights should be safe and appropriate for a school setting at all times including non-uniform days. Sandals, flip flops, slides, slippers, clogs, etc are not permitted.

General Dress Code

Occasionally students may arrive at school out of uniform with prior permission. Any clothing that is worn must be modest. No skin should be visible between the neck and knees and no undergarments should be seen. Clothing should be clean and tidy. It should not be too loose, nor too form-fitting. Messages of a political, racial, religious, or social nature are not permitted. No explicit or offensive language should be present. All attire should be appropriate for a school setting and should not cause any distractions.

Uniform Infractions: The Middle and Upper School Uniform policies will be implemented on the first day of school. Middle School and Upper School students that arrive without a proper uniform will be addressed as follows, even if the uniform infraction is remedied.

1st Offense	Verbal and recorded warning
2nd Offense	Infractions notice + Parent notification
3rd Offense	Infraction notice + Parent NotificationStudents will be asked to change into an acceptable uniform that is either brought to them by a parent or is borrowed from the Dean's office. These uniforms are clean and stored in the event that they are needed.
4th- Offense	Students will be asked to change into an acceptable uniform that is either brought to them by a parent or is borrowed from the Dean's office. These uniforms are clean and stored in the event that they are needed.- A parent conference will be requested and the appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. This may include detentions, suspensions and meetings with the school's life coach.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Security Video Surveillance

While attending Pioneer Academy, students can expect to be under security video surveillance on school grounds. Camera coverage circumnavigates the entire building/grounds and are at key positions inside the building. Students will be monitored by video throughout the day and recorded in case the need for playback arises. Be aware that these videos may be used as evidence in a court of law. The objective of Pioneer Academy is to maintain a safe school in a safe environment. Any activities interfering with the peace, safety, tranquility, and the pursuit of academic success are unacceptable at Pioneer Academy.

UNAUTHORIZED PRESENCE

Please note that attendance is a safety and security issue. The school is responsible for all students while they are on campus; students are expected and required to be in their scheduled or designated locations at all times. There will be no exceptions to this rule; failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

SECURITY AND HEALTH PERSONNEL

All students are expected to comply with the legal orders of safety personnel, security personnel, and health personnel (security guards, nursing staff, Dean of Students, Dorm Director, etc.) at all times. Failure to comply with the directions of security and health personnel may exacerbate existing dangers or health concerns exposing individuals to unnecessary risk or injury. All instances of this behavior will be considered serious infractions and may lead to suspension or expulsion. If safety is compromised due to failure to follow directions, students may be subject to arrest and/or prosecution in a court of law.

Outdoor Recess & Physical Education Policy

If the temperature or wind chill is:

Above 32 degrees Fahrenheit, children will be allowed to go outside.

Between 26 and 32 degrees Fahrenheit, outside is optional.

Below 26 degrees Fahrenheit, all children will remain inside.

Staff will use their judgment on days when the temperature or wind chill is in this range (example: shortened outside time)

Cold/Snow: Children must be dressed appropriately to go outside in cold weather. Coats, hats, and mittens/gloves must be worn at all times when the temperature is below 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

Heat: If the heat index is excessively high, staff will shorten or eliminate outside time. This includes heat, humidity, and air quality factors. On these days, it is best for outside time to occur prior to 11:00 am.

Lightning/Severe Weather: At the first sign of threatening weather or lightning, staff will bring all children indoors into a safe area. Staff will need to monitor the situation.

PARENT/ GUARDIAN AUTHORIZATION & CONSENT FORM

As parents/guardians, we give our full authorization and permission for our child to participate in all clubs and activities at Pioneer Academy's (hereinafter referred to as the “School") facilities on and off school premises and

further give our consent to school administrators to provide transportation and participate in clubs, trips, and activities for our child.

We give school administrators our permission to act on behalf of us in making decisions pertaining to our child's education, including permission to participate in co-curricular activities. We understand that participation in clubs, trips, co-curriculars, and other School activities involve risks, injuries, hazards, accidents, and dangers, including, but not limited to, risks of travel by ground transportation and all other types of transportation. We understand and acknowledge that these risks, injuries, hazards, accidents, and dangers may impact our child's health and safety, including loss of personal property, personal injury, or death. We give our consent for medical treatment to be provided by the school nurse or by medical institutions under the sole supervision of the School. We understand that the school cannot and does not assume responsibility for any such personal injuries, death, or property damage.We hereby assume full responsibility and liability for any expenses, damages, or medical expenses to our child or his/her personal property resulting from his/her participation or involvement in any clubs, curricular or extracurricular activities. We further agree to release, defend, hold harmless and indemnify, defend, hold harmless and indemnify the School from any liability for any such actions.

We remain financially responsible for all personal expenses of our child, such as traveling expenses, living expenses (in case of boarding students), or any medical expenses, such as accidents, illnesses, injuries, immunizations, etc. provided to the minor. We hereby agree and understand that we will promptly pay any invoice for the cost of such care.

We understand that if the student is a resident in the dorms, he agrees to comply with all of the school rules stated in this handbook as well as the regulations within the dormitory handbook provided upon registering as a dorm student.

We hereby agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the School, collectively and individually, and its Board of Trustees, employees, officers, directors, agents, successors, volunteers, and assignees from any and all liability, loss, damage, or expense, including attorney's fees which arise out of, occur during, or are in any way connected with our child's acts or participation in all co-curricular and other school activities, any related or independent travel, any activities or field trips, irrespective of whether they are sponsored, supervised or controlled by the School.

We agree that this form is to be construed and governed under the laws of the State of New Jersey, U.S.A. without reference to its choice of law rules. Our signature of the Student/Parent Handbook indicates that we have read and understood this form and that we agree to everything stated in the statement above. We further state the school has made no representations, statements, or inducements, oral or written, apart from the foregoing written statement, to us.

Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying

New Jersey State Law generally defines harassment, intimidation, and bullying as any type of communication or contact that a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, would have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of emotional harm or physical harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property.

Sexual harassment, physical assault, emotional abuse, threats, blackmail, isolation and/or ostracization, and any other actions that serve to create a hostile environment for any individual are both unlawful, against school regulations, and harmful for both the perpetrator and the victim.

Those who bully may be subject to criminal charges and psychological harm; the impact of bullying goes far beyond the individuals directly involved. The victims of both physical bullying and emotional bullying may undergo intense psychological stress. This stress may result in

long-term psychological disorders, self-harm, suicide, or potentially deadly attacks on others. These responses can manifest in even the youngest of bullying victims. Some research even suggests that more than half of all upper school shootings are committed by students who were bullied.

Bullying or harassment of any student or staff member will not be tolerated under any circumstances, whether or not the actions occur on school grounds, during school times or at school functions. To clarify, actions taken outside of school times and off school property will still be subject to school disciplinary or lawful actions if they constitute bullying or harassment of any PA student or staff member.

Bullying and/or Harassment are defined as:

Any unwanted and/or repeated written, verbal, electronic, or physical behavior, including, but not limited to, threatening, insulting, and/or dehumanizing acts by a student that is severe and pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation, or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation. Severe and pervasive behavior will be determined by the school administration.

Prohibited acts may include, but are not limited to an oral, written or electronic communication, act of violence, threat of violence, or harassment based on actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, any other category protected by State or Federal law or other distinguishing characteristics of a student that is directed at one or more students and/or staff member; substantially interferes with educational opportunities or educational programs of the targeted student(s); or adversely affects the ability of a student(s) to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities by placing that student(s) in reasonable fear of emotional or physical harm, or because the conduct as perceived by the student(s) is objectively offensive.

This policy includes, but is not limited to, using social media and/or texting to harass, demean, and/or embarrass another student at ANY time as it interferes with their right to learn in a safe environment free from distractions. Name-calling, derogatory comments, and/or initiating or spreading rumors that demean, embarrass, and/or question the personal choices of another student(s) and/or staff member are considered bullying and/or harassment.

It is a student's duty and responsibility to report any such bullying and/or harassment actions to the Dean of Students or Guidance Department, or any faculty member if they become aware of them and/or are a witness to them. All reports will be kept confidential and investigated promptly and thoroughly.

Consequences: For the safety of all our students, any student reported to be in violation of HIB policies may be removed from the class or separated from classmates while the administration looks into the matter. These consequences are guidelines which may be modified depending upon the severity of the offense(s) and the student's past disciplinary record.

1st Offense: Parents/Guardians contacted. Discipline will be applied at the discretion of the administration. Consequences can include up to three days of suspension and mandatory attendance of an anti-bullying workshop. .

2nd Offense: Parents/Guardians will be contacted; possible expulsion, possible prosecution

Pioneer Academy will not permit any form of harassment, intimidation, or bullying by anybody at any time. Anyone witnessing harassment, intimidation, or bullying, whether by students, staff, or faculty, should immediately report it to the Dean of Students or Guidance office. Pioneer Academy will investigate any reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and will take immediate action to stop the victimization of its students. This may result in requirements for counseling, suspension, expulsion, and/or involvement of law enforcement.

Students found to be in violation of HIB policies may be asked to complete a state-certified online course/training session. The cost of the course will be covered by the student's family, and the course will be completed independently at home or in school during a suspension.

Search and Seizure

Periodically, lockers, dormitory rooms, classrooms, and other school areas of school grounds, facilities, and property may be checked and searched randomly and without suspicion. Other school resources (including network activity, access, and usage records) used by students may also be searched periodically without suspicion. Additionally, students' belongings (including automobiles, backpacks, wallets, clothes, and other personal belongings, et cetera) may be searched by a school official if the official has reasonable suspicion that such a search will result in evidence that a student has violated a law or a school rule. Items that are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process may be removed from the student by school authorities or law enforcement. Parents and students must note that with reasonable suspicion, the school may also search contents of students' personal electronic devices, including, but not limited to cell phones, notebook computers, or other communication and/or data storage devices.

As with all areas of school grounds, student lockers, desks, dormitories, and parking lots are property of the school; they and all items inside them are subject to search by school officials and, in some cases, by law enforcement. Students shall not bring, keep, conceal, use, or maintain any prohibited articles or materials on school property or at school events; students shall not assist with the transportation, concealment, use, or maintenance of any prohibited articles or materials on school property or at school events.

Lockers & Personal Property

Students should have no expectation of privacy of anything maintained in lockers, and school officials may search them at any time without suspicion. Please note that the school is not responsible for the loss of personal property, including books, clothing, or valuables, left in lockers or desks. Students are required to keep their lockers locked at all times. The school provides combination lockers to facilitate this. However, in some cases, students may be required to purchase their own locks; in such instances, combinations and/or copies of keys to all student locks must be provided to the authorized school personnel prior to use. Failure by a student to provide lock combinations or keys to the appropriate school personnel may result in the lock being cut from the student's locker. Students must not provide lock combinations or keys to any individuals other than authorized school personnel.

Unattended Items

Students may not leave personal belongings unattended. Any items found unattended will be subject to confiscation, disposal, placement in lost and found, or referral to law enforcement. A large number of unattended items greatly increases the difficulty of identifying suspicious or dangerous items. Students consistently leaving his/her belongings unattended will be subject to severe disciplinary action.

Lost and Found

The school is not responsible for lost items or student property; however, the school has designated a place for lost items to be brought for reclamation by the owners. Lost items are defined as any items found unattended anywhere on school grounds. You may come to the main reception area to request to search the lost and found box during school hours. Unclaimed items will be discarded, donated, or re-used by the school. The lost and found box will be emptied every 1st and 15th day of the month. No items will be stored during the winter, spring, or summer recess. All items, including clothing supplies and any items brought by a student to school, must be labeled in order to minimize any potential loss. Pioneer Academy is not responsible for any items lost or discarded, donated or re-used as outlined above. Please take any found or unclaimed items and place those in the designated area.

Maintaining Updated Family Information

It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school of any changes in employment, address, phone numbers, care and/or custody arrangements, and any other important information regarding their child or family situation. All aforementioned informational changes must be completed in writing and submitted to the front office. Please, also, consult with school personnel should any problems arise concerning your child, whether at home, school, or at PA.

EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS

Fire, lockdown, evacuation, and weather-related drill instructions will be discussed with each class during the first week of the semester. Students will be required to understand and follow these instructions as proper adherence to them may save their lives. Instructions will be posted on a bulletin board in each teacher's room. Students should be familiar with the assigned drill areas. Every classroom will be provided a safety folder outlining the protocol.

Fire & Evacuation Drills

Fire and evacuation drills are designed to prepare students for emergency situations and prevent confusion, injury, and loss of life. Such drills will be carried out regularly. When the alarm is sounded for a fire drill or evacuation drill, everyone is required to respond promptly and orderly manner, leaving the school building by a prescribed route as directed by the teachers. During the winter months, it is recommended that students wear their Pioneer Academy uniform sweaters should drills or actual emergencies occur. The following rules must be followed during fire drills and actual fire emergencies:

Do not talk from when the alarm is sounded until you have returned to your room or place of instruction.

Form orderly lines as instructed.

Move quickly; Do not push or run.

Meet unusual situations with calmness and clear thinking.

In case an exit is blocked, proceed in orderly formation to the next nearest exit.

In the event of smoke, stay low to the floor.

Lockdown Drills

In the unlikely event of an intrusion or security breach, the school must be prepared to keep students as safe as possible. Lockdown drills will be staged regularly for this purpose. Specific instructions will be given to students

regarding lockdown procedures. Please consult the Administration for further details. In the event of an actual lockdown, your peers are depending upon you to reduce the danger and likelihood of injury or death. Failure to pay attention, take seriously, and apply the procedures may lead to a tragic loss of limb, ability, and death.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL POLICIES

Immunization Requirements

All immunizations must be completed by the 1st day of attendance. All students must meet the NJ State Immunization Requirements.

Kindergarten age students are mandated to receive their annual flu vaccination.

The school nurse will review records annually and advise students of deficiencies or updated requirements. Students transferring into a public school must submit documentation of compliance with the law in the form of official school records, records from a public health department, or a certificate signed by a licensed doctor. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the exclusion of the student from school until the time that the immunization requirements have been fulfilled.

All students must be vaccinated unless the student presents proof that vaccinations will be indisputably detrimental to her/his physical health. An official board-certified physician's note must be provided at the time of enrollment, listing each school-required vaccination that will cause a physical health crisis for the student. Any school-required vaccinations not listed on the physician's note must be completed prior to attendance at Pioneer Academy.

Please be aware that regardless of medical exemptions, students not fully vaccinated may, at the school's discretion, be excluded from classes or campus to protect the health of the other students and personnel.

Nurse Visit

Any student wishing to visit the nurse must be given permission from their teacher. If necessary, the student should be accompanied by a classmate or adult. If the student is too ill to move alone, the nurse should be called to tend to the ill child. The Nurse will document and notify the necessary teachers and family members as well as the Dean of Students. The nurse will mark it as an excused absence in Veracross. to properly adjust the student's attendance. Excused nurse visits are limited to 6 (six) per year; additional visits to the nurse will be unexcused unless initiated by the nurse, administration, or by a board-certified doctor.

Medical Emergencies

If an injured/ill person requires serious medical attention (extreme illness or symptoms, severe injury, loss of consciousness, delirium, et cetera), immediately notify a staff member or DIAL 911 and tell emergency services to send an ambulance to: 164 Totowa Road, Wayne, NJ 07470.

If a Pioneer Academy staff member had not been notified before dialing 911, notify the nurse, an administrator or staff member immediately. Student's parents and guardians are responsible for all medical and related expenses.

Health, Illness & Injury Policy

Parents will be contacted immediately via phone regarding major and minor injuries requiring professional medical attention. Pioneer Academy families should follow the CDC guidelines when determining whether to attend school while feeling ill.

