

PIKE ROAD SCHOOLS

FACULTY/STAFF HANDBOOK



The Pike Road Way

The strength of Pike Road Schools is grounded in our sincere desire to create a culture of intellectual curiosity. We are fearless about doing what is best for our students. We refer to how we do things as the “[Pike Road Way](#).”

Our Mission: To create a culture of intellectual curiosity where all students have ownership over their learning and are inspired to think, innovate, and create.

Our Vision: Our students are lifelong learners who use their knowledge, skills, and influence to make the world a better place.

OUR BELIEFS

We believe intellectual growth occurs when learners are **genuinely engaged** in their learning.

We believe students are more engaged when they are **solving real problems** for a real audience.

We believe meaningful learning can occur **any time** and at **any location**.

We believe learners will do challenging work when **failure** is embraced as a valuable part of the learning process and they **feel safe and valued**.

We believe community members are **valuable partners** and must be **involved** in their schools.

We believe all members of the school community should treat each other like **family**.

We believe that every member of the school community contributes to student learning and should be a **continuous learner**.

We believe teachers are **designers, facilitators, navigators, mentors, encouragers**, and **leaders** who continuously work on improving the learning experiences designed for students and are highly respected experts who have a global impact on teaching and learning.

We believe parents are **valuable partners** and members of the school community.

We believe the superintendent and principals are **lead learners** and are highly respected experts who have a global impact on teaching and learning.

We believe the superintendent and school board function as a **team**, advocate for students, create capacity and build community.

PIKE ROAD SCHOOLS' PLEDGE TO STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY

As a school system, **WE PLEDGE** to accomplish our mission of creating a culture of intellectual curiosity where all students have ownership over their learning and are inspired to think, innovate, and create.

We PLEDGE to support our students as learners by

- Fostering a safe and nurturing learning environment
- Being responsive to students' needs as learners to enable each student to reach his/her full potential
- Empowering teachers as designers, facilitators, navigators, mentors, encouragers, and leaders who guide, instruct, and support students in their learning
- Engaging students in their learning by creating experiences by in which students are solving real problems for a real audience
- Empowering students to be researchers, curators, content creators, and publishers
- Piquing students' curiosity about how things work and encouraging them to ask questions, observe, investigate, take things apart, build, and create
- Structuring learning in a way that allows students to have more ownership over their learning
- Creating learning experiences that cause students to retain what they learn and be able to apply their learning to new situations
- Using technology resources to supplement, enhance, and accelerate students' learning
- Empowering students to conduct in-depth research on topics of interest to them and to become the resident experts on their area of interest
- Assessing students' knowledge and skills to devise each student's learning path and reassess as needed to ensure students are continuously learning and making significant academic gains
- Flexibly grouping students to work on specific content objectives/skills based on their learning needs
- Supporting each student on his/her level with an emphasis on moving the student to the next level
- Allowing student learning to determine how we use time and resources.

We PLEDGE to communicate and partner with parents and the community by

- Valuing parents as our partners and members of the school community.
- Communicating and collaborating with parents about your child's learning, events, and opportunities.
- Providing parents ongoing access to their child's progress as a learner and working together to monitor and discuss students' progress
- Enlisting community support and volunteers to share their time, hobby, and/or allow our students to come into their place of business for shadowing, apprenticeships, and opportunities for solving real problems
- Collaborate with colleges and universities to provide online and onsite college courses to enable our high schools to earn college credit hours prior to graduating from high school

PIKE ROAD SCHOOLS' PARENT/GUARDIAN PLEDGE

As a parent/guardian, **I PLEDGE** to be a valuable partner and member of the school community.

I PLEDGE to support my child as a learner by

- Helping my child discover the joy of learning, thinking, innovating, and creating
- Spending time talking and listening to my child everyday about his/her learning - - asking questions such as "What did you work on? What did you learn? What are you doing next? What are you curious about?"
- Helping my child take more responsibility and assume ownership over his/her learning

- Asking questions, having conversations, and modeling my curiosity about the topics being discussed/studied by my child
- Learning with my child
- Talking with my child about my learning - - things I find interesting, things that challenge me, things I want to learn more about, things I have recently learned, etc.
- Encouraging my child to learn continuously
- Encouraging my child to stretch himself/herself and attempt challenging work
- Helping my child learn from failure and teach my child that failure is a valuable part of the learning process
- Modeling and encouraging resiliency
- Encouraging reading. I will read to my child, and I will listen as my child reads to me
- Helping my child develop self-confidence and self-discipline
- Encouraging my child to have positive and respectful relationships with teachers, students, and other staff
- Discussing and modeling qualities like honesty, hard work, respect, and integrity.
- Affirming my child's respectful attitude, responsible behavior, and quality work.

