

WELCOME TO STUDENT ORIENTATION 2023-2024



Tamika Hughes-Leeks,

Principal

Edward Erickson

Assistant Principal



**Complete PCSB
Forms Online!**

General Information

Disston Academy for Progress & Enterprise is a Pinellas County Schools' Educational Alternative School. This status gives us special exemption to support scholars who need "Something Different".

- Operating Hours: 6:30AM-2:30PM
- Student Hours: 7:15AM-1:45PM
- Serving scholars in grades 6-12
- How is Disston Academy Different?
 - ✓ Blended curriculum model.
 - ✓ Accelerated graduation model.
 - ✓ Fully staffed student services team with trauma informed care systems.
 - ✓ Uniforms & structured check-in processes.
 - ✓ Pinellas County Schools best kept secret!



Full Scale Student Services Support

As an Educational Alternative School (EAS), we support a population of scholars who are 100% trauma exposed and nearly 90% trauma engaged. Our typical student is...
A-typical.

To counter environmental and social exposures, we provide many services. Disston Academy provides a setting that fosters the optimal development of our scholars through connective, empathetic, and communal structures. Some services we provide are:

- ❖ Schoolwide Restorative Practices
- ❖ Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports
- ❖ Onsite social worker, psychologist, behavior specialist & counselors
- ❖ City of St. Petersburg Cohort of Champions
- ❖ Clothes for kids referrals
- ❖ St. Petersburg Free Clinic referrals
- ❖ Girlfriends & 5000 Role Models
- ❖ Individual counseling & small group facilitation



WHO'S WHO at DISSTON ACADEMY

School Administrators

Tamika Hughes-Leeks- Principal
Edward Erickson- Assistant Principal

School Support Staff

Diana Gregory - Secretary/Bookkeeper
Jertia Bingham - Data Management Tech
TBA - Clerk Specialist I
Brian Cooper- Campus Monitor
Carla Ephraim - D.A. Guidance Counselor
Brittany Cooper - T.S. Guidance Counselor
TBA - Behavior Specialist
Officer James Miller - S.R.O.
Devlin Pippert - School Social Worker
TBA - School Psychologist
Dr. Michele Branton - MTSS Coach
Pamela Douglas - Math Coach
Angela Almeida - Registered Nurse

School Instructional Staff

Kathleen Papa-Zinko - English 1 & 2
Melissa Witeck - English 3 & 4
Dr. Michele Branton-M/J Reading, Test Prep
TBA - Reading/ELA - Grades 6-9
TBA -Reading - Grades 9-12
Teniquiana Ramsey - ESE
Natalee Cleveland - Math 6-8. Algebra 1
Alicia Higgins - Geo. , Math 4 College LA
Pamela Douglas - M/J Math, Test Prep.
Natasha Sandman - Media/Tech & Econ.
Nakkia Sly - M/J US History, US History
Destiny Waiters - M/J Civics, US Govt.
Brittany Cooper - World History
Elizabeth Hassler - E/S Sci, Phy. Sci, M/J Sci
Siedah Atwater - Biology, Env. Sci, Int. Sci

Elective Instructional Staff

Cosmetology - Tiffany Simpson
Culinary Arts - William Graveley
PE/Health - Kyle Sand

School Paraprofessionals

Karen Marshall
Shannan Nichols
Carolyn Turner
Delores Green (Records)
TBA



Food Services at Disston Academy

Disston Academy
is a recipient of the
USDA Community
Lunch School
Program.

This means all
scholars are
provided breakfast,
and lunch free of
charge!

....But we still need your applications!

Please go to www.myschoolapps.com
or complete a paper application
before you leave!



Disston Academy's Operational Staff

- ❖ **Zyllion Mason- Head Plant Operator**
- ❖ **Rochi Morand- Night Specialist**
- ❖ **David Rhett- Plant Operator**
- ❖ **Marquel Tramel- Plant Operator**
- ❖ **TBA- Plant Operator**



School Vision and Mission

VISION-100% student success through preparation, performance and pride.

MISSION- Disston Academy's school mission is to educate and prepare each student for college, career and life through the expectation of performance and infusion of pride.

MOTTO- Ascending the ashes, soaring to Greatness!



