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## PHILOSOPHY OF PITTSFORD MIDDLE SCHOOLS

The primary responsibility of staff at the Middle Schools is to provide quality education for each student. Setting high expectations and goals for all learners, and then assisting the students in reaching those goals will promote excellence. Through curricular and extracurricular activities, each student will be offered a variety of educational opportunities that will accommodate his or her growth in self-concept, understanding of processes of learning, and mastery of skills and concepts.

The early adolescent years represent a stage in the development of the student distinct from those associated with both the elementary and senior high school years. It is a time of transition from childhood toward adulthood. These years must provide educational opportunities that are flexible enough to enrich the lives of students, yet structured enough to satisfy needs common to all. Attention must be paid to the marked changes in physical, intellectual, social and emotional makeup in order for the student to realize his or her potential.

The program of the Pittsford Middle Schools will reflect an understanding of the characteristics and needs of the middle level student. It will be implemented by a qualified and dedicated staff who is understanding, patient and sympathetic towards the needs of youth. The school climate will be characterized by sound working relationships among students, staff and community that promote student growth in an atmosphere of friendly understanding and mutual respect.

The Pittsford Central School District does not discriminate in access, admission, employment, or treatment of participants in any of its programs and activities on the basis of race, religion, age, sex, color, handicapping condition or ethnic or national origin. Inquiries regarding concerns, complaints or other compliance issues related to Title IX and /or Section 504 may be addressed to the Director of Human Resources at the District Administration Building, Pittsford, New York. (716) 267-1000.

## **MISSION**

Pittsford Middle Schools are schools for early adolescents that provides an excellent academic program for students while addressing their social, emotional, artistic and physical needs. Pittsford Middle Schools assist families in their children's growth and promotes life-long learning.

## **VISION**

Pittsford Middle Schools are an educationally progressive, student-centered learning community committed to excellence through an integrated educational program, with a focus on excitement for life-long learning and a responsibility to provide a caring and harmonious multi-cultural environment.

## **SCHOOL CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE (1520)**

### **PREAMBLE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide students, parents, teachers, school administrators, the Board of Education and the general public with guidelines for local policies governing relations among the various groups and individuals who make up the school community. It has been written in compliance with the provisions of Education Law Section 2801 and 3214 and applicable regulations of the Commissioner of Education. The administrators, faculty and students of a school have the responsibility of working together to create an educational setting which meets the needs of each student within the context of the overall goals of society.

The educational philosophy of the district seeks to promote independence, resourcefulness and responsibility within the framework of definite limits which are mandated by the administration for the protection and well-being of all. The full cooperation of students, employees and visitors to the schools with these basic rules and regulations of the school and more specific administrative directives made from time to time will ensure a more meaningful school experience for all students and contribute to high morale in the school community.

### **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS, STAFF AND VISITORS**

All students, faculty, staff, parents and visitors shall behave in a manner consistent with the following standards and comply with the following regulations which shall govern the conduct of students, faculty, staff, parents and visitors upon district property.

1. No person shall, in accordance with applicable provisions of law, interfere with the freedom of movement and speech of any individual or group.
2. No person shall disrupt or interfere with classes, educational activities, service activities, extracurricular functions or any authorized event.
3. Signs or other demonstration materials shall not be taken, without appropriate and lawful authority, into any building or room where a class, speech, or other school function is to take place.
4. No person shall, without appropriate and lawful authority, utilize or threaten physical force, physical harassment or physical obstruction or intentionally cause bodily harm or endanger the health of any person.
5. No person shall incite or encourage physical violence by other persons or to commit any of the acts herein prohibited.
6. No person shall, without appropriate and lawful authority, enter, occupy or remain in any classroom, office building or premise.
7. No person shall, without appropriate and lawful authority, impede or restrict reasonable and free access to or exit from any classroom, office building or premise.

8. No person shall intentionally or recklessly cause damage to or be involved in the theft of school property, or the property of any person where such property is located on school premises.
9. No person shall, without appropriate and lawful authority, invade the privacy of any school records, data or communications or any record, data or communication which are the property of or in the possession of another person.
10. No person shall, without prior permission of the School District and in accordance with the applicable provisions of law, possess, maintain or use an obnoxious, dangerous or apparently dangerous weapon, instrument or substance in or upon any building in the District or on school premises.
11. Upon the request of any school official or authorized public official, any person present in or upon any building or property shall promptly identify himself.
12. No person shall interfere with or disrupt the orderly conduct of activities of the Board of Education including but not limited to meetings of the Board of Education, budget votes and elections.
13. No person shall commit any action which threatens the safety or welfare of persons in or on property to which the rules and regulations contained herein apply.
14. No person shall, in accordance with applicable provisions of law, violate another person's civil rights or behave in a manner that is abusive, either physically, verbally or in writing.
15. No person shall refuse to obey the directions of an administrator, faculty or staff member or event supervisor.

### **STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In addition to above, students at the district are guaranteed all rights provided by constitutional and statutory law, including the right to a free public education. Students also have the right and responsibility to:

1. Become responsible members of the community and to conduct themselves in a manner that will bring credit to themselves, their school and community.
2. Seek reasonable and realistic academic and social experiences within the school structure designed to protect the rights, property, and prerogatives of all.

3. Be free from actions that threaten their safety, welfare and right to education.
4. Develop and operate student government bodies within the schools that address issues and actions that concern contemporary students, and shape student governments into positive instruments of student involvement.
5. Share thoughts and debate issues and ideas that foster understandings in such a way that does not violate the rights of others to disagree.
6. Be accountable for their actions to school officials.
7. Be cooperative and assist school personnel in the investigation and identification of discipline issues, possibility of violent acts and/or intentions, and substance possession, use, distribution or sale.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Board has a number of policies regarding student behavior that are the basis of this code of conduct. Each building has age appropriate rules and expectations that are applicable in each building. All students shall comply with local, state and federal laws and statutes.