CDC — When Sick, Keep Your Child Home

PA reserves the right to determine whether a student should remain at home, is permitted to stay, or permitted to return to school when illness is a consideration. A doctor's note giving permission for a student to return to school may be requested. Parents of students who become ill during the day will be promptly notified and are expected to make arrangements for their child to be picked up immediately. The sick student will, if possible, be isolated to minimize other student's exposure to the illness. If the parent and/or guardian cannot be reached, the individual designated as the emergency contact will be notified. Please let the school know if your child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness. A notice will be shared with families of potentially affected students within the school, letting them know that their child has been exposed to a contagious illness/disease. For confidentiality reasons, the name of the child with the confirmed illness will not be released. Common colds and allergies should not, unless causing the child to feel too uncomfortable, prohibit attendance. It is our policy to have conditions that encourage cleanliness and good health practices among both staff and students.

Head Lice Policy

This policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of the PA staff should a case of head lice occurs. All members of PA will work cooperatively and collaboratively to assist families to manage head lice effectively.

At PA there is a commitment to do this in the following ways:

Where an active case is detected, the school encourages immediate treatment and students may return to school after appropriate treatment is commenced and the head lice issue is resolved.

The administration or their nominee will contact the family to ask that a student be checked and receive treatment if necessary.

Parents/caregivers will notify the school if their child is found to have live lice or nits (eggs) and advise when appropriate treatment was commenced.

The school will notify parents/caregivers of children in a classroom when a case of head lice is detected, to alert these families of the need to check their children.

Once notified of the possibility of head lice exposure, all families will check at home the hair of all household members for live lice or nits. They will aim to use a head lice comb, for greater accuracy, and they will use an effective treatment if necessary.

Families should notify the parents/caregivers of their child's friends where appropriate, so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.

Afflicted students will either bring a certificate or note from their doctor/head lice removal specialist stating that the condition has been resolved and/or the student's head may be checked by a PA staff member prior to their returning to the classroom to ensure that the matter has been resolved.

A sympathetic attitude will be maintained by the entire school community to avoid stigmatizing/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures. To support parents/caregivers and the broader school community to achieve a consistent, collaborative approach to head lice management, PA will undertake to:

Distribute up-to-date and accurate information on the detection, treatment, and control of head lice to students, staff, and their families at the beginning of the year or more frequently if required.

Provide practical advice, maintain a sympathetic attitude, and avoid stigmatizing/blaming families experiencing difficulty with control measures.

Access community educational resources and support, such as community health centers.

Encourage children to learn about head lice to help remove any stigma or other negative experiences associated with the issue.

Be aware of real difficulties, such as a treatment failure, that some parents/caregivers may encounter and seek extra support from community health centers if required.

Continue to seek opportunities to increase our understanding of and response to managing head lice.

NOTE: If multiple head lice cases are found in a short timeframe, an entire classroom may have a blanket head inspection or head lice screening by school staff. If this were to become necessary, PA staff would take precautions to respect the privacy and maintain confidentiality for each student.

Medication Policy (Over-the-Counter Medications)

Aspirin, Tylenol, Neosporin, and other patient over-the-counter drugs are not available through PA. Should you wish for your child to have access to these medications, you must sign an 'Authorization to Administer Medication Form' and leave a supply with the nurse.

Prescription Medications

For the safety and health of students, Pioneer Academy requires written notification annually or as specified by the physician (if more frequently) of all medicines students intend to bring and use at the school. It is the full responsibility of the parents to ensure that the medication has been provided and the proper form completed. Parents/Guardians must fill out a medical form and submit it to the nurse for processing. The nurse and the administration must approve prescription medicines and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines to ensure legality, proper dissemination, and proper observance of safety protocols. All such medicines must be kept in the Nurse's office unless otherwise specified.

Administration of Prescription Medications

The medication to be administered by designated school personnel must be sent directly from the pharmacy or physician's office or brought to school by the student's parent/guardian. The school must receive an 'Authorization to Administer Medication Form' signed by the student's physician and/or parent/guardian.

Bring in only the amount of medication that is needed for a school day. In the case of prolonged need, send in the amount for a clearly specified period. Written authorization to dispense medications shall be limited to two weeks unless otherwise prescribed by a physician.

Medication shall only be dispensed from its original container, which must be labeled with the child's name. Extra medication will not be sent home with a student. All medication will be kept in a secure location in the nurse's office.

Self-Administration of Medication

As a general rule, students are not allowed to carry any medication with them in school. However, students may carry and administer their medication if both of the following conditions are met and is pre-approved by the school nurse:

It is warranted by a potentially life-threatening condition and advised by their physician AND an 'Authorization to Carry Inhaler, EpiPen, Insulin or Other Approved Medicine Form' is on file in the office signed by the student's parents and the physician.

EpiPen Policy

If your child has an allergy that may require the use of an Epipen, PA will require its own Epipen kept on-site, which will be provided by the parent or guardian. If your child would require the use of the Epipen while in attendance the following steps will be taken:

The EpiPen would be injected by a staff member.

911 would be called after the Epi-pen is injected.

The parent or guardian would then be contacted and given further information.

Medication Storage and Administration

Medication should not be brought to school unless it is essential to the health of the student. If a student must take medicine at school, these procedures must be followed:

PA requests that all medication be delivered directly to the nurse and that proper documentation is completed. Medications are kept in the nurse's office in an area that can be locked at all times. PA will not store nor administer any medication that has not been delivered by the parent/guardian with properly completed accompanying documentation.

All dorm students are not permitted to hold any medication (both over the counter and prescription) in their rooms. The medication must be given to the nurse and kept there to be used as prescribed by the physician.

Expired medication will not be kept on site. All expired medication will be returned directly to a parent/guardian, or discarded if not picked up by June 30 at the end of the academic year. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to supply PA with non-expired medication and properly completed accompanying documentation in order to administer any prescription or non-prescription medication on site.

Delivery of Medication: Any PA nursing staff that gives or applies medication shall ensure the following:

The right drug;

The right recipient;

The right dose;

By the right route;

At the right time;

Report to Parents: Any error in the giving or applying of medication shall be reported to the parent.

Medication Log: PA has a designated medication binder in the Nurse's office for all children enrolled receiving medication. The information within the binder is kept confidential. For each child receiving medication, there

must be an "Authorization For Medication" form completed in its entirety signed by a parent or guardian. The log recording the administration of medication will be located on the back of this form. A notation on the log will be made if an adverse reaction to over-the-counter and/or prescribed medication occurs. Parents will be contacted immediately via phone regarding a major adverse reaction to medication requiring professional medical attention. Minor adverse reactions, such as slight redness will be reported on the minor adverse medication reporting form sent home with the student for a parent signature.

Confidentiality: Any PA staff who gives or applies medication shall not disclose information about that child's medication unless such information is needed to protect the health of other children or staff. The student's health information is deemed confidential, however can be shared if the parent requires or agrees to do so.

First Aid Kit

First Aid supplies are located in the nurse's office stored in areas that can be locked at all times. The following first aid supplies are available at all times: scissors, tweezers, thermometer, bandages, sterile gauze pads, medical tape, protective eyewear, protective mask, insect sting preparation, antibacterial ointment, antiseptic cleaning solution, cold packs, triangular bandages, and gloves.

Allergies and Latex Gloves

Any family whose student has a medical allergy should notify the school nurse and plan for care accordingly. These include allergies to substances, foods, or medicines. Latex gloves are worn by staff when administering first aid. Please inform the front office staff and your child's teacher(s) and indicate on your child's registration form if your child has a latex allergy.

Hand Washing

All PA staff shall wash their hands before giving or applying any medication. If handling any bodily fluids is involved, PA staff must also wear gloves and wash hands after giving or applying medication.

RESOURCES, TRANSPORTATION, SCHOOL GROUNDS, AND FACILITIES

Pioneer Academy is first and foremost an educational institution. The school facilities, inside and out, must be respected as such. Breaking and entering, trespassing, vandalism, defacement, damaging or theft of school property, and accessing and/or manipulating administrative/faculty data and networks are crimes. Pioneer Academy reserves the right to seek compensation for correction, repair, or replacement due to criminal activity and to notify the local police department of suspected perpetrators. Please note that convictions may carry severe penalties, including fines, jail time, and deportation.

Identification Cards

Pioneer Academy will provide each Upper School student with ID. Students are required to have their pictures taken for their student ID cards. These IDs are to be used as proof of enrollment and identification as an upper school student. Any student who fails to comply with school requirements will be disciplined accordingly. A fee may apply to replace lost cards.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures grades 5-12

Pick-ups and drop-offs are at the South Entrance unless posted otherwise. Traffic patterns, signs, and speed limits should be observed at all times, particularly observing the speed limit and pedestrian crossing signs. Drivers

should remain in their vehicles while in designated drop off areas. If a driver needs to enter the building their vehicle should be left in the designated visitor parking area.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures grades K-4

K-4 students should be dropped off in the designated area appropriate for their class as directed by the school administration per written guidelines. When picking a student up at dismissal time, please use the driveway at the front of the building. Students will only be allowed to enter or leave school if they are escorted by the parent(s), a person authorized by parent(s), or facility personnel. All instructions and traffic guidelines should be followed, particularly observing the speed limit and pedestrian crossing signs

After-school care parents must come into the building in the evening when picking their children up and escort them from the building. If the person picking up a child appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, another authorized person will be called to pick up both the child and the adult.

Pioneer Academy will honor a custodial court order for pick up only after receiving a copy of the order to keep on file.

Early Dismissal/ Pick-Up

Students that leave school with permission prior to the end of the last class period are considered to have left early. Parents are asked to send the request for early dismissal prior to the day of early dismissal, when possible.

When a parent arrives for early pick-up, they must enter the school lobby and inform the receptionist. They will then sign the student out and the student will meet them with their belongings. Students that leave school early are not permitted to return for any reason unless they are provided approval by their Dean. This includes clubs, extracurriculares, athletic events…etc.

Early Dismissal/ Pick-up by Non-Parent/Guardian

Parents wishing to have their children transported by another non-parent/guardian prior to the end of the day must notify the school via e-mail. The person picking up the student is required to enter the lobby and sign the student out as the legal guardian is required. Identification may be required at times for a non-guardian pick -up.

Early Dismissal for a student-driver and students leaving a student driver or carshare

Parents must request permission for a student driver to leave early from school in their own vehicle. Students wishing to leave early with a student driver or using a ride share service (Such as lyft, Uber, Taxicab etc) must also have parental permission emailed to the Dean of Student or receptionist to be permitted to leave school campus.

Late Pick-Up & Penalty Fees

For day students not signed up for after-school study hall, a late fee of $5.00 will be charged to parents failing to pick up their children within five minutes of the end of dismissal time. For pick-ups times that are more than five minutes late, another $1.00 will be charged for each additional minute that parents are late to pick their children up. Students not enrolled in

After-school study hall must be picked up at dismissal time. Habitual late pick-ups will require a parent meeting with the administration (Dean of Students Office).

School Transportation & Student Vehicles

Pioneer Academy provides school buses and school transportation vehicles for school trips, events, and activities and athletic events. However, these services are not available for daily student pick-up for school arrivals.

Students must maintain proper behavior at all times while utilizing this school resource, as improper behavior may cause breaches in safety protocol and lead to serious injury or death. Failure to observe respectful and safe behavior while being transported in a vehicle may result in disciplinary consequences and/or loss of transportation privileges.

In addition to the school's code of conduct, the following guidelines are expected to be observed by all students on school-sponsored transportation.

Remain in your seat at all times

No eating or drinking.

Maintain your voice at an appropriate level

Keep the aisles clear or bookbags, body parts and personal belongings

Do not extend any body parts outside vehicle windows.

Do not throw things in the vehicle or out of the windows.

Do not deface the vehicle, and do not leave trash in the vehicle.

Do not exit via rear/emergency doors unless directed to by the driver or school staff.

Report any strange activity by students, bus drivers, or staff to an adult upon arrival at school or by telephone upon arrival at home.

Student Driving Privileges Driving

Privileges and Student Vehicles

Driving and parking privileges are given to licensed 11th and 12th grade domestic students only. Driving privileges may be granted only after those eligible have submitted the necessary forms to drive and park on the Pioneer Academy campus. Each application is subject to approval and each student driver will meet with the Dean of students to review their driving application and privileges. Students who have the privilege of driving on campus must meet Pioneer Academy's expectations for safe and proper behavior and must register their vehicles with the Office of the Dean of Students. Please note that seniors are given priority when driving privileges are granted. Unregistered vehicles may be subject to fines and towed at the owner's expense. Day students that drive to school are expected to park in designated locations, where their cars should remain until they are permitted to leave for the day.

The school will not coordinate or track students that wish to arrive or depart from school with one another. In these instances, the student's parents are responsible for coordinating family car pools and ensuring the timely and safe travels between home and school. The school will not be liable for the legal operation of any student-driven vehicles that have not been properly registered with the Dean Students.

The regulations associated with driving privilege on campus are a combination of state laws and school policies. For complete details about campus driving rules and fees, please visit the Dean of Students prior to driving or parking on campus.

No student is permitted to visit parked cars at any time of the school day without permission. The school reserves the right to revoke driving privileges for excessive tardiness or absences, poor conduct, poor academic performance, improper vehicle operation, or failure to adhere to any

on-campus driving guidelines. Please note that no students may park their vehicles on campus overnight. Student drivers must follow the school's attendance policy for entering school or leaving school early as well as driving another student off campus.

General Use of School Facilities and Rooms

All facilities in all areas of the school, including classrooms, recreational and fitness rooms, and dormitory rooms, are governed by school rules and by the faculty and staff assigned to them.

Students are obligated to follow the rules the staff members set for the facilities and rooms, including dining halls and cafeterias. Furniture must not be rearranged without faculty permission and may not be used in a manner inconsistent with the purpose of its construction. Failure to follow school rules or heed the directives and warnings of staff and faculty will result in disciplinary action.

Classrooms

School classrooms are designed to be environments of learning. With the exception of water, no food or drink, of any kind, including gum, is allowed in the classroom for any reason without permission from the administration. Exceptions to this rule will usually coincide with special school-wide events. Students are expected to utilize trash cans and refrain from leaving trash in, on, or around desks or on the classroom floor. Students must also keep their belongings with them at all times. Classrooms should not be used for the storage of student belongings. Items left unattended in classrooms may be collected by sanitation, security, or other staff members.

Students may not disrupt classes to search classrooms for lost items.

Lockers

Lockers are provided as a convenience to students. Each student will be assigned a locker which must be kept clean, orderly, and locked at all times. Students will receive locker numbers from the administrators. Students are cautioned not to give out locker combinations to anyone since the locker is to be used only by the individuals to whom it is assigned. Students allowing others access to their lockers not only violate school regulations but also compromise their own security. Students are responsible for their own valuables.Please note the following guidelines:

Lockers must be closed and locked at all times with no locks pre-set to the combination.

Students jamming or otherwise disabling the locking mechanism of the lockers will be subject to disciplinary action. Tampering with locking mechanisms may damage or render the locker inoperable. This will incur fines to return the locker to operable condition.

Carrying large amounts of money to school is neither necessary nor recommended. Talking about money in one's possession or "flashing" bills is both dangerous and irresponsible.

It is the student's responsibility to be prepared for classes with the proper books, supplies, and homework at the appropriate times. "Forgotten" items may be retrieved at the teachers discretion. It is not guaranteed.

Please note that school officials reserve the right to inspect student lockers for contraband. Students should have no expectation of privacy of anything stored in a locker and school officials may search lockers with or without reasonable suspicion. Lockers may be checked at any time, as detailed in the Security section of this handbook.

Student Restrooms

Pioneer Academy makes every effort to keep the changing rooms and restrooms clean and sanitary. School restrooms remain part of the school's property and should be respected. Students are obligated to maintain proper decorum and hygiene in the lavatories by adhering to the following rules.

In addition to the school's code of conduct, the following guidelines are expected to be observed by all students when visiting the restroom:

Use only the restrooms which are designated for grade level.

Practice sanitary and polite habits:

Flush toilets and urinals after use.

Do not intentionally clog toilets, urinals, or sinks.

