NORMA

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK

2023 - 2024

Norma Elementary School
873 Gershal Avenue, Pittsgrove, NJ 08318
Phone: (856) 358-6904 Fax: (856) 691-2885

Dr. Priscilla Ocasio-Jiménez, Principal (ext. 4732)

Becky Hall, Secretary (ext. 4731)

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NORMA ELEMTARY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

Dr. Priscilla Ocasio-Jiménez, Principal (Ext. 4732)

Gina Baker, Elementary Supervisor of Early Childhood and Elementary
Danielle Saponaro, Teacher-in-Charge & Preschool Instructional Coach
Danielle Glasser, PreK4 Grade Level Chair
Jaime Cole, PreK3 Grade Level Chair

NORMA ELEMENTARY HOURS

Office:	7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Students:	8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Teachers:	7:45 a.m. to 2:51 p.m.

SCHOOL COLORS

BLUE

and

WHITE

SCHOOL MASCOT - Cub

NOTE

All Board of Education Policies can be found on the District website. Hard copies are available upon request.

DISCLAIMER

All information contained herein is as of **September 1, 2023**. Changes may occur through administrative/Board of Education action.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

In order to provide a safe arrival and dismissal at Norma Elementary School, we ask that you follow the guidelines that are outlined below. Though we encourage parents to allow their child(ren) to ride the bus to and from school, below are the drop off and pick up procedures.

Norma Preschool begins the school day at 8:00 AM and dismisses at 2:00 PM. **Students not riding the bus may arrive at school no earlier than 7:45 AM unless enrolled in the SACC Program**. The SACC program is from 6:30 AM – 8:00 AM and from 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM; for more information on the SACC program and cost, please call 358-3094 ext. 4034.

Express Drop-off and Pick-up procedures

The parent parking lot is located behind the school on Levishohn Street. Arrival time for students is from 7:45 AM – 7:55 AM. Pick up time is from 1:45 PM – 1:55 PM. Because our main front lot is small and for the safety of our students and staff, once the buses have arrived, ***no one will be permitted to enter or exit the main front parking lot***. Parents who wish to drop off and pick up students may use the parking lot located behind the school from Levishohn Street. If you would like to walk your child to the middle door during drop off at 1:55, **you should park in the lot behind the school and then walk your child to the building using the middle entrance; that entrance will not be available after 8:00 AM**.

DAILY "EXPRESS" ARRIVAL PROCEDURES ONLY

- **Arrival time for ALL students is from 7:45 AM – 7:55 AM.** Please note that arrivals ***prior to 7:45 AM*** will be sent to SACC and **you will be charged for the childcare**.
- Enter the parent parking lot from Levishohn Street. You may escort your child(ren) to the Norma Center door (east side of the building).
- Please note that there will be sidewalk markings to make sure that all families remain 6ft apart. If you notice that the line is too long for appropriate social distancing, please remain in your car until the line has gone down and you are able to stand 6ft apart marker.
- Once you arrive at the door, there will be a pen available for signing in your child.
- **For safety reasons, parents or visitors will not be permitted to enter the building** in the morning or at dismissal time.

DAILY "EXPRESS" PICK UP FOR END OF DAY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

- **Dismissal time for ALL Express students is from 1:45 PM – 1:55 PM. Parking for parents is located in the back of Norma Elementary School.** Entrance to the parent parking lot is from Levishohn Street. Your child(ren) will be in the Norma Center door (east side of the building). The Security Officer will direct you. Please use the social distancing markers (6ft apart). At "Express" pick up, **you will have to show your ID** to the Security Officer and then sign out your child on the sign-out form.
- ***Once you sign, we ask that you not approach the exit door, giving ample room for other students to exit.***
- Once you have your child(ren), you then exit the school grounds by accessing Levishohn Street. Please use caution.
- Students not picked up by 2:00 PM will be placed in our School Aged Child Care (SACC) Program. **A fee will be charged each time this occurs**. Please make every effort to pick up your child on time.

OCCASIONAL PICK UP AT DISMISSAL

Parents who must pick up a child(ren) occasionally for an appointment, etc. should follow these procedures:

- Please use the "Note to School" form. You can request the office or your teacher to send the form to you in advance; however one is included in your summer packet. Send in the signed note stating the time you expect to arrive at school. You can also scan the **signed** note and email it to Ms. Becky, my secretary, at bhall@pittsgrove.net and copy your child's teacher. All teacher emails are first initial, last name @pittsgrove.net (i.e Jane Doe is teacher - jdoe@pittsgrove.net). If we do not receive the "Note to School," then your child will continue their normal scheduled day (i.e go home on the bus, go to express pick up, go to SACC).
- Enter the parking lot and head to the right side of the building and park in any available spots **EXCEPT during drop off and pick up times.** If there are no parking spots, then use the parking in the back of Norma Elementary School. Entrance to the parent parking lot is from Levishohn Street.
- To sign out your child, please use the front main door and push the buzzer to the Office**.** You will be met by security at the door. **You will need to show your ID *each time* for pickup** with the Security Officer. You would then sign out your child on the sign-out form.
- ***Please note that for safety reasons, if a student is being picked up from 1:57-2:00 PM, the individual will need to wait until after the bus dismissal.***

Parents/Guardians who plan to pick up their child(ren) **daily** throughout the school year must complete, sign and return the "**Express" Pick Up form** and return to the main office. This form will be kept on file and should eliminate your need to come to the office to sign out your child each day. **** Please note that this form is not to be completed if you plan to pick up or drop off your child on certain occasions; instead, this form is for those who have a regular pick up schedule.**

Late Arrivals

Students must be in their classroom by 8:10 AM to avoid being marked absent or late, unless lateness is due to failure of the bus to arrive on time or Doctor's Office visit with note. The

dismissal bell rings at 2:00 PM. **Parents are not permitted to enter the building during arrival and dismissal times for the safety & well being of our students.**

Please review these procedures with your child(ren). Please note that for security reasons:

- All doors are locked.
- An armed Security Officer is present daily.
- We reserve the right to **request identification** from anyone who is picking up a child from school. **Please have I.D. on you at all times.**
- Anyone who picks up students **must be 18 years of age or older with written consent**. We cannot release students to minors.
- Parents/Guardians/Guests **are not** permitted in the building during arrival and dismissal times. We are also restricting visitors in the building for safety reasons.