#### **Attendance**

Regular attendance as provided by law shall be required of all district students. (This shall include all matters related to tardiness, class cutting and truancy).

Parents are required to call the attendance clerk in the morning if their son/daughter will be absent or tardy to school. Parents are required to call the attendance clerk or provide a note to the attendance clerk if their son/daughter will be leaving school early.

## **Determination of excused and unexcused absences**

The following reasons for absences and tardiness are accepted by the Pittsford Central School District as excused:

- Sickness
- Sickness in the family
- Death in the family
- Religious observance
- Court attendance
- Music Lesson
- DMV Road Tests
- Impassable roads or bad weather
- Approved school visits
- Medical appointment
- Approved cooperative work program
- School-sponsored activities
- Approved employment visits
- Activities in which students are representing the school or district
- Principal-approved educational experiences

All other reasons for absences and tardiness will be considered unexcused.

### Theft and Vandalism

Students involved in acts of theft, vandalism or destruction of district property will be subject to discipline by school authorities and legal action. Students shall also be subject to discipline by district authorities and legal action for similar acts involving the property of other individuals while on school property or during school sponsored events.

### Speech, Dress and Action

All students shall maintain proper standards of speech, dress and action at all times.

#### Speech

Profanity, vulgar, abusive, harassing and discriminating language is prohibited.

#### Dress

The State of New York has passed new legislation (Safe Schools Against Violence in Education Act) which insists that each public school district in New York State adopt a code of conduct policy which includes a student dress code.

Under this new legislation “all students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions.”

A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up and nails, shall:

- Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
- Recognize that extremely brief garments such as tube tops, net tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, plunging necklines and see through garments are not appropriate.
- Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
- Include footwear at all times.
- Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item. Please discuss these new state guidelines with your child.

#### Action

All students shall conduct themselves courteously and adhere to mature standards of conduct in classroom, corridors, cafeterias and at all extracurricular functions. Aggressive or disruptive behavior in the form of physical or verbal aggression or other acts intended to intimidate directed toward school personnel or other students or visitors is prohibited. All students shall obey the reasonable requests and directions of any administrator, faculty member, staff member or event supervisors.

#### Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is integral to the academic experience in school. All students shall do their own work at all times. Collusion, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited.

#### Substance, Possession and/or Use

The use or illegal possession of drugs, alcohol or other controlled substances on school property or during school related activities is prohibited.

#### Firearms and Other Weapons

The possession or use of firearms and dangerous or apparently dangerous instruments or weapons on school properties or during school sponsored events is prohibited.

#### Firearm

For purposes of the Policy, the term firearm is defined as in 18 U.S.C. §921.



### Other Weapons

For purposes of the Policy, the term weapon shall include any dangerous or deadly instrument which can cause death, injury or damage to a person or property including, but not limited to, BB gun, pellet gun, disguised gun, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, gravity knife, brass knuckles, sling shot, metal knuckle knife, box cutter, cane sword, electronic dart gun, Kung Fu star, electronic stun gun, pepper spray or other noxious spray, explosive or incendiary bomb.

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## **BUILDING PROCEDURES INVOLVING PUPIL SERVICE PERSONNEL, ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

All members of the school community are expected to identify potential and actual discipline problems as they occur in the school building, on or about school property or at school functions. School personnel should either deal directly with the problem or refer it to an appropriate member of the staff, counselors and/or administrators. Students and parents are encouraged to communicate information about behavioral problems to an appropriate member of the staff.

1. An appropriate staff member resolves the problem immediately by following district policy and building procedures.
2. Referral cases which are not resolved immediately and are in need of further inquiry and/or information shall be dealt with by an administrator, counselor or other staff member. This inquiry process may include information from students, staff members, parents, and community resources. Resolution of the problem may involve group interaction (e.g., by Pupil Services Team, Community Intervention Team, etc.)
3. Where required by law, and under such circumstances as are deemed appropriate by school authorities, problems involving breaking of local, state and federal laws shall be reported to appropriate legal authority.

### **ENFORCEMENT**

1. It shall be the duty of the administrator, teaching staff member, sponsor or other person responsible for a school activity to make an initial determination whether the conduct of any person violates the policies of the Board of Education or administrative rule or regulation.

2. The person making the initial determination of such a violation may take immediate and appropriate action to abate the violations and, if authorized, may further administer appropriate disciplinary measures at the time such violation is determined. Such individual may defer a determination of the appropriate disciplinary measures for a reasonable period of time for further investigation and action by building administration.
3. The respective building principals, or their designees, shall have responsibility of the review of the findings of the alleged violation of these policies and, insofar as authorized by law, shall have the authority to administer appropriate discipline for violations.

4. Insofar as permitted by law, the Board of Education does hereby delegate to the Superintendent its authority in the administration of these policies. The Superintendent shall be charged with the responsibility of maintaining order and discipline in the schools of the district, and further to carry out the policies of the Board of Education so as to secure the best educational results and maintenance of public order. In such capacity the Superintendent shall hear and determine appeals from decisions of other district authorities as to violations of these policies and the disciplinary measures resulting there from, and shall have such further authority to modify or impose such other disciplinary measures as he shall deem appropriate.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

1. Violation By Students – A student who shall have been found in violation of this policy shall be subject to such disciplinary action as set forth under the “Penalties” section as deemed appropriate under the circumstances. Parents will be notified either orally or in writing depending on the nature of the violation by the principal or his/her designee. It is the policy of the Board of Education that disciplinary problems be handled promptly and appropriately by the district representatives most directly concerned, and that building principals and the Superintendent be involved in only more serious disciplinary problems.
2. Violation by Staff Members – Faculty and staff members found in violation of the policies of the Board of Education are subject to dismissal, suspension, termination or other disciplinary action. Disciplinary action involving faculty and staff members shall be consistent with the provisions of the New York Education Law, New York Civil Service Law and applicable collective bargaining agreements.