Place all used paper towels in trash receptacles and flush all used tissues down the toilet. DO NOT leave paper of any kind on floors, toilets, or sinks.

Report any damaged or non-working lavatory facility to the Main Office

The use of any substance material in the restroom is strictly prohibited.

While the use of the lavatory during class time requires permission from the class instructor, use between classes is permitted if it does not make the student tardy. Lavatories are not social halls; students are not permitted to gather in or utilize the lavatories for any other purposes than that for which they were designed. After using the facilities, students must wash their hands and return immediately to their classes.

Hallways and Corridors

Students are expected to pass from class to class in an orderly manner. Running and horseplay are not permitted as such actions may lead to injury and are subject to disciplinary action. Once students have reached their classroom, they are to enter the room and remain there until the end of class. No student is to leave the classroom without permission after the start of the period.

Smart Pass Use for Leaving class

Students are required to obtain a smart pass when leaving the classroom. Obtaining a pass begins with permission from the teacher. Once permission is granted, the student can create a digital pass, leave for their destination and once they return they should end the pass. If a student is not given permission to leave the classroom they should not begin to open a smart pass. No student is permitted to move about the building during instructional time without opening a pass.

Food, Beverage & Treat Policies

Students are not permitted to bring food, other than water into a classroom. Morning beverages, such as coffee or tea, will not be permitted into the classroom. Reusable water receptacles can be used as long as they can be sealed/closed for storage in a bookbag, and are smaller than 24 ounces. Large drinking containers with straws

that cannot be sealed are not permitted. The administration reserves the right to confiscate any container used by students at any time without question.

School Meal Policy (Lunch & Daily Snacks)

Parents are responsible for providing a bagged lunch (or purchasing it from New Line Catering) and two snacks for grades K-2 and one snack for grades 3 and 4.

In grades 5-12, it is the family's responsibility to register a student for a meal plan through New Line Catering or to provide a student with a bagged lunch or money to purchase a meal.

For grades K-4, if the child's lunch does not meet the nutritional requirements necessary for children or the child does not have a meal, the classroom teacher will assist in providing the student with a meal. A parent may incur fees for this service when necessary. Lunches and snacks must be labeled with the student's first and last name. No swapping of home-prepared food between students is permitted.

PA suggests that the content of bagged lunches and snacks meet the USDA's following guidelines: Updates to the School Nutrition Standards

Student Snack Time

Snack time will be provided twice per day for grades K-2 and once for grades 3 and 4. Depending on a grade's specific lunchtime, they will receive either a morning or an afternoon snack. Lunch and snack times vary, so classroom teachers will inform parents of their student's specific times.

Snacks during After-school Care

Time will be provided during the after-school care program for a late afternoon snack per schedule. If your student arrives after lunch or snack time, he/she will wait until the next meal or snack time to eat. Students are encouraged to use this time to share their experiences with each other. Manners are taught, reinforced, and practiced during this time as well.

Please list on the registration form any food allergies your child may have. If your child needs a special diet, the parent is responsible for supplying the proper food and informing PA staff in writing. If a student consistently refuses to eat during mealtimes, parents will be informed.

Dining Hall Cleanliness and Behavior

Maintenance of the Pioneer Academy Dining Hall is the responsibility of everyone who uses it. All students are expected to clean their table and dispose of any waste created at and around their places. Students must report all spills or potentially slippery floor areas to the dining hall staff.

Dishes, mugs, glasses, or silverware may not be removed from the dining hall. Please note that except for the picnic tables outside the cafeteria, no food or drink may be brought outside the dining or Pio Cafe areas. No trays from the cafeteria should be moved to the Pio Cafe area. No dining materials may be left outside.

In addition to the school's code of conduct, the following guidelines are expected to be observed by all students while in the dining hall.

K-4 Students should remain seated at all times unless they raise their hand and are given permission by an adult to leave their seat.

Garbage and tables should be cleared prior to the end of the period and before leaving for recess or other activities.

Electronics should be used appropriately and independently

Voices and activities should be an appropriate volume

- Birthday Treats & Invitations
- Lower School:

Students in lower school are allowed to bring in treats to celebrate their birthday during their afternoon snack time. However, enough treats must be provided for the entire grade. You may contact your child's teacher about celebrating your child's birthday at school. If your child celebrates his/her birthday in the class, students are welcome to bring treats (cupcakes, cookies, etc.). We ask that all treats include an ingredient list. Party favors are discouraged at school as they create a distraction. We know that you will understand our request that invitations to birthday parties only be brought to school to be distributed if every student in the class is invited. Parents are not allowed as visitors in the classroom, and all items brought must be compliant with the school policy.

Middle School

Students in Grades 5th through 8th are allowed to bring in treats to celebrate their birthday during their lunch period. However, enough treats must be provided for the entire grade. The front office can provide parents with the correct number of students. Treats can be dropped off in the front office with the student's name, period, and teacher clearly indicated on the treats. We ask that all treats include an ingredient list. We know that you will understand our request that invitations to birthday parties only be brought to school to be distributed if every student in the grade is invited.

Food Fundraisers

Occasionally, PA school clubs, school academic teams, and/or the PA PTO will offer treats, foods, and/or beverages for sale to raise money to support enrichment activities, purchase equipment, charitable endeavors, and/or school competition expenses. These must be overseen by an adviser and pre-approved by the administration. The school may choose to participate in outside food vendor fundraisers where a portion of the purchases raised at that vendor's facility would be donated to the school. All fundraising events will be publicized via pre-approved posters, stickers, paper notices, email, or the school newsletter. These types of food purchases are 100% optional and up to the discretion of each student and family. Further, these purchases should not be considered replacements for nutritious school lunches or snacks.

Classroom and/or School Celebration Foods

At the end of difficult units, quarters, semesters, as a reward teachers may organize and allow their students to participate in pizza, popcorn, and/or a frozen treat parties. Students may be asked to bring in $1 to $10 depending on the size of the class to fund their optional participation in these activities.

Occasionally, students will be asked to bring in dishes to enrich a school lesson, such as Spanish food for a Spanish class. This is not mandatory, but it is fun for the students and greatly appreciated.

If homemade dishes are brought to school for a class activity, please provide a complete list of ingredients with the dish. Teachers will apprise parents of the class if there are any student food allergies. If any, please refrain from using those ingredients in donated dishes so that all students may be able to participate and enjoy the class activity equally.

Food Purchase during the school day

Students are required to bring cash or credit cards for school lunch or snack purchases. Digital payment such as Applepay or Venmo will not be accepted by the school vendors.

Food Purchase and Deliveries

Upper school students may have food delivered for lunch and the food must be eaten during the lunch period only. The ordering and delivery of the food must not interfere with class instruction. All food is to be collected on the table designated at the front desk. If there is a conflict with the food delivery that interferes with class time, please see the Dean of Student to help resolve the matter. Food delivered during class time is subject to confiscation and forfeiture.

Food delivery apps that require a student's pin should not be used if the food is delivered during class time. In these cases the driver may opt to take the food as a pin was not provided. Food that is missing or lost due to being left in locations other than the lobby cannot be recovered. These events occur at the users/student's expense.

For food delivery service, please specify the exact location where a driver should deliver the food. You may use the following:

"Please deliver to 164 Totowa Road, Pioneer Academy, and leave it with the receptionist on the table labeled 'food delivery.' Please be sure you are at the school and not the warehouse across the lot. Thank you."

Canteen Visits

The canteen has been provided by the school as a convenience for students. Usage of the canteen is a privilege. Please note that students may use the canteen to purchase items and food only during their lunch and break times. Students will not be permitted to leave class to visit the canteen. Please note that no food or drink may be brought outside the dining area and into the classroom.

Non-Food Purchase and Delivery

Students may purchase items for delivery to Pioneer Academy provided that none delivered items are prohibited by school policy and school rules. The student to whom the item is addressed is the only person who may claim the delivered item. In addition to prohibited items, no perishables, unapproved health/fitness aids (e.g., dietary supplements, herbs, drugs, medicines, pharmaceuticals), poisons (including pesticides and herbicides), toxic or radioactive materials, biological materials, contagions, or other potentially harmful materials may be purchased or delivered. Pioneer does not assume responsibility for lost or stolen delivered items.

Exchange of Money for Items or service

It is not permitted to exchange money for services or goods while at Pioneer Academy. No items should be sold on campus unless preapproved and under the direction of a faculty adviser.

Students that are found to participate in the exchange of money for goods or services of any kind will be reprimanded. It is highly suggested that students do not trade items without supervision or causes and also do not engage in the lending of items or money, as the terms of these agreements are not the school's responsibilities.

Fitness Center

The fitness center is open to upper school students during posted hours and for teacher-lead middle school activities. PA reserves the right to update the hours of usage as needed throughout the academic year. Every member of the Pioneer Academy community is expected to adhere to the rules of use, be considerate of others, and contribute to keeping it safe, clean, and orderly. As with all machinery, those who use the fitness equipment must be trained in proper safety protocols prior to use of the facilities. Any questions should be directed to the Director of Athletics.

Appropriate Use of Electronic Devices (Personal computers, chromebooks, cell phones, audio/recording devices, etc)

Personal Devices as Instructional Tools

Chromebooks will be provided for lower school and middle school students only. Students will be responsible for the cost of replacing lost, stolen, or damaged devices. Upper School has implemented a “bring your own device” policy for its students. Therefore Chromebooks will not be provided to upper school students. All upper school students must have, bring, and maintain their own notebook/laptop computers to school every day. A fully charged computer is necessary to be prepared for learning. It is the responsibility of the student to have a charged and functioning computer and to have the necessary/appropriate accessories for learning, especially charging chords.

Failure to bring a computer to school may preclude participation in classes or result in the inability to complete important assignments. If students have some extenuating circumstances that prevent them from obtaining a computer independently, please contact the Dean of Students prior to the start of the school year.

Loss or Theft of Personal Electronic devices

Maintenance and tracking of personal electronic devices is the student's responsibility. Therefore, students are strongly urged not to leave personal items unattended anywhere in the school. While the school will make efforts to locate missing items, the school is not responsible for lost and/or stolen property. Any items of value should be placed in lockers and locked when possible, and locker combinations should never be shared.

Appropriate Use of Electronic Devices While on School Campus:

The use of personal electronic devices during school hours is limited to educational purposes. Students must adhere to the rules governing the use of electronic devices and school resources at all times while on the Pioneer Academy campus. Students misusing personal electronic devices such as tablets, notebooks, laptops, gaming systems, smartwatches and similar devices in ways abusive to school resources or in a way that is disruptive to the educational environment will be subject to disciplinary action. This includes the use of electronic devices for personal activity or personal communication. The school supports students' access to information sources but reserves the right to limit in-school use to materials appropriate for educational purposes.

The school’s electronic property such as equipment in classrooms and labs, Media Center, or Laptop Carts should be respected and cared for. Any mishandling or tampering with electronics, or systems may result in losing computer privileges at school. In addition, disciplinary action.

Any damage requiring repair to any school property including hardware or software will result in financial charges being assessed. Students shall not alter or attempt to alter school or private property, including technology hardware and software. Students may only bring computer software to campus to be used on school computers with prior approval from the school administration.

Middle School Chromebook Policy

Laser Pointing Devices

These devices project a powerful, intense, and potentially damaging point of light. They are not permitted on school property at any time. Any student found to have a laser pointing device will have the device immediately confiscated, and the student will be subject to out-of-school suspension.

Network Usage

All wireless network access must be authorized by the administration or the network administrator. Unauthorized attempts to access the wireless network are prohibited and will be met with disciplinary action.

School computer systems and networks constitute an expensive and valuable resource and are provided for students as part of the school's academic program. Students are encouraged to become proficient in the use of computers as a means of enhancing their educational experience.

However, the capacity of this resource to fulfill all the legitimate academic and administrative needs of the students, faculty, and staff may, at times, be limited.

The school reserves the right to govern the use of its computer and network resources and to restrict student access to usage directly related to the students' academic programs in order to maintain efficient functionality. Computer misconduct can result in restrictions, revocation of computer access privileges, or further disciplinary action.

The School also reserves the right to determine what usage practices constitute violations of rules or inappropriate use, including, but not limited to, theft and harassment. School personnel may monitor student accounts, files, and/or log-in sessions for appropriate management purposes, including the performance of archival and recovery procedures, system performance evaluations, the ensuring of system integrity and security, and other routine operations. Students should have no expectation of privacy in anything sent or received on the network.

Hardware

The school and dorm facilities are provided with internet access through wi-fi. Personal computers with Windows or Macintosh operating systems are the only devices that may be attached to the school network. Students are not allowed to attach routers, hubs, switches, or wireless access points without permission. Student computers are not to be set up as servers for web, FTP, email, or peer-to-peer file sharing.

Printers may be installed locally on computers but should not be shared across the network. Attempting to bypass network security, impair the function of the network, or bypass restrictions set by the network administrator is forbidden. This includes, but is not limited to, accessing network switches, servers, or filtering and packet-shaping hardware. It also includes setting up wireless networks on administrative jacks that do not shut off or circumventing protocols to facilitate network access by devices that have been denied access by the network administrator.

Telephones and Mobile Communications Devices

Generally, telephones are prohibited during the school day and must be shut off and stored appropriately as detailed by the school and administration. Pioneer Academy is not responsible for any items lost or misplaced. As a general rule, we highly discourage the usage of cell phone devices. Parents in need

Lower School Phone Policy

Students in grades K-4 are not allowed to use cell phones, smartwatches, or cameras during school hours, after-school care services, field trips, events, or activities. Teachers have the right to confiscate electronic devices if students use them during the school day or contact the school administration about the incident.

Middle School Phone Policy

We are committed to creating an environment that minimizes distractions and promotes meaningful learning and interactions. To support this goal, we have implemented a phone-free policy for all middle school students. By limiting phone use, we aim to enhance student focus, encourage active class participation, and foster stronger peer connections. This policy supports digital well-being and helps ensure that students are fully engaged during their time at school

For 7th and 8th-grade students, this includes the use of Yondr pouches to securely store their phones during the school day.

Student Yondr Policy

While 5th and 6th-grade students do not use Yondr pouches, they are also not permitted to use cell phones during the school day. Phones must be turned off and stored in lockers or kept in backpacks throughout the day.

Upper School Phone/ Device Policy

Electronic devices are any devices used to communicate electronically in any way including cell phones, smartwatches, meta-eyewear tablets, PC's etc… Pioneer Academy reserves the right to implement a new electronics system and policy at any time, it may include the collection, confiscation or storage of phones as needed.

The use of telephones is permitted before 8:15am and after 4:30pm, in designated areas only. Cell phones may not be used during instructional time or for making purchases. For these needs, students may use cash or credit/debit cards. Mobile communications devices may be confiscated if handled outside of designated times and locations (including club time). Classrooms, hallways and restrooms are never designated areas while The PioCafe, Cafeteria and Lobbies are at varying times. Designated phone-use areas are clearly labeled throughout the school and must be obeyed.

Use of Yondr Pouch

Cellular devices, tablets and smartwatches are prohibited from 8:15 to 4:30pm. Phones and smartwatches must be locked in a functioning Yondr pouch. Students who neglect to remove the items and store them may be asked to leave the pouch in the Dean's office.

Students that do not have their phone on any given day may receive a pass to use during routine Yondr checks. Students that continuously arrive at school without a cell phone will be asked to submit a notice by a parent.

For safety and proper management, a written notice must be sent to the Dean of Students if a student will not be bringing a phone to school.

Use of communication devices during field trips/outing

The use of cell phones during a school outing or field trip is at the teacher's discretion. Students may be required to keep their devices locked and stored during a field trip.

When a student is permitted to use their communication device, it is to be used responsibly and in line with the school's electronics policy. Students using communication devices irresponsibly may be asked to store it or submit it to a chaperone.. Students who abuse the privilege to wear their smartwatch, cell phone, or Yondr pouch will be asked to remove the items and store them or may be asked to leave the pouch in the Dean's office.