** These guidelines do not apply to SACC participants.**

The playground may not be used during school/SACC hours 6:30 AM-5:00 PM.

Finally, please YIELD to all buses and do not obstruct the buses from entering or exiting the driveway; this will allow us to expedite the arrival and dismissal process. Your cooperation is essential in maintaining a safe school environment.

A note is required for children being picked up. Please use our 'A Note to School'. If you need a hardcopy, please contact your teacher or the main office. Students must be signed out if they are leaving before the end of the school day. Visitors **must** report to the front main entrance door and ring the bell for further guidance. Children will be sent home on the bus if you have not arrived, and we do not have in writing that you will be picking up your child. Persons wishing to pick up a child **MUST** be the parent/guardian or listed as the emergency contact. No student will be released to a person who is not listed in our student information system. Additionally, anyone picking up a child **MUST** have photo identification and be 18 years of age. **We do request that early "Pickups" be kept to a minimum. Picking up students before the end of the school day disrupts the continuity of classroom lessons. You have received a school calendar and we ask that you arrange medical and dental appointments after school hours whenever possible. We also ask that vacation trips coincide when schools are closed.**

ATTENDANCE

In accordance with B.O.E. Policy 5113, regular attendance is essential to a student's success in school. Persistent absenteeism, tardiness and early pick-ups create a genuine hardship for the student and his or her classmates. Only those absences that are health related and/or have a doctor's note is considered excused. It is therefore considered a very serious issue. Consequently, responsibility for having children attend school regularly lies with parents. ***If for any reason your child is sick for five or more days, a note from your family doctor stating he or she may return to school is required. Please visit our district website to view our attendance policy in its entirety.***

Frequent absences of pupils from regular classroom learning experiences disrupt the continuity of the instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study to obtain maximum benefits of a thorough and efficient educational program. Poor attendance limits accomplishments and reinforces a habit that will handicap the individual in future education or

employment. Therefore, the Pittsgrove Township Board of Education requires the regular attendance of all students each day school is in session.

It is important that children attend school unless they are ill. Asking that a child leave before the end of a school day disrupts the continuity of the program. Please try to arrange appointments for after school hours. You have received a school calendar, so please try to confine vacation trips to those days that school is not in session**.** During each trimester, **the appropriate documentation to excuse an absence must be submitted within ten (10) school days of the absence or it will not be accepted.**

It is important that every effort be made to insure prompt and consistent daily attendance. The school will, in turn, notify parents of any concerns regarding a student's attendance by completing these steps:

Prior to 5 days absent – Principal will contact parent/guardian reference to absenteeism and lateness.

- **5 days** – Warning notice to parents from Administration.
- **8 days** – 2nd warning notice to parents from Administration.
- **10 days or more –** referral to Truancy Court

(Attendance is also indicated on Progress Reports, Report Cards)

FAMILY VACATIONS: (Vacation Days are NOT excused absences)
School personnel do not have the legal authority to give students permission to be absent during school hours for the purpose of taking vacations during the school year. This is a decision that can only be made by a parent/guardian. Students who take a vacation during school hours do so with the full understanding that they are responsible for the course work covered during their absence. Since a part of a student's evaluation may include daily contribution and class discussion, absence from school has a direct effect upon learning and its subsequent evaluation. Due to the nature of some course work, it is not possible to "make up" the material. Vacations during class time may affect your child's progress.

For family vacations, a vacation notification form must be submitted to the Main Office at least ten (10) school days prior to leaving. This notice does NOT excuse the student's absences.

BUSES

Norma Preschool students are transported by bus. **Riding a bus is a privilege that must not be abused.** If the privilege is abused a student may be suspended from the bus for a short or extended period of time. Effective September 1, 1994 state law requires that all children in bus seats with seatbelts must buckle up. Please help us keep your child safe by enforcing this law and discussing its importance with your child. Problems related to traveling on the bus or at the bus stop are to be referred to ***Dr. Priscilla I. Ocasio-Jiménez, Principal.*** All other problems should be referred to the Transportation Coordinator at 358-3094, ext. 4823.

Pittsgrove Township Board of Education, by policy, prohibits our bus drivers from leaving students in Pre-Kindergarten through 3rd Grade unattended at the bus stop unless a consent form has been filed with the Transportation Department. The Board of Education strongly encourages

parents/guardians of students in Pre-Kindergarten through 3rd Grade to escort their child/children to and from the bus stop, or to designate an adult to do so. Please remember that you must get out of your vehicle or your home to meet your child/children at the designated bus stop. This will allow our bus drivers to check that you or the responsible party receiving your child is present.

In the event that a parent/guardian or designated adult is not present at your child's bus stop in the afternoon, the student will be returned to the school they attend. ***It will then become the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pick up the student at the school.*** If your child has not been picked up by the time the school office closes at 2:10 PM, your child will be taken to the Norma School Age Child Care (SACC) Program.