3. Violation by a Visitor – Any visitor who is deemed to be in violation of this policy shall be informed of the alleged violation and requested to desist. In appropriate circumstances the person may be asked to leave the district property and upon failure to do so, or if otherwise deemed appropriate, law enforcement authorities may be called upon to assist.

## **PENALTIES AND USE OF OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

It is the policy of the Board of Education that all disciplinary measures employed by persons enforcing the policy have as their objective the maintenance of public order on school property. Disciplinary measures shall be just and insofar as possible, shall be suitable to the individual. Law enforcement authorities shall be summoned to school grounds as required by law or when deemed necessary by the building administrator.

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The following disciplinary measures are among those deemed appropriate. The list is not intended to be exhaustive.

### Students

The disciplinary measures for students may include one or more of the following activities:

1. Individual appropriate action by teacher, administrator or event supervisor
2. Parent conference-collaborating effort between school and parent to solve problem
3. Detention or after-school time
4. Teacher or administrative removal from a class
5. Loss of privileges
6. In-school detention
7. In-school suspension
8. Out-of-school short term suspension (up to 5 days)
9. Out-of-school long term suspension (more than 5 days)
10. Expulsion
11. Involvement of appropriate legal agencies and actions
12. Restitution

While the district cannot mandate other penalties than those listed above, administrators, in consultation with parents and students, may agree to alternative actions such as, but not limited to, community service activities, counseling, mediation or referral to a medical professional. The district will follow required procedures for juvenile delinquency petitions, PINS proceedings, and/or criminal proceedings as necessary and appropriate.

For those disciplinary measures which remove a student from classroom instruction, provisions will be made to provide continued academic support.

#### Minimum Periods of Suspension

While the following minimum periods of suspension are established, the suspending authority has the discretion to modify the minimum period on a case-by-case basis, considering any of the following:

- age of student
  - the student's prior disciplinary record
  - the Superintendent's belief that other forms of discipline may be more effective
  - input from teachers, parents and /or others
  - other extenuating circumstances
1. Possession or use of a firearm will result in a five-day out-of-school suspension, a Superintendent's Hearing with a one-year suspension, and referral to legal authorities.
  2. Possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm will result in a five-day out-of-school suspension, and may include a referral to a Superintendent's Hearing for consideration of a long-term suspension. The student may also be referred to legal authorities.
  3. Bomb threats will result in a five-day out-of-school suspension, a Superintendent's Hearing with a one-year suspension and referral to legal authorities.
  4. Violent behavior, the use of physical force, threats, or acts of violence, will result in a five-day out-of-school suspension and may include referral to a Superintendent's Hearing for consideration of a long-term suspension. The student may also be referred to legal authorities.
  5. Repeated substantially disruptive behavior will result in a two-day suspension, in school or out of school, to be determined by the principal. For purposes of this code, repeated substantially disruptive behavior means engaging in conduct that results in the student being removed from the classroom by the teacher pursuant to regulation 1520R on three or more different occasions during a semester or four or more different occasions during a school year.

#### Removal from a class

A teacher may remove a disruptive student from the classroom in accordance with the procedures described in 1520R.

Persons determining disciplinary measures are encouraged to use appropriate innovative remedial measures toward the end of obtaining mature personal growth and securing willing cooperation with the policies of the Board of Education and the maintenance of order on district property. Insofar as specific procedures are mandatory prerequisites to the administration of disciplinary measures, those procedures shall be followed.

### **ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Any or all alternative educational programs approved by the New York State Education Department will be considered as to their appropriateness based on the needs of a pupil. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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### **RIGHTS OF APPEAL**

Insofar as permitted by law, authority for the implementation of the Board of Education policy on school conduct and discipline is delegated to the Superintendent of Schools. Any individual aggrieved by a finding of violation of this policy, and/or the disciplinary measures resulting there from, may appeal to the Superintendent.

Such appeals must be in writing submitted to the Superintendent within thirty (30) days of the initial decision to be appealed. The Superintendent shall review and decide to appeal within thirty (30) days following its submission. The appeal may be determined solely upon written papers or such further investigation as the Superintendent, in the Superintendent's sole and unrestrained discretion, shall deem pertinent to the questions presented on appeal.

## **PUBLICATION AND REVIEW**

The district policy on discipline and responsible student conduct shall:

- Be printed in all student and faculty handbooks.
- Be reviewed annually at the first faculty meeting of the school year in each building
- Be made available to all students and parents prior to the opening of school
- Be reviewed with all students at the beginning of the school year
- Be reviewed annually

Other opportunities for communication of this policy may be afforded through:

- Pupil Service Team meetings
- Grade level/department meetings
- Course offering at Pittsford Teacher Center
- Workshops

## **ADMINISTRATIVE RULES**

The within statement of Board of Education policy shall not be interpreted as precluding the establishment of such further rules, regulations and directives as deemed necessary by School District personnel. Such rules, regulations and directives shall not be inconsistent with the policies of the Board of Education or applicable law and shall be subject to the authority of the Superintendent and the Board of Education.

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## **STATE LAW**

This policy of the Board of Education shall be interpreted so as to be found consistent with applicable statutes and regulations of the Commissioner of Education. Insofar as specific procedures are established by law as conditions precedent to the administration of disciplinary measures the same shall be deemed incorporated into these policies and shall be followed.

Board Action – 1/27/86, 9/14/88, 9/25/89, 9/10/90, 4/8/96, 12/11/00, 6/25/01

## **SCHOOL CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE REGULATIONS (1520R)**

### **Procedure for Teacher Removal of a Disruptive Student from Class**

A disruptive student is a student who is substantially disruptive of the educational process, substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom, demonstrates a persistent unwillingness to comply with the teacher's instructions, or repeatedly violates the teacher's classroom behavior rules.

A classroom teacher may remove a disruptive student from a class for up to two days. The removal from class applies to the class(es) of the removing teacher only. The teacher will keep a log of all referrals.