Emergency Communication and Cellular Communication with Parents and Students

In case of emergencies, a school administrator will communicate with parents via digital messaging such as mass text messages, robocalls, or emails. Students are asked to refrain from communicating with families during drills or circumstances where official communication is needed. The student may consult the Main Office staff if a telephone call must be made during the school day due to a personal problem or an emergency. Students are not permitted to handle any cellular device or engage in messaging applications on any electronic device during class hours. If a parent wishes to communicate with a student during class times, they may contact the school office to make arrangements.

Students are prohibited from using classroom phones at any time. Calls of an urgent nature that may involve interrupting a class to deliver a message to a child must be directed to the dean of students for approval. To avoid class interruptions and confusion, we expect that all families are familiar with their child's after-school activities and have arranged for transportation to and from home.

Recording Devices

Photos and videos are prohibited during school hours, and taking photos and videos outside of school while in school uniform is discouraged. Students and/or school staff members should not be subject to having a photo, video, or audio recording taken of them for any purpose without the consent of the student, the student's parent, and/or the school staff member. Taking photos or recording without such consent is strictly prohibited, regardless of the intention of the photo or recording in question. Using the Pioneer Academy Logo, Name, or names of its affiliate in any social media or internet platform is strictly prohibited. Any students suspected or reported to engage or affiliated with such behavior will be subject to review and may suffer disciplinary consequences that include detention, suspensions or expulsion.

Other Electronic Devices

Students may be allowed or required to use certain electronic devices for classes. These devices may include calculators, audio recording devices, electronic dictionaries, e-readers, or other similar devices. Approval for the use of such devices will be determined by the class teachers and the administration. Unauthorized use may result in confiscation and academic penalties. If the device has not been designated a requirement for the class, students must secure permission before use in the classroom. The use of any electronic device, such as smart watches are, at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

School Events, Excursions, and Off-Campus Activities

Academic and Social Field Trips

Pioneer Academy students may have the opportunity to go on field trips at various times throughout the school year, and attending them is a valuable privilege that offers students exciting ways to learn. Some of these trips may be required by a class (e.g., a trip to a history museum), and some of them may be optional (e.g., cultural trips to foreign countries, pre-season sports trips during Spring Break). Because the well-being of all students is of the utmost concern, participation in field trips is a privilege that may be denied for some students due to

behavioral or academic reasons. In most cases, the school will arrange transportation to and from the event; parents and students will be notified of any exceptions.

Specific safety rules will apply to these activities. For all field trips, the following rules will apply:

Students must return the Field Trip Permission Slip with a parent or guardian's signature by the required date. Phone calls will not be accepted as permission.

Students must wear school uniforms unless otherwise specified.

Students must abide by Pioneer Academy student code of conduct and all Pioneer Academy handbooks while on the field trip.

Students must follow the rules and guidelines provided by the trip advisor and respect all faculty, staff, and dorm assistants.

Student luggage, backpacks, or belongings are subject to search.

Only teachers and approved dorm advisors are permitted on field trips.

Parents must meet their children at the scheduled time of return if they return from a field trip after school dismissal time or when school is not in session. If students return from a field trip prior to school dismissal time, they will be sent to their appropriate classes. (For overnight field trips, a separate set of guidelines will be provided by the administration prior to the event.)

Failure to observe the rules and protocols of school travel will result in disciplinary action and possible revocation of future travel privileges with the school.

Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Participation in team sports, clubs, and other extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. Such privileges may be revoked due to behavioral or academic reasons. These activities may entail travel to the forum of competition. In most cases, the school will provide transportation. School bus and vehicle rules will be in effect. Participants must remember that they are representatives of the school and that breach of rules will incur disciplinary action.

Please note that participation in school trips may incur additional fees not included in regular tuition payments or supply fees.

Students who have legitimate reasons for not attending an extracurricular activity can refer to the guidelines outlined in the Absence portion of the handbook.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

General K-12 Academic Policies

Code of Academic Integrity

Pioneer Academy students are committed to their education and uphold the areas of academic integrity at high regard. They are accountable for their work and do not attempt to take credit for work researched, completed or submitted by anyone other than themselves. Pioneer Academy students understand the importance of growing

in knowledge and learning to apply what they have learned to practice in their ever-growing world and daily lives.

Academic Dishonesty: General Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating on tests or any other types of attempts at deception to get credit without required academic effort is unacceptable. Each teacher sets his/her own standards of behavior for the classroom, and students are expected to know the standards and procedures for each of their classes and the expectations of their teachers. Plagiarism, defined as the unauthorized taking of another person's ideas or written work without giving appropriate credit to the author, constitutes taking a word, phrase, or idea directly (direct copy of text) or indirectly (paraphrase of material) without proper citation or credit given to the original author. Types of conduct that will be deemed plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following:

giving or receiving answers to homework

giving or receiving answers to questions on tests or quizzes

taking credit for work that was completed by someone else, including other students, internet resources, AI, and any other source material not created by the submitter

When a teacher or administrator determines that a student has engaged in any form of academic dishonesty, the student should expect disciplinary consequences as outlined in the disciplinary portion of this handbook.

Technology Policies

Purpose: Technology at our school is provided to enhance the educational experience and support academic learning. All use must be consistent with educational objectives and school policies.

Acceptable Use: Students must use technology responsibly, ethically, and legally. Any activities that interfere with the operation of school technology or the learning environment are prohibited.

Access and Privacy: Students should respect the privacy of others and only access their own accounts. Sharing passwords or attempting to access others' accounts or information is strictly forbidden.

Content and Conduct: Accessing or sharing inappropriate, harmful, or offensive content is not allowed. All communications and online activities should reflect respect and integrity.

Monitoring and Consequences: The school reserves the right to monitor technology use and will enforce policies through appropriate disciplinary actions. Violations may result in loss of technology privileges and further disciplinary measures.

Digital Citizenship: Students are expected to be good digital citizens, understanding the impact of their online behavior and contributing positively to the digital community.

Exams

Personal technology devices, except approved calculators in appropriate moments of an exam, are never to be used during exams.

When assessments/exams are being administered, students are responsible for ensuring their devices are stored in a backpack or other inaccessible location.

Any student found with an unapproved device available during an exam will be subject to an academic penalty and disciplinary action.

If any student was not able to get any exam, s/he should contact the teacher for make-up possibilities.

Liability and Enforcement

The School's IT resources are provided "as is" and "as available." The school disclaims all representations and warranties, express or implied, concerning the IT resources and the content.

The school shall not be responsible for the actions of individuals outside the school constituency or for the quality and content of information they make available actively or passively.

The school shall not be liable for disruption of external networks and computer systems as the result of activities initiated by Users of School IT Resources.

The administration of the school reserves the right to monitor all activity generated by students' use of technology equipment. Any User who becomes aware of any misuse of the school's IT resources should immediately report the matter to the Dean of Students. Violations of this policy will be investigated and may result in suspension or revocation of computer, network, or service access; discipline, up to and including suspension, expulsion; and/or legal prosecution, in accordance with school policy and the fullest extent of the permissible law.

Parents have an option of opting out if Pioneer Academy is notified within 1 week of this notice in writing by contacting the Dean of Students directly. Please note that we may not be able to provide alternate instruction for the students.

Pioneer Academy reserves the right to alter and update the policy as needed, with or without prior notification. You may refer to the latest updates sent via emails for detailed information.

Student Information System (Veracross)

Parents can see their children's academic improvement, daily homework and assignments, projects, discipline records, and attendance records through PA SIS (Veracross). At the beginning of each school year, parents will be provided a username and password, which will provide access to ONLY their student's records. We strongly encourage parents to visit PA SIS (Veracross) daily to stay informed of their child's progress. It is the parent's responsibility to provide the school with updates regarding a family's contact information or personal information that is requested through the Veracross and school system.

Readmission Policies

Please refer to the document below regarding our readmission criteria and re-enrollment process. Readmission Policies

GPA Calculations

Grade Point Averages (GPAs) are calculated by converting letter grades to grade points, weighting these by the number of credits each course is worth, and then averaging these weighted values.

Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
Points	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.3	1.0	0.7	0.0

Academic Policies Specific to Lower School

Promotion and Retention

In order to successfully be promoted to the next grade, students must earn a 70% or higher in each of their core courses (Math, English Language, Arts, and Science).

For any courses with an average less than 70%, students must complete an online equivalent course over summer. Failure to do so will result in retention of the student for the next year.

Academic Support and Enrichment Learning

Please refer to the document below regarding our academic support and enrichment programs. Academic Support and Enrichment Learning

Elective Change Requests

During the first 15 days of school, parents may request to change their child's elective courses. If the course change is possible, the Director of Academics will complete the requested schedule change. With the exception of the first marking period, only elective change requests that are made within 5 days of the first day of the marking period will be considered.

Academic Policies Specific to Middle School

Graded Assignments and Assessments

Students will have midterm and final exams. The midterm exam will take place halfway through the year and will cover all material taught from the beginning of the year up to that point. The final exam will be administered at the end of the year and will assess students on the content covered throughout the entire academic year. These exams are designed to measure long-term retention and mastery of the curriculum.

Both midterms and finals will each count for 10% of the final course grade.

Honor Roll Recognitions and Academic Awards

Leadership Awards - Middle school teachers will collectively recognize one student from each grade with The Pioneer Academy Leadership Award for their positive contributions to the school environment.

Honor Roll - GPA equal to or greater than 3.5 but less than 3.75

High Honor Roll - GPA equal to or greater than or equal to 3.75 but less than 4.0

Head of School Distinction - GPA equal to 4.0 (Straight A's)

Subject Awards - Subject teachers will use their own criteria to determine the recipient of any subject award.

8th Grade Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Valedictorian and Salutatorian candidates must demonstrate high moral standards and leadership skills to the entire Pioneer Academy class body. Candidates who uphold these values will be awarded recognition primarily on GPA. In the case of a tie, a core class percentage average will serve to break the tie.

Any student that accumulates more than 20 demerits during the year may be ineligible for the Valedictorian and Salutatorian recognition.

Homework Policy

All homework assignments will be posted on Google Classroom. It is the responsibility of the student to check each classroom nightly for posted assignments.

Middle school students should expect an average of between 30 to 60 minutes of homework per school night. Students may opt to join Homework Club at any time if they feel overwhelmed with the workload.

Students with homework grades lower than 70% in more than one class may be enrolled in Homework Club once or twice a week.

Late Submission Policy

Assignments not submitted by the posted deadline will receive a 20% deduction.

Any assignment more than one week late will not be accepted.

Absence Policy

Students who are absent are expected to complete any in-class or homework assignments posted on Google Classroom by the normal deadline unless specified otherwise by the classroom teacher. Students who are absent on the day of an assessment will be expected to take the assessment on the day that they return to class.

Cheating and Plagiarism Policy

Pioneer Academy has a zero-tolerance policy for cheating, plagiarism, or the unauthorized use of artificial intelligence. Students caught cheating will be given a zero on the assignment or assessment and will receive the predetermined number of demerits points for the incident.

STUDENT USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming an important part of education, college, and the workplace. AI tools can help students explore ideas, practice skills, conduct research, receive feedback, and approach problems in new ways.

At Pioneer Academy, we want students to learn how to use AI responsibly rather than simply how to use AI.

AI can be a valuable learning tool, but it must never become a substitute for a student's own thinking, effort, creativity, or understanding.

The central principle of this policy is:

AI should enhance learning, not replace learning.

AI use is therefore permitted only when it is consistent with the expectations established by the teacher and the academic integrity standards of Pioneer Academy:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use and Academic Integrity Policy

Elective Change Requests

During the first 20 days of school , parents may request to change their child’s elective courses. If the course change is possible, the Director of Academics will complete the requested schedule change.

With the exception of the first marking period, only elective change requests that are made within 7 days of the first day of the marking period will be considered.

Intervention Policy

Teachers are responsible for informing parents via email if their child's grades have dropped below 70%.

If a student has less than a 70% in two or more courses, the student will be enrolled in Homework Club and the teacher's office hours at least once a week.

The school will try to arrange tutoring services from a designated National Honors Society upper school student.

An intervention meeting will be scheduled with the parents of any student that fails two or more classes in the first marking period. During the meeting, teachers and parents will develop a plan of action to help improve the student's academic performance.

Retention Policy

Any student whose average grade is below 60% will fail that course for the year. Students who fail a core class will have to recover the credits before moving to the subject's next grade level.

Students who fail two or more core classes and do not recover credits over the summer will have to repeat the grade

Academic Policies Specific to Upper School

Upper School Graduation Requirements

PIONEER ACADEMY UPPER SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS		
Courses	College Prep Diploma	Honors College Prep Diploma
English/Language Arts	20 credits	20 credits
Mathematics	15 credits	20 credits*
Science	15 credits(Min. 2 courses with lab)	15 credits(Min. 2 courses with lab)
Social Studies	15 credits	20 credits**
21st Century Life & Careers	5 credits	5 credits
PE/Health	10 credits	10 credits
World Languages***	10 credits	20 credits
Financial Literacy	2.5 credits	2.5 credits
Fine Arts	5 credits	5 credits
Electives	32.5 credits	22.5 credits
Senior Capstone Project	1 credit	1 credit
TOTAL	131 Credits	141 Credits
GPA	NA	Minimum 3.50 out of 4.00

ELL students will earn a maximum of 5 English/Language Arts credits during their ESL prep year. All remaining ESL credits will be counted towards Electives.

English/Language Arts: Only certain courses will count towards meeting core requirements.

*Every student must take or show proficiency in Algebra-1, Geometry, and Algebra-2

**5 credits of Social Studies can be replaced with Science credits.

***Students whose native language is other than English may take a waiver test in their native language to be exempted from the World Languages.

As part of Pioneer Academy's commitment to academic excellence and college readiness, all seniors are required to successfully complete a Capstone Project prior to graduation.

Senior Year Early Leave Policy

Seniors at Pioneer Academy may be eligible to apply for early leave before the official end of the school year. To qualify, they must meet the requirements for the Upper School Diploma and demonstrate a complete, high-quality education as determined by the Pioneer administration and the State of New Jersey. Approval for early leave is subject to strict criteria, with rare and limited exceptions. For more information, please refer to the link below:

Conditions and Terms for Seniors Early Leave

Early Graduation Consideration

Pioneer may permit students to graduate early in extenuating circumstances if the following criteria are met.

The student must be in 9th or 10th grade at the time of application. Students in 11th grade may apply but will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the School's administration based on academic history, ability to meet graduation requirements, and other relevant factors. 8th-grade students who meet the eligibility criteria may participate in the honors program, allowing them to take high school courses that count toward early graduation requirements.

At the time of application, the student must have an unweighted GPA of 3.90 or higher, verified through official transcripts.

Middle school applicants (8th grade) must provide MAP test scores (Math and Reading) demonstrating academic readiness. (90% and above)

Upper school applicants (9th–11th (incoming) grades) must provide PSAT scores as part of their application to demonstrate college readiness. (90% and above)

The student must have a clean or satisfactory discipline record, with no severe infractions or patterns of disruptive behavior. The administration reserves the right to assess this criterion based on school records and disciplinary reports.

The student must submit a minimum of two teacher recommendations from their current school. These recommendations should evaluate the student's academic ability, work ethic, and readiness for accelerated graduation.

The students must submit a personal statement (500–750 words) explaining their motivation for pursuing early graduation, future goals, and how they plan to handle the challenges of an accelerated program.

9th-grade applicants must have earned at least 40 academic credits by the time of application.

10th-grade applicants must have earned at least 80 academic credits by the time of application.

Course Selection

The Guidance Office distributes a course selection table every May to the current student body. The students should discuss the course selection table with their parents/guardians and finalize their courses with their guidance counselor for the upcoming year. After students complete the selection and approval process with their counselors, they may only change their courses if their change request does not present any conflicts. Certain administrative changes may still occur to adapt to general scheduling restrictions and other unanticipated eventualities or to facilitate graduation requirements.