The following procedures will occur should your child be returned to school by their bus driver:

- 1st notice letter mailed home from school Principal
- 2nd notice letter mailed home, phone call from Principal
- 3rd notice letter mailed home, phone call from Principal, charges from the SACC Department begin
- 4th notice letter mailed home, phone call from Business Administrator/Transportation Coordinator, additional SACC charges applied
- 5th notice letter mailed home, phone call from Superintendent, additional SACC charges applied

Please visit our website for SACC information, including charges at www.pittsgrove.net.

** ***Please note that any person picking up minor children from school must be 18 years of age or older and be prepared to show proper identification.***

The SACC Office can be contacted at the following number and extension (856) 358-3094 Ext. 4034. Our Transportation Department can be reached at (856) 358-3094 Ext. 4822.

Students who miss their bus or Express may be dropped off at the middle entrance *ONLY* at 7:55 AM.

Riding Another School Bus:
Arrangements to ride another bus **must be given to the Transportation Coordinator**; parents/guardians will then be notified as to whether such arrangements can be accommodated.

REQUESTS FOR DAY-TO-DAY, WEEK-TO-WEEK, OR MONTH-TO-MONTH TRANSPORATION WILL NOT BE GRANTED.

CAFETERIA

The cafeteria/food service will be serving breakfast daily to students in preschool. The price for breakfast will be $1.60. The free and reduced price for breakfast is $.0. Milk and/ or juice will be included in the cost. Students must be on time and no later than 8:00 A.M. to get breakfast. The first day that breakfast will be served will be September 8th.

The cafeteria/food service will also be serving bagged lunches daily to Preschool students. The price for a complete lunch is $3.00. The free and reduced price for lunch is $.0. Payment for school lunches can also be made through myschoolbuck.com. You may also send in check/cash payments. Please put payment in an envelope clearly marked with student's first and last name and teacher's name. (Prices subject to change.)

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for taking care of all school property. Any damage must be paid for. Deliberate destruction of school property, books, iPad, equipment, etc. will be grounds for restitution.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER

For the well being of your children it is vital that the school office be notified immediately of any change to your address, telephone number, emergency number, or place of employment and phone number of either parent during the school year.

CUSTODY/GUARDIANSHIP/PARENT VISITATION

Any custodial parent changes or visitation changes that affect pick up and drop off must be **reported** to the office **immediately** to ensure the safety of your child. Additionally court papers must be submitted and filled immediately upon your receipt. Please note – Reporting any parental and or visitation changes to your child's teacher or administration is **not sufficient; we need a copy of the court documents, which is verified by the building principal/designee.** The **Main Office** must be made aware of any changes immediately and be provided with the most up to date court documentation to ensure the safety of your child. Please note that the latest court documentation on file is what we utilize with regard to custody/ guardianship/ parent visitation.

CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY & DURING SCHOOL EVENTS

The school district may hold parents liable for property damage caused by acts of their children. The school district has the authority to implement rules and regulations for its own management and to promote the health, safety, and welfare of its students. These rules include the authority to take action against disruptive conduct by visitors to school property or school events including parents.

DRESS CODE

- Any type of dress or grooming which is disruptive such as shirts with the following: Inappropriate slogans, TV programs or advertising, belly shirts, midriffs, see-through clothing, tube tops/dresses, or top/dresses that expose cleavage or bare backs will not be permitted.
- Bare feet, slippers, flip-flops, or other shoes that pose a safety hazard are also unacceptable.
- Pants are to be worn at the waistline with undergarments not exposed. Tops and bottoms must meet at all times –sitting and standing.
- Skirts, dresses, shorts must be finger-tip length. Clothing must be properly buttoned at all times.
- Hat and other head coverings are not permitted unless part of a "special" day event or for religious/cultural reasons.
- Clothing must be buttoned at all times.

- As students mature, please monitor the appropriateness of shirts and the necessity of undergarments.

Parents will be contacted to bring a change of clothing to school for their child if attire is found to be inappropriate.

It is recommended that a change of clothes be sent in with preschool aged students in the event of bathroom accidents and/or food accidents. We do have change of clothes on hand in our Nurse's Office (limited supply). If clothing is borrowed, we ask that it be washed and returned the next day. We are always looking for donations for this purpose. Please contact Nurse Lori at Ext. 4711. Your cooperation is appreciated.

EARLY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

All PRESCHOOL students will be dismissed at 11:30 AM. Early dismissal dates are listed on our district calendar. A hardcopy is sent home at the beginning of the school year. It can also be found on our school and district website. The school monthly calendars are sent monthly via School Messenger in the "Message from the Principal and are also located at the bottom of our website.

Emergency School Closing

If the possibility exists that the schools in Pittsgrove Township will open late or remain closed due to inclement weather, **please visit www.pittsgrove.net for school closing information.**

School closing decisions are made as early as possible. Please ***do not call*** the school. Our district will also use our school notification system to alert you with closing information.

Please note that Norma Elementary School may dismiss students at 11:30 AM or sooner due to weather conditions or an unexpected emergency.

ATTENTION PARENTS:

A situation may occur at any time during the school year, which could necessitate the need for an early dismissal.

Please discuss such possibilities with your children to alleviate any fear or confusion on their part. They should know what to do and where to go should such a situation occur.

If you have concerns about possible early dismissal due to excessive heat, storm conditions, snow or a possible unanticipated school emergency, a School Messenger broadcast will be sent out.

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

This act affords parents and those over 18 years of age certain rights with respect to the students' educational records. These rights include:

1. Right to inspect and review records
2. Correction of inaccurate information
3. Right to consent to disclosures
4. Right to file a complaint

FIELD TRIPS

All students must be transported by school bus to and from all Field Trips. **No Exceptions.** Students may be signed out in the office upon return. No pupil should be denied participation in a field trip due to financial need. Parents/guardians must sign their child's permission slip and return the signed permission slip form on stated due date.