Classroom management techniques which remove a student from the classroom for a short period of time are not considered "teacher removal from the classroom" actions.

### **Communication to the Student**

If the student does not pose a danger or ongoing threat of disruption, the teacher may remove the student to each building's designated location. The teacher must provide the student with an explanation of the reason for removal and give the student the opportunity to present his or her version of the events before the removal from the subsequent class.

If the student poses a danger or ongoing threat of disruption, the teacher may remove the student to each building's designated location. Within twenty-four hours the teacher must provide the student with an explanation of the reason for removal and give the student the opportunity to present his or her version of the events.

### **Communication to the Principal**

The teacher must inform the principal or his/her designee in writing by the end of the school day or if special circumstances exist, by the beginning of the next school day.

### **Communication to the Parents**

Within twenty-four hours of the removal from class, the principal or his/her designee must notify the parent of the removal, the reason for the removal and their right to request an informal conference.

### **Conference**

The parents may request an informal conference with the principal or his/her designee. If the student denies the charges, the principal or his/her designee must explain the reason for removal and give the student and his/her parents an opportunity to present the student's version of the relevant events. The principal may require the removing teacher to attend the conference if it occurs within the teacher workday. The conference must be held within forty-eight hours of the removal unless a mutual agreement between the principal, teacher and parents is made to extend the timeframe.

### **Principal's Right to Overturn a Removal**

The principal or his/her designee may overturn the removal of a student from class if any one of the following is determined:

1. The charges against the student are not supported by substantial evidence.
2. The student's removal is otherwise in violation of law, including the district's Code of Conduct.
3. The conduct warrants suspension from school, pursuant to Education Law S3214, and a suspension will be imposed.

The principal may overturn the removal at any point between receiving the referral form and the close of business on the day following the forty-eight hour period for the informal conference, if a conference is requested. No student removed from the classroom by the classroom teacher will be permitted to return to the classroom until the principal makes a final determination, or the period of removal expires, whichever is less.

### **Students with Disabilities**

The district will comply with all state and federal laws regulating discipline procedures for students with disabilities.

The disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities have been developed to:

1. promote early intervention and avoid escalation of behavioral or other adjustment problems;
2. examine and respond to behavior as it relates to the disability; and
3. provide for modifications of instructional program, services and/or placement in an expedited fashion to avoid disruption of the student's education.

It is intended that behavior, which is related to the disability and does not present a serious danger to self or others should be dealt with through modification of the instructional program, services or placement rather than the suspension process. This would include conferences among the teacher, Special Education Teacher, Administrator, and the parent to attempt to resolve the problem. It may result in a referral to the Committee on Special Education or modifications within the existing program which do not affect the Phase I IEP.

Where the behavior is not related to the disability and/or the behavior does present a serious danger to self or others, the short-term suspension process may still be used.

These procedures have been developed to avoid the students having prolonged periods of time without any instructional program and/or minimize the staff time involved currently in the long term process.



## **GUIDELINES FOR HOMEWORK AND AGENDA BOOK**

### **A Statement Regarding the School Agenda Book and the Teacher Use of Websites**

Several years ago the middle school and the PTSA embarked on a joint project to create a multipurpose educational tool that would address several student educational needs. After careful study, the agenda book was introduced as a means to encourage the development of such essential student skills as organization, planning, and responsibility. The agenda book also served as an efficient form of school-home communication by providing parents with a daily method of monitoring their child's homework and long-term projects.

The expanding world of technology has created both opportunities and confusion. The introduction of websites as an alternative form of communication has prompted some teachers/teams to create and maintain sites. These websites are an optional form of communication, maintained voluntarily by teachers. The middle school's Instructional Leadership Team feels that it is appropriate to clarify and restate the school's position regarding the use of the agenda book.

The middle school agenda book is the designated vehicle for the recording of assignments, both daily and long-term, and should be reviewed daily by both student and parent alike. The middle school faculty and staff believe that the agenda book is the most effective method of promoting student organization, responsibility, and self-reliance, as well as an appropriate method for addressing the New York State Standards. The agenda book provides a comprehensive view of your child's daily academic life.

Parents should rely on the agenda book as their primary source of daily information regarding their child's assignments. While a website may supplement the agenda book, it does not replace it. **The teacher use of websites is strictly voluntary.**

### **Homework Rationale:**

Homework is an important part of most courses at Pittsford Middle School. It is designed to serve a variety of purposes in the education of our students including:

- The reinforcement of daily classroom learning
- Preparation for the next day's classroom topic
- Building independent work habits and responsibility
- The reinforcement of time management and organizational skills
- Assisting teachers with the evaluation of student progress
- Promoting the development of academic integrity

**Guidelines:** *Homework is given to create a learning opportunity for all students.*

Homework assignments will be meaningful and supportive of classroom instruction. Time spent on homework varies among students. Most students average between 1-2 hours for completion time. A general guideline is approximately 60 minutes per day for 6<sup>th</sup> grader, 75 minutes for 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 90 minutes for 8<sup>th</sup> grade. If a student is spending an excessive amount of time on homework, the team should be contacted.

Assignments may be differentiated to adapt to students individual needs.

**Independent Practice:** reinforces and practices skills and concepts learned in class

**Reading:** for content and/or literature study; preparation for the next day's lesson or long-range lessons

**Research projects:** in-depth studies of a particular topic involving library skills and research techniques (these projects could involve visits to the school and/or public libraries)

**Group projects:** students work in small groups to study particular topics (these projects will be completed during the school day – students will not be required to work with assigned partners outside of the school day)

Students can expect to have homework on a regular basis. Each team will coordinate its own homework, projects and exams to avoid overburdening students. Special area teachers will notify teams about long-range projects and major exams to be considered in their team plans. Teams will schedule no more than two major exams on one day, giving at least one week's notice via the agenda book.

**Grading:**

Homework quality and completion will be included in the student's course grade. Individual teachers will specify their system for granting credit.