I PLEDGE to communicate and partner with the school by

- Talking with my child's teacher about how my child is doing in school
- Partnering with my child's teacher(s) by sharing relevant information about my child and participating in parent conferences.
- Partnering with my child's school by participating in and volunteering at school events.
- Reading all correspondence from my child's teacher and the school
- Responding as needed to correspondence from my child's teacher and the school
- Checking my child's learning progress on a regular (weekly) basis
- Ensuring that my child is at school on time each school day
- Making sure my child gets healthy meals, enough sleep, and good exercise every day
- Setting a regular time and place for school work that is free of distractions
- Supporting the role of teacher as designer, facilitator, navigator, mentor, encourager, and leader

PIKE ROAD SCHOOLS' STUDENT PLEDGE

As a student, **I PLEDGE** to be assume ownership over my learning and use my knowledge, skills, and influence to make my school system, my community, and the world a better place.

I PLEDGE to take ownership of my learning by

- Being enthusiastic about the joy of learning, thinking, innovating, and creating
- Spending time talking and listening to my parents, teachers, experts, and classmates everyday about my learning - - discussing with them what I am working on, what I am learning, and what I am curious about.
- Taking more responsibility and assume ownership over my learning
- Being a continuous learner
- Stretching myself and attempt challenging work
- Giving my best effort in all circumstances and celebrating quality work
- Learning from failure and view failure is a valuable part of the learning process
- Being resilient
- Reading often and talking about my reading with others.

- Developing self-confidence and self-discipline
- Eating healthy meals, getting enough sleep and exercise every day
- Seeking assistance or advice from parents and teachers when I am confused or need support
- Being on time and prepared for learning each school day

I PLEDGE to use my knowledge, skills, and influence to make my school system, my community, and the world a better place by

- Being a positive influence and a good friend to all my fellow Patriots
- Being an active researcher, curator, content creator, and publisher.
- Talking with others about my learning - - things I find interesting, things that challenge me, things I want to learn more about, things I have recently learned, etc.
- Asking questions, having conversations, and modeling my curiosity about the topics being discussed/studied
- Learning with my parents, teachers, classmates, experts, etc.
- Having positive and respectful relationships with teachers, students, and other staff
- Thinking about and pursuing ways I can have a positive impact on others
- Being honest, working hard, respecting others, and having integrity
- Following through on assignments and other obligations for the benefit of myself and others
- Using tools and resources wisely and for good purposes

ALABAMA EDUCATOR CODE OF ETHICS

See Pike Road Board Policy G – 2.

COPYRIGHT COMPLIANCE (Pike Road Board Policy C-9)

The unauthorized use, installation, copying, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or a patented material on the network or the Internet is expressly prohibited. The Board will adhere to the provisions of the U.S. Copyright Law. The Board prohibits employees from copying materials that (1) violate copyright law, (2) violate fair use guidelines, (3) violate licenses or contractual agreements, or (4) without other permission.

The following guidelines shall govern the reproduction of copyrighted materials in the school system: (1) Board employees may reproduce copyrighted materials under the provisions of the copyright laws currently in force under Title 17 of the United States Code. (2) Any reproduction of copyrighted materials will be done either with the written permission of the copyright holder or within the bounds of "Fair Use" guidelines provided in the Copyright Act; otherwise, the individual responsible for reproduction may be liable for infringing the copyright under existing laws. (3) The ethical and practical problems caused by the unauthorized copying of any copyrighted materials (printed, video, or software) will be taught to educators and students in all schools. (4) The Board in recognizing the importance of the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) hereby notifies all employees and students that a willful infringement of the law may result in disciplinary action.

As a general rule, if an employee or student did not create material, does not own the rights to it, or has not received authorization for its use, it should not be copied, downloaded, or put on the Pike Road School System's Network or the Internet.