GRADING INFORMATION

Preschool students will have ongoing individualized assessments using Teaching Strategies Gold. For more information please visit the following website:
https://teachingstrategies.com/solutions/assess/gold/

HEALTH INFORMATION

Health Office Screening consists of:
Height and Weight
Vision
Hearing
Blood Pressure

Communicable Disease Policy

Illness, Injury and Communicable Diseases

Our teachers and school nurse keep close watch on all children. If illness occurs, the school nurse will attempt to notify parents. If your child has been hospitalized or is absent from school for any illness lasting more than five consecutive days, a note from your family physician is required before your child may return to school.

Students will be sent home for the following reasons: 1) **Having a temperature of 100 or above.** If a student was sent home by the school nurse with a fever, the student will be issued an "Excused Absence- Nurse Excused" for the following day, because they must be fever free without Tylenol or other medication for 24 hours before returning to school. 2) **Having a severe cough or cold and having diarrhea and/or vomiting** (must be over for 24 hours before returning). Students who are sent home ill or who are absent from school may not participate in afterschool and/or evening activities for the duration of the illness.

If your child has been injured and must return to school with crutches, a cast, brace, sling, neck brace, sutures, etc., a note from your physician is required. Please contact our School Nurse prior to your child(ren) returning to school

If your child must be excused from participation in physical education activities due to illness or injury, a note from your physician is also required. In such cases he/she will also be exempt from participating in Directed Play.

Any student suspected of having a "nuisance" disease; namely, Impetigo, Ringworm, Pinkeye (conjunctivitis) Reoccurring Head Lice (pediculosi), Scabies (mites under the skin), or any questionable rash, will be excluded from school and may only return with a physician's note. If there are any health problems you feel the school nurse should be aware of, please do not hesitate to notify her. If there are any problems we feel you should be aware of we will do

likewise. We appreciate your cooperation in caring for the well being of your child while at school. Please feel free to call the school nurse if you have any questions.

Medications in School:

NO medications may be given in school without prior written permission from the child's parent/guardian and physician. If medication must be given during school hours, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. Written orders from the physician must give: name of drug, dosage, and time medication is to be taken.

2. Written permission provided by parent/guardian requesting the school to comply with the physician's order.

3. Medications must be brought to school in the original container labeled by the pharmacy or physician.

4. **Nonprescription medications, i.e. aspirin, ointments, cold tablets, etc, cannot be given without prior written consent of the child's parent/guardian, and physician.**

5. Parents or guardians are to bring medications to the Nurse's Office. Students may not carry medications to school on the school bus.

6. The nurse administers all medications unless the parent is present to do so.

7. Any pills out of the original container will not be administered.

Pet Visitation

To prevent a health risk to students with allergies, pets of any kind may not be brought into the classroom and/or School Building. Special circumstances may permit a therapeutic pet visitation. This will require permission from the building principal in consultation with the School nurse. Please submit all requests in writing to the building principal.

LABELING

We need your help. Please label jackets, coats, lunch boxes, and other personal items taken to school. Lost items could easily be returned to their owners. Students should check lost and found items in the main office when they lose something belonging to them. Any item(s) not claimed by the end of each trimester will be either donated or discarded.

OUTDOOR CHOICE TIME

Students should bring sneakers each day for the choice activity planned by the classroom teacher. Please note that students cannot be bare feet, wear slippers, flip-flops, or other shoes that pose a safety hazard are also unacceptable. In order to provide children with a change of environment, classes will go outside on moderately cool days. We ask that they be dressed

appropriately with gloves/ mittens, hats, coats or sweaters and warm footwear whenever appropriate as dictated by the weather.

PARENT / TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent Teacher Conferences will be held in December and March. Conference information will be given in a timely fashion. Preschool students will be dismissed at 11:30 AM on these days. **Attendance at Parent / Teacher Conferences is strongly encouraged. Parents or teachers may also request additional meetings during the school year as needed.**

November 6th, 7th, and 8th
No Spring Parent / Teacher Conference

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Children are not to bring personal belongings to school without permission from their teacher and parent/guardian. In addition, baseballs, softballs, footballs, and wood or metal bats are not allowed in school. ***The school will not be responsible for any loss or damage to such items.***

PRESCOOL INTERVENTION & REFERRAL TEAM (PIRT)

PIRT is one of the many resources used to intervene with student problems or concerns arise, prior to a Child Study Team (CST) evaluation. Areas addressed are Academic, Behavioral, Social/Emotional or Health related.

PIRT services are for general education students and intended as a primary way in which general education teachers or specialists can assist a student who is at risk for school problems within the general education environment.

PIRT interventions are not intended to replace traditional methods or resources for helping students to function effectively in school. Our preschool students have a P.I.R.T. to assist their needs. This exists primarily to focus on particular student problems using available resources within the general education environment.

The term intervention is used when teachers and other school personnel study and creatively problem solve educational issues that place a student at risk for school failure. Using a team approach that also significantly involves parents, each school carefully considers the needs of students who are identified "at risk" for learning, behavior, and health problems. After careful consideration, strategies are put in place to work with the student and effectively address the issues at hand.

PIRT PHASES

1. Request for Assistance
2. Information Collection
3. Parent/Guardian Notification and Participation
4. Problem Solve
5. Develop Action Plan
6. Support, Monitor and Continue the Process
7. Problem resolved or referral to CST

For more information, please contact our PIRT Specialist, Danielle Saponaro, the Principal, Dr. Priscilla Ocasio-Jiménez, or visit the following website at www.state.nj.us/njded/students/irs/

PROGRESS REPORTS/CHECK POINTS

Progress reports are written for students and sent home with the students at the mid-point of each trimester to keep parents informed of their child's progress. Students who are in danger of failing a specific subject for the trimester or whose marks have changed may receive more frequent reports.