**Incomplete Homework:**

Students are expected to complete homework assignments. Procedures for dealing with incomplete assignments will be specified by individual teachers.

Homework missed as a result of absence from class is expected to be made up.

Students who are absent for more than one day due to illness, may request homework by calling the automated homework line before 9:00 a.m. on the second day of absence. The homework can then be picked up that day after 3:00 p.m. outside the office by Cafeteria One. In case of extended serious illness, tutoring can be arranged. If this is desired, the family should contact the Counseling Office.

Because homework is so closely tied to instruction, specific homework assignments cannot be provided in advance.

<b>PROGRAM DESIGN - GRADE 6</b>
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PERIOD

1	English
2	Social Studies
3	Science
4	World Languages
5	Lunch/Band/Chorus/Orchestra
6	Math
7	Physical Education/Health/Family and Consumer Sciences
8	Study Hall/Art/General Music
9	Enrichment

<b>PROGRAM DESIGN – GRADE 7</b>
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PERIOD

1	English
2	Social Studies
3	Physical Education/Family and Consumer Sciences
4	World Language
5	Science
6	Lunch/Band/Orchestra/Chorus
7	Math
8	Art/General Music/Technology
9	Enrichment

<b>PROGRAM DESIGN – GRADE 8</b>
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PERIOD

1	English
2	Social Studies
3	Math
4	World Language
5	Physical Education/Health
6	Science
7	Lunch/Band/Orchestra/Chorus
8	Enrichment
9	Technology/Art/Study Hall

PITTSFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL  
STUDENT PROGRAM

**GRADE 6**

English	Full year
Social Studies	Full year
Math	Full year
Science	Full year
Enrichment	Full year
World Language	Full year
Latin	
French	
Spanish	
Physical Education	Alternate days all year
Family and Consumer Sciences	Alternate days half year
Health	Alternate days half year
Art	Alternate days half year
General Music	Alternate days half year
Music:	
Band	Alternate days all year
Chorus	Every day all year
Orchestra	Every day all year

PITTSFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT PROGRAM

**GRADE 7**

English	Full year
Social Studies	Full year
Math	Full year
Science	Full year
Enrichment	Full year
World Language	Full year
Latin	
French	
Spanish	
Technology	Alternate days all year
Physical Education	Alternate days all year
Family and Consumer Sciences	Alternate days all year
Art	Alternate days half year
General Music	Alternate days half year
Music:	
Band	Every day all year
Chorus	Every day all year
Orchestra	Every day all year

PITTSFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT PROGRAM

**GRADE 8**

English	Full year
Social Studies	Full year
Science	Full year
Math	Full year
Enrichment	Full year
World Language	Full year
Latin	
French	
Spanish	
Physical Education	Alternate days all year
Technology	Alternate days all year
Health	Alternate days all year
Art	Alternate days half year
Music:	
Band	Every day all year
Chorus	Every day all year
Orchestra	Every day all year

## **ENGLISH – GRADES 6, 7, 8**

The sixth, seventh, and eighth grade English program is designed to provide students with an integrated process-oriented study of the conventions of the English language.

- ⇒ To gain information, discover meaning, understand logical relationships, and make judgments through critical thinking, reading, researching, and thinking.
- ⇒ To speak, write, and solve problems creatively
- ⇒ To communicate emotions, ideas, opinions, values, experiences, and information.
- ⇒ To discover both the power and the beauty of literature as a mirror of human experience, reflecting human motives, conflicts, values, and traditions.

Within the language arts program is instruction and implementation in the following areas:

- ⇒ *grammar and language skills* to assist in providing a framework for manipulating language.
- ⇒ *vocabulary* to strengthen and build word acquisition and comprehension.
- ⇒ *reading* strategies to extract information and develop higher level comprehension.
- ⇒ *writing* to emphasize the process approach of thinking, organizing, drafting, and revising.
- ⇒ *literature* to expose students to various genre such as poetry, drama, non-fiction, short stories, and novels.
- ⇒ *thinking skills* to help engage students in critical analysis.

The Pittsford Middle School English curriculum is sequential, providing the student with a structured approach for learning and applying communication skills and exceeds the New York State Standards for Language Arts.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

### **SIXTH GRADE**

During sixth grade, students will explore the ancient civilizations of the Eastern Hemisphere, including Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, India, and Persia, Greece, and Rome, and will complete their course with a study of the Middle Ages. Units will focus on social, political, economic, and geographic factors, with an emphasis, when appropriate, on overarching concepts as delineated by the State Education Department. Students will continue to work on document skills through the completion of Constructed Response Questions and Document-Based Questions, as part of the district wide curriculum. Current Events will also be emphasized, as they are applicable to the unit of study.

### **SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADE**

The social studies program in grades 7 and 8 is a two-year course of study focusing on the social, political, and economic history of the United States. This chronological review of the major events, issues, and people that shaped our nation's development includes the study of key concepts such as interdependence, justice, and citizenship, as well as others that are delineated by the State Education Department. Students will continue to work on document skills through the completion of Constructed Response Questions and Document-Based Questions, as part of the district wide curriculum. The program concludes with the NYS Intermediate Social Studies Assessment at the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **SCIENCE**

### **SIXTH GRADE**

Sixth grade science is the first year of the Middle School science program. This Biology and Earth Science System program includes problem solving through inquiry based on the Pittsford School District Science Standards. Core topics include classification, kingdoms of life, cells, microscopes, pillbugs, earthworms, plants, human body, exploring science and rocketry.

### **SEVENTH GRADE (Chemistry and Earth Science Systems)**

Seventh grade science applies the concepts of chemistry (Matter, Atoms, Elements, Compounds, Mixtures, physical and chemical properties and changes) to the discussion and/or problem solving of current environmental issues related to science, math,



technology and society. This program includes the teaching and reinforcement of the Pittsford School District Science Standards.