DROPPING AND ADDING COURSES

All students are expected to choose courses carefully during the course selection process. Schedules are planned according to student requests, and students must abide by their choices. The administration determines staffing requirements for each academic year based upon the course selections of the students; therefore, the add/drop policy will be strictly upheld.

Requests by students and/or parent(s) to initiate schedule changes will only be considered if the following criteria are met:

An official PA Course Change Form must be completed and submitted by the student or parent before the third week of school ends.

In order to process a change, students must

Schedule an appointment with their counselor during the add-drop period.

Complete the PA Course Change Form.

Choose a substitute course, if one is available, for each dropped course.

Final approval of changes can only be possible upon the following:

The proposed change does not jeopardize graduation.

The proposed change does not negatively affect the prospects of college admission.

The change requested is logistically possible.

Under no circumstances, will schedules be adjusted to:

Change teachers

Change lunch periods (unless supported by medical documentation)

Change to more convenient and/or desirable periods

Group friends together in the same class

Provide a chance to improve GPA by dropping courses a student seems likely to fail

Student schedule changes recommended by administrators, teachers, or counselors due to academic concerns may occur anytime throughout the school year. Approval for such changes will take place upon the agreement of the counselor, teacher(s), parent(s), and the administration.

Intervention, Academic Support, and Summer Coursework

Students are able to monitor their progress through the Veracross system and constant communication with their teachers. Academic intervention is available at all times. Teachers will share their office hours with students to schedule additional academic support. It is the student's responsibility to enroll in the academic support program unless mandated by a teacher and to attend the sessions regularly. These resources may be available to reinforce learning, but do not guarantee passing scores. Ultimately it is the student and family's responsibility to seek resources that go beyond the capability of teachers and school hours.

COURSE RETAKE POLICY

Effective January 1, 2025, the following policy will apply to all course retakes:

Approval Process: Students at Pioneer Academy seeking to retake a class must obtain prior approval from the college counselor or an administrator. This ensures that the selected course and institution meet the academy's standards and the student's academic needs.

Grading: The original grade received in the class being retaken will still appear on the student's transcript. However, this grade will not be used in calculating the student's Grade Point Average (GPA). The grade earned from the retaken course will be used in the GPA calculation instead.

Financial Considerations: Students are responsible for the full cost of any courses they choose to retake. Pioneer Academy does not provide financial assistance for these courses.

Time frame: Students must complete the retaken course by the deadline provided by Pioneer Academy. This deadline will be communicated to the student upon approval of the retake request.

Number of Allowed Retake Courses: Each student is permitted to retake only one class per each academic year at Pioneer Academy. This policy ensures that students are focused on their current coursework while providing an opportunity to improve in one subject area.

Approved Institutions: Students are required to retake classes through colleges, community colleges, or accredited online institutions. The chosen institution and course must be approved by Pioneer Academy's college counselor or an administrator to ensure that the academic standards and credits are acceptable.

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

To enroll in Advanced Placement courses, students must do the following:

Have AP Potential Designation, which is determined by the College Board after taking the PSAT or the SATs.

Get teacher approval for taking the AP course.

Attain an A- or higher in the relevant content area(s) (i.e., a student who wants to take AP US History must have earned an A- or higher in their social studies course the prior year).

Students failing to meet the requirements above may complete an appeal form.Further information about AP fees, conditions, and requirements can be found in the AP Contract, which will be emailed to AP students at the beginning of each academic year.

GRADING POLICIES

Grading policies will be determined by each department based on the needs of the subject and will be included in course syllabi. For additional information on grading policies, consult your syllabus or speak to the course instructor.

Parental Notification

Teachers will, when possible, regularly contact parents/guardians to discuss failing students or students in danger of failing at least once per month. It is the responsibility of the student and parent to check grades regularly on the student information system.

Grading Scale 9-12

As per the chart below, all Pioneer Academy classes follow a standard scale for assigning letter grades. However, for incidents involving academic dishonesty, the student will receive a 0.

A grade of 1 (one) will be entered for assignments that have not been submitted by the student.

Grade Point Averages (GPAs) are calculated by converting letter grades to grade points, weighting these by the number of credits each course is worth, and then averaging these weighted values.

Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
Points	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.3	1.0	0.7†	0.0

US Weighted and Unweighted GPA

A student's Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated by multiplying the number of credits per course by the grade achieved in the course. The totals for each course are added and then divided by the number of credits taken to compute a student's grade point average. A weighted GPA is computed to provide information for scholarships and to determine valedictorian and salutatorian. Class rank information is available only upon request. There are two levels of courses utilized for the purpose of calculating the weighted grade point average. Weighted courses are Advanced Placement (AP) and Honors (H) courses. Unweighted courses are courses not designated AP or H. Advanced Placement courses are weighted 1.33. Honors courses weigh 1.25.

Usage of Unweighted GPA

Calculating the grades during the year, report cards, and qualification of Diploma types.

Usage of Weighted GPA

Reporting Transcripts to Colleges and other institutions; Determining the Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

Class Rank

Defining the Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

Head of School Distinction

A student who earns a 4.0 average for the quarter with no suspensions in the same quarter will be on the Head of School Distinction for that quarter.

High Honor Roll

A student who earns a 3.75 average for the quarter with no suspensions and no failing grades in the same quarter will be on the High Honor Roll for that quarter. Students with a record of academic dishonesty may not be placed on the Honor Roll list at any level for that quarter.

Honor Roll

A student who earns a 3.50 average for the quarter with no suspensions and no failing grades in the same quarter will qualify for the Honor Roll for that quarter.

Valedictorian

The Valedictorian is selected from the class of graduating seniors and is based on the student's status as an exemplary student, having earned the highest overall weighted GPA by the end of the senior year while also having exhibited obvious support of Pioneer Academy school values and beliefs. Please note that GPA is not the only requirement to become Valedictorian; in addition to meeting GPA requirements, students must also meet the following criteria:

No major disciplinary infractions

No instances of disrespect to teachers or staff

No more than 10 minor infractions and 2 major referrals in upper school

No major referrals during junior or senior year

In some cases, when the top two candidates are extremely close, co-valedictorians may be selected.

Salutatorian

The Salutatorian is selected from the class of graduating seniors and is based on the student's status as an exemplary student, having earned the second-highest overall weighted GPA by the end of senior year with no major disciplinary infractions while also having exhibited obvious support of Pioneer Academy school values and beliefs. Please note that GPA is not the only requirement to become a Salutatorian; in addition to meeting GPA requirements, students must also meet the following criteria:

No major disciplinary infractions

No instances of disrespect to teachers or staff

No more than 10 minor infractions and 2 major referrals in upper school

No major referrals during junior or senior year

Students with a record of academic dishonesty throughout their time at Pioneer Academy may not qualify for the title of Valedictorian or Salutatorian.

- Athletics, Clubs, Interscholastic, Intramurals, and
- Extracurricular Activities

There is no better way for students to enrich their education than by taking part in clubs and after-school activities or working with a teacher. These opportunities will allow you to explore things you already enjoy and to try other areas that sound interesting.

To participate in any after-school extra-curricular activity, including music performances, plays, etc., students must arrive in time to be counted present during the school day.

Students serving in-school suspension may not participate in after-school activities on the day(s) the suspension(s) is served. Students staying for after-school activities will be expected to adhere to the following rules, or they may be banned from all after-school activities:

You may not stay after school to wait for another student.

You must be with a teacher or other staff member at all times

You must abide by the PA Code of Conduct while participating in the activity.

Your school activity privileges will be canceled if discipline becomes a problem.

You must clear the school building immediately following after-school activities by using the front door.

You must arrange for your own transportation to arrive promptly at the end of the activity.

ACADEMIC TEAMS

PA has many academic competitive teams, including, but not limited to, the Science Olympiad, Model U.N., Tech Fair, Robotics, Lego League, Chess Team, Math Team, etc. Participation is open to students in grades K through 12. Participation is governed by the same rules as listed above for after-school clubs and activities.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY

Interscholastic activity is defined as any activity where PA competes against or interacts with other schools or groups of students that are not attending PA. Students involved in any interscholastic activity must follow the following eligibility requirements:

Students must maintain an average of 70% or above in each of their core classes.

Students must maintain a discipline record free from any severe consequences rendering the student ineligible to participate in interscholastic activities.

It is the responsibility of the coach or faculty/adviser, together with the Dean of Students to ensure that each student involved in their interscholastic activity meets these eligibility requirements and notify the PA Administration of students who become ineligible immediately.

SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES ELIGIBILITY & DISCIPLINE

PA administration organizes and sponsors both on and off-campus activities. Unless otherwise specified by the administration, all school rules are in effect in any such school-organized or sponsored activity. Eligibility to participate in such programs and any additional specific policies will be determined and announced by the administration as needed.

GENERAL STUDENT EXPECTATIONS DURING EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participation in school-sponsored extracurricular programs at Pioneer Academy is both a privilege and a responsibility, and taking part in them is an excellent way to enrich the learning experience. The privilege may be revoked for any student who does not follow school rules or is not in good academic standing. Students are free to participate in any of several clubs and teams sponsored by the school. Pioneer Academy is always looking to expand its extra-curricular activities to areas of student interest and betterment and welcomes suggestions for new clubs and teams. Students participating in after-school activities will be expected to adhere to the school's code of conduct.

Physical Health Clearance

Please note that for certain extra-curricular activities, a health check from a physician indicating fitness to participate in athletic activities may be required. Please see the relevant activity coach/adviser or the Director of Athletics for the required forms. Students without proper forms are mandated not to participate in any activities and waive their right to a legal appeal in case of any risk or injury. It is the student's and parents/ guardians responsibility to ensure that proper paperwork has been signed and provided to the school nurse or administration.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Among the highest honors at Pioneer is being appointed or elected to a student leadership position. Students holding these positions are the core of the school and team spirit and should assert themselves in challenging, motivating, and integrating members of their respective

extra-curricular activity groups. Such positions include Team Leaders or Team Captains, Student Government Association (SGA), National Honor Society (NHS) leadership positions, or other positions which may be required by various school-sponsored extracurricular activities. Though each position carries with it differing responsibilities, all carry the same basic expectations:

To provide leadership both on and off the field.

To be an example to other students by upholding the Mission of Pioneer Academy, taking pride in the school, and respecting the expectations of the school community.

To adhere to the rules of the school and their extra-curricular activities, to respect the spirit of such rules, and to address all concerns about rules with the activity advisers.

To encourage and expect the same levels of pride and respect for the rules from fellow students and to address violations of the same whenever witnessed.

To maintain a positive attitude and to exhibit and contribute to school spirit at all times.

To assist the coaches/advisers with practice/meeting organization and activities, such as awards assemblies, team get-togethers, and other events.

To work with faculty and staff to improve the school and make school life fun, productive, and safe for all members of the Pioneer Academy Community.

A full list of after-school clubs and activities will be provided at the start of the school year. Each student is required to attend one club each year. Instructions on submitting requests for a new club will be shared with the school by the Club Coordinator and Head of Schools. All activity that is held for a club must be pre approved and all activity must follow the procedures and rules shared by the adviser and head of schools.

ATHLETICS AND CLUBS

While participation in physical education classes is mandatory, students are encouraged to join sports and intramural programs offered at Pioneer Academy. These activities serve to challenge students both mentally and physically while instilling in them a love of healthy competition, the value of teamwork and cooperation, an understanding of sportsmanship, and a sense of fair play.

Off-Campus Physical Education Classes (Grades 8–12, 2nd and 3rd Quarter of the academic year)

Students in grades 8-12 will travel to the Wayne Community Center (WCC) for Physical Education classes by means of school sponsored transportation (vans or buses). Students are expected to abide by the school's code of conduct while they travel to and from the WCC and during their stay at the WCC. Students must also abide by the community center's rules and regulations and the agreement that is provided to them by their PE teacher.

Adequate and appropriate supervision will be provided during travel to the WCC and while at the WCC. Parents agree to release and hold harmless the PA Board of Trustees, its employees and volunteers from any and all liability, claims, suits, demands, judgments, costs, interest and expense (including attorney fees and costs) arising from, or related to, such activities and/or any related activities, including any accident or injury to the student and the costs of medical services. In the event of an injury requiring medical attention, Parents hereby grant permission to the supervising teacher(s) or staff (including volunteers) to attend to and provide medical treatment for my child. In the event of a serious emergency, and the parent is unable to be located, the parent hereby grants permission to the supervising staff to take my child to the hospital. This release shall bind the parents and their successors and assigns, and shall be inure to the benefit of the PA Board of Trustees.

Rules for PE transportation

Be on time, seated, and follow staff directions

Keep aisles clear; no shouting or inappropriate language.

Water only—no food or soft drinks.

Small bags (no backpacks) can be taken to WCC

Phones must be turned off, stored in a pouch and cannot be used until returning to school.

Keep hands and items inside; respect everyone on the bus.

If the student missed the bus at any time, they must notify a pioneer faculty member immediately.

Consequences
Misbehavior or missing the bus without notice may result in loss of PE credit, bus privileges, or further disciplinary action. Repeated issues may lead to parent contact or suspension from PE.

Intramurals

These programs are provided to broaden students' interest in athletics through active competition amongst themselves and their fellow students within the school in various after-school sports and team-building activities.

Team Sports

Team Sports are highly competitive athletic programs in which schools with sports teams compete against each other in meets, matches, and games. Tryouts are held by the coaching staff to choose team members. Medical clearance exams are required for participation.

Clubs and Academic Competitions

Pioneer Academy sponsors diverse clubs and participates in several academic competitions each year. The clubs serve to broaden interests and encourage the development of well-rounded students. They also provide enjoyment and variety to the school day. Students may join the clubs of their choice at the start of the school year. Although clubs are provided for your enjoyment, each club can only be as good as its members make it. Cooperation and consideration of others is necessary.

Clubs and Academic Teams

Academic and recreational clubs and teams are provided to allow students to indulge their interests in various school-sponsored activities through less competitive participation with fellow students within the school or academic challenges against other schools. Usually, these activities are not athletic, though they may have physical components. Additionally, some clubs may participate in national or international events.

Academic Competitions

Some individuals or clubs may participate in special events such as academic fairs, chess matches, debates, talent competitions, science or other academic competitions, robotics competitions, spelling bees, or other national or international events. Some events may travel to the competition forum. Please note that the protocols for school travel will be in effect.

School-wide Assemblies

Assemblies are periodically scheduled throughout the school year for information sessions, guest speakers, or other events. Students are expected to report to their seats quickly and quietly. Attendance will be taken, and unauthorized absences will be considered cutting. Proper behavior is expected at all times. Students not adhering to the code of conduct during assemblies are subject to disciplinary actions.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

STUDENT RIGHTS

Students have the right to participate in all school activities equally, regardless of personal characteristics or protected categories.

Freedom of Expression: Students may express their opinions verbally, in writing, or symbolically, as long as it doesn’t disrupt school operations or infringe on others’ rights. Written expressions must be signed by the author, and all expressions must comply with school policies.

Publication: Students are encouraged to participate in school-sponsored publications, which are supervised by faculty to ensure high standards. Content must be reviewed by school administration before publication.

Distribution of Materials: No materials can be distributed on school property without prior permission from school administration, who may regulate content, time, place, manner, and duration of distribution.

Equal Rights and Non-Discrimination: Pioneer Academy guarantees equal rights and prohibits discrimination. Students have the right to report discrimination or harassment privately to school administration.

Safety and Due Process: Students have the right to feel safe and are entitled to due process in disciplinary actions, which follow New Jersey Education Law.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to:

Be role models and uphold the school's values at all times.

Do their best in learning and mastering all they can.

Respect school rules, personal and property rights, and treat everyone with fairness and courtesy.

Ensure personal expressions respect others' rights.

Follow state laws and school policies on substance abuse.

Participate in school activities following guidelines and adhere to due process procedures.