The following are our Trimester/Checkpoints. Each checkpoints lasts for 60 days with the Midpoint occurring on the 30th day. Report Cards and Progress Reports typically go home a week following these dates. These time frames are subject to change due to changes that may occur in our calendar year.

1st Trimester Dates
September 7, 2023 – Start of 1st Trimester
October 19, 2023 – Midpoint of 1st Trimester
December 6, 2023 – End of 1st Trimester

2nd Trimester Dates
December 7, 2023 – Start of 2nd Trimester
January 26, 2024 – Midpoint of 2nd Trimester
March 14, 2024 – End of 2nd Trimester

3rd Trimester Dates
March 15, 2024 – Start of 3rd Trimester
May 1, 2024 – Midpoint of 3rd Trimester
June 14, 2024 – End of 3rd Trimester

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY (ELEMENTARY SCHOOL)

B.O.E. Policy 5123

It is important to recognize that children struggling or failing in an elementary grade will benefit from the opportunity to continue in the same grade for another year. Many educators and parents understand that wrong grade placement and numerous other factors or circumstances that impede a child's learning are not of the child's making. Children who develop more slowly often experience continual frustration and failure when attempting to complete tasks they would be able to complete successfully one year later. The lack of developmental readiness is one of the most common causes of wrong grade placement, which results in school failure. Taking the needed time to learn and grow is a lot less unusual than it use to be. Consequently, several factors and options must be considered when the possibility of retention exists.

Parents must be notified by the classroom teacher of the child's difficulties as early as possible. If retention in the same grade level appears to be a possibility, that concern must also be made known as soon as possible.

In reaching a decision to retain a child or not, the child's teachers, parents/guardian, the Child Study Team, and Principal will meet to review all available data and circumstances. Major consideration will be placed on what is best for each individual child.

According to the District's policy, to be considered for retention a child must have a failing average in one subject. Any student having failing averages in two of the three subject areas (math, reading and/or language) will be retained and/or recommended for appropriate remediation.

The final decision for the promotion or retention of an individual student rests with the principal as with any other official action taken within his/her school.

The Child Study Team and Special Education teachers will make recommendations regarding the promotion or retention of classified students.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

Doors will be locked after children leave and custodians are not to allow anyone in the building. Our office hours are from 7:30 AM – 3:30 AM.

RELEASING YOUR CHILD(REN) DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Upon written request from parents, students may be dismissed early for medical and dental appointments when necessary. A note must be written to your child(ren)'s teacher(s) stating that you or a designated individual will pick your child up at a specified time using our "Note to School" form.

Please note that if you inform your chid(ren)'s teacher by any other means, such as classroom dojo, that your child needs to be released early, the message may not be received in time as teachers are teaching throughout the school day. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform the main office for students being released during the school day. Please contact my secretary at bhall@pittsgrove.net or contact the main office at (856)358-6904 Ext. 4731.

Once you arrive, please ring the bell and the main office will provide guidance.

Although we realize that an early dismissal may be necessary at times, we discourage this practice. **We ask parents to make every effort to schedule medical and dental appointments after school hours.**

No students shall be permitted to leave during bus dismissal. Once bus dismissal is completed, please ring the bell and the main office will provide guidance. ***(All persons must be 18 years of age or older.)***

For safety and instructional purposes, parents/guardians MAY NOT go directly to the classroom to meet their children.

SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE (SACC)

SACC is a before and after school program aimed at meeting the needs of working parents by providing children with care for the hours when school is not in session. Norma SACC program is from 6:30 AM – 8:00 AM and from 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM. Call 358-3094 ext. 4034 for more information and costs. Prior registration and approval is required in order for your child(ren) to attend SACC.

SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

Norma Elementary School is committed to providing safe and orderly classrooms for all students. When classrooms are orderly, teachers are able to teach and students are able to learn. An important part of your child's education is learning to make correct decisions and to accept responsibility for their behavior.

Norma Elementary School utilizes a positive behavioral support model – CSESFEL Pyramid Model. (Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning) The CSESFEL Model is focused on promoting the social emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age 5. For more information on this practice, please visit: http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/

We believe that a child's social emotional learning is a partnership between home and school.

In the event a child needs individual supports for social emotional development they may be referred to PIRT (Preschool Intervention and Referral Team).

When behavioral concerns arise, PIRT will be communicated to parents/guardians by the classroom teacher and/or school principal.

SCHOOL CONCERNS
CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION

This process is designed to offer you the most effective path to resolving any issue you many encounter with your child's educational experience. Please follow these important steps in our staff hierarchy to ensure your concern is handled in an efficient manner.

On matters involving Instruction at your child's School:

1. Classroom teacher
2. Case Manager if your child has an IEP
3. Preschool Instructional Coach
4. Instructional Supervisor/School Counselor (only applies K-12)
5. Principal
6. Chief Academic Officer
7. Superintendent
8. Board of Education

On matters involving student discipline at your child's school:

1. Classroom teacher
2. Case Manager if your child has an IEP
3. Assistant Principal (only applies to middle and high school
4. Principal
5. Superintendent
6. Board of Education

On matters involving student social, emotional, behavioral concerns:

1. School Counselor or case manager if your child has an IEP
2. Director of Guidance

3. Principal
4. Superintendent
5. Board of Education

On matters involving IEP and Special Education services:
1. Classroom Teacher
2. Case manager
3. Child Study Team Supervisor
4. Superintendent
5. Board of Education

On matters involving facilities or buildings & grounds:
1. Buildings and Grounds Supervisor
2. Business Administrator
3. Superintendent
4. Board of Education

On matters involving School Security:
1. School Safety Specialist
2. Principal
3. Superintendent
4. Board of Education

On matters involving athletics:
1. Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Principal
4. Superintendent
5. Board of Education

SCHOOL MASCOT, COLORS, and P.R.I.D.E.