### **SCIENCE 8**

This course is designed to provide additional support in preparation for the New York State Intermediate Science exam. It covers the basic concepts of the Physics 8 core curriculum. In addition, the course reinforces key concepts from Science 6 and Science 7.

### **PHYSICS 8**

This course studies the field of physics. Topics covered are measurement, motion, forces, work, simple machines, power, energy, sound, and light. Problem solving, technology and measurement are integrated throughout the year. Physics concepts are applied to selected topics from Earth Science.

### **EARTH SCIENCE**

Beginning in September 2008, the eighth grade science program will include Physics 8 and Regents Earth Science. Regents Earth Science replaces Honors Physics 8. As with Honors Physics 8, students must qualify for Regents Earth Science. Qualification is based on previous performance and readiness. This course will include a June New York State Regents Exam, required labs, and if successfully completed, a high school credit will be earned. This is a high school level course, credited by New York State, and will be included in your child's official high school transcript and high school grade point average.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Middle School mathematics is designed to engage students in thoughtful mathematics. Problem solving, mathematical reasoning, making connections, and communicating both verbally and in writing are process goals. These goals are emphasized in all courses in order for students to use mathematics in meaningful ways.

### **MATH 6 R**

This course is designed for students who had difficulty mastering basic math skills and concepts in elementary school. A small class setting provides opportunities for more individualized instruction. Students will develop fluency with operations of fractions and decimals. Students will solve a wide variety of problems with ratios and proportions.

Prerequisite: NYS Math Score Level 1 or 2

## **MATH 6**

This course uses the basic skills of elementary math in relevant problem solving applications. Students will begin to work with basic algebra concepts using integers and equation solving. Other topics include ratio, proportion, geometry, and probability. On occasion, calculators may be used to investigate and justify procedures and findings.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of 5<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics

## **MATH 6 HONORS**

This course is designed for the extremely capable math student who demonstrates fluency with rational numbers, possesses academic maturity in study skills, homework detail and completion and is highly motivated. The program uncovers the topics of the Math 6 program in greater depth and at a faster pace. On occasion, calculators may be used to investigate and justify procedures and findings. Students need to maintain a B (85%) minimum average in this course.

Pre-requisite: Math department screening process

## **MATH 7 R**

This course is designed for students who had difficulty mastering math skills and concepts in prior math classes. A small class setting provides opportunities for more individualized instruction. Students will develop an understanding of proportionality, measurement, perimeter and area. Calculators are used to investigate and justify procedures and findings.

Prerequisite: NYS Math Score Level 1 or 2 or teacher recommendation

## **MATH 7**

This course investigates pre-algebra and geometry concepts, statistics, and probability using visual models, hands-on labs and skill practice with real world problem solving. Students are challenged to solve multi-step problems and represent their solutions accurately. Calculators are used to investigate and justify procedures and findings.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of 6<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics

## **MATH 7 HONORS**

This course is designed for the extremely capable math student who is reasoning at an abstract level, possesses academic maturity in study skills, homework detail and completion, and is highly motivated. The program covers the topics of the Math 7 program in greater depth and explores additional topics. Calculators are used to investigate and justify procedures and findings. Students need to maintain a B (85%) minimum average in this course.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Math 6 Honors or A+ average in Math 6 and teacher recommendation

## **MATH 8 R**

This course is designed for students who had difficulty mastering math skills and concepts in prior math classes. A small class setting provides opportunities for more individualized instruction. Students will begin to represent and analyze linear functions, systems of linear equations, two-dimensional figures, and data sets. Calculators are used to investigate and justify procedures and findings.

Prerequisite: NYS Math Score Level 1 or 2 or teacher recommendation

## **MATH 8**

This course investigates a variety of topics in algebra including operations with polynomials, solving verbal problems algebraically, systems of linear equations and linear functions. Students will apply coordinate geometry to analyze problem solving situations. Calculators are used to investigate and justify procedures and findings.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of 7<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics

## **INTEGRATED ALGEBRA**

This course is designed for students who have shown outstanding achievement in their previous math courses. This course uses algebra in context to solve problems and investigate applications. This course focuses on algebraic topics including solving and graphing linear equations and inequalities, polynomials and quadratic, exponential, and rational equations. Students will also study basic trigonometry, probability and statistics. This course concludes with the NYS Algebra Regents Exam. Students need to maintain a B+ (87%) minimum average in this course. Students will earn a high school credit for successful completion of this course and exam.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Math 7 Honors or A+ in Math 7 and teacher recommendation

## ART

The goal of the three-year Middle School program is to provide an experience that works directly with the District's Art's Standards which include Studio Production, Aesthetics, Critical Thinking, and Art History.

### GRADE 6

**Major Units of Study Include: Components of Visual Art** (subject, format, medium, art history, art criticism); **Elements of Design and Principles of Design** (overview); **Line** (observational contour line drawing); **Color** (traditional mixing theory, wheel relationships); **Space** (positive, negative and compositional); **Shape** (geometric and organic); **Pattern & Texture** (concepts and application); **Value** (concepts and application); **Balance** (symmetrical, asymmetrical balance); **Unity** (concepts and application); **Emphasis** (concepts and application); **Proportion** (drawing skills); **Movement** (visual movement); **Contrast** (differences); **Art History; Criticism; Analysis**

**7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade consists of one unit of study divided between the two years.**

### GRADE 7

**Major Units of Study Include: Elements and Principles of Design** (in depth study); **Line** (contour line drawing); **Color** (color & value); **Space** (2-point perspective, abstraction); **Value** (pencil shading); **Value/Form** (creating the illusion of form, stippling, cross-hatching); **Proportion** (the human figure); **Art History; Criticism; Analysis**

### GRADE 8

**Major Units of Study Include: Elements and Principles of Design** (in depth study); **Line** (contour drawing, proportional drawing); **Space** (design & composition, negative & positive alternation, application of perspective in observational drawing); **Color** (5 color theory mixing systems, color theory application, abstraction); **Form** (sculptural concepts); **Emphasis** ( focal point & contrast); **Variety** (in composition); **Art History; Criticism; Analysis**

## **MUSIC**

### **GENERAL MUSIC**

General music is a required course for all 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. The class will explore the basic concepts of music using a variety of instruments and techniques including keyboards, guitars, computers, MIDI technology, improvisation, composition, and performance. This class meets every other day for 1 semester.