Treat all members of the community with complete respect, fairness, and courtesy,

Abide by all the expectations of the school and its community,

Students will be asked to sign a Student/Parent contract stating and confirming receipt of, understanding of, and agreement to adhere to the rules and policies of Pioneer Academy as detailed in this handbook.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

General Parent/Guardian Rights

General Rights

Parents can request visits to speak with school personnel and tour the facilities, scheduled by the school. Parents may also drop off/pick up items or their children at any time by signing in at the lobby.

General Responsibilities

Parents must promptly update contact information with the school. Failure to do so may hinder the school's ability to contact parents during emergencies or important situations.

School Events/Teacher Meetings

Parents are encouraged to attend Orientations, Parent-Teacher Conferences, and Back-to-School nights, which are vital for staying informed about their child's progress. If you cannot attend, please communicate with the school to stay informed. Parents are also encouraged to meet with teachers as needed to address concerns.

Emotional & Psychological Needs of Students

Children face various pressures and challenges. Parents should stay involved in their child's life, watch for warning signs, and discuss issues such as academics, behavior, bullying, depression, substance abuse, and peer pressure with their children. Open communication is key to supporting your child's well-being.

Support of School Mission and Methodology

Pioneer Academy encourages and appreciates involvement from all parents and wishes to incorporate their input as the school endeavors to provide the best, most equitable education for all our students. Likewise, we regard our teachers as the most revered, precious, and essential resource in our mission to provide an excellent education to all students. The administrative staff is thereby obligated to provide our educators with the resources and support needed to do their jobs.

This means ensuring that our academic staff has a fair, non-hostile work environment, reasonable workplace goals, fair evaluations and feedback, required resources, earned trust from the administration, and reasonable buy-in from parents, allowing them the freedom as educators to provide quality education in accordance with their training, school policy, and federal, state, and municipal laws.

Please note that the student handbook is available to all students and parents online. All parents and students are mandated to review the entire contents and agree to follow all of its rules and regulations within two weeks of attending Pioneer Academy by "opting in" as a default. If the student or parent/ guardian disagrees, he/she and his or her family notify the school in writing, which will disqualify the student from attending Pioneer Academy. The school is not liable for any potential issues arising from the student attending the school at his or her own risk. Please note that the Student Handbook is in effect for the entire duration of the academic year. Pioneer Academy reserves the right to make changes periodically as needed.

Providing an excellent education is impossible without the buy-in and support of the parents. It requires agreement on three issues:

Trust from the Parents

Courtesy & Professionalism

Observation of Applicable Laws, Accepted Protocols, and School Policy

Trust from the Parents

Parents must trust the teacher and the school to provide educational services without unreasonable or exceptional demands. Our teachers choose their profession and are trained to educate students; they are excited and happy to be in the classroom; their administration and colleagues trust them as educators. This does not mean they are not held to exacting standards; staff members failing to meet such standards will be disciplined appropriately. However, not all aspects of classroom work and formative assessments are observable by the parents; such assessments are, either graded or used as diagnostics.

We understand that having questions and wanting clarification is normal and reasonable. Methods of evaluation, grading policies, and class requirements can be explained by the teachers, by the Director of Curriculum & Assessment, or by the Dean of Academics; this can be requested via a patient, courteous email, or face-to-face meetings made by appointment.

School Administration and employees have the right to speak to students in matters pertaining to school related activities on campus, academic matters or any concerns that need to be addressed without the presence of the

parent. If needed, an incident report may be required to be completed and provided for the school records to document as needed. It is time sensitive and must be done immediately to ensure prompt follow up.

If parents or students are not satisfied with the education being provided or the remedies offered by the school in good faith as a response to concerns tendered by the parents, we urge them to make an appointment with the administration at their earliest convenience. The best interests of the student, the parents, and the school are served by discussing how to resolve concerns as soon as possible.

Courtesy & Professionalism

Civility Towards Teachers and School Personnel

Civility towards our faculty and staff is expected. Please understand that teachers have a demanding, high-energy job involving a great deal of planning and work.

Curriculum writing; lesson planning; teaching, differentiating, and providing for individual needs in the classroom; entertaining, counseling, coaching, intervening, encouraging students at all times; attending professional development; assignment design, creation, and grading; organizing, preparing for, and participating in school events; preparing for parent-teacher conferences; responding to parent emails and inquiries; addressing non-academic student needs and problems; tutoring and mentoring; running clubs; serving on school and board committees; meeting to determine how to improve the school's education and offerings are just a few examples.

The above is an incomplete list of a teacher's typical duties and responsibilities. While the workload is high, they love and appreciate the opportunity to do it all for their students. In most cases, it is best to communicate with the teacher directly to find mutually agreed upon solutions to any issues that may have arisen; unfortunately, teachers may not be able to reply to every

e-mail or telephone call immediately, but will usually respond within a few days. Pioneer Academy always welcomes parental involvement and communication. Nonetheless, teachers have no obligation to reply to emails or telephone calls during their non-working hours; therefore, a teacher response time of 24-48 hours per e-mail is considered reasonable by the administration. If no response is received within 24-48 hours, please contact the administration.

Regardless of the circumstances or rationale, employees of Pioneer Academy shall never be subjected to harassment, inappropriate behavior, or interference/coercion in the performance of their professional duties by anyone in or out of the school community at any time. This includes parents, students, other employees, affiliates of the school, and anyone coming into direct or virtual contact with Pioneer Academy Employees.

Inappropriate behavior includes verbal abuse, such as speaking in excess of civil conversational tones/loudness; verbal, recorded, written, and/or electronically transmitted communication of any kind containing abusive language, such as profanity, threats or insults, and/or upbraiding; making false, questionable, or misleading statements about the school or school personnel; repeated or continuous badgering; rallying, inciting, or encouraging others to attack, berate, or undermine school personnel; repeatedly making excessive demands for special treatment or exceptions from school policies and rules; any communication likely to cause an adverse effect in the person being addressed or referred to.

Employees of Pioneer Academy are neither required nor expected to remain in any forum or meeting in which inappropriate behavior is directed towards them; furthermore, they are not obligated to reply to any communication deemed inappropriate or deemed to contain inappropriate elements. The school retains the

right to deny a parent the opportunity to meet with a teacher or school official if the parent has a pattern of being disrespectful, unprofessional, or abusive.

The Pioneer Academy Administration takes seriously its obligation to protect its personnel, students, and community members from harassment and inappropriate behavior from anyone. Steps taken by the school may include the following responses by the Pioneer Academy Administration:

the suspension of standard privileges and benefits;

the suspension of access to or communication with non-administrative faculty and staff;

the retraction of invitations or permission to participate in non-academic activities;

the suspension or barring of individuals from Pioneer Academy facilities and resources;

the cancellation of offerings, discounts, or scholarships;

the termination of some or all services provided by Pioneer Academy;

cancellation of enrollment without the refund of tuition;

legal action/litigation;

referral to law enforcement

Parents are urged to make an appointment with the administration to address any outstanding concerns or issues they may have regarding school personnel. If you believe someone has acted inappropriately, please contact the school administration immediately.

Civility Towards Parents and Guardians

Pioneer Academy is determined to support the interests and rights of parents and guardians.The school expects all parents and guardians to treat each other with courtesy and respect. As parents/guardians and educators, the display of proper and exemplary behavior to the students is critical. We encourage parents/guardians who feel that they are being harassed or otherwise mistreated by any other parents/guardians to report the behavior to the school administration so that a resolution can be determined and implemented.

Civility Towards Parents and Students

Parents should treat each other and all students with respect. Harmful behavior toward students is prohibited by school policy and law, and the administration will take necessary action to protect all community members. In case of any incidents or situations that need attention, parents should promptly notify the administration so that it can be addressed and resolved. A parent cannot approach another student or parent directly to avoid intimidation or confrontation.

Observation of Applicable Laws, Accepted Protocols, and School Policy

By enrolling at Pioneer Academy, parents agree to follow school policies and applicable laws.

Privacy Policy and Freedom of InformationStudent Information and Records

Parents and adult students have the right to review student records, subject to state regulations. All student information is confidential and will not be shared except as required by law or necessary for services like payment processing or law enforcement.

Public Relations and Advertising

Students may be photographed or recorded for school promotion. On an annual basis parents who do not wish their child's image to be used must notify the Dean of Students in writing within the first week of attendance.

Student/Parent Contract

Parents must sign a contract acknowledging receipt and agreement to follow the handbook's rules and policies.

Intent to Return Forms

In the spring, families will receive an Intent to Return Form to reserve their child's seat for the next school year. To guarantee a spot, the form and deposit must be submitted by March 1st.

Student/Parent Contract

Parents will be asked to sign a Student/Parent contract stating and confirming receipt of, understanding of, and agreement to adhere to the rules and policies of Pioneer Academy as detailed in this handbook.

Intent to Return Forms

Each spring, your family will receive an Intent to Return Re-Enrollment Form to reserve your child’s seat at our school for the following year. If the re-enrollment form along with a deposit, is not completed by March 1st, your child’s seat may not be guaranteed, and the seat may be given to another student.

School Rights & Responsibilities

Pioneer Academy is committed to working with parents to ensure the best education for students. We strive to:

Collaboration: Work with parents and guardians to achieve the best educational outcomes for students.

Communication: Listen to student and parent concerns and respond to reasonable requests.

Policy Updates: Regularly review and update policies to maintain excellence in education, safety, health, and efficiency.

Fair Treatment: Treat all students equally, without prejudice, in accordance with the law.

Legal Obligation: Report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the authorities.

Application of Rules

Pioneer Academy enforces rules to provide a top-tier education. Rules are applied equally to all students to ensure fairness, though no system is perfect. Every effort will be made to apply the rules consistently.

Enrollment Policy

Before enrolling your child, please:

Read and understand all school policies, and sign the required forms indicating your agreement.

Complete and submit all necessary forms before admission.

Contacting Instructors
Teachers are not available during class time for parental inquiries unless an appointment is made. Parent-teacher conferences are specifically organized for such discussions.

Disability Accommodations

Pioneer Academy welcomes all students of all abilities and is happy to provide for the needs of the ability-compromised students to the extent of the school's capabilities. Disability accommodations will be provided if such accommodations are feasible, reasonable, and unlikely to disrupt everyday classroom management and/or teaching. It must be noted, however, that requests for disability accommodations will be considered only if the following requirements are met:

Students for whom disability accommodations are requested must be evaluated by a certified, licensed professional, such as a physician, psychologist, psychiatrist, occupational therapist, social worker, speech and language specialist, or other licensed and certified professionals recognized by the state as qualified to make such evaluations.

All requests must be accompanied by an official, professional letter summarizing the student's evaluation, stating the specific diagnosis, the reasons accommodations are needed, and prescribing the specific accommodations required for the student to participate equitably in school.

The original, official, professional diagnosis letter, written by the professional or the facility that conducted the evaluation must be submitted; no evaluations by proxy or third-party certifications of evaluations will be accepted in lieu of the original evaluation letter. Original documents will be scanned or copied and then returned.

In certain cases, Pioneer Academy may not have the facilities, resources, or personnel to accommodate the needs of some students. For such cases, the school recommends seeking out specialty or public schools with facilities designed with special needs students in mind and personnel trained specifically to address their needs.

Special Education

Pioneer Academy does not offer special education services. Please consult your local public school for more information.

Termination of Services

Pioneer Academy is a private school and, therefore, is not subject to the same laws as the public school systems. As such, please note that the school may choose to discontinue services to anyone at any time for any reason (except for discrimination against protected groups).

Termination of services may result from situations including but not limited to the following:

Consistent or repeated failure by student or parent/guardian to adhere to school policy and/or rules, and/or applicable law;

Consistent, repeated, or egregiously disruptive and/or inappropriate behavior by the student;

Consistent, repeated, or egregiously disruptive and/or inappropriate behavior by parents/guardians;

Failure to respect staff, teachers, directors, supplies, the building & its grounds;

The behavior of the child which is harmful to the physical or emotional well-being of the other children and/or staff; Pioneer Academy has the right to terminate a contract without notice in the case of harm to other children and/or staff, or a dangerous situation due to any action that the child or parent/guardian has caused intentionally or otherwise.

Failure to abide by PA Policies;

PA may revoke the enrollment of the Student and dismiss the Student from PA if the Student's progress is unsatisfactory or if PA is unable to meet the needs of the Student as determined in the sole judgment of the Head of School.

False or incomplete information on the application, enrollment forms, and/or other forms requested by the school;

Failure to disclose information critical to the well-being and/or educational needs of the student;

Non-payment of tuition fees

PA reserves the right to immediately end school instruction and student care for non-payment. Per the PA contractual agreement, the full amount of the tuition is obligated and earned upon the enrollment of the Student. No refund is due or payable upon the withdrawal, transfer, or dismissal of the Student during the academic year.

Pioneer Academy may withhold or refrain from releasing/sending transcripts and/or student academic records due to nonpayment of tuition fees until such time as all fees are paid and up-to-date.

The school also has a right to deny a student future enrollment or present enrollment if the student or parents lack cooperation and collaboration, or refuse to sign documents, answer emails or show up to meetings as mandated, in which case student's enrollment status would be reviewed on a quarterly basis and result in a hold for the re-enrollment. if the family is not deemed to be a good fit for the school and is regularly unsatisfied with the school despite its best efforts. A student who has been designated as provisional enrollment or re-enrollment must refer to the documents and ensure compliance, a period review will take place to ensure continued eligibility of enrollment, which can be retracted due to lack of satisfying the criteria designated by the school.

Financial and Payment Policies

School payments can be made in the following four ways:

Online Payment Option - Blackbaud Tuition Management (preferred)

Check - Payable to Pioneer Academy - must be handed in person to the Account Receivable Specialist or placed in the safety box at the South Entrance Reception Area.

Cash - Must be handed in person to the Account Receivable Specialist

Wire Payments

Credit Card - Please note that a convenience fee of 3% is charged for credit card payments.

Payment Policy

All payments are due on the selected due date. All families are responsible for meeting their tuition obligation to Pioneer Academy on a timely basis. If payments are not received by the due date, a late fee ($40) will be assessed. Fees for failed electronic check payments and for returned checks are: Failed ACH - $30.00 Returned Check - $30.00 These Fees are issued by Blackbaud Tuition Management and Pioneer Academy has not had any control over the fees.

Tuition and Fees Refund and Withdrawal Policies

Parents agree that the total amount of the tuition and fees are obligated and earned upon the student's enrollment. No refund is due or payable upon the student's withdrawal, transfer, or dismissal except as expressly

provided below. Re-enrollment is at full discretion of Pioneer Academy, it will be contingent on the student's academic performance, attendance and discipline. It can be revoked in line with the re-enrollment policy.

Refunds may only be possible for out-of-state relocations when required evidence is provided. The required evidence is a letter from the employer, an enrollment letter from the out-of-state school, and a lease or purchase agreement for housing for an out-of-state location. For comprehensive details, please refer to the financial contract.

Delinquency in tuition payments will result in the disabling of a student's access to the Student Information System(SIS), and a hold on the academic record of the student until the balance is fully cleared. Long-term delinquency will result in the student's withdrawal from Pioneer Academy. On the 30th day after a missed tuition payment, the student's access to SIS will be disabled. Access will be granted when all past-due payments are paid. On the 60th day after a missed tuition payment, the student will be withdrawn from Pioneer Academy. Any future enrollment in Pioneer Academy will be disallowed until all past-due balances are paid in full.

Failure to pay tuition may result in a referral to a collections agency. In the event that the account becomes delinquent for more than 30 days, the parents/guardians also agree to pay a late fee of

$40 per month on any balance due, as well as all reasonable collection costs (not to exceed 50% of balance) court costs, attorney fees and interest/late fees accrued with the collection of this account. Cash, credit card, online payment, wire transfer, or check will be accepted, and a receipt will be given upon request.

