

Student Handbook

Portland West Middle School
2020-2021

Attention: Due to the current pandemic, multiple aspects of this handbook may be modified or changed based upon organizational or safety concerns. Portland West Middle School is committed to keeping you up to date on any changing issues. Please check our website and your child's Skyward email account regularly. Thank you!

Shelley Cooper, Principal
John Massey, Assistant Principal

Welcome

Welcome to Portland West Middle School. Plans are in place to help you have exciting and successful learning experiences. Understanding and living the three school rules and their expectations should help every day be fun and beneficial.

This **Student Handbook** will help guide you in your journey through the middle school years to academic victories, fun student-life, and positive interactions with adults and peers.

Our Mission and Vision

The **Mission** of Portland West Middle School is to **Prepare, Work, Master, and Succeed**. We take these developmental elements very seriously and review them every morning on our announcements.

The **Vision** of Portland West Middle School is to increase student success by inspiring them to accomplish, by continually growing in our professional knowledge, and by fostering a positive, cooperative relationship with families and our community.

Our Beliefs

We believe that students, teachers, administrators, parents, and our community share the responsibility for advancing the school's vision and mission.

We believe that our staff is committed to excellence.

We believe that our students deserve a safe, comfortable and encouraging learning environment.

We believe that all students can learn, and it is our responsibility to provide the support needed to meet their unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.

We believe that a positive atmosphere of honesty and integrity promotes learning and respect.

We believe that regular attendance is valued, expected, and essential for success in school, in the workplace, and in the community.

We believe that our students deserve an active, engaging learning experience that reflects sound professional development practices.

We believe that our students should be recognized for their achievements.

School Rules

Be Responsible

Be Respectful

Be Safe

Portland West Middle School Time Schedule

07:55 – 08:05	Homeroom	(10 minutes)
08:05-08:08	Hall-time	
08:08-08:52	Block One (Period 1) –	(44 minutes)
08:52 – 08:55	Hall-time	
08:55 – 09:39	Block One (Period 2) –	(44 minutes)
09:39 – 09:42	Hall-time	
09:42 – 10:26	Block Two (Period 3) –	(44 minutes)
10:26 – 10:29	Hall-time	
10:29 – 11:13	Block Two (Period 4) –	(44 minutes)
11:13 – 01:18	Block Three (Periods 5 & 6) –	(see * <u>Lunch Schedules</u> below)
01:18 – 01:21	Hall-time	
01:21 – 02:05	Block Four (Period 7) –	(44 minutes)
02:05 – 02:08	Hall-time	
02:08-02:11	Afternoon Announcements	
02:11 – 02:55	Block Four (Period 8) –	(44 minutes)

*Lunch Schedule

Seventh Grade 11:16 – 11:37 Lunch; 11:47-12:31 5th Pd; 12:34-1:18 6th Pd

Eighth Grade 11:16-11:47 5th Pd; 11:49 – 12:17 Lunch; 12:19-12:32 5th Pd cont; 12:34-1:18 6th Pd

Sixth Grade 11:16-12:00 5th Pd; 12:03-12:22 6th Pd; 12:24 – 12:52 Lunch; 12:54-1:18 6th Pd cont

Academics

Grading System:

A	93--100
B	85--92
C	75--84
D	70-74
F	---69

Grade Reporting

Progress Reports are updated four-and-one-half weeks into each nine-week term through our Skyward software program. The grades reflect how the student is progressing in that specific term. Good scores indicate the student is doing his/her homework, studying for all examinations, and participating in classroom work. If additional effort is needed, sufficient time remains to raise the scores.

Report Cards are uploaded at the end of each nine-week term. Good report cards are worth celebrating because they show the student has been very successful. If the report card indicates a need for parent-teacher communication, please call the school office at 615-325-8066 and schedule a phone conference.