YOU ARE A PATRIOT!

- o You represent your Pike Road Patriot Family.
- o Monitor your social media and be sure it puts you (and the system) in a good light.
- o Be careful what you say and how you say it.
 - o We NEVER talk negative about our colleagues.
 - o We ALWAYS build goodwill and capacity for PRS.
- o We will have candid internal conversation about teaching and learning, but we fiercely support “The Pike Road Way” externally.

AS PIKE ROAD PATRIOTS . . . We have a consistent message.

- o We use a common language.
- o We represent Pike Road in a good light.
- o We are lifelong learners
- o We build capacity.
- o We love and respect ALL children.
- o We are FAMILY!

DRESS CODE FOR FACULTY/STAFF

Please dress professional and appropriate for the work environment and what you are doing that day. We want to be good examples for students and put Pike Road Schools in a good light. If you are sitting on the floor most of the day, dress appropriately. If you are painting or using tools with students, dress appropriately for this activity. If we have visitors or are doing presentations, dress appropriately. Fridays will be spirit days and this will be an appropriate time to wear jeans and a Patriot shirt. We must model appropriate dress for students. If you have doubts, do not wear it.

DUTY HOURS FOR CERTIFICATED STAFF

Teachers' hours will be from 7:40 to 3:40 and extended hours on days/weeks that have assigned duties.

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ELECTRONIC MEDIA (See Pike Road Board Policy C-10)

The Board recognizes that electronic media and the Internet provide access to a wide variety of instructional resources that enhance educational opportunities. Use of electronic resources must be in support of and consistent with the established vision, mission, and goals of the Board.

All users of the district wide area network and/or other electronic informational services will strictly comply with all applicable ethical and legal rules and regulations regarding access as outlined in the Acceptable Use of Technologies procedure.

In compliance with public law 106-554, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Superintendent shall institute, maintain, and enforce guidelines with respect to access to the district wide area network and/or other electronic informational services to accomplish the following:

1. To install and continuously operate a qualifying "technology protection measure" that includes, but is not limited to firewalls, district filters, and local school filters;
2. To prevent unauthorized access (hacking) and disclosure of students' personal information by on-line users;
3. To ensure the security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of electronic communication; to prevent access to depictions that contain (a) obscene material, (b) child pornography, or (c) material "harmful to minors," the definition for which is in section 1721 (c) of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000.
4. To institute, maintain, and enforce procedures for practically monitoring users' on-line activity.
5. To allow authorized person(s) to disable a "technology protection measure" during adult use, only for the purposes of bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

EMPLOYEE LEAVE

- Sick Leave - See Pike Road Board Policy G-5 and G-6.
- Personal Leave - See Pike Road Board Policy G-7.
- Vacation Leave - See Pike Road Board Policy G-8.
- Family and Medical Leave - See Pike Road Board Policy G-10
- Medical Leave of Absence – See Pike Road Board Policy G-11
- Legal Service Absence – See Pike Road Board Policy G-13

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

It is the policy of the Board that no person in this district shall, on the basis of race, color, disability, creed, religion, sex, age, or national origin be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in any education program or activity. This includes employment, retention, and promotion.

The Superintendent shall designate a member of the staff to investigate complaints, which may be brought against the district in regard to any alleged discriminatory action. The name, address, and telephone number of the designee shall be publicized. Grievance procedures shall be promulgated to support the intent of this policy.

Any complaint of sex discrimination practices or any noncompliance with Title IX requirements should be registered with the Coordinator of Title IX activities. Any complaint regarding equal opportunity employment may be filed on a grievance form provided by the Board.

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES REGARDING FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) (Pike Road Board Policy G-3)

All employees hired by the Pike Road Board need to understand that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects student educational records. This act assures that information about students is not disclosed without the written consent of their parents. A student's right of privacy is violated when personal information is disclosed to others without consent, or when he or she is being asked for personal information by others who have no legal basis to do so.

FERPA applies to education records that include but are not limited to the following:

Family information

Personal information

Grades

Test records

Special education records

Disciplinary records

Medical and health records

Transcripts

Videotaping

All employees are expected to comply with confidentiality demands of FERPA and may not disclose any student information verbally, in writing, or electronically to anyone other than another school employee who has a need to know due to a legitimate educational interest.

