

DISSTON ACADEMY FOR PROGRESS AND ENTERPRISE

Student Handbook



HOME OF THE MIGHTY PHOENIX

“RISING AND SOARING FOR THE CULTURE”

5125 11TH AVENUE S.

GULFPORT, FLORIDA 33707

(727)893-1115

www.pcsb.org/Disston

Tamika Hughes-Leeks, Principal

SCHOOL VISION: 100% Student Success through Preparation, Performance and Pride.

Table of Contents

Welcome & General Information.....	Pages 2-3
Scholar Dress Code.....	Page 4
Scholar Attendance.....	Page 5
Scholarly Academic Expectations & Discipline.....	Page 6
Scholarly Behavior Expectations.....	Pages 7-8
Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS).....	Page 9
School Safety & Security.....	Pages 10-11
School Communications.....	Page 12
Transportation.....	Page 13
Title 1.....	Page 14
Additional Information for Scholars & Families.....	Page 15

Welcome & General Information

WELCOME

Disston Academy for Progress and Enterprise offers scholars an alternative educational experience and setting. As an accredited, Pinellas County Schools public school, we provide scholars an opportunity to get back on track or work ahead to acquire the necessary high school diploma requirements. Our school uses a blended model of digital and teacher-directed instruction. All coursework is mastery-based and gives scholars the opportunity to earn credits on a personalized pathway and often on an accelerated pace.

The focus is on goal setting, self-discipline, time management and a commitment to quality academic performance. Scholars are expected to follow school expectations. This program uses the same approved core curriculum as all Pinellas County high schools. Scholars can participate in extra-curricular activities provided by zone schools.

CONTRACTS

All scholar participants and parents must have a Parent/Scholar Agreement on file for the current school year.

PARENT MEETING ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Parents are requested to attend at least one parent meeting per school year; preferably one (1) meeting within the 1st semester and one (1) meeting within the 2nd semester. The approved types of meetings include PTA meetings, SAC meetings, PIC meetings, Title I meetings, and/or parent/scholar conferences. Additionally, parents are required to attend one orientation meeting at the start of each school year and the Year in Review meeting at the end of each calendar year. A calendar of meeting dates and times will be available at the orientation. Dates may change due to holiday conflicts.

When circumstances arise, which make it impossible for a parent to attend a required meeting, a representative (18 years of age or older) may be sent. It is the parent's responsibility to make the representative aware of all obligations.

Sign in at meetings must be completed no later than twenty minutes after the scheduled start of the meeting as the sign in cards are removed at that time. Meetings last approximately one and a half hours and parents are expected to be present for the entire meeting.

It is the parent and/or guardians' responsibility to monitor their attendance so that they are in compliance with the meeting attendance expectations.

SCHOOL HOURS

Scholars are welcome on campus at 6:50 A.M. Scholars may enter campus at 6:55 A.M. for breakfast or with a pass for a pre-arranged campus/classroom function. Classes are in session from 7:15 A.M.-1:45 P.M. daily. Extended Learning Program is offered Tuesday & Thursday from 1:45-4:15 P.M. Arrangements may be made with your teacher to obtain tutoring during lunch.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

When walking to and from school, scholars must use the crosswalk and follow all traffic/pedestrian rules. Once on campus, scholars are not permitted to leave until school dismissal unless a parent/guardian picks up their child during school hours, or consent has been provided to administration. Scholars who leave campus after arrival will receive consequences.

Each scholar leaving early will be given a "Permit to leave" slip and will be picked up in the front office. Parents/guardians please write a note stating the reason your child will be leaving, the time they will leave, and a phone number where you can be reached. If a scholar is to be picked up by someone not listed on the clinic card, the name and phone number of the person picking up the scholar must be in the note from the parent or guardian. Parents should follow the school traffic route when picking up their child from school. Scholars must wait in front of the school on the sidewalk for parents to arrive in the afternoon.

FOOD AND DRINKS

Scholars who bring personal snacks and/or lunch at Disston Academy will have all items stored until lunch break. Scholars should bring their food and drinks in one bag to make it easier to inspect and label properly. Food and drinks may not be consumed in the classroom environment.

BREAKFAST

A free breakfast program is provided for all scholars beginning at 6:55 A.M. Scholars will not be permitted in the building prior to 6:55 A.M. or into the cafeteria after 7:10AM.