Special Communications are sometimes helpful. When a teacher contacts the parents concerning a student's grades, it is for the purpose of encouraging successful learning experiences. If a parent/guardian desires a conference with a specific teacher, administrator, or a group meeting with all of his/her child's teachers, please call the school office and a conference can be scheduled. Good and positive communication will lead to success.

Classroom Integrity

Graded schoolwork is designed to help evaluate the learning experiences and retention of information. Honesty in all work provides the teacher, student, and parents a true measure of what has been learned and what is still a challenge. It is important for the student to always submit his/her own work. Friendships should be based on integrity and a commitment to save any friend embarrassment by asking him/her to go against this integrity.

Textbooks

Textbooks are issued to each student for use in the educational process. Taking proper care of the textbooks saves the life of the book and having to face replacement costs. The cost of each lost textbook will be based on replacement cost. If a textbook received damage, a small fee may be charged to have the book professionally rebound. Minor repairs need to be taken to the Librarian. Your child will not be able to register for the following school year until all textbook charges have been taken care of.

Student Records

It is important to keep all student records up to date. Current telephone numbers, mailing addresses, emergency contacts, and legal restrictions are especially important to keep updated. PWMS observes all legal regulations regarding privacy of student records.

Immunizations are to be current. All parents have legal access to educational records unless restricted by signed legal documentation. All parents have the right to check his/her child out of school unless restricted by signed legal documentation.

PWMS is happy to cooperate with former/future schools in the transfer of records when all textbooks, library books, and financial obligations are satisfied.

Attendance Information

Goal: Perfect Attendance

Being in school is very important to achieving academic and other school-related goals. PWMS recommends each student arrive early in order to have sufficient time to go to the locker, visit with friends, take care of personal business, and still arrive in class prior to the bell that signals the beginning of class. When you are late to school, check in at the office before going to class.

Note: A detention will be issued for each tardy to school beginning with tardy number five per semester whether excused or unexcused.

Signing In / Signing Out

Parents/Guardians or designated adults can sign a student out of school for various appointments. Upon the student's return to school, the adult should accompany the student back to the main office and sign the student in. Be sure to include the correct time, student's name, and escort on the Sign In / Sign Out Form in the main office.

Photo-Identification is required of those wanting to sign out a student. This precaution is designed to ensure the security of the student. Thank you for your cooperation.

Excused Absences

Student attendance is imperative if learning is to take place. When a student has to be absent, a written note from the parent/guardian will excuse the student **five times each semester**. Additional absences must be verified.

Verification is accomplished by providing documentation from:

1. Physician, Dentist, Orthodontist, health Agency, or Hospital
2. Funeral Home, Mortuary
3. Court Officials
4. Vacation/Trips with prior approval by the principal
5. Special recognized religious holidays with prior approval by the principal
6. Approved school related activities with prior approval by the principal
7. Other extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student as approved by the principal.

Attendance is based on class period presence. Please schedule out-of-school appointments so a minimum of school time is missed.

Makeup Work

Students are to complete all makeup work within three school days after the student returns to school. Makeup work is graded work. This policy applies to both excused and unexcused absences. (Board Policy for Middle School JB K-12)

Student Dress Code and Hygiene

Students are encouraged to dress and groom in a clean, neat, and modest manner so as not to distract or interfere with the academic activities of the school. Cleanliness is an indication of personal pride...be proud. PWMS adheres to the guidelines adopted by the Sumner County Middle School Principals. Parents/Guardians need to help students adhere to the dress code. Dressing appropriately can save a call home for a change of clothing, spending the day in isolation, or being sent home. All Teachers and Staff at Portland West Middle School also dress for success daily.