Phoenix P.R.I.D.E Expectations

Prepared
Responsible
Invested
Determined
Engaged



Phoenix Pride

Prepared- Always be prepared for excellence in education!

Responsible- Lead in the classroom & workplace!

Invested- In the success of all within our school community!

Determined- Achieve greatness in academics and advancement in life!

Engaged- Excellence through equity & restoration!



Positive Behavior Supports (PBIS)

Goal: To promote school safety and promote a positive environment within the school.

Rewarded Behavior Examples: Attendance & punctuality, adequate course progress, dress code, demonstrating PRIDE!

Activity Examples: March Madness basketball tournament, tailgate cookout, talent show, Spring Fling Dance, Phoenix Picnic, Flag Football, recreation room, kickball, college tours, pizza parties & more!



Restorative Practices Overview

What is it?

Restorative Practices principles emphasize the importance of positive relationships as essential to building community and involves processes that repair relationships when harm has occurred.

What does it do for my student?

Providing a setting that fosters the optimal development of its members through empathy, supportive and community building.

Examples

- ▶ Empathetic Listening
- ▶ Using “I” Statements
- ▶ Restorative Questioning
- ▶ Restorative Conversations (Chats)
- ▶ Proactive Restorative Circles

Required Supplies

- ❖ **All Scholars will receive a Disston Academy Backpack, PCSB Laptop, Laptop Charger & Binder. Daily use of these items is a requirement of enrollment.**
- ❖ **Only Disston Academy Backpacks will be permitted inside of the building.**
- ❖ **Pens, Pencils and paper will also be given to the scholars; however, they are welcome to bring their own.**

Entry & Release from School

School Hours are 7:15AM – 1:45PM

- ❖ **Scholar Entry** – Scholars will enter the building from the bus circle in building 1 or building 3 from 6:45AM-7:10AM.
- ❖ **Parent Drop Off** - Please drop your scholar off in the car circle **ONLY**. They will walk around to the bus circle and enter at their assigned building.
- ❖ **Late Entry** - Scholars are checked in at the front office after 7:10AM. Scholars not checked in before 7:15 AM are considered tardy. Scholars arriving after 8:00AM must be excused by administration prior to arrival.
- ❖ **Personal items** - Including but not limited to lunch, snacks, purses, clutches and backpacks will be searched and collected on arrival. Please bring your food and drink for lunch in one bag so it is easier to label and track.
- ❖ **Early Release** – All scholars are required to get a Permit to Leave(PTL).

Permits to Leave are granted beforehand and all scholars, including those over 18 must have parent/guardian notification and/or approval.

Student Dress Code

- ❖ Polo or oxford (collared) shirts in solid colors of red, burgundy, white, black or grey.
- ❖ Pants, chinos, cargos, shorts, skirts or skirts in the color of khaki/tan or black only.
NO JEANS
- ❖ Belts are a mandatory requirement of the dress code.
- ❖ Open-heels shoes, flip-flops, slides and bedroom slippers **are not permitted!** Distressed, damaged, or torn clothing **are also not permitted!**

THE FOLLOWING POLICIES
APPLY TO ALL SCHOLARS
AT DISSTON ACADEMY



ACCESSORIES: Scholars may wear jewelry except for spiked objects, mace or sprays.



DRESS CODE ENFORCEMENT

There are daily dress code checks upon entry. Scholars found in violation of the dress code policy will receive consequences.

- ⇒ 1st Offense per semester– Parent contact, change of clothing
- ⇒ 2nd Offense per semester–Change of clothing, work detail (3 days)
- ⇒ 3rd Offense per semester– Change of clothing, detention (3 days)
- ⇒ 4th Offense per semester– Change of clothing, ABS, Contract
- ⇒ Five or more Offenses– Progressive discipline with the possibility of returning to the zone school.

Dress Down Opportunities

Scholars who pass a class can dress down every Friday during the following month. Scholars who have perfect attendance for a month can dress down every Monday the following month! Clothing must meet the PCSB code of conduct requirements.

**If your scholar needs clothing support please see Ms. Pippert for a referral to the Clothes to Kids Store.



Disston Academy Electronic Device Policy



Scholars may **NOT** possess a cellular telephone, Smart Watch or other electronic device. Scholars are strongly encouraged to leave cell phones and other electronic devices at home. If it is necessary for a scholar to bring a cell phone to school, the scholar **MUST** turn in the phone upon entering the building whether they are asked by a staff member or not.