BACKPACKS/BAGS/PURSES

All Backpacks, Bags, Clutches and Purses will be searched and secured for the duration of the school day, as they are not permitted in class. **Scholars may only carry a Disston Academy Backpack while on campus. This backpack will also be searched upon arrival.**

PROHIBITED ARTICLES

Disston Academy may prohibit articles in addition to those listed in the Code of Scholar Conduct. Prohibited articles include materials not related to the school curriculum including, but not limited to, magazines, toys, and playing cards. The administration will make the final determination if the article is appropriate or not.

BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS

Bicycles or skateboards are not allowed to be ridden on campus. Bicycles are to be stored and locked in the bike compound located at the southwest corner of the school campus for the entire school day. Skateboards are to be stored on the check-in cart. State law requires bicycle helmets be worn by anyone under 16 years of age. Disston Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen bicycles or skateboards.

PARKING PERMITS

Scholars who intend to drive to school must meet all 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. Any scholar vehicle parked at Disston Academy without an official parking permit may be subject to towing at owner expense without prior notice. See the Secretary/Bookkeeper for more information or to purchase a permit.

SCHOLAR SERVICES

Guidance Counselor: Disston Academy offers full time guidance services. The school guidance counselors may be consulted for the following reasons: schedules, progress in school, personal problems that may affect schoolwork, test interpretations, planning for middle school or high school programs, information on vocational opportunities and conferences with teachers.

Behavior Specialist: Disston Academy offers full time behavior support. The behavior specialist provides behavioral interventions to scholars as part of the progressive discipline plan. Likewise, the behavior specialist investigates bullying incidents and manages the school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS).

Social Worker: Disston Academy offers Full-time social work services. The social worker helps scholars overcome obstacles that interfere with their academic success and the ability to reach their full potential. The social worker is available to discuss home or family issues ranging from financial hardships, homelessness, deaths in the family, incarcerated parents, alcoholism, or drug abuse, etc. Furthermore, the social worker may conduct small groups, as well as provide support, counseling, and referrals to community agencies.

Psychologist: Disston Academy offers part-time school psychologist services. The school psychologist provides comprehensive psychological services for students experiencing learning and behavioral problems and for students exhibiting high-level abilities and talents. Comprehensive psychological services include formal and informal assessments, counseling, behavior management, consultation, research, and in-servicing training.

Scholarly Dress Code

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

The dress and grooming of a scholar should be neat and clean and not be disruptive to the classroom atmosphere, educational process. **Scholars should wear clothing as designed to be worn; pants and skirts must be worn at waist level.** Scholars violating the dress code will be sent to the office to call their parents and request a change of clothing, when necessary. The scholar may be issued work detail or other forms of disciplinary action for violation of the dress code policy.

*** Administration shall be the final judge as to the neatness and cleanliness of wearing apparel and whether such apparel is appropriate, disruptive, distracting, or in violation of health and safety rules.

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE FOR MALE SCHOLARS

Scholars may wear oxford-styled or polo-styled shirts in a single color only. Color choices are Red, Burgundy, Black, White and Gray **ONLY!** Logos must be the size of a quarter or smaller. Scholars must wear Khaki or black colored pants, shorts, or cargos with pockets. All bottoms **MUST** be secured at the waist, belts buckled, and no midriff or underwear exposed. Belts may be any color. Scholars without a belt will receive a dress code violation and an alternate way to secure their pants at the waist if necessary.

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE FOR FEMALE SCHOLARS

Scholars may wear oxford-styled or polo-styled shirts in single color only. Color choices are Red, Burgundy, Black, White and Gray **ONLY!** Logos must be the size of a quarter or smaller. Scholars must wear Khaki or Black colored pants, shorts, skirts, skirts or cargos with pockets and must reach at least mid-thigh. If you put your arms by your side and your fingers are past the bottom of the uniform bottom, they are too short! All bottoms **MUST** be secured at the waist, belts buckled, and no midriff or underwear exposed. Belts may be any color. Scholars without a belt will receive a dress code violation and an alternate way to secure their pants at the waist if necessary.

APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR

All shoes must be closed heel or have a heel strap. Shoes may be any color. No slides, flip flops, mules, or sandals without straps and no bedroom shoes or slippers.

APPROPRIATE OUTERWARE

Scholars may wear a blazer, jacket, coat, raincoat, sweater, or sweater vest. If the outerwear has a hood, it must also button or zip all the way down, like a jacket. Outerwear must not have slogans, pictures, or advertising not appropriate for the school setting. No bandanas, unauthorized head coverings, or hats allowed. No pajamas or blankets.