*Students may select the following:*

### **BAND OR STRING ORCHESTRA**

These organizations provide continuing ensemble experience for wind instrumentalists, string instrumentalists and percussionists. Participating students have the opportunity to play instrumental literature from pre-classical to contemporary styles stressing the techniques of good ensemble playing. Both groups meet every day for a full year and perform several evening concerts during the year. Members of these groups take weekly small group lessons on their instruments. They also are eligible to audition for the select vocal and instrumental ensembles.

### **CHORUS**

This ensemble is designed for those students who enjoy singing in a large group. Musical literature is selected from a variety of time periods, including classical styles, popular styles and “show tunes.” Students will also study basic vocal techniques. Chorus meets every day for a full year and performs several evening concerts during the year. Participating students are eligible to audition for the select vocal ensembles.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION – Grades 6, 7 and 8**

The goals of physical education in the Middle School are twofold: to develop in all students an attitude of appreciation for physical activity and to provide students with a background of knowledge and appreciation for team sports, individual sports and recreational activity for leisure time.

Activities taught to all students include soccer, flag football, wrestling, basketball, gymnastics, volleyball, swimming, track and field, softball, recreational games, golf, weight training, cross-country running, field hockey, tennis aerobics, cross country skiing, team handball, floor hockey, lacrosse, dancing, orienteering and snowshoeing.

In addition to physical education instruction interscholastic sports will be available throughout the school year for grades 7 & 8 and intramurals for grades 6, 7, & 8.

## **HEALTH EDUCATION – Grades 6 and 8**

Health Education at the Middle School is taught by certified Health Education Teachers at the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade level. Sixth grade Health meets every other day for one half of the year. Eighth grade Health meets every other day all year.

This course is designed to enhance students' physical, social and emotional wellness. Topics of interest and importance to the students are selected from the New York Health Curriculum Guides and are discussed in a non-threatening atmosphere.

The desired outcome is that students will gain age-appropriate health information and will learn how to be a self-advocate and develop the ability to make positive and healthy life choices. Both courses also have several parent components to provide parents with the opportunity to discuss health topics and family values with their child.

## **WORLD LANGUAGES**

Our world language program has been carefully designed to offer students the opportunity to:

- a. Use a language other than English as a tool for communication
- b. Extend their social horizons to include the international community
- c. Understand and appreciate cultures different from their own

### **FRENCH 6, SPANISH 6**

No prerequisite

Level 6 introduces sixth graders to the excitement of language learning. This is the first course in the Middle School sequence. It meets every other day for a full year. Listening comprehension, reading, writing and speaking skills are developed. Basic vocabulary and basic grammar are introduced, as well as aspects of foreign culture.

### **LATIN 6**

No prerequisite

Latin 6 introduces sixth graders to the rich language, history and culture of the Romans and the Roman Empire. This is the first course in the Middle School sequence. It meets every other day for a full year. Students build a basic Latin vocabulary for use in comprehending Latin stories, and explore English derivatives and Latin expressions used in English. Roman mythology, history and cultural background are integral parts of the course.

### **FRENCH 7, SPANISH 7**

*Prerequisite: Level 6*

This is the second course in the Middle School sequence. It meets every day for a full year. Listening comprehension, reading, writing and speaking skills are developed.

Intermediate vocabulary and basic grammar are introduced, as well as aspects of foreign culture.

### **LATIN 7**

*Prerequisite: Level 6*

This is the second course of the Latin sequence. It meets every day for a full year. Grammar skills, forms, inflections and principles of syntax are studied. Students build a basic Latin vocabulary for use in comprehending Latin stories, and explore English derivatives and Latin expressions used in English. Roman mythology, history and cultural background are integral parts of the course.

### **FRENCH 8, SPANISH 8**

*Prerequisite: Level 7*

This is the third course in the Middle School sequence and meets every day. There is a continued emphasis on communication with the goal of an increased ability to express oneself in the target language. Intermediate vocabulary and grammar structure continue to be developed as well as a growing awareness of the foreign culture.

### **LATIN 8**

*Prerequisite: Level 7*

This is the third course in the Middle School sequence and meets every day. This course continues to develop the student's acquisition of Latin vocabulary, comprehension skills, understanding of English derivatives and appreciation of Roman culture.

*New York State Proficiency Examination will be administered all world language students at the end of level 8. Students who pass this examination will earn one unit of high school credit.*

## **TECHNOLOGY - GRADES 7, 8**

Gateway to Technology's (GTT) cutting-edge program addresses the interest and energy of middle school students, while incorporating national standards in mathematics, science, and technology. GTT is "activity oriented" to show students how technology is used in engineering to solve everyday problems. There are currently four instructional units that excite and motivate students to use their imaginations. They are designed to teach them to be creative and innovative, while gaining the skills they need to develop, produce, and use products and services.

Seventh graders will work with a CAD program called AutoDesk Inventor during the unit "Design and Modeling". They will learn about 3D solid modeling and apply their introductory knowledge to the solution of a variety of problems. In the "Science of Technology" unit, students will apply their understanding of basic scientific principles to a variety of problems, where they will design, build, and implement their solutions.

In the second year of Technology Education, eighth grade students will receive an introduction to the “Magic of Electrons”. The focus will be placed on the construction of simple electricity and electronics projects. Because this is, for many, their first exposure to electricity and electronics, projects are step-by-step construction with a small amount of theory. In the other unit, “Automation and Robotics,” students will build mechanical devices using parts supplied by Fischertechnik, and learn introductory programming. Basic concepts and understandings will be applied to the solution of problems requiring construction, wiring, and programming of simple mechanical models.