If a scholar is caught with an electronic device, it will be confiscated, and the parent or guardian will have to retrieve the item from school administration.

Transportation Options

Scholars who live outside of the two (2) mile radius will be provided a Pinellas County School Bus assignment at an arterial location.

PSTA offers free transportation to scholars with a picture student ID.

Scholars who intend to drive to school must meet all of the requirements established on the Disston Academy Parking Permit Application. This includes but is not limited to proof of a valid state driver's license, proof of insurance, paid parking permit fee and a consistent attendance record. Documents and fee must be submitted to Ms. Gregory to obtain parking permit.

Any scholar vehicle parked at Disston Academy without an official parking permit may be subject to towing at owner expense without prior notice.

Medications in the School Setting

Pinellas County Schools encourages that all medication be given at home. If this is not possible, the PCSB guidelines on the following slides will be enforced.

PCSB Medication Guidelines

- ❖ Scholars may NOT transport medications to or from school.
- ❖ Parent/Guardian must complete a medication form and/or obtain MD signature/order
- ❖ Please bring meds to school pre-cut if necessary.
- ❖ Parents/Guardians must notify the school of any changes in medication dosage, time, etc. (New form must be completed annually)

PCSB Medication Guidelines

- ❖ Parents are required to pick up and sign out any unused or unnecessary medication at the end of the school year or upon request. (Any medications left at the end of the school year will be destroyed)
- ❖ Over the counter medications require both a parent signature and written health provider prescription.
- ❖ Pharmacy label must be intact for prescription meds
- ❖ Medications **MUST** be counted with the school nurse upon drop off of the medication as well as the pick-up.

PCSB Medication Guidelines

- ❖ Narcotics, barbiturates, and non-FDA regulated non-prescription herbal products will NOT be given at school.
- ❖ Questions or concerns, please call the school nurse at (727)893-1115.

Personalized Learning Options

Facilitated Digital Support

- ✓ 100% digital course including assignments, study guides, quizzes & assessments.
- ✓ Coursework is accessible at anytime, from any web enabled device.
- ✓ A teacher certified in the content provides support and monitors assessments in person.
- ✓ Scholars work at their own pace and have the capacity to accelerate and complete courses in less time than a traditional semester model.

Blended Instruction

- ❖ Small class size instruction
- ❖ Instruction and learning occur through different modalities including digital, project-based, and traditional.
- ❖ Lectures and targeted lessons for review and reinforcement of complex skills and structures in support of the digital course.
- ❖ Accelerated Pacing.

Traditional Direct Instruction

- ❑ State assessed core subject areas with a focus on Middle Grades, Algebra 1, Biology, English, Geometry & US History
- ❑ Instruction provided through lecture and collaborative structures.
- ❑ Traditional textbooks and supplemental materials.
- ❑ Access to laptops and Clever applications for remediation and supplemental support.

Career & Technical Offerings - Cosmetology

- Introductory courses are available beginning in 8th Grade.
 - There are two onsite certification pathways:
 - Nail Tech Specialist (Two Year Program)
 - Esthetician Skin Care Specialist (Two Year Program)
- The scholar learning lab will be open to select customers providing nail and skin services beginning in January of 2024.
- Scholars who complete the Nail and Esthetician programs can dual-enroll at Pinellas Technical College for hair specialization certification.



Career & Technical Offerings – Culinary Arts

- Introductory courses are available beginning in 8th Grade.
 - There are two onsite certification pathways:
 - ServSafe Certification
 - OSHA Food Handler Certification
- The Culinary Arts program sells meals on Fridays for PCS employees.
- An Urban Gardening program will activate beginning the Spring of 2024. Quarterly community garden sales will occur to aid in sustaining the program.
- Scholars who complete the Culinary Arts pre-requisites can dual-enroll at Pinellas Technical College to pursue full certification.



Co-Enrollment for Athletics and/or Activities

Scholars wishing to participate in athletics or other events at their zoned school may co-enroll with that school so long as all requirements for eligibility are maintained.