DRESS DOWN FRIDAYS

Scholars may earn the privilege of wearing traditional attire on Fridays and Mondays as a PBIS Incentive for course completion or perfect attendance. If your scholar earns DRESS DOWN FRIDAY OR MONDAY, he or she may wear any clothing items permitted within the guidelines of the PCS Scholar Code of Conduct. This attire may **ONLY** be worn on designated Fridays and Mondays by eligible scholars. See PBIS Section for further clarification and details. Administration shall be the final judge as to whether clothing is in alignment with the PCSB Code of Conduct.

NON-NEGOTIABLES

Scholars may not wear sheer, transparent, ripped, torn or distressed garments. Scholars may not wear leggings, tights, jeans, spandex, or workout wear. Scholars may not wear clothing items with prohibited, offensive, or vulgar language or graphic images.

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, parent must bring change of clothing
- 2nd Offense per semester- Change of clothing, 3 days of lunch work detail
- 3rd Offense per semester- Change of clothing, 3 Days of administrative detention
- 4th Offense per semester- Change of clothing, 3 Days of ABS, and placed on an Intervention Probationary contract.
- Five or more Offenses- Progressive discipline with the possibility of returning to the scholar's assigned zone school.

Scholarly Attendance

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is vital and necessary for scholar success. We are required to monitor and report excessive absenteeism to the State of Florida Department of Motor Vehicles monthly. Your scholar's driving privileges may be denied or suspended due to excessive absenteeism with strict requirements for restoration.

COMPULSARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Florida Law (Section 1003.21, Florida Statutes) states that all children who are either six years of age, who will be six years old by February 1 of any school year, or who are older than six years of age but who have not attained the age of 16 years, must attend school regularly during the entire school term. A student who attains the age of 16 years during the school year is not subject to compulsory attendance beyond the date of which the student attains that age if he/she files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the school district.

TRUANCY

Florida law defines "habitual truant" as a student who has 15 or more unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of the student's parent or guardian, and who is subject to compulsory school attendance.

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTIONS

Disston Academy offers a plethora of interventions to assist scholars with high rates of absenteeism. A few of those interventions include Daily Morning wake-up calls, automated phone calls to parents/guardians when a student is absent, resources to community resources and much more! Contact the school social worker if you or your scholar are interested in attendance interventions.

TO REPORT AN ABSENCE

To assist us in maintaining accurate attendance, please notify the school before 12 Noon the day of the absence by phone or on our website. For an excused absence and make-up provisions please review the guidelines established in the PCSB Code of Student Conduct. Parents may provide written documentation in person, by phone at (727)893-1115, or by email to DisstonAcademy.Absence@PCSB.ORG.

It is the **responsibility of the scholar** to request and submit all make-up work missed due to an absence. **All absences will be eligible to receive full credit.** To participate in an evening or after school activity, the scholar must be in attendance the day of the activity.

Scholarly Academic Expectations

INNOVATIVE LEARNING OPTIONS

Disston Academy offers several learning options to meet the needs of your scholar. We provide personalized programs for all scholars that includes small class size, instruction and assessments are provided through a variety of modalities such as digital, project based and traditional. One of those learning options is facilitated digital support that includes the following benefits: 100% digital course including assignments, study guides, quizzes, and unit tests. Coursework in these courses is accessible at any time using any internet connected electronic device. A certified teacher provides support and monitors assessments in person. Scholars may work at their own pace and have the capacity to accelerate and complete courses in less time than the traditional semester model. The other learning option that is available for scholars is traditional direct instruction. We offer this option for all state assessed core subject content areas such as all middle grades courses, Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology, and US History. Teachers provide instruction through lecture and collaborative structures utilizing traditional textbooks and supplemental materials. All scholars at Disston Academy will be issued a school laptop to access Clever applications for remediation and supplemental support.

HOMEWORK/CLASS WORK GUIDELINES

Homework and class work are integral components of academic success at Disston Academy. While homework is not assigned on most days of the week, scholars are encouraged to continue to work in digital courses beyond the school day.

GRADING

The final grade in traditional direct instruction classes are determined by using grades from all grading periods and averaging them together to get a semester or full year grade. The final grade in facilitated digital courses is the average of all coursework completed in the platform. When looking at the digital platform, scholars will see two grades. One is the current grade which indicates the student's course grade of ONLY the assignments completed to date. The Course Grade is the actual grade for the course that the student would earn if the course ended today. Regardless of learning model, grades are determined using the grading scale below.