AVOID:

1. Sagging trousers and slacks or those dragging the ground
2. Trousers that have attached chains or other hardware

3. Holes in the pants must have leggings/Under Armour to hide any bare skin and cannot be large enough to catch on objects that may harm the child or others
4. Clothing related to gangs (bandanas etc.)
5. Pajamas, sleepwear, or house shoes
6. Underwear showing
7. Shorts above the kneecap
8. Mesh/Gym shorts
9. Shirts without sleeves (must have sewn in sleeves)
10. Suggestive slogans, tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or other inappropriate insignias or writings of the clothing and lettering across the seat of garments
11. Bare midriffs, halters, fishnet, or tank tops
12. Revealing necklines
13. Spandex, form-fitting or body conforming outer clothing (no leggings)
14. Skirts and slits in the skirt above the kneecap
15. Footwear with cleats
16. Dog collars or jewelry/belts/bracelets with studs
17. Extreme hair coloring, hair extensions, or hairdos (includes carved objects, letters, or numbers in the hair)
18. Uncovered tattoos
19. Body piercing except in the ears
20. Black or Gothic lipstick
21. Black, Gothic, or White-out on fingernails
22. Large necklaces, big beaded necklaces, or multiple chains
23. Headgear of any kind inside the building (avoid baseball style caps at school)
24. Grills
25. Autographing of bodies or clothing
26. Tinted glasses/sunglasses unless prescribed by a physician
27. Trench coats
28. Roller shoes

The administration reserves the right to order a change in one's dress when, in the opinion of the administrator, it is detrimental to the educational environment at Portland West Middle School.

School Approved Uniforms

Sports uniforms, cheerleader uniforms, and other specially approved attire may be worn under the direction of the coaches and/or principal.

Student Safety

Students have a right to feel safe while in school. It is the responsibility of everyone in the school to comply with all safety expectations and report safety concerns to an adult and/or the office as soon as possible. Everyone works together for the safety of our school's population.

All Visitors

All visitors should enter the school through the front doors and report to the main office during school hours. During special events held in the gymnasium, the east entrance doors to the gymnasium will be used. When desiring to enter the front doors, push the button on the wall

near the right set of doors. The receptionist will grant entrance. Enter through the left door of the first set of doors. This is now a Board of Education policy and must be strictly adhered to for the safety of our population. Visitors may be asked for identification.

Everyone, with the exception of law enforcement officers, should be free of weapons. Portland West Middle School is a weapon-free location in compliance with Board of Education policy.

Building Safety

It is the task of every citizen in the building to continually be on the watch for potential, dangerous situations. **Building Evacuations** will be practiced from time to time to ensure the safety of every person in the building. Fire alarm pull stations are located throughout the building. They should only be used in the case of a fire. False alarms violate civil law and can prompt action by the administration and/or an investigation by the fire marshal's office. **Severe Weather** drills will also be practiced as a safeguard against potential weather storms. Everyone is encouraged to cooperate to help ensure the safety of all should the school experience a serious weather danger.

Emergency Response Plan

Portland West Middle School has a detailed ERP should the need arise. The local emergency services have reviewed the plans and given approval to them. Specific procedures per classroom/office/public areas are posted for easy access. The school will immediately telephone 911 when an emergency develops. The care and well-being of each person in the care of PWMS will be the top priority in all emergencies.

Injuries or Serious Physical Illness

Portland West Middle School is blessed with having a School Emergency Team (SET) that has been trained to be first responders to school emergency situations. Parents are immediately telephoned when their child is facing medical needs. Please be sure the office has updated telephone contact numbers. 911 will be called if the situation warrants such response as determined by the SET. The care and well-being of each child and adult at PWMS will be the top priority in all emergencies.

Medications at School

Parents should make every effort to administer medications at home. When impossible, school office personnel may administer medication with a written request from the parent, approval by the family physician, and school administration. In such cases, medication should be brought to the office at the beginning of the school day and will be dispensed to the student from the Nurse's Room located in the main office complex.

Permission Forms for non-prescription and prescription medications are available in the office and must be completed before any medication is dispensed. Due to the medical risks involved, aspirin and/or aspirin products will be avoided unless ordered by a physician.