This requirement applies to *any* knowledge, written or otherwise, that an employee might have about a student's educational experience that is gleaned from working as a Pike Road Schools employee.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a great way for students to experience authentic and meaningful learning. Teachers will plan, organize, and properly supervise field trips to achieve full educational value. Parents will be asked to complete a general field trip permission form and then teachers will notify parents/guardians prior to each field trip.

The principal must approve field trips of all communities, clubs, or groups associated with the school and the Superintendent must authorize overnight field trips and/or field trips outside the State of Alabama.

Granting permission will require that field trip sponsors provide detailed plans of schedules, costs, transportation, insurance coverage, provisions for chaperones, and permission from parents. Sponsors will plan for medical conditions, dietary restrictions, special needs, and all extenuating circumstances.

GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINTS

See Pike Road Board Policy G-21

HARRASSMENT, VIOLENCE, THREATS OF VIOLENCE, INTIMIDATION OF STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES

See Pike Road Board Policy G-20

INTERNET SAFETY AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

See Pike Road Board Policy G - 22

LIBRARY/MEDIA SERVICES

Professionally trained persons who meet the standards of the State Board of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools will ensure library/media services in the schools.

The primary function of library/media services is to support teachers and students in selecting library/media resources to enhance learning, which also includes an emphasis on researching and lifelong literacy. Media resources will be available in each grade level community and via digital platforms.

LOST AND FOUND

All students should safeguard school supplies, electronic devices, articles of clothing, backpacks, and lunchboxes at all times. All items should be clearly labeled with the student's name. The school Lost and Found is located in the nurse's office. It should be checked when items have been lost. Unclaimed items will be donated to a charity organization.

CHILD NUTRTION PROGRAM

The child nutrition staff works hard to provide nutritious, well-balanced meals for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Carbonated drinks and restaurant fast foods (in its original package) may not be brought into the cafeteria.

All students have a computerized account number in the lunchroom to purchase food items. Parents are encouraged to make deposits on a weekly or monthly basis rather than a daily basis. Parents may deposit funds into their child's account by sending a check (payable to PRS) to the school. Parents may also access and deposit funds into their child's account by using the automatic pay service.

Allergies or Dietary Restrictions

We understand that certain children have special dietary needs and we will do our best to

accommodate those needs. For a student with a chronic medical condition such as diabetes, cystic fibrosis, or a non-life threatening food allergy, a diet prescription signed by a licensed physician, nurse, registered dietitian, or physician assistant is required. A student with a disability or life threatening food allergy must have a diet prescription signed by a licensed physician.

Physician's Statement for Children with Disabilities USDA regulations (7 CFR Part 15b) require substitutions or modifications in school meals for children whose disabilities restrict their diets. A child with a disability must be provided substitutions in foods when a statement signed by a licensed physician supports that need. The physician's statement must identify:

- the child's disability
- an explanation of why the disability restricts the child's diet
- the major life activity affected by the disability
- the food or foods to be omitted from the child's diet, and the food or choice of foods that must substituted

Medical Statement for Children with Special Dietary Needs. Each special dietary request must be supported by a statement, which explains the food substitution that is requested. A recognized medical authority must sign it. The medical statement must include:

- an identification of the medical or other special dietary condition which restricts the child's diet
- the food or foods to be omitted from the child's diet
- the food or choice of foods to be substituted

The [Diet Prescription for Meals at School](#) form can be found on the PRS website.

ON-THE-JOB INJURY

See Pike Road Board Policy G-12

OVERTIME AND COMPENSATION TIME

See Pike Road Board Policy G-14

PARENT-TEACHER-STUDENT ASSOCIATION (PTSA)

Pike Road Schools is excited to partner with our PTSA to support student learning, coordinate volunteers, and provide financial assistance for many school projects. Parents, teachers, students and community members are encouraged to join. Membership is \$10.00 per person.

REPORTING STUDENT LEARNING

An essential component of the mission of Pike Road Schools is that students have ownership over their learning. In doing so, students will have online access to their mastery of content standards. Parents will also have online access to their child's mastery level of content standards.