A= 90-100%	D= 60-69%
B= 80-89%	F= 0-59%
C= 70-79%	I= Incomplete

*** If a Scholar's grade point average in a course is 3.5, 2.5, 1.5, or 0.67 (rounded), it will be the option of the teacher and the principal as to whether the higher or lower grade will be given.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY/CHEATING

Cheating on any academic endeavor is considered a serious offense. The giving or receiving of another scholar's work is considered cheating. Scholars may not share any work, including homework without the teacher's permission. Scholars will receive a "0" for the cheating incident.

- First offense – Parent notification and a grade of 0 for the related assignment.
- Second offense – Parent notification, restart the module and referral for progressive disciplinary action.
- Third offense- Parent/Scholar conference, restart the course and progressive discipline ranging from administrative contract to withdrawal and return to zone school.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Disston Academy is on a six period per day schedule. There are four grading periods per school year. Each grading period is nine weeks and is referred to a quarter. Report cards are distributed at the end of each grading period. All scholars receive midterm progress reports every 5th week of the grading period.

Scholarly Behavior Expectations

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

Disston Academy's School-wide Behavior Plan is a comprehensive guideline for success. The acronym P.R.I.D.E. is what drives our PBIS program and our school's core values: Preparation, Responsibility, Invested, Determined and Engaged. It focuses on mediation and agreement rather than punishment. It aims to keep scholars in school and to create safe environment where learning can flourish. Scholars who choose to demonstrate disregard for the behavior plan will receive progressive discipline in alignment with the PCS Scholar Code of Conduct. Also, non-compliant scholars may be returned to their zoned school. Disston Academy's School-wide Behavior Plan is inclusive of the Positive Behavior Intervention Support. This program recognizes scholars that display our core values in academic and social settings. Scholars exchange their PBIS Points to attend activities or make purchases from the school store throughout the year.

Scholars at Disston Academy are expected to exercise good judgment and behave in a responsible manner. Each school year the Pinellas County Schools Code of Student Conduct lists misconduct that may lead to immediate suspension, disciplinary withdrawal to reassignment, or recommendation for expulsion. A scholar may also be returned to their zoned school.

The Code of Student Conduct will be used to determine consequences for those actions. Scholars recommended for reassignment or expulsion will immediately be removed from Disston Academy. Scholars who are suspended will be referred to the Pinellas County Schools Alternate Placement Program to minimize their loss of instructional time. All listed behaviors that disrupt the learning environment may result in progressive discipline such as detention, office referral, suspension, and/or recommendation for expulsion.

At the beginning of each school year, the teacher will provide scholars with written course information explaining classroom rules and consequences. Each case of misconduct will be treated individually.

Detentions are used by the teachers to correct inappropriate scholar behavior. Detentions are scheduled at the teacher's discretion during lunch, before or after school. Administrative detentions will be scheduled by the assistant principal or principal. *Note: Teachers give only one detention per offense.

The following offenses may not be listed in the Pinellas County Schools Code of Scholar Conduct but are contrary to Disston Academy expectations. The consequences for specific offenses are also listed below:

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

Violation of the cafeteria rules will result in a warning, assigned seating, detention, work detail, office referral or suspension, as deemed appropriate for the offense.

DETENTION

Detentions are assigned for various infractions of the discipline code. Administrative, Saturday or teacher-initiated detentions may be used to address these matters. Scholars will be issued one copy of the detention form stating the reason and date for the detention. The copy should be taken home, signed by the parent and returned the following day to principal's designee. **Parents are responsible for the transportation of scholars who serve detention.** Transportation issues do not excuse a scholar from attending a detention.

Any appeal or date change regarding a detention must be made directly to the person who assigned the detention and is not guaranteed. The original detention form must still be returned. Failure to serve detention will result in the missed detention being rescheduled, and an additional detention being issued. Further failure to serve required detentions will result in an office referral and progressive discipline. Scholars arriving late or unprepared to detention will not be allowed to serve their detention and it will be marked as a missed detention.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Scholars must turn off all cell phones, CD players, MP3 players, IPODs, IPADS, tablets, E-readers, Smart Watches and turn them in to staff upon check-in. School staff will not investigate the theft of these items or be responsible for broken or lost items. Items confiscated from a scholar must be picked up by a parent or guardian and will not be returned to the scholar.

EXCESSIVE OR REPEATED MISCONDUCT

Scholars who continually violate classroom/school rules will be referred to the administration for disciplinary action. These referrals are considered a serious violation of Disston Academy policies and will be disciplined accordingly.

FORGERY

An office referral will be issued if a scholar forges a parent signature on homework, academic notices, detention forms, permission slips or any other school documents that require a parent/guardian signature. Additional disciplinary action is dependent upon the severity of the forgery but may include detention, work detail, Alternative Bell Schedule, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension.