General Money Matters

School fees and tuition are due regardless of whether or not your child attends. You are paying for a staff position, as well as educational instruction. No refunds are given for late arrivals or early departures. All education services will be contracted. The contract is a legal document obligating PA to provide a service for you and obligating you to pay PA for those services. There are other requirements in the contract. PA urges you to thoroughly read the contract and parent handbook and recognize that it is legally binding and you will be held liable for each item in the contract. By signing the contract, you are accepting it in all its terms.

A non-refundable registration fee of $250.00/child will be payable upon initial enrollment at PA. Both new and returning students are required to pay Resources, Technology & Activity Fees before completing their enrollment. A slot at PA will be considered open until the application and enrollment fees are received. After payment is received PA will hold your class spot for your specified start date. Students must start within 2 weeks of the proposed start date to maintain a secured class spot.

PIONEER ACADEMY REGULATIONS AND DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

K-12 Discipline System and Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct

Pioneer Academy students behave in a manner that will result in maximized academic progress and optimal character development. Whether on or off campus, a student's behavior must remain respectful to their school, themselves and every member of their community. Their actions must be honorable, non violent and responsible. Pioneer Academy students are accountable and work towards growth and self improvement. Their character represents that of a global citizen that commits to empowering their own talents and fostering creativity, and living with integrity. Students are expected to abide by the school's code of conduct and rules set

forth in the handbook off and on campus and during any school sponsored activity. Respect for all school property and equipment is expected from each student. Students do not need to be found “guilty” nor does the school have to “provide proof” to address concerns raised by the school community. All persons reported/suspected to be involved in any incidents are parties to the violation.

Suspicion of inappropriate activity or reporting from another member of the Pioneer community is suffice for the school’s policies to be implemented. Students are expected to remove themselves from negative situations and to report negative activity as a means of prevention.

Conduct at Group Assemblies

School assemblies are held to benefit the students and the faculty. Courtesy will be shown to those in charge of and participating in the program. Students who misbehave will be removed and may lose their privilege to attend assemblies in the future.

Description of Disciplinary Actions

Pioneer Academy’s discipline system is established to assure the safety and educational progress of each student. The school administration may take immediate action to ensure the safety of all its students prior to communication with parents but is required to notify parents in a timely manner of any disciplinary action taken or communication with students. Pioneer Academy reserves the right to impose a range of disciplinary consequences depending upon, among other things, the severity of the infraction, prior disciplinary history, and age/grade level of the offending student. Pupils are also reminded that they are a reflection of the school at all times and should be mindful of their off-campus conduct and online activity that may reflect negatively upon themselves or the school. Pioneer Academy may discipline students for off campus conduct that impacts the school or reflects negatively upon it in any way.

In addition, dorm students are mandated to follow all of the dorm rules and regulations as mandated in the Dorm Handbook, a copy will be emailed to all students and shared with parents. The dorm is a direct extension of the school grounds at all times.

Communication with students

School faculty is expected to and has the right to communicate with any student while on campus. All communication should be respectful and appropriate and serve as a means of fostering positive relationships with students. Students will be the first line of communication between a faculty member and student when a concern is raised. The parent will be notified thereafter. Students should expect that teachers will address minor disciplinary problems in the classroom through reference to classroom rules and communication with students and parents. Incidents that are deemed majorly overly disruptive will be referred to the Dean of Students. The range of penalties includes the following:

Detentions

Detention may be assigned at the discretion of any faculty member. Detentions may be assigned after school or during lunch as needed. On the day of the detention the student will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities. Students that skip a detention will accumulate further demerits and withheld from participating/ attending school-sponsored activities or extracurriculars until the detention is completed. It is the student’s responsibility to adjust their schedule to serve detentions in addition to other priorities. If the time is not permitted for completion due to external circumstances, the student forfeits their participation and will be required to attend detention at another time.

Lower School Students Success Plan and Veracross Discipline System

The K-3 students do not accumulate demerits at the start of their school year. However, any incidents involving a lower school student are documented by teachers and the Dean of Students and shared with parents via email or class dojo. The Lower school Dean will determine the severity and recurrence of unsafe or disruptive behavior to determine when they will be provided a behavior intervention plan (SSP). At the time the SSP is established, the student will be given specific guidelines that will help the student discontinue unsafe or disruptive behavior. The purpose of the plan is to allow each student to develop a strategy for improved behavior and better academic progress. The SSP is implemented after a parent conference and will be reviewed with the parents and students and in some cases, teachers.

Counseling Track

Students may be referred to the Dean of Students or School Counselor at any time by any faculty member. At times, a counselor may determine that a student needs further support to assist with a path to success. At that time, the counselor will determine the needs of the student and work together with the Dean of Students to accommodate the proper means of support for the student. The student will be provided a custom and unique set of guidelines and expectations as determined by the school counselor. This course of action is known as a Counseling Track.

Students are required to participate in scheduled meetings with their school counselor. These meetings are designed to provide a supportive and confidential space where students can openly express themselves and receive guidance as they navigate the academic and personal challenges of school. The school counselor will determine the timing and frequency of these meetings throughout the year.

In-School Suspensions

In-School Suspension is a formal disciplinary action that can only be assigned by the PA administrator and requires written correspondence to parents. All students under in-school suspension are prohibited from participating in after-school activities and are therefore required to leave the school campus immediately upon dismissal. In-school suspension assignments will be recorded on the student's discipline transcript. Suspension will be assigned from the start of 1st period to the end of 8th period. The student will report to the suspension room and complete any assignments and exams in this room. The student's phone and electronic devices will remain in the DOS' office. The student will eat lunch in the suspension room and may be asked to assist in school service if the teacher does not provide school work.

Out-of-School Suspension

Out-of-School Suspension is a formal disciplinary action that can only be assigned by the PA administrator and requires written correspondence to parents. A meeting between a parent and an administrator is required prior to the return to PA of any student serving an out-of-school suspension. All students under out-of-school suspension are prohibited from participating in all school activities and therefore are not permitted on campus for the duration of the suspension.

Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be able to participate in any overnight field trips for the rest of the school year and any fees or deposits paid earlier are non-refundable. Out-of-school suspension assignments will be notated on the student's discipline transcript.

Mandatory Self-Study, Online awareness course/training

Any student completing a suspension will be required to complete a state-certified online course during the suspension's hours. These courses are paid for by the family and focus on self-improvement and awareness. Students must complete the course before dismissal time on the day of the suspension and will receive a certificate upon completion of the course.

Withholding of Privileges

Under some circumstances, students may be denied an opportunity to partake in school-related activities and/or events as deemed appropriate by the administrator. These circumstances may include academic progress and disciplinary status. Students and parents will be notified if they are unable to attend a field trip, school function or participation in school-sponsored activities and extracurriculars.

Academic and Disciplinary Probation

Students whose GPA falls below a 2.5 or accumulates 60 demerits will be placed on probation for a specific amount of time. During this time the student will focus on academic improvement by speaking to their teachers, and taking the time to develop a plan for improvement. Students on disciplinary probation will be given specific guidelines to show improvement in behavior and therefore regain the privilege to participate in extracurricular activities.

Withdrawal and Expulsion

Withdrawal occurs when a student’s family voluntarily un-enroll a student from the school. Expulsion is the disenrollment of a pupil and discontinuance of educational services by the school’s administration. For severe disciplinary infractions or for repeated violations of the school’s behavioral expectations, the school may ask a student to withdraw or expel a student from school. Students may also be prevented from re enrolling for upcoming school years.

Should a student be expelled, there is no refund for the unused portion of tuition.

Implementation of Academic and/or Behavioral Agreements

All disciplinary activity will be communicated with parents through electronic, written, correspondence, phone calls or in-person meetings that are documented through the Veracross system or through hardcopy forms. Failure to sign the agreement by the parent and/or student will not hinder the school administration from taking any further actions or implementing the school’s disciplinary procedures in any capacity. At the discretion of Pioneer Academy, failure to cooperate or sign agreements may result in termination of enrollment or the inability to re enroll a student for upcoming school years at full discretion of Pioneer Academy. A periodic review will be conducted and a decision will be communicated to the parents/ guardians.

Cause for Suspension or Expulsion

Conduct that constitutes cause for suspension or expulsion includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Continued and willful disobedience

Open defiance of the authority of any teacher or person having authority over the student

Conduct of such character as to constitute a continuing danger to the physical well-being of other students, faculty, or member of the community

Physical assault upon another student or staff member

Taking, or attempting to take, personal property or money from another student, or from the student's presence, by means of force or fear

Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, damage to school property or the property of others

Unauthorized occupancy of any school building or school property

Knowing possession or knowing consumption of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products,

e-cigarettes, juuls, nicotine products, marijuana or controlled dangerous substances on school premises, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages, marijuana or controlled dangerous substances while on school premises or at school sponsored events.

Exhibiting disrespectful behavior toward anyone on any basis, included but not limited to differences in race, sex, sex orientation, gender identity, religion, physical ability, or analogous differences

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, including cyberbullying.

Cheating/plagiarism

Accumulation of demerits as set forth below.

The chart below explains the course of action taken when students accumulate a number of behavioral demerits. The school is committed to communicating these cases with parents ina timely manner and working closely with the School Counselor to prevent further escalation of concerns and to create an effective course of action for each student:

Disciplinary Points	Disciplinary Outcome	Communication	Assigned Counseling
0-9 Demerits	Warnings of upcoming detentions	Student/Parent Notification via Email and Veracross SIS	0 sessions
10 Demerits	Lunch/ Afterschool Detention	Student/Parent Notification via Email and Veracross SIS	0 Sessions
20 Demerits	Lunch Detention/Afterschool Detention	Student/Parent Notification via Email and Veracross SIS	1 Session
30 Demerits	After-School DetentionA Student Success Plan (SSP) will be designed for the student	Student/Parent Notification via Email and Veracross SIS and request for a parent meeting	1 Monthly Session
40 Demerits	Lunch/afterschoolDetention	Student/Parent Notification via Email and Veracross SIS Personalized communication to parent via email, phone call or in-person meeting.	Weekly or as determined by the counselor
50 Demerits	In-school Suspension	Student/Parent Notification via Email and Veracross SIS. Students will observe class from an isolated room and will not participate in any extracurricular activities for the day.	Weekly or as determined by the counselor

Disciplinary Points	Disciplinary Outcome	Communication	Assigned Counseling
60 Demerits	Detention (Lunch) Probation and Parent Conference	Students will be placed on probationary status. The student will not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activities until they are taken off probation status.	2 per week for the remainder of Probation period and subsequently as determined by the counselor
70 Demerits	2nd In-School SuspensionPermanent probation for the remainder of the year.	Students will continue on probationary status for the remainder of the year and may be placed on probation during the time of enrollment for the following year.	As determined by the counselor
70+ Demerits	Students will be placed on probationary status for the upcoming school year. Possible loss of enrollment and/or possible expulsion.	In-person meetings will be required.	As determined by the counselor
80 Demerits	Removal from classroom1-Day Out of school suspension	Personal communication via email, phone call or in-person meeting. Students may lose resident housing, re enrollment privilege or may be asked to withdraw.	As determined by the counselor
90 Demerits	Removal from classroom2nd 1-Day Out of school suspension	Written notification	As determined by the counselor
100 Demerits	Removal from classroom2-Day Suspension	Written notice to parent and phone call.	As determined by the counselor
125 Demerits ⚑ *Row data appears misaligned/incomplete in the source document.*	Written notice to parent and in-person meeting with parents	As determined by the counselor	
150 Demerits	Removal from classroom, 3-Day Suspension	⚑ *Communication and counseling columns are blank in the source document.*	
200 Demerits	Loss of reenrollment privilege and/or possible expulsion	In person meeting with parents and school administration.	As determined by the counselor

Academic dishonesty:

Pioneer Academy is committed to helping students to understand the importance of personal honesty and academically honorable behavior. The student's Code of Academic Integrity aims to help students follow these core values and avoid academic dishonesty or plagiarism. For further description on the details of Academic dishonesty, see the section titled "Academic Dishonesty: General Cheating and Plagiarism" within this handbook.

Any student partaking in incidents of academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action including loss of credit and possible expulsion as well as the disqualification to be recognized for an honor award.

1st Offense: The student will receive a 0 (zero) for the assignment. The student may complete the assignment properly and the final grade will not be higher than 50%. The student's parent or guardian will be notified as soon as possible. A student that has exhibited academic dishonesty will be removed from any Honor award for the marking period.

2nd Offense: The student will receive a zero for the assignment with no opportunity to redo the assignment. The student's parent or guardian will be notified as soon as possible. The teacher will notify the administration and file an incident report. The student, teacher and Dean of Students will meet to discuss the conduct. The incident report will remain in the student's file.

Any student exhibiting academic dishonesty more than once while enrolled at Pioneer Academy will be reviewed before awarded the honor of Valedictorian or Salutatorian during their commencement exercises.

Appeal of Major Administrative Decisions

Pioneer Academy is committed to maintaining a fair, consistent, and thoughtful process when addressing significant academic or disciplinary matters. Students and parents/guardians may request a formal review of certain final administrative decisions through the School's appeals process.

All Pioneer decisions are discussed by an administrative committee that is directly involved with student life. The committee will be the first line of communication regarding any decisions that affect a student's school life and record. Families may appeal final decisions that include long term suspension, expulsion or course failure due to major infractions or missed instructional time.

Grounds for Appeal

Minor disciplinary consequences, individual grades or assessments, teacher judgments, scheduled parent conferences, and meetings with teachers or administrators are not considered formal appeals under this policy. An appeal is not a new hearing or an opportunity to reconsider a decision solely because a student or family disagrees with the outcome. An appeal must be based on one or more of the following grounds:

Procedural Error: A significant School procedure was not followed and the error may have materially affected the outcome.

New Information: Significant and relevant information has become available that was not known, and reasonably could not have been presented, during the original review.

Misapplication of School Policy: The decision or consequence was based on a material misapplication of an applicable School policy.

Conflict of Interest or Bias: A material conflict of interest or demonstrated bias may have affected the fairness of the decision-making process.

Submitting an Appeal

Routine and scheduled parent conferences are not considered official family appealsA student or parent/guardian wishing to appeal must submit a written request to the Head of School within three (3) school days of receiving written notice of the final decision.

The written appeal must:

Clearly identify the decision being appealed;

State the specific ground or grounds for the appeal;

Explain why the family believes the decision should be reviewed; and

Include any relevant supporting documentation or information.

Appeal Review

Upon receiving a timely appeal, the Head of School will determine the appropriate review process and may establish an Appeal Review Committee including personnel who were not materially involved in making the original decision. The appeals process does not automatically require a new hearing, additional interviews, or a meeting with the student or family.

Following the review, the Head of School may:

Affirm the original decision;

Modify the decision or consequence; or

Return the matter to the appropriate administrator or committee for additional review or consideration.

The School will communicate the outcome of the appeal to the student and parent/guardian in writing within a reasonable period of time that does not exceed 14 days.

Submitting an appeal does not automatically suspend or postpone the original decision or consequence unless the Head of School determines otherwise. During the appeal time, a student may be suspended from attending regularly scheduled classes.

The decision of the Head of School following the designated appeals process is final and concludes the School's internal review process, unless another Pioneer Academy policy or applicable law provides a different procedure.

Use of tobacco, smoking products and controlled substances and paraphernalia

Tobacco Products/E-cigarettes

Possession, distribution, smoking, or any other use of any tobacco or e-cigarette product or paraphernalia is forbidden by Pioneer Academy within the building or on any school-sponsored activity. A first offense will be treated as a finable offense. Parents will be notified of the offense and the consequences, including fines up to $1,000.00. Possession of a lit tobacco product in a school building is considered an open flame and is a fire hazard. The financial burden of any fines, penalties, damages, or problems incurred by Pioneer Academy due to the use of smoking materials will be the family’s responsibility.