## **FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES – Grades 6, 7**

Family and Consumer Sciences is a program of applied activities and instruction which is crucial to the skills needed for students to meet their responsibilities as family members, consumers, wage earners, future parents and home managers.

Students gain knowledge and skills in decision making, problem solving and management in the areas of human development, interpersonal relationships, personal safety, consumerism, money management, meal planning and preparation, nutrition, and clothing and textile science. Career exploration is a significant component of the curriculum. The overriding theme throughout this skills-based course is the teaching of and emphasis on the Universal Foundation Skills recognized by the SCANS report.

## **ENRICHMENT PERIOD, Grades 6, 7 and 8**

The Enrichment period will attempt to address the diverse needs and interest of the Middle School student. The core team comprised of English, Social Studies, Math and Science will collaborate with the Wellness, Arts, and Technology Teams as well as outside sources to develop a comprehensive program. This period will provide a variety of opportunities that will engage all students in learning activities which stimulate inquiry, creativity, and discovery.

## **CORE SUPPORT**

**Prerequisite:** Placement by the Committee on Special Education.

Core Support is a program for students who have been identified with a disability by the Committee on Special Education. The program provides additional support in all the content areas. Core Support also focuses on specific skill areas such as writing, reading, mathematics, organization, time management, study strategies, test-taking skills, listening skills, and social lessons. The class is offered on a daily basis, but students may participate at various levels depending on their needs.



## **READING/WRITING**

**Prerequisite:** Students are identified as needing support if they:

- Score below the State Reference Point on the New York State English Language Arts Assessment
- Score at or below the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile on any subtest of a standardized reading achievement test
- Meet the Academic Intervention Support identification criteria

Barker Middle School offers a Reading/Writing program to students who have demonstrated needs in the Language Arts areas. The goals of this Reading/Writing program include diagnostic testing and teaching to improve skills through literature and the use of content materials.

Reading/Writing students meet in a small group setting with the Reading Specialist on alternate days for a full class period.

The Reading Specialist facilitates reading and writing strategies that students can apply to their content area classes. Students learn a variety of methods to improve their effectiveness in reading expository and fictional texts. Practice with different styles of writing and one-on-one feedback help students improve their writing skills.

Direct instruction on reading and writing strategies helps prepare students to meet the New York State English Language Arts Standards, which are assessed in Grades 6, 7, and 8. Students are encouraged to take risks with their reading and writing and provided with individualized opportunities to develop their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

## **SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SERVICE**

**Prerequisite:** Evaluation and recommendation by the Teacher of Speech and Language; Placement by the Committee on Special Education

Students who have a “speech impairment” and in need of help in areas of receptive and expressive language and/or articulation, and/or fluency, and/or voice, and/or social thinking, and/or hearing impairments are scheduled to work with a teacher of speech and language either in their classroom in small groups or individually. Students may also be referred for evaluations in any one of the above areas by the Pupil Services Team. Coordination with classroom teachers, special education teachers, counselors and parents aid in providing educationally and communicative relevant programs for students.

## REPORT CARD AND GRADING INFORMATION

All grades are based on a combination of tests, quizzes, projects, reports, participation and effort. Individual teachers will give detailed information to students on grading during the first weeks of school.

The Middle Schools use a letter grade to communicate progress. The letter grade represents a category of performance and is converted to a numerical midpoint in order to average in final test marks. Four marking periods and final exams (when applicable) are averaged together and converted to a final grade at the end of the school year. Courses that meet for one semester do not give a final exam.

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u>	<u>CONVERSION</u>
A+	96.5 – 100	98
A	92.5 – 96.49	94.5
A-	89.5 – 92.49	91
B+	86.5 – 89.49	88
B	82.5 – 86.49	84.5
B-	79.5 – 82.49	81
C+	76.5 – 79.49	78
C	72.5 – 76.49	74.5
C-	69.5 – 72.49	71
D+	65.5 – 69.49	67.5
D	64.5 – 65.49	65
E	54.5 – 64.49	60
F	Below 54.5	55

## HONOR ROLL

Seventh and eighth grade students are eligible to be included on the Honor Roll.

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade:** There are two Honor Rolls per year, January and June. All grades for each semester are used to determine eligibility. The overall average must be at least 92.5 (95.5+ High Honor). Grades are weighted according to the number of times each class meets, i.e., a class meeting alternate days is given only half credit of a class meeting daily.

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** There are two Honor Rolls per year, January and June. All grades for each semester are used to determine eligibility. The overall average must be at least 92.5 (95.5+ High Honor). Grades are weight according to the number of times each class meets, i.e., a class meeting alternate days is given only half credit of a class meeting daily.

## AWARDS

### FACULTY RECOGNITION AWARD

Students at each grade level will be honored for their citizenship, effort, classroom performance and improvement.

***Purpose:*** To recognize those students who strive all year, have good citizenship and yet are not formally recognized by the faculty for their efforts.

- Criteria:***
1. A student may be considered provided he does not also receive a faculty award.
  2. Citizenship as seen in teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relations is to be considered.
  3. Effort and improvement should receive high consideration.

- Method:**
1. Each teacher nominates one student.
  2. If two teachers nominate the same person, those teachers involved will meet to decide on the nomination
  3. The list will then be distributed to all teachers and they can vote for as many as they feel qualify.
  4. In order to receive the award, a student must receive 4 votes or the votes of 50% of the teachers for students who are not fully mainstreamed.

### **FACULTY SCHOLASTIC AWARDS**

Based on 30-weeks academic achievement, the faculty recognizes students whose academic performance has been meritorious. The awards are given at the annual Awards assemblies. To be eligible for the Faculty Scholastic Awards, a student must have:

89.5 – 92.49 – Merit Roll  
92.5 – 95.49 – Honor Roll  
95.5+ High Honor Roll