GOSSIP, SLANDER, UNKIND/HURTFUL REMARKS ABOUT ANOTHER PERSON INCLUDING BULLYING

Violations may result in a warning, detention, work detail, office referral, or suspension, as deemed appropriate for the offense.

HALL PASSES

Scholars must secure a hall pass before leaving a classroom or instructional area. Each hall pass that is issued to a Scholar must be signed by the sending teacher with the date, time, and scholar destination. No hall passes will be issued during the first or last ten minutes of class.

PUNCTUALITY (TARDY)

To prepare you for college, career and life, we have implemented a strict tardy policy for each quarter as indicated below:

Tardy # 1 & 2- Written Warning & Restorative Circle

Tardy # 3 & 4- Parent Contact & Lunch Detention

Tardy # 5 & 6- Alternate Setting Assignment

Tardy # 7- Mandatory Parent Conference

Tardy # 8 & 9- Alternate Bell Schedule

Tardy # 10 & 11- Mandatory Parent Shadowing

Tardy 12 and up- Progressive Discipline up to and/or including return to zoned school or an alternate placement.

***The tardy count will be reset at the start of each nine weeks. Excessive tardiness is considered defiance and may result in a referral to the school's MTSS team.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Restoration focuses on mediation and agreement rather than punishment. It aims to keep scholars in school and to create a safe environment where learning can flourish.

SKIPPING OR LEAVING CLASS WITHOUT PERMISSION

- First offense will result in a parent contact and minimum of two detentions and/or referral.
- Second offense will result in a parent contact, and a referral with additional disciplinary action in accordance with the school discipline matrix.
- Third offense will result in a required parent conference and progressive disciplinary action in accordance with the school discipline matrix.
- Fourth offense will result in a referral to the Intervention/Dismissal Committee.

APPEALS OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The parent/guardian of any scholar receiving disciplinary action from Disston Academy may appeal, in writing, to the principal within five (5) days of the date of due process. The appeal process is in direct alignment to Pinellas County Schools policies and procedures.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION SUPPORT (PBIS)

Disston Academy School-wide Behavior Plan is inclusive of the Positive Behavior Intervention Support. PBIS has been proven by researchers to reduce the number of office discipline referrals, in-school and out-of-school suspensions and reduce the loss of instructional time that occurs with these consequences. PBIS allows our school with the ability to provide a framework of proactive, evidence-based prevention and intervention behavioral strategies to support scholars in a safe and positive learning environment.

PBIS is utilized to recognize scholars that display our core values in academic and social settings. Scholars exchange their PBIS Points to attend activities or make purchases from the school store throughout the school year. Our PBIS program is a process that provides teachers and staff with an opportunity to reward students who are demonstrating the core values and expectations of all stakeholders here at Disston Academy. Our school's core values are Preparation, Performance & Pride and our Guidelines for Success are used and memorized through the acronym P.R.I.D.E which stands for: Preparation, Responsibility, Invested, Determined and Engaged. Scholars can reference the PRIDE posters hanging throughout the school and/or ask a teacher or staff member what things they can do to earn PBIS points.

HOW TO EARN PBIS POINTS

Here are some examples of how to earn the maximum number of PBIS points possible:

- Arrive to school and class on-time daily.
- Arrive to school in dress code, including wearing a belt.
- Attend classes and being prepared to learn with your Disston Academy Backpack and school issued laptop.
- Being a responsible scholar while on school property.
- Invest in yourself and high school diploma by exhibiting behavior to show you are serious about your education
- Being Determined to not let any obstacles stand in your way and not creating more obstacles for yourself.
- Being Engaged with your classwork, the school community, school clubs, tutoring and other activities.

PBIS EVENTS

- USF College Tour & Game
- Disston Got Talent.
- Kickball Game
- Flag Football Game
- Spring Fling
- PBIS Phoenix Picnic
- And much more!



School Safety & Security

BULLYING

It is the policy of the Pinellas County School Board that all scholars, employees, and volunteers learn and work in an environment that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. Disston Academy will not tolerate bullying or harassment of any scholar or staff member. Bullying or harassment can be reported verbally or in writing to a member of the administration team.