The Preschool mascot is the Cub. School colors are blue and white. We encourage our students to identify with these symbols as a representation of our school pride and spirit. The first Friday of each month is School Spirit Day. We wear these colors with pride.

Our District Motto is **P.R.I.D.E.** (**P**atience, **R**espect, **I**ntegrity, **D**iligence, and **E**mpathy) Character Education is an important part of a child's social and educational development. Norma Elementary School's Motto is, **P.R.I.D.E. Starts Here!** We will teach and encourage our students to be the best they can be each and everyday.

SCHOOL PARTIES

Due to Federal Regulations, traditional "party foods" are no longer permitted in schools. We like to celebrate holidays; however, we are restricted on the types of foods we can offer/serve our students. Only "**healthy food options**" are permitted under the regulations for our holiday celebrations.

We will provide a list of celebration options to help us, such as, donating a book to the library, sending in a special book to be read to the class, or completing a simple craft with the class.

No snacks will be permitted for birthday celebrations.

SCHOOL SECURITY

School doors are locked each day after the bell rings. For the safety of our children, an intercom ~~bell~~ has been installed on the front entrance of the school. Ring the bell and the main office will provide guidance. **Please report directly to the School Safety Specialist to sign in and sign out**. If you are attending a school program in the evening, doors nearest the performance area will be unlocked for entrance.

STUDENT SALES

Students may not conduct any sales in school except when they are a part of an approved school activity.

TELEPHONE CALLS FOR ABSENCES

It is vital that you contact Norma Preschool when your child(ren) is absent. Please call the office at 358-6904 between 7:30 AM - 8:00 AM with the following information:

a. Student's name
b. Grade/Teacher
c. Reason for absence
d. Anticipated date of return

If your child is absent and we **do not** have a call from the parent/guardian by 8:30 AM, you will receive a call from our Automated system. If your child will be absent for an extended period of time, it will only be necessary to call the first day of absence and indicate the number of days your child will be out.

TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY ETHICS VIOLATION

Technology use in our schools are a public domain and will be monitored for appropriate/approved usage. No student shall use the Internet to create, send or receive e-mail, instant messages, or chat. Nor shall a student use technology to copy software or programs for personal use, generate personal income, or interfere with normal computer and/or network functioning. In addition, students found using unacceptable, vulgar, and profane or threatening language on a school technology will face disciplinary action.

According to Senate Bill No. 2057 with Committee Amendments, "The Anti-Big Brother Act," requires a school district or charter school that furnishes a student with a laptop computer, cellular telephone, or other electronic device to provide the student with written or electronic notice that the electronic device may record or collect information on the student's activity, or the student's use of the device if it is equipped with a camera, global positioning system, or other feature capable of recording or collecting information.

TRANSFERS

If you are moving, please notify the school office immediately so that transfer cards can be prepared. A minimum of twenty-four (24) hours notice is necessary to process papers.

VANDALISM

Our school and school equipment are public property. Willfully damaging or destroying this property may warrant immediate removal. The school requires that vandal damage be paid for. If a student accidentally causes damage, they should report it to their teacher immediately so that damage is not misconstrued as vandalism.

VISITORS

For security and educational reasons ALL visitors **MUST** ring doorbell and await guidance. Your cooperation is essential if we are to maintain a safe school environment.

WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS AND ADDITIONAL OFFENSES

The policy of the Pittsgrove Township Board of Education is to recognize that there is the potential for the presence of weapons and dangerous instruments in any school setting, which not only directly endangers the safety and well being of all members of the school community, but also undermines the educational environment. Appropriate, prompt response is necessary to minimize these dangers and to ensure compliance with N.J. S.A.18A: 37 – 1, et seq. and the Federal Gun –Free Schools Act.

The possession of any weapon and/or dangerous instrument by any person is prohibited on school properties or at any school related activities. Students in possession of such weapons or dangerous instruments while in route to and from school shall also be subject to the conditions of this policy.

CONTRABAND

Students may not bring items to school which interfere with the instructional program: toy guns, pen knives or knives of any type, water pistols, radios, head sets, D.S.'s computer games, IPods and other electronics such as Gameboy, etc., playing cards, Yu-Gi-Oh cards, Pokemon cards and any other type of trading cards. Items deemed inappropriate or disruptive will be confiscated and returned to parents at a later time.

The possession of a weapon as defined by school policy will result in suspension and possible legal action.

DISORDERLY PERSONS

2A:170-28. Any person who by noisy or disorderly conduct disturbs or interferes with the quiet or good order of any place of assembly, public or private, including schools, churches, libraries and reading rooms, is a disorderly person.

2A:170-36. Any person who maliciously destroys, defaces, damages or injures property, may where the damage does not exceed the sum of $200, be adjudged a disorderly person.

By order of the
BOARD OF EDUCATION

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING

Pittsgrove Township School District strives to provide students with the highest conditions for learning by preserving a school community where each student is treated with respect and no one is physically or emotionally harmed. In order to ensure respect and prevent harm, it is a violation of district policy for a student to be harassed, intimidated or bullied by others in the school community, at school sponsored events, on a school bus or when such actions create a substantial disruption in or substantial interference with the orderly operation of the school.

The Pittsgrove Township School Board of Education and administration believes that educating children is a shared responsibility between the parent/guardian and the school community. Students will not be harassed because of their race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, mental or physical disability or other distinguishing characteristics.

As per New Jersey Statute, Title 18A:37-1 through 19, the consequences for any pupil who commits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. However, the Chief School Administrator may modify a pupil's removal on a case-by-case basis. In addition, the appropriate law enforcement agency may be notified.