Becoming Sick at School

When a teacher refers a student to the office for illness, preliminary data is gathered (temperature, where the student hurts, etc.), the nurse called when appropriate, and the parent notified. After consultation with the nurse and parents, the decision is made whether to dismiss the student from school or return to class. In the event a child receives a cut or scrape, the school can only apply soap, water, and a bandage.

Backpacks, Bags, and Purses

These items should be stored in the student's locker. Only class materials are taken to class. If items are needed, the locker can be visited to retrieve the items with the teacher's permission.

Lockers

A locker is provided to each enrolled student for storage of personal and school-related materials. Changing lockers is permitted only through Mr. Massey's office. Sharing lockers with friends is strictly prohibited.

Sexual Harassment

Everyone at Portland West Middle School should feel comfortable and free from any form of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to:

1. Pressure to engage in sexual activity
2. Touching of a sexual nature
3. Demanding sexual favors in exchange for implied preferential treatment and/or implied or overt threats.
4. Sexual gestures, sexual jokes, sexual name calling, sexual rumors, sexual drawings or graffiti

Persons guilty of sexual harassment must be reported to the administration as soon as possible. If you are uncomfortable reporting sexual harassment, please tell an adult you trust and have that adult contact the administration of the school. The safety and well-being of every person is important at PWMS.

Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs

Possession, sell, purchase, and/or use of any alcoholic beverage, drug substance, or possession of paraphernalia on school property are illegal and in violation of Sumner County Schools Policy. This includes tobacco products such as chewing tobacco, cigarettes, and all types of vapes. Avoid suspension, expulsions, or alternative school by being free of these substances. Being under the influence of these substances is also an offense treated in the same way already mentioned.

Tobacco and Tobacco Products

Portland West Middle School campus and building is a tobacco-free site. The policy on Tobacco Products from the Sumner County Schools Central Office will be followed. Tobacco products

found in the student's locker or personal effects will constitute possession. Visitors to Portland West Middle School should respect this policy and avoid embarrassing situations.

Weapons (Zero-Tolerance)

Weapons of all kinds are included in this zero-tolerance policy. Weapons include but are not limited to:

1. Knives, Box Cutters, Razor Blades, Ice Picks
2. Firearms (guns) of any kind including pellet, paintball, BB, or toy imitation
3. Clubs, Police Batons, Chains, Spiked Wristbands, Spiked Belts, etc.
4. Explosive device (includes fireworks)
5. Other objects designed with the intent and/or capability of inflicting bodily harm

Weapon Violations are Zero Tolerance. Consequences may include but are not limited to Out-of-School Suspensions, Disciplinary Board Hearing, and/or Expulsion from Sumner County Schools.

Searches

When probable cause is established, the administration may conduct a search of the locker and/or personal items belonging to the student. Possession of banned items will serve as evidence of school/county policy violations. Appropriate action will be taken by the administration of the school.

Student Life

Flowers

Parents and friends may send flowers to the school for students celebrating special occasions and birthdays. The flowers should be delivered to the school office where they will be kept until the end of the school day. Please be advised that the Sumner County Schools Transportation Policy prohibits glass containers and balloons on a school bus. The school bus driver has the final say in allowing objects on the bus. It is suggested that parents/friends check with the driver before ordering flowers.

Field Trips

In all activities on campus and excursions away from campus, students should behave in a respectful manner since they represent Portland West Middle School. All permission forms should be returned to the designated person as soon as possible. If parents want to serve as chaperones on these occasions, contact the sponsoring teacher. Portland West Middle School wants all such occasions to be educationally beneficial and enjoyable for all involved. Proper behavior contributes to future participation opportunities.

Social Time Prior to Opening Bell and After Dismissal

One of the joys of school life is the formation of friendships. When students arrive at school early, they should report to the gymnasium where they can visit with friends until dismissed to go to classrooms. Once seated in the gymnasium, students remain seated. It is suggested that friends agree on a section of the bleachers so they can be together without having to move around. The supervisors should be respected and their instructions followed. A fun start to the school day will help make the whole day better.