Diploma and Graduation Options

❖ *Standard Diploma Options*

- *18 Credit Option (Career Prep)*
- *24 Credit Option (College Prep)*
- *Dual Enrollment Options*

❖ *Commencement Options*

- *Zone School (March Deadline)*
- *Disston Academy*
- *Countywide Summer*

Graduation Requirements for Both Credit Options

- ❑ Four (4) Credits of English: English 1, 2, 3, and 4
 - ❑ Four (4) Credits of Math: Algebra 1, Geometry, and two more selected Math credits
 - ❑ Three (3) Credits of Science: Biology and two more selected Science credits
 - ❑ Three (3) Credits of Social Science: World History, US History, Economics (.5), US Govt. (.5)
 - ❑ One Credit of Performing Arts/Practical Arts Credit
 - ❑ Three (3) credits of selected Electives (Reading, culinary, cosmetology, etc.)
-

The additional requirements for the 24-credit graduation option are:

- ❑ One Credit of Hope
- ❑ Five (5) additional selected electives (these should include at least two consecutive credits in the same foreign language IF you wish to enter a university as a freshman, or if you wish to qualify for the highest Bright Futures Scholarship award)

Dual Enrollment Options



- ❖ *Dual-enrollment options for Pinellas Technical College (PTC) and St. Petersburg College are available to students at Disston Academy.*
- ❖ *Classes, books and all related fees are provided by Pinellas County Schools.*
- ❖ *Scholars have to have good attendance and minimal discipline referrals.*
- ❖ *Scholars have to apply by the end of the preceding school year (PTC)/semester (SPC).*
- ❖ *Scholars who successfully complete courses will earn high school credit AND credit towards college-level credit and certification.*
- ❖ *For PTC, scholars need at least a 2.0 (some programs require a higher GPA).*
- ❖ *For SPC, scholars need at least a 3.0 except for specified courses, and they need to pass their CPT/PERT/ACT/SAT.*
- ❖ *For enrolled scholars, transportation is provided to and from Pinellas Technical College.*

Additional Graduation Requirements

Scholars need to pass one of these tests in Reading and Math in addition to earning all their credits to receive a diploma :

The logo for ACT (American College Testing) is displayed in white text on a dark blue background. The letters 'ACT' are in a bold, serif font, with a red swoosh under the 'A' and a registered trademark symbol (®) to the right.The logo for 'THE REDESIGNED SAT' is shown in white text on a blue background. The words 'THE REDESIGNED' are in a smaller, sans-serif font, and 'SAT' is in a much larger, bold, sans-serif font. Horizontal lines are positioned above and below the text.

ACT/SAT Concordant Assessments

The SAT and ACT assessments are offered in school twice a year. The fees for these assessments are covered by the district.

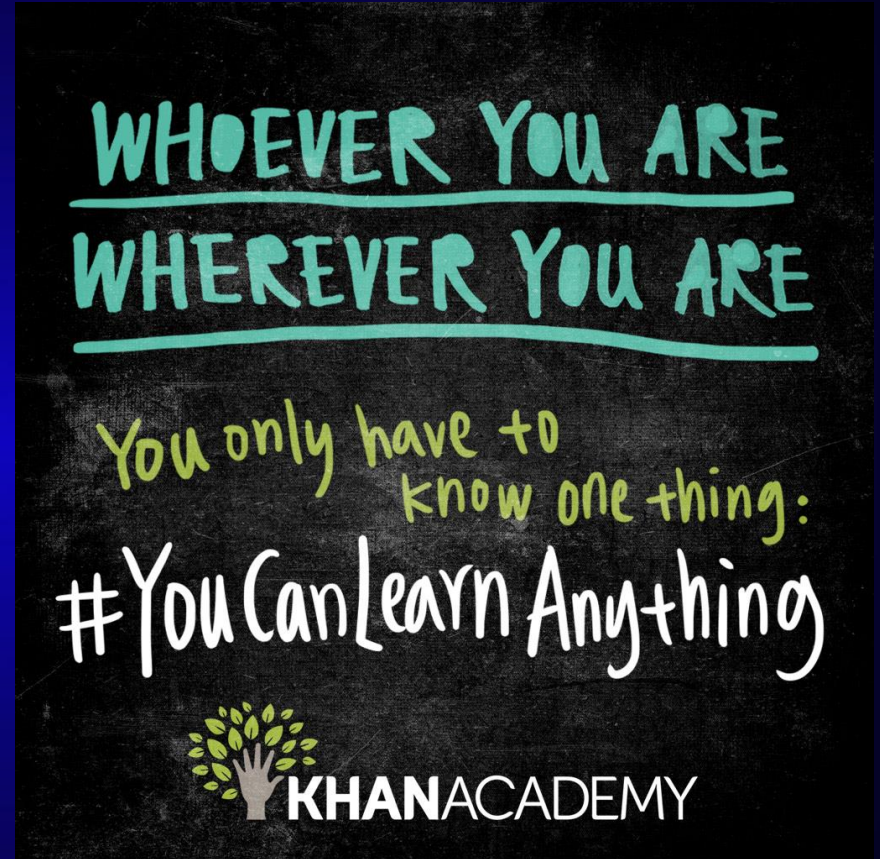
Test Prep offered during the school day and through our Extended Learning Program so that scholars are prepared.