To ensure that the harassment, intimidation and bullying policy is understood, please read the district policy online at www.pittsgrove.net. To report an incident of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying, please download a HIB reporting form from the district website and submit it to the main office or guidance counselor. If you have questions or concerns regarding a HIB case or the district policy, please contact:

The 10 Steps of the HIB Complaint and Investigation Process

Schools are required to take specific steps when an alleged HIB is reported. For information on the Pittsgrove Township School Board's HIB policy 5131.1, please visit the district website at www.pittsgrove.net under the HIB policy.

The steps a school district and a school must take when addressing a suspected incident of HIB are provided below. These steps can be found in *N.J.S.A.* 18A:37-15 of the ABR:

Step 1: The Verbal Report – All reports of HIB acts must be reported to the principal the *same day* the incident occurs when a school staff member, a contractor, or a volunteer:

- Personally witnesses an act of HIB; or
- Receives reliable information indicating that a HIB act occurred.

Parents, students and others also may make verbal reports.

Step 2: Parent Notification – As soon as possible following any verbal report of HIB to the principal, the principal must inform the parents of all suspected student offenders and suspected student victims. If it is appropriate to the situation, the principal may discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services**.**

Step 3: The Investigation – After receiving the verbal/written report, the principal, or his or her designee, in consultation with the anti-bullying specialist, makes a preliminary determination as to whether a reported incident or complaint, assuming all facts presented are true, is a report within the scope of the HIB law. If so, the principal or the principal's designee must start an investigation of the act. The school anti-bullying specialist conducts the investigation, in coordination with the principal. If the decision is NOT to initiate an investigation, the parent may appeal to the BOE.

Length of Investigation – The investigation should be completed as soon as possible, but must be completed no later than *10 school days* from the date of the *written* report (see Step 4: The Written Report below). During the investigation:

- The principal might appoint other school staff to help with the investigation; and
- The administrator might administer discipline or take other steps under the board of education's anti-bullying policy or code of student conduct if the facts show there is enough information to do so.

Step 4: The Written Report – Within *two school days* of the verbal report, the school employee, contractor or volunteer must also report the act of HIB to the principal, in writing. The written report requirement does not apply to parents.

Step 5: The Investigation Report– Within *two school days* of the completion of the investigation, the results of the investigation must be reported to the CSA.

Amending the Investigation Report (Depends on the Facts): If there is information related to the investigation that is received after the 10 school day deadline, the ABS may amend the original results of the report to include the information. There is no deadline for making an amendment to the report. The district would make a decision on the way to respond to the additional information, depending on the facts.

Step 6: CSA Actions – Based on the investigation report, the CSA may choose to take any one of the following additional actions:

- Impose discipline;
- Provide intervention services;
- Create training programs to reduce HIB, improve school climate and make the school safer and more accepting of all students;
- Order counseling; or
- Take any other actions necessary to address the incident or reduce HIB in the schools.

Step 7: The CSA's Report to the Board of Education – The CSA must report the results of the investigation and any actions taken to the board of education by its next meeting following the completion of the investigation.

Step 8: Information to Parents – Within *five school days* after the results of the investigation are reported to the board of education, the school district must provide the parents with information about the investigation that is limited to the following:

- The type of investigation that was conducted;
- Whether or not the district found evidence of HIB, as defined in the ABR; and
- Whether or not discipline was imposed or services were provided to address the HIB.

Limited Information and Student Privacy Laws: Due to student records and privacy laws and regulations, parents are only entitled to review their child's educational records; a parent is not entitled to view the records of other students. This means that parents are not permitted to receive the entire HIB investigation report if it in any way would identify a student other than their own. If parents believe they are entitled to more information than has been provided by the school district, the parents may request a hearing before the board of education. The process for the board hearing and other options available to parents are explained in the following section (Based on 20 *U.S.C.* §1232g, the *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act*, and *N.J.A.C.* 6A:32-7, Student Records).

Step 9: Optional Hearing or Appeal – Parents may request a hearing, no later than 60 calendar days after parent or guardian receives written notice of the outcome of the investigation. Parents have the right, but are not required, to request a hearing with the board of education, if they are unsatisfied with the investigation findings or any other actions taken by the school or school district. If the parent requests this hearing, it must be held within 10 days of the parents' request.

Step 10: Board of Education Decision – At the board of education's *next meeting* following its receipt of the CSA's report (Step 7), the board must produce a decision, in writing. The decision must either uphold, reject or change the CSA's decision.

HIB Specialist
Dr. Priscilla I. Ocasio-Jiménez, Principal
873 Gershal Avenue
Pittsgrove, NJ 08318
(856) 358-3094, Ext. 4732

HIB Coordinator
Mrs. Gerri Turner
Schalick High School
718 Centerton Rd
Pittsgrove, NJ 08318
(856) 358-3094, Ext. 4111

Pittsgrove Township Website www.pittsgrove.net

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Board of Education believes that all students have the right to seek redress of individual grievances through established channels. A grievance is defined as an official statement of a complaint over something believed to be wrong or unfair. Should an individual student seek redress, the procedure is as follows:

- An individual student with a grievance, which arises at his/her association with the school, shall indicate in writing, the action that caused the grievance, the reason the student believes it is a grievance, and the relief sought.
- Within 10 days of the date of the alleged grievance, the student shall submit the written form to the office of the Assistant Principal.
- Within 7 school days the Assistant Principal shall render a written decision to the student. The Assistant Principal may hold a hearing in the interim with the student and those involved to elicit facts, if the Assistant Principal so deems it necessary. Should the individual student not agree with the decision of the Assistant Principal, within 5 school

days of receipt of the Assistant Principal's decision, all paperwork to date must be submitted to the Principal along with the reason for dissatisfaction of the Assistant Principal's decision.