Controlled Substances, Marijuana and Alcohol

The use or sale/distribution of alcohol, marijuana, and controlled substances of any kind by students is both illegal in the state of New Jersey and strictly prohibited at Pioneer Academy, whether on campus or off campus including at any school activity. Many drug abuse offenses are also felonies. School personnel may search rooms, lockers, book bags, gym bags, coats, and any other containers if they suspect the presence of drugs or drug paraphernalia.

Random and Suspicion-based Drug and Alcohol Testing

If a student's behavior raises suspicions (but no direct evidence) of drug or alcohol use, Pioneer Academy may require the student to receive an immediate medical examination to determine whether the student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The student maybe required to undergo a substance use evaluation, the results of which must be available to the School Counselor and administration , to devise the follow-up plan.

Pioneer Academy Vaping Policy and consequences to the any tobacco, smoking device, controlled substance or alcohol use violation.

The State of New Jersey has prohibited the sale of tobacco products, including electronic vaping products, to anyone under the age of 21 years. It is also against the law to use these products indoors or within 25 feet of a door. To help keep its students safe, Pioneer Academy has installed air quality monitors in various locations on campus. The use of electronic smoking devices or tampering with air quality monitors in any form is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, deactivation, covering, removal, or disabling of the device. The following policy applies to any student who is reported smoking/vaping on campus or is present (for any reason) during a time Tampering or High Vape Index is measured.

1st Time: Notification will be sent to parents, and students will receive a mandatory school-service assignment.

2nd Time: Students will receive a working suspension (internship-like day with a faculty member) and schedules for a mandatory session with the school's life coach and the student will attend a substance -dependency workshop related to their infraction.

3rd Time: Students will receive an out-of-school suspension that may be reported to other institutions and may lose privileges such as attending field trips.

Students will move into a probationary status that outlines future expectations and consequences that can include expulsion, withdrawal or the inability to re-enroll in upcoming academic years (for students in grades 9-11)

Public Displays of Affection, Prolonged Physical Contact

To uphold respect for each student, Pioneer Academy provides a safe place where students are expected to keep their hands to themselves at all times. Public displays of affection, such as kissing, prolonged hugging, or other types of physical contact are not allowed. Extreme instances of physical contact and/or repeated violations of such behavior while on campus or during

school-sponsored activities constitute major violations of school policy. Consequences may include detention, suspension, or in extreme cases, expulsion.

Leaving Campus without Permission

Students' consequences may include suspension or expulsion.

Forgery

Any attempt by a student to duplicate or imitate a teacher's, administrator's, parent's/guardian's, or another student's signature on any school document is considered forgery.

Consequences may include suspension or expulsion.

Lying to Faculty/Staff, Failure to Self-Identify

The knowing provision of false information to Faculty and Staff, refusal to provide name and/or other identifying information and refusal to stop or report when so instructed by staff will not be tolerated.

Consequences may include suspension or expulsion.

Discipline Policies- Specific to Lower School

At our school, we believe that consistent expectations and positive reinforcement help students thrive both socially and academically. Our behavior systems are designed to promote a respectful, safe, and supportive environment for all learners. The approach is tailored by grade level to meet students' developmental needs.

Grades K–2

Positive behavior is encouraged through a ClassDojo-based point system. Minor behavioral incidents are documented and shared with parents via email or ClassDojo. Special subject teachers will also use the ClassDojo point system within the homeroom teacher's class, creating skills specific to their subject area. If a student displays repeated or serious misbehavior, the Dean of Students will review the case. In such cases, a demerit point system may be applied to provide more structured support and accountability.

Grade 3 & 4

A merit/demerit-based discipline system is used from the start of the school year. The Lower School Dean assesses the severity and frequency of unsafe or disruptive behaviors. When needed, students are placed on a Behavior Support Plan (SSP) after a parent conference. The SSP outlines specific behavior guidelines to help the student improve conduct and academic focus. The plan is reviewed regularly with parents, students, and, in some cases, teachers to track progress and make necessary adjustments.

Consequences for Out-of-Classroom Behaviors

For the following behaviors, the student will be immediately removed from the class, a phone call will be made to their home, and a family conference will be scheduled if necessary.

Additionally, the student will lose the privilege of recess, pending school admin approval:

- Uniqueness Slur
- Walking Out of the Classroom
- Trying to Leave the Building/Area
- Being in an Unauthorized Area
- Cursing at Someone
- Stealing
- Destruction
- Inappropriate Touching
- Refusal to Take a Break or Problem Solve with Someone

Classroom Disruption (verbal and non-verbal)

Physical Unsafe Behavior (climbing, kicking, throwing objects/things)

Physical Aggression towards Others (kicking, slapping, pulling hair, pushing with the intent to harm)

Extreme Aggression towards Others (hitting, biting, throwing objects towards others)

Repeated instances of physical or verbal aggression, or extreme aggression towards others, may result in early dismissal or suspension from school. Additionally, students may lose the privilege of attending educational field trips, events, or activities. The chart below explains the course of action taken when students accumulate a number of behavioral demerits. The school is committed to communicating these cases with parents in a timely manner and working closely with the School Counselor to prevent further escalation of concerns and to create a practical course of action for each student:

Demerits	Student communication	Admin procedure	Number of Mandatory Counseling Sessions
10 Demerits	Lunch Detention	Parent Notification	1 Session
20 Demerits	Lunch & Recess Detention	Parent Notification and request for a phone call	2 Session
30 Demerits	Lunch & Recess Detention	In-person meetings will be requested.	3 Session
40 Demerits	Detention & BSP	In-person meeting and share the BSP	Weekly or as determined by the counselor
50 Demerits	Detention	Parent Notification and Review the BSP	Weekly or as determined by the counselor
60 Demerits	DetentionProbation and Parent Conference	Students will be placed on probationary status. They will be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activities with their parents and guardians.	Weekly or as determined by the counselor
70 Demerits	Detention (After school)Probation for the remainder of the year.	In-person meetings will be required.	2 per week for the remainder of the Probation period and subsequently as determined by the counselor
80 Demerits	1.1-Day Out of school suspension2. Parent conference	In-person meetings with parents will be required. Students may lose resident housing, re-enrollment privilege, or may be asked to withdraw	As determined by the counselor
90 Demerits	Written notification	As determined by the counselor	

For a detailed list of demerits and parent communication, refer to the “Pioneer Academy Regulations and Discipline System” portion of this handbook.

Parent Partners

Involvement

Parental involvement is an integral part of our program. Parents and students working with staff members is an essential element in a quality school program. Visitation is encouraged by parents and other interested parties

who wish to visit the site. A solid relationship with the PA teachers and staff is built on mutual trust and respect and is key in making your student's school experience work well for everyone.

Also, there are a number of opportunities and events at PA where a parent can volunteer. Please contact the PA Parent Volunteer Organization (PVO) for a list of involvement opportunities.

If parents plan on volunteering on a regular basis for more than an hour at a time, they need to complete a criminal background check and submit it to the school. Please note that this does not apply to attending school events.

Keep these general tips in mind as you begin to build your relationship with PA:

Keep the lines of communication open at all times. Let your teacher know if something is going on in your child's life that may affect behavior and/or school performance.

Be aware of program policies and honor them. Respect drop-off and pick-up times, policies, and procedures.

Get involved with the program. The more you participate, the more comfortable and confident in the school programs you will be.

We want to build positive relationships with all our families. Visit us whenever you can. You are always welcome!

School Visitation and Scheduled Observation

PA values the concept of parents as partners in education. Parent and community support and assistance are vital in all facets of the school program. Parents of currently enrolled students or prospective students may wish to observe the classroom setting or perhaps volunteer to serve as an instructional partner in the classroom. While custodial parents of attending students are always permitted access to all student areas of our school as long as they have made their presence known to the administration, interruption of classroom instruction is prohibited.

Note: Actual classroom observations during regular school day instructional hours must be scheduled to minimize disruption to all students and maintain the integrity of class lessons and are limited to 1 per semester for grades K through 8.

Also, impromptu conversations with teachers about students are prohibited in order to maintain school schedules and teacher planning times unless the teacher themselves initiates them. Parents should schedule conferences with the teachers to discuss issues and/or student concerns.

General Parent/ Guardian Responsibilities

The following outlines the responsibilities of Pioneer Academy parents/guardians.

Contact PA if your child will not be attending class on any given day.

Parents/ guardians are responsible for ensuring accurate information is listed in the database, periodic login to ensure the accuracy of the information listed including student, parent data and attendance records. Any discrepancies must be promptly reported.

Notify PA in advance if anyone other than the parent or guardian will pick the student up. Note: These individuals must be listed on the emergency contact form.

Honor PA operating hours by not dropping your child off before 7:30 am and picking your child up by 6:00 pm (before and after care hours, which also requires signing up for the service on that given day), otherwise 8:00 drop off and 3:50pm pick up in line with the dismissal schedule, which takes precedence. Parents/ guardians are responsible for immediate supervision of their child upon the dismissal time.

Update your child's records or family information as changes occur. It is the responsibility of parents to notify the front office staff of any changes in employment, address, phone numbers, care and/or custody arrangements, and any other important information regarding their child or family situation. All aforementioned informational changes must be completed in writing and submitted to the front office.

Notify or consult with school personnel should any problems arise concerning your child, whether at home, school, or PA. We are here to help.

Notify the school of any special needs your student may have. The information must also be listed on your child's enrollment form.

Follow all PA policies and procedures.

Notify the administration in the event of questions or concerns with PA staff or policies

Notify in writing any changes to your child's enrollment status or intention to withdraw from PA.

Keep your tuition account current.

Attend all general school meetings whenever possible.

Read all emails sent by the school and teachers to stay informed about current information.

Volunteer and participate in school activities whenever possible. Get involved.

Avoid Danger - When left unattended in a motor vehicle, children are at risk for bodily harm or death due to factors including extreme hot and cold temperatures, kidnapping, and tampering with the vehicle's gear setting or ignition.

After-School Student Location and Supervision Policy

Lower School students and grades 5-6 are provided an aftercare program. Students are required to attend and abide by the aftercare policies and procedures. ⚑ *Referenced without an active link in the source document.*

Supervised After-School Period: 2:49 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Following dismissal, students may remain on campus only in designated areas and only with appropriate permission and supervision. Students are not permitted to remain in any other area of campus, including athletic fields, workout rooms, dormitories, or common areas, unless specifically authorized by a staff member.

Students may not enter classrooms or hallways other non-designated areas after 4:30 p.m. Students who do not comply with these location, permission, or sign-in requirements may be subject to administrative consequences in accordance with the school's student conduct policies. Middle School and Upper School students may remain in a classroom only when directly supervised by a teacher.

Grades 7–12: Students may use the Cafeteria or Pio Cafe as designated supervised areas.

Silent Study Hall: One designated supervised area will be available for students completing silent, independent schoolwork only.

At 4:30 p.m., students may no longer enter or remain in hallways or classrooms.

After-Hours Locations and Mandatory Sign-In: 4:30–5:30 p.m.

Parents/guardians must contact the Dean of Students whenever their child will remain on campus after 4:30 p.m. Beginning at 4:30 p.m. Students who remain on campus must follow the designated after-hours location requirements and sign in as required.

Grades 7–8: Students must remain in the lobby only until picked up. Students in Grades 7–8 may not re-enter or remain inside other areas of the building.

Grades 9–12: Students may remain in the Cafeteria or Lobby only. This period is not directly supervised, and students are expected to remain in the designated areas and follow all school expectations. Families that prefer a student to be directly supervised, may direct their upper school student to report to the lobby as of 4:30pm.

Grievance Policy

Pioneer Academy School Policy for Parents & Students

In case of a grievance against a staff member from a parent or a student, the initial step would be to ask if it was addressed with the staff member directly via email. The communication must be done in a respectful, non-confrontational manner. Every effort should be made to understand and resolve the issue within the Pioneer Academy's guidelines.

If the staff member does not communicate within three business days, an immediate supervisor should be informed in writing via email:

PK-4 - Ms. Duzgun (if Operational)

K-8 Dr. Gavaz & Mr. Caiazzo (if Academic)

5-8 Mr. Benevenga (if Operational)

9-12 Ms. Lainez (if Operational)

9-12 Mr. Bilgin (if Academic)

A review should take place, and a response should be provided in writing within three business days via email. If the supervisor is not responding within five business days, the matter should be brought up with the assistant head of school, who may inform the head of school. Every effort will be made to understand the issue brought up and to address and resolve it in line with the Pioneer Academy policies.

STATEMENT OF EQUAL RIGHTS AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Pioneer Academy admits students regardless of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, or other characteristics protected by State or Federal law. Pioneer does not discriminate in admissions, educational programs, scholarships or financial aid, athletics, extracurricular activities, or other School-administered or School-supported programs and activities.

Pioneer is committed to an inclusive and respectful environment. Anyone who experiences or witnesses discrimination or harassment is encouraged to report it privately to the Pioneer Administration, Guidance Department, and/or Human Resources Department. All reports will be reviewed and addressed in accordance with applicable School policies and State and Federal law.

HANDBOOK CORRECTIONS AND/OR MODIFICATIONS

PA reserves the right to change or modify this handbook as needed throughout the school year. The latest version will always be available on our website at www.pioneeracademy.org

HANDBOOK DEFINITIONS AND/OR INTERPRETATIONS

For purposes of clarity, many terms and situations have been defined or explained to explicitly determine their exact meaning and/or context. The PA administration will determine and apply specific definitions and interpretations where necessary to provide maximum security, safety, and educational opportunities for PA students. No other definition or interpretation, nor any other source may be used or applied to terms or situations described within this handbook.

Disclaimer – Notice of School's Right to Revise Policies

Pioneer Academy is constantly striving to improve its policies and practices. Please note that Pioneer Academy reserves the right to revise its policies at any time, with or without notice, as required to fulfill the school's security, educational, and organizational objectives. This document should be viewed as a guideline that is continually under review and subject to modification with or without notice. Should issues arise that have not been clearly addressed in this document, a resolution will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Pioneer Academy Administration.

PIONEER ACADEMY - Parent-Student Handbook 2026-2027

I understand that PIONEER ACADEMY is committed to reviewing its policies, practices, and benefits continually. Accordingly, I understand that the policies, practices, and benefits outlined in this student handbook are subject to change at any time to improve the school environment. I recognize and accept that the PIONEER ACADEMY Administration reserves the right to enforce all current or future policies based upon examination of such policies and investigation of any situations to which they may apply. In the event of an incident or situation for which no clear policy has been established or to which current policies cannot reasonably be applied, I understand and accept that the PIONEER ACADEMY Administration reserves the right to determine, at its own discretion, which actions will be appropriate to rectify or resolve any outstanding issues, and to execute such actions.

Furthermore, I understand and consent to my student responsibilities as outlined in this Pioneer Academy Parent/Student Handbook. I understand and agree that I will be held accountable for my behavior and must accept and adhere to the policies as outlined in this document. Additionally, I understand that these policies will be upheld at school, at school-sponsored and school-related activities, including school-sponsored travel, and at events in which the school participates. I understand that any student who violates the code of conduct is subject to disciplinary action as outlined in this Parent & Student Handbook, and that in extreme cases when local, state, or federal law is violated, disciplinary action may include referral for criminal prosecution.

No handbook can cover every aspect relating to the functions, procedures, and policies in place within a dynamic institution such as Pioneer Academy. Therefore, any situation not explicitly referred to in this handbook will fall under the jurisdiction of the PA Administration and the Board of Directors. Pioneer Academy reserves the right to

update it with or without prior notification. The latest copy will be posted on the website, and a hard copy will be available upon request.

Any student attending Pioneer Academy, their parents, and guardians are required and agree to abide by the enclosed handbook. Their continued attendance is an agreement to all rules and protocols as outlined. Agreement and adherence to the student-parent handbook is agreed upon for the entire time a student is enrolled at Pioneer Academy, including all subsequent years of enrollment.

Pioneer Academy

2026-2027 Student and Parent Handbook www.pioneeracademy.org

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