A report can also be made anonymously by going to www.saysomething.net Anonymous reports can also be made by calling the Campus Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1(800)873-8477. Please refer to the Pinellas County Schools Scholar Code of Conduct for more information regarding Bullying: <https://www.pcsb.org/code>

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AND ABUSE POLICY: The School Board strictly prohibits any act of Teen Dating Violence and Abuse committed by one scholar against another on school property, during a school-sponsored activity, or during school-sponsored transportation. This policy applies only to scholars in grades 7-12. "Teen Dating Violence and Abuse" is a pattern of emotional, verbal, sexual, or physical violence and/or abuse by one person in a current or past relationship of a romantic nature to exert power and control over another when one or both of the partners is a teenager. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive partner uses this pattern of violent and coercive behavior to gain power and maintain control over the dating partner.

Disston Academy is committed to providing a safe learning environment and will not tolerate Bullying/Harassment or Teen Dating Violence and Abuse of any kind. Incidents can be reported to the principal or any staff member or reported online at the below link:
www.saysomething.net

Anonymous reports can also be made using the District Electronic Reporting Form, or by calling the Campus Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-873-8477, or by texting keyword TIP144 plus your message to CRIMES (274637).

For more information about either the Policy against Bullying and Harassment or the Teen Dating Violence and Abuse Policy, please visit the **Prevention Office** by going to <https://www.pcsb.org/Page/3639>
To learn more about Bullying/Harassment and find out what adults can do to help prevent it, visit the Stop Bullying website at www.stopbullying.gov

SCHOLAR HEALTH AND SAFETY

***Accident Insurance:** **A scholar must have school insurance to try out for and/or participate in any extra-curricular activity.** School accident insurance is optional. Each scholar is supplied with the necessary information regarding coverage and rates. Please visit <https://www.pcsb.org/scholaraccidentinsurance> for more information.

***Illness or Accident:** Clinic cards must be completed by parents and turned into the school office so that parents may be reached in case of emergency. Parents must keep their child's clinic card up to date with any changes. Parents are expected to pick up their child from school if they are sick or injured. **Only the person(s) listed on the clinic card will be permitted to pick up a sick child. Photo ID is always required.**

MEDICATION

School personnel may not administer any medication (prescription or over the counter) to any child without having on file in the school office an official authorization form signed by both the doctor and the parent/guardian. Such forms shall indicate the kind of medication, quantity, time to be administered and the termination date. These forms are available from the front desk and the scholar health center (clinic).

Scholars may not self-administer any form of medication to themselves without proper authorization (i.e. asthmatic medicines). Scholars are not permitted to carry any medications on their person or in bags (i.e. cough drops, aspirin, etc.). Any scholar using an inhaler in the classroom must have written permission from the parent/guardian and doctor.

VISITORS

Visitors to the school campus must report to the main office, scan their state or federal Identification card and obtain a visitor's badge from the front desk in the main office. This visitor's badge must be worn for the entire visit. A new visitor's badge is required for each visit to the campus. Parents who wish to visit their child's class must give 24 hours advanced notice.

VOLUNTEERS/MENTORS

Volunteers will play an important part in the various activities at our school. It is encouraged that parents/guardians become active in school activities. Volunteers are needed in the following areas: mentors, tutors and field trip chaperones. Anyone who wants to volunteer must be registered and background check approved prior to volunteering. The volunteer registration form must be completed and a government issued photo ID is required. All volunteers are locally and nationally background screened.

Unsupervised volunteers must be Level 2 approved; this is also required for field trips. Field trip drivers must have their driver's license and insurance forms updated as well. If you are able to volunteer or know someone who can, please contact the volunteer coordinator. Siblings may not be brought along when a parent/guardian volunteers.

Any time volunteers are on campus, they are required to stop at the front desk to sign-in and obtain an identification badge before proceeding with the visit. This includes but is not limited to picking up and dropping off your child in the classroom, volunteering and having lunch.

Speakers: All speakers must be registered, and background check approved prior to speaking. The only exceptions to this policy are the Great American Teach-In speakers and for large group speakers, such as Career Day where speakers are coming into the school for the day. Any speaker who talks on a sensitive topic must be approved prior to his/her coming into the school.

School Communications

COMMUNICATION

Agenda planners are an integral part of the learning environment at Disston Academy. It is one tool for communication between the parent, scholar and teacher. When a teacher needs to communicate with a parent, a note in the planner is considered a method of official parent contact. It is equally a great way for parents to communicate with teachers.

ELECTRONIC MAIL (E-MAIL): All faculty and staff may be contacted via email. Please refer to the school website for specific faculty and staff e-mail addresses.