Additionally, ACT/SAT Boot Camp may be offered on Saturdays before designated test dates.

For more information about testing or test prep, contact Mr. Erickson.

Khan Academy: Reading Test Success

- ❖ Scholars will be added to my Khan Academy Class
- ❖ Khan Academy is personalized and tailored to each scholars' SAT needs
- ❖ Scholars will use site to practice as needed for ACT
- ❖ The greater amount of time spent practicing, the higher the likelihood of the scholar passing the test.



Practice Reading Everyday

- ❖ *Set a timer for 15 minutes a day and read a book, a physical, paper, book. Not on your phone.*
- ❖ *Use the local library to find books your scholar is interested.*
- ❖ *Digital & Audio books are available for checkout through the school district's destiny website.*
- ❖ *Increase the time every week by 1 or 2 minutes.*
- ❖ *Read fiction and nonfiction.*

Let's Review the Forms and Policies Together

- ❖ Student Handbook
- ❖ Welcome Letter
- ❖ Parent/Student Acknowledgment Form
- ❖ Dress Code Handout
- ❖ Rise to Transition Rubric
- ❖ Electronic Device Policy
- ❖ Safe School Agreement
- ❖ Where do I go for assistance
- ❖ Student Calendar
- ❖ Code of Conduct Acknowledgment Form
- ❖ Residency Questionnaire
- ❖ EAS Parent/Student Notification Form
- ❖ EAS Parent./Student Registration Form

- ❖ Clinic Card
- ❖ Home Language Survey
- ❖ PCSB Medication Policy
- ❖ Bring Your Own Device Agreement
- ❖ Network/Internet Acceptable Use Agreement
- ❖ Media Release Form
- ❖ Directory Information Opt-Out Letter
- ❖ Title 1 Budget

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



WE WANT YOU!

We have a small cadre of community partners but we need so much more! We are seeking corporate and community support in providing:

Career Exploration Field Trips

College Preparation

Employment and Internship Opportunities

Financial Support and In-kind Contributions

Mentoring

Public Speakers and Orators

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?

- ❖ ***Become a coach by providing teachers your email address.***
- ❖ ***Review your scholar's progress in each course, current GPA, and past due assignments.***
- ❖ ***Contact your scholar's teacher if you suspect they may be off track.***

**"Success occurs
when
opportunity
meets
preparation."**

Parent Conferences

- ❖ *Parent-scholar conferencing is highly recommended. This conference can occur in a face-to-face setting, via email, Microsoft TEAMS or telephone.*
- ❖ *Arrangements can sometimes be made after hours on designated nights.*
- ❖ *While it is always encouraged to communicate with individual teachers. Please contact Ms. Ephraim or Mr. Erickson to set up a conference at least once per semester.*
- ❖ *Parents may be required to attend conferences to address significant concerns with placement, attendance, or academic progress.*

Title 1

What is Title I?

Title 1 funds aim to bridge the gap between low-income students and other students. The U.S. Department of Education provides supplemental funding to local school districts to meet the needs of at-risk and low-income students.

What can Title I Money purchase?

- ❖ Teachers/Additional Staff
- ❖ Before and/or after school tutoring
- ❖ Supplies & Materials
- ❖ Technology

General Questions

*Thank you for attending, we
are excited to have you here!*