- The Principal, within 7 school days, shall render a written decision.
- The Principal may hold a hearing, if he deems necessary, to determine all facts. Should the student not be satisfied with the decision of the Principal, the student may appeal it to the Superintendent of Schools within 5 school days of receipt of the Principal's decision--forwarding all paperwork thus far accumulated, in addition to the reasons for the dissatisfaction of the Principal's decision.
- The Superintendent will, under normal operating circumstances, render a written decision within 10 school days of the receipt of the appeal. The Superintendent may hold a hearing in order to better determine the facts of the case. An aggrieved party not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent of Schools may appeal the decision within 10 school days to the Board of Education. Such requests for an appeal shall be filed, in writing, with all necessary papers with the Secretary of the Board of Education.
- The Board of Education shall, within 30 school days, render a decision. The Board may conduct a hearing if it deems a hearing is appropriate.
- Final authority rests with the Board of Education.

APPEAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION

A. Definition

The appeal process may take place after due process and disciplinary action are administered, relative to short-term suspensions from school. Detentions, or lesser consequences, are not considered appealable in that they do not deprive a student of his/her regular educational program.

In that the Assistant Principal is normally the administrator at the first level of administration of discipline, the appeal of the action taken is directed to the Principal, and subsequent administration, as needed.

An appeal may be considered if:

1. The specific nature of the incident and facts support an appeal.

2. Detentions, or lesser consequences, are not considered appealable.

Based on the merits of the written report filed by the complainant the appeal may be heard or denied, with clear and sufficient reasons, in writing, to the complainant if the appeal is denied.

B. Hearing of Appeals - Procedure

1. An appeal must be expressed in writing by the complainant.

2. An appeal must be filed in the Principal's office by the third (3) school day after the day of the incident and due process conference.

3. Short-term suspensions will be withheld while the appeal process is in progress.

4. Clear and concise reasons must be expressed in writing as to the facts surrounding the immediate suspension/disciplinary action. Opinions, assumptions or unrelated

information will not be considered. Only specifics related to the current incident will be entertained.

5. If the written appeal is completed in satisfactory order, every effort will be made by both parties to meet within three school days after receipt of the appeal.

6. If the information provided in the written appeal has merit, the administrator hearing the appeal will establish the date and time in conjunction with both parties. If the appeal is deemed to be without merit, the administrator to have heard the appeal will reply in writing noting the reason for rejecting the appeal.

The administrator hearing the appeal may accept the statements presented from witnesses or other contributors from the due process hearing and/or previous appeal conference. The administrator hearing the appeal may elect to request if additional information can be added to the statement.

An Advocate's Role:

1. An advocate will have no participation in the conference except to advise the complainant. He/She may speak to the complainant and offer advice, without interruption or annoyance to the process. The administrator hearing the appeal may remove the advocate if this procedure is violated.

2. Cross-examination will not take place between parties as all questions must be directed to The administrator hearing the appeal.

C. Disposition of an Appeal

1. The administrator hearing the appeal will close the hearing when he/she has determined that all information appropriate to the appeal has been gathered. He/she will render a decision, in writing, within three school days.

2. Any action pending from the issue being appealed will be continued on the first school day following the written disposition of the administrator hearing the appeal.

3. If an appeal is found in favor of the complainant, all suspension days will be expunged from the record.

D. Appeals beyond the Principal's Level

The procedure will remain the same as A,B,C, above; however, the Superintendent may elect to render a decision based on the evidence presented from the due process hearing and the appeal at the Principal's level with a review of facts and further investigation if necessary. A formal appeal conference may or may not take place.

1. The Superintendent will, under normal operating circumstances, render a written decision within 10 school days of the receipt of the appeal. The Superintendent may hold a hearing in order to better determine the facts of the case. An aggrieved party not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent of Schools may appeal the decision within 10

school days to the Board of Education. Such requests for an appeal shall be filed, in writing, with all necessary papers with the Board Secretary.

2. The Board of Education shall, within 30 school days, render a decision. The Board may conduct a hearing if it deems a hearing is appropriate.

AFFIMATIVE ACTION

The Pittsgrove Township Board of Education affirms its responsibility to ensure all students in public schools of the Pittsgrove Township equal educational access and opportunity and all employees equal employment access and opportunity without regard to race, creed, color, national or ethnical origin, ancestry, age, marital and civil union status, unlawful consideration of sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and/or expression), pregnancy, religion or philosophical beliefs, developmental or physical disability, socioeconomic status, citizenship status, genetic information, veteran status or any personal attribute or characteristic that is protected by applicable local, state and federal laws To fulfill this responsibility the Board will continually re-examine and monitor policies, school and classroom programs and practices as well as employment and contract practices and will identify and correct inequities in either area of responsibility. The Board shall maintain both instructional and work environments that are free from harassment of any kind.

Pittsgrove Township School District's Affirmative Action Officer is in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A: 7-1.6, 1.7 &1.8 will oversee the compliance with the Board Affirmative Action Policies, and will receive all complaints protecting the rights of the person making the complaint and the alleged harasser. The district's Comprehensive Equity Plan, grievance procedures and annual reports are located in the Central Office at 1076 Almond Road.

The District Affirmative Action Officer is:
Dr. Scott Goldthorp
718 Centerton Road
Pittsgrove, NJ 08318
856-358-3094 ext. 4111
sgoldthorp@pittsgrove.net
Pittsgrove Township Website www.pittsgrove.net

A list of community-based health and social service provider agencies and food pantries that are available to support students' families are included in the **Community Handbook located on our website.** A hardcopy can also be obtained at our main office.