FOCUS/SIS PARENT PORTAL: **FOCUS** is an online tool which allows parents/guardians of scholars to view grades, attendance records, discipline records, upcoming events and holidays. An account may be obtained from the front office by bringing in a valid ID. Parents/Guardians only need one account for all children in the household. However, separate accounts can be created for the scholar's other parent/guardian. For more information, please visit: <https://focus.pcsb.org/focus/index.php>

NEWSLETTERS: A monthly newsletter will be posted on the school's website and in the Title I Resource area. The newsletters will provide information regarding school activities, scholar recognitions, monthly PTA/SAC meetings, Title I information, strategies/opportunities for scholars, volunteer needs, breakfast/lunch menus and the school calendar.

SCHOOL MESSENGER: The School Messenger system allows the school to record time-sensitive voice notification phone and e-mail messages to parents/guardians. To ensure the delivery of these messages, it is extremely important for parents/guardians to provide changes in phone numbers and e-mail addresses in a timely manner.

WEBSITE Scholars and parents are encouraged to visit the school website often for announcements and updates. <https://www.pcsb.org/disston>.

FAMILY CONFERENCING: Family conferences are often necessary for ensuring the success of scholars. A parent/guardian may be asked to schedule a conference. Guidance counselor schedule conferences.

PARENT AND TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences are often necessary for ensuring the success of scholars. A parent is asked to schedule and attend a conference when their child receives a homework violation notice, a discipline warning or violation, a D or F in an academic class, an N or a U in conduct, or at the teacher's request.

Conferences concerning the scholar's progress in Disston Academy can, at times, be accomplished by ZOOM, Microsoft TEAMS, telephone or electronic mail. When a person-to-person conference is deemed necessary for the success of the scholar, the parent is required to attend. The parent will receive a notice requesting a person-to-person conference. Parents can request a conference by calling the assistant principal at (727)893-1115. Conferences are normally scheduled in the afternoon, but flexible scheduling options are available.

PLANNERS

One planner is given to each scholar at the start of the school year. Parents are asked to review it consistently to stay informed with what is happening. If a scholar loses his or her planner, a new one can be purchased from the bookkeeper for \$2.00.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Disston Academy is on a six period per day schedule. There are four grading periods. Each grading period is nine weeks. Report cards are distributed at the end of each grading period. All scholars receive midterm progress reports every 5th week of the grading period.

Transportation

TRANSPORTATION

Disston Academy provides two modes of transportation for the convenience of your scholar and family. These two options are: Pinellas County School busses and Pinellas County City (PSTA) which is free for scholars who have a student ID. Students needing an ID card should contact our Library Media Technologist. The school bus driver has the responsibility for the safety and conduct of scholars riding the bus to and from school. Scholars should always obey the driver and any other PCSB employee riding the bus. Any scholar who persists in disorderly conduct on a school bus when being transported to or from school or at the bus stop will be reported by the driver to administration and may result in suspension from riding the bus. In addition to bus suspensions, repeated misconduct on the school bus may result in the scholar losing access to PCSB transportation for the remainder of the school year. If you have questions about PCSB transportation, please call (727)587-2020 Monday through Friday during normal business hours.

PCSB TRANSPORTATION EXPECTATIONS

Scholars must; sit in their assigned seat and use the seat belt if it is available, stay seated at all times when bus is in motion, not put any part of their body outside the bus windows, not distract the driver with loud conversations or noises, not eat or drink on the bus, maintain silence when dome lights are on, not throw any items inside or outside of the bus or bus windows, not mark, cut or damage any part of the bus, not display signs from the bus, not use obscene language or gestures, not push, kick, hit or spit. Bullying rules are also applicable to PCSB bus stops and PCSB busses and will be addressed when brought to administration attention. Emergency doors should only be used in the event of an emergency. In case of emergency, scholars are expected to follow the bus driver and/or any Pinellas County Schools Employee on the bus.

MINOR INFRACTIONS

Bus drivers maintain all authority of their bus and have the right to address scholar behavior. Minor Infractions that will be addressed by the bus driver and/or other PCSB employee. Those behaviors include but are not limited to: Chewing Gum, eating on the bus, general use of profanity and being too loud and disruptive. Repeatitive minor infractions could result in a bus referral and/or school consequences.

MAJOR INFRACTIONS

The school bus driver must always maintain a safe and orderly bus. These major infractions could result in a bus referral and/or school-based consequences: Sitting inappropriately, throwing items in or out of the bus, spitting, rough housing, fighting, pushing, kicking, hitting, inappropriate touching, not using assigned us stop, moving while bus is in motion, being noisy at railroad crossings, possession of tobacco products, drugs or alcohol, spraying scents or perfumes while on the bus, weapons of any type or profanity directed towards an adult.