After dismissal, students awaiting school buses should report to the gymnasium. Students are to sit in bus groups to insure no one misses the bus dismissal. As the bus number is called, students then gather up all belongings and exit the gymnasium for the school bus.

Parties and Social Gatherings

Successes in school are worthy of celebrations. All special occasions are well planned, chaperoned, and sponsored by school organizations under the supervision of school personnel. When the activities are after school hours, parents should make arrangements to meet their child for transportation home at the proper time.

Cell Phone/Apple Watch Policy

Cell phones and Apple watches are to be turned off and secured during school hours away from the student's accessibility. All electronic items should be turned off and put away prior to entering the building. The principal can authorize cell phone use during or after school activities and on field trips as well as in the event of an emergency or serious situation.

Electronic Devices, Toys Etc.

All electronic devices, toys, and similar items easily distract the student's focus away from the tasks of academic pursuits. Such distractions need to be left at home. Selling and/or trading personal items should be done outside school time. Only bring to school items necessary to complete schoolwork and assigned activities.

School Spirit

Portland West Middle School is proud to wear the colors of purple and white. Go, Portland Panthers! Your school spirit, when joined with your peers, will help build friendships, partnerships, and lots of quality enjoyment. Students are encouraged to attend athletic games, music concerts, art shows, special assemblies, and pep rallies. Participate in various school spirit activities and create memories that will last throughout your life.

Pep Rallies build school spirit as our school cheerleaders lead the student body in cheers to encourage the teams. Do your part to make these pep rallies fun and productive by cooperating with the cheerleaders.

Cafeteria and Foods/Drinks

The cafeteria at Portland West Middle School prepares delicious meals each day for our students and staff. Students need to memorize their student identification number to speed check-out at the registers. Students are allowed to bring their lunch from home. Approved beverages (milk, fruit juices, water) are available for sale in the cafeteria. Students may include water or fruit drinks in lunches brought from home. It is strongly recommended that caffeine and/or high sugar drinks be avoided. Eating should be limited to lunch times and/or special occasions with teacher/administrative permission.

School Bus Information

Sumner County School Transportation Bus Rules

(See at <https://sumnerschools.org/index.php/school-bus-rules>)

The following rules and regulations insure the safest, most enjoyable and efficient transportation for your children:

1. Students must be at the bus stop on time. Students should be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the bus arrives. All buses operate on a fixed schedule.
2. While waiting at the bus stop, students must wait on the sidewalk, driveway, or as far off of the traveled portion of the road as possible.
3. Students must wait in an orderly manner and wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before approaching the bus.
4. If it is necessary to cross street or roadway, students must wait until the driver signals them to cross and cross the street or roadway 10-15 feet in front of the bus to ensure that the driver sees them.
5. Students must enter the bus in a single file and be seated as quickly as possible.
6. Upon leaving the bus; wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before standing to exit. Standing is not permitted on a moving bus.
7. Exit in a single file in an orderly manner and walk away from the bus.
8. Upon leaving the bus, if the student must cross the roadway, walk approximately 10-15 feet forward so the driver can see the student. Do not cross until the driver signals you to do so.
9. The operator of any school bus shall be responsible for the order and conduct of the pupils transported.
10. The operator has the responsibility to assign seats and will be directed to do so as a matter of policy.
11. Pupils should obey promptly and willingly any reasonable directive of the driver.
12. Outside of ordinary conversation, classroom conduct is to be observed. Shouting, vulgar language or gestures are not permitted.
13. Pupils must remain seated with feet on the floor in front of them; not in the aisle or draped over the seat back. Students must sit facing forward while the bus is in motion as if they were wearing seatbelts.
14. Students may not board or depart from a bus at any other stop than that which has been properly authorized by school authorities.
15. Pupils will not extend hands, arms, heads or objects from the bus windows at any time.
16. Pupils are not permitted to shout, or gesture to passing vehicles or pedestrians from the bus.
17. Students may adjust windows only when permitted to do so by the driver.
18. Pupils may not throw any object including trash or paper either from within or out of the bus while waiting for, riding, or after leaving the bus. Spitting is not permitted on the bus.