Students will also assume an active role in their learning, which may include student led parent/teacher/student conferences as well as students sharing about their learning/project

at learning showcases.

Student mastery of content standards will be recorded in each student's cumulative file.

SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- [Tobacco Free Environment](#) - See Pike Road Board Policy G-23
- [Drug-Free Workplace Policy](#) - See Pike Road Board Policy G-24
- [Gun-Free Schools](#) - See Pike Road Board Policy G-25

SECLUSION OR RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

The Pike Road Board of Education requires that all schools and programs within the school district comply with State Board of Education Rule 290-3-1-.02(1)(f) regarding the use of "seclusion" or "restraint," as those terms are defined within the rule. See *Pike Road Board Policy J-17*.

STUDENT WELFARE

Student safety and wellbeing is up utmost importance at Pike Road Schools. School is a place where students should feel safe and valued.

The State of Alabama requires by law that any principal, teacher, counselor, or other school administrator report all cases of suspected child abuse of children less than eighteen years of age. The law requires the reporting of injuries or neglect of minors, provides immunity for those reporting in good faith, and provides a penalty for violation of the law.

We make the assumption that all students at Pike Road Schools will treat each other and school property with respect. However, in the rare instance that a student makes a poor choice, ***The Pike Road Patriot Code of Conduct*** outlines expectations and consequences for student behavior so as to maintain a safe learning environment.

Due Process – When students are involved in a discipline incident, they will be given Due Process. In cases where disciplinary action is taken, school administrators will do the following:

Investigate what happened.

Share findings with student.

Give the student an opportunity to share what happened.

See *The Pike Road Patriot Code of Conduct*.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

School is a place where students should feel safe and valued. We make the assumption that all students at Pike Road Schools will treat each other and school property with respect. Our culture is to teach students how to make good choices through conversations, coaching, and logical consequences.

Also see *The Pike Road Patriot Code of Conduct*.

Due Process – When students are involved in a discipline incident, they will be given Due Process. In cases where disciplinary action is taken, teachers and school administrators will do the following:

Investigate what happened.

Share findings with student.

Give the student an opportunity to share what happened.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Pike Road Board believes intellectual growth occurs when learners are genuinely engaged in their learning, and this happens when students are solving real problems for a real audience. Students will be researchers, curators, content creators, and publishers. Each student will have a designated device to augment this.

Teachers will guide, instruct, and support students in their learning as well as help them navigate content and resources. Learning in this manner causes students to retain what they learn and be able to apply their learning to new situations.

Learning will be structured in a way that allows students to have more ownership over their learning. Having ownership is an essential skill for a lifelong learner. In addition, students will continue to move to higher levels as there will be no limit on learning. The goal is to be responsive to students as learners and enable each student to reach his/her full potential. In addition, character education will be integrated into the school day in meaningful and authentic ways.

Controversial Issues

Knowledge and understanding of controversial issues are indispensable to education for citizenship. Therefore, teachers and other certified personnel are free to deal with such issues by observing the following guidelines:

Teachers shall:

- Adapt the study to the age, maturity, and academic background of students.
- Place major emphasis on how to think rather than what to think.
- Provide appropriate materials to students.
- Allow students to express their opinions within the limits of decency, good will, and respect for the opinions of others.
- Teach the principles and techniques of the scientific method and provide opportunities for practice in the application of facts to problems.
- Seek to develop the ideals of truth and honesty.
- Encourage an atmosphere of mutual respect for all viewpoints.
- Teach students to base opinions on research, experience, and knowledge.
- Teach the principles of assembling, critically examining, and checking facts for accuracy before making judgments and drawing conclusions.
- Take a non-adversarial position during discussions.
- Exercise reasonable judgment.
- Seek advice from administrators and colleagues before exploring controversial issues.

Teaching about Religion

Teaching about world religions and referring to various religious texts and displays relating to various ethnic and religious holidays and symbols is appropriate.

The Board prohibits indoctrinating or encouraging students regarding specific religious beliefs or practices.

VISITORS

All visitors, parents, volunteers, and guests must enter the school through the main entrance and report to the main office before entering any part of the school campus. Authorized visitors will be issued a visitor's pass.

Also read ***Pike Road Board Policy***.

The Bottom line . . . exemplify The Pike Road Way in all that you do!