POSSIBLE BUS REFERRAL CONSEQUENCES

When a bus driver delivers a student referral to the school, the following consequences could be issued. The consequences include but are not limited to:

Verbal Warning

School Based Sanctions include in-school suspension, out of school suspension, Alternate Bell Schedule, detention, etc.

Suspension from the school bus

Expulsion from the school bus

Please note, all discipline must be served even if the scholar transfers to another school. Bus suspensions may be appealed utilizing the same process in place for appealing school discipline referrals.

Title 1

TITLE I FUNDING

Disston Academy is a Title I school. This designation is school-wide and enables the school to receive additional federal funds to “ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.”

Schoolwide programs allow staff in schools to redesign their educational programs to serve all students. The emphasis is on serving all students, improving all structures that support student learning, and combining all resources, as allowed, to achieve a common goal of 100% student success.

Activities supported by Title I, Part A funds must be planned based on a comprehensive needs assessment and developed in consultation with parents, teachers, principals, and other relevant stakeholders. The Local Educational Agent (LEA) must also actively engage stakeholders in continued consultation to improve supported activities.

Developing and implementing a high-quality schoolwide program is a systemic, effective strategy for increasing the academic achievement of all students. A schoolwide program will maintain the fundamental Title I principles including accountability and reporting of academic results, reform rooted in research-based practices, and school and community engagement and collaboration in the operation of the school.

TITLE 1 SCHOOL COMPACT AGREEMENT

A compact is a written agreement among parent/guardians, scholars, and teachers to work together to improve the academic skills of the scholar. Each parent/guardian, scholar and teacher will be asked to provide input and sign the agreement annually.

For additional information pertaining to Title 1, please visit pcsb.org/title1

Additional information for Scholars & Families

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

Disston Academy will have a Parent Teacher Association. The overall purpose of PTA is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. PTA operates under its set of by-laws and sponsors our learners' fundraising activities. All parent/guardians and teachers are invited to join the association. Annual dues are \$6.00. Please consult the school website for PTA dates and times.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

A School Advisory Council (SAC) is a standing group of representative parents, community people and staff members. The school advisory committee is responsible for researching the school's program and needs, the school budget, the school improvement plan and giving input to such items as suggestions to the principal. The SAC will operate under its set of by-laws. The SAC is open to all members of our school community. Items that are important to a stakeholder may be brought to SAC meetings during open agenda or presented to a SAC member and he/she will present the information to SAC. Please consult the school website for SAC times and dates.

RECORDS

Parental Rights: According to Florida statutes, the parent or guardian of a scholar attending public school (or a scholar 18 years or older) shall be entitled to specific rights of access, waiver of access, challenge and hearing, and privacy, with regard to records and reports relating to such scholar maintained and used by the school. This right extends to all official records, files, and data directly related to the scholar such as identifying data, academic work, achievement records, test scores, psychological tests and health data.

The parent or guardian has the right to a list of these records, to be shown the records, to have the records interpreted and to have copies made (**the cost to be paid by the parent or guardian**). In addition, **the parent or guardian has the right to waiver access** to confidential letters or statements and has the right to challenge and have a hearing regarding content of reports or records.

The right of privacy protects scholar records which are personally identifiable from being released without written consent of the parent or guardian, except to official school-related organizations. **The right of privacy does not relate to the publishing and releasing of general public directory information.** Parents or guardians who wish directory information to be withheld shall notify the school in writing to that effect.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Scholars will be issued a class schedule on the first day of school. Parents will be notified of any changes to that schedule. The staff may make schedule changes for the following reasons:

- Level changes requested by the teacher during the first marking period. Example: a scholar is moved from a regular class to an advanced class.
- **Changes necessitated by placement in or withdrawal from an Exceptional Scholar Education program.**
- Changes initiated by Disston Academy to balance class enrollment.

Parents requesting schedule changes out of a teacher's class **must** have a conference with that teacher prior to a change being considered.

TELEPHONES

The school phone is a business phone and is available for scholar use for academic or urgent communication needs. In emergency situations, scholars should contact an administrator.

Parents may leave voice messages for staff members; these messages are usually captured after school and addressed within 48 hours.

Personal cell phones are to be turned off and turned in upon check-in. If scholars need to contact parents or guardians during the school day permission to use personal phones may be extended by the school staff or administration.

This handbook is a snapshot of Disston Academy policies and procedures. Please refer to the Pinellas County Schools Scholar Code of Conduct for more pertinent, general information <https://www.pcsb.org/code>



PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, prohibits any and all forms of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, martial status, age sexual orientation or disability in any of its Programs, services or activities.