19. Riders must stay out of the driver's seat and may not tamper with any operating equipment.
20. Students may not exit from the emergency door unless directed to do so by the driver.
21. Eating and drinking food and beverages on the bus is prohibited. Neither food nor liquids are permitted on the bus except in school lunch bags or lunch pails.
22. The use of tobacco, drugs or alcohol in any form shall not be permitted on the bus.
23. Animals, knives, matches, firearms including cap and water pistols, explosives, glass and other similar breakables, or any other items creating a safety hazard are not permitted on the bus. Necessary schoolbooks and backpacks are permitted. Other items are not permitted.
24. Students needing to ride any bus other than their regular assigned bus must give the driver a note from their principal using the proper form. Bus drivers may not accept notes from parents.
25. Students desiring to take another student home with them who does not normally ride a particular bus must obtain prior permission from their principal to assure the bus is not overloaded. Bus drivers may not accept notes from parents.
26. Teachers, especially sponsors of activity trips need to be aware of bus regulations.
27. Absolute quiet is required at railroad crossings. The driver will turn off all radios and illuminate the dome lights to alert students to be absolutely quiet. This is a requirement of the State of Tennessee, Pupil Transportation; and Sumner County Schools.

Before You Ride

When a bus student is supposed to be let off at a location different from the normal place, the parents/guardians need to write a note to the school office.

The following information is necessary:

1. Name of the Student
2. Bus Number and Driver's Name
3. Exact Location where the student is to be let off
4. Telephone Number where the parent can be reached
5. Signature of the parent/guardian and dated

The proper form will be signed by the school, given to the student, and the student gives it to the bus driver upon getting on the bus.

When a bus student wants to go home with another student on a different bus, the parents/guardians need to write a note to the school office.

The following information is necessary:

1. Name of the Student
2. Current Bus Number and Driver
3. Transfer Bus Number and Driver
4. Exact Location where the student is going
5. Telephone Number where the parent can be reached
6. Signature of the parent/guardian and dated

The proper form will be signed by the school, given to the student, and the student gives it to the bus driver upon getting on the bus.

Riding a Different Bus

When a bus student needs to ride a school bus to a location different from his/her normal location and this request is to continue for more than one day, a special Complimentary Transportation Forms has to be completed by the parent and signed by the principal.

The following information will be needed:

1. Name of the Student
2. Complete current home address
3. Bus Number and Driver
4. Morning and/or Afternoon Route
5. Exact Location where the student is going
6. New Bus Number and Driver
7. Reason for the Request
8. Telephone Number where the parent can be reached
9. Signature of the parent/guardian and dated

The proper form will be submitted to School Transportation for approval. The student will be given a copy of the form to be given to the bus driver upon getting on the bus.

Car Riders

In the mornings, all car riders should be dropped off at the “Car Rider Side” and then go into the gymnasium to await the first bell. It is recommended that students pre-arrange with their friends the section in which to meet and enjoy each other’s company while waiting for the bell. Plan to arrive early so being on time to class is easy.

In the afternoons, car riders need to go get in their cars as soon as permissible in order to help eliminate traffic jams. Be sure and watch for moving cars.

If you plan to ride home with a bus rider, follow the same note format as a bus rider changing to a different bus for one day.

When someone is supposed to pick you up other than your normal pick up, please notify the school office.

Walkers

When walkers arrive at school, enter the gymnasium doors and wait with your friends until the first bell rings. In bad weather, leave home earlier to ensure arrival at school on time. Walkers follow all safety rules as they walk to and from the campus.

Portland West Middle School

619 College Street
Portland, Tennessee 37148

(615) 325-8066

<https://pwm.sumnerschools.org>