

# PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR MIDDLE SCHOOL

## Student Handbook

Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School (PLDMS) is a safe, non-violent school community with high academic and behavioral expectations for all students. The policies, procedures, responsibilities and privileges contained in the *PLDMS Student Handbook* have been established to create the best learning environment for everyone. It is not all-inclusive, but does cover most of the items that commonly concern parents and students. It is essential that students and parents read this handbook and become familiar with its contents. You will find it to be of great value as you become an integral part of our school community.

**Student hours are 9:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Students are permitted on campus at 9:15 a.m. and are dismissed at 4:00 p.m. *There is no adult supervision available prior to 9:15 a.m. or after 4:30 p.m.* The school cannot be held responsible for your child beyond those times. Parents of students arriving too early or staying too late will be contacted.

The teachers and staff at PLDMS will do everything possible to help students be successful in middle school. However, students are reminded that the level of success they achieve is directly related to the amount of effort they put forth. Have a great year!

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Important announcements at PLDMS are presented in the morning and in the afternoon on the school-wide PA system. Morning announcements include the Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence, morning message, and school-related news from the Principal. Eagle Eye News is a student-produced news shown at the end of the first block to inform students. Afternoon announcements contain information regarding bus changes and after school activities. **During announcements, all students are expected to remain quiet and attentive.**

## ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are held at various times during the year **and are a privilege to attend.** Attentive and courteous behavior is expected. All students should refrain from talking and give speakers and performers their undivided attention and respect. Each student is personally responsible for the impression made by the school. Appropriate gestures of appreciation should be in the form of applause. Rudeness, inattentiveness, or other disruptive behaviors are unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action.

## ATTENDANCE

### ID REQUIRED TO PICK UP A STUDENT

To ensure student safety, anyone picking up a student from school prior to dismissal due to illness or an appointment must come to the office and provide proper photo identification.

The adult's name must be listed on the student's Emergency Card or the student will not be allowed to leave school. Exceptions to this rule can be made when the parent/guardian listed on the Emergency Card faxes a signed letter authorizing the individual to pick up the child.

### COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual school attendance is crucial for a student's academic success. Per state statute, all students are required to attend school every day of the school year. Parents are responsible for their child's daily school attendance.

**Any time a student is absent from school, parents are expected to notify the school office before 9:45 a.m. each day of the absence and send a signed excuse note the day the student returns. This note must specify the student's full name, as well as the date(s) and reason for the absence. Students are required to give this note to their homeroom teacher.**

**Failure to bring a note from home will result in an UNEXCUSED absence.**

## **PATTERNS OF NON-ATTENDANCE**

Students exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance will be referred to the School Social Worker and the school principal may request documentation for subsequent absences. A “habitual truant” is a student who has 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or justifiable consent of the child’s parent. Non-attendance includes tardiness, early sign-out, or absence for all or any part of the day. A pattern of non-attendance is established by:

- 5 days of non-attendance in a calendar month
- 10 days of non-attendance in a 90 calendar day period

**Patterns of non-attendance may result in withholding of academic credit (after 9 days absent) or referral to Social Services.**

## **ABSENCES**

Upon receiving a note from home, only absences permitted by *School Board Policy 4.16* will be excused.

Excused absences are as follows:

- ✓ Personal sickness or injury of student (absences of 3 days or more require a written note from physician)
- ✓ Students having, or suspected of having, a communicable disease or infestation which can be transmitted are to be excluded from school and are not allowed to return to school until they no longer present a health hazard
- ✓ Illness or death of immediate family member
- ✓ Observance of religious holiday of student’s own faith
- ✓ Medical/dental appointments
- ✓ Court appearance or subpoena
- ✓ Special event: Examples of special events include important public functions, conferences, state/national competitions, as well as exceptional cases of family need. The student must request and receive permission from the principal at least five days prior to the event.
- ✓ **ANY OTHER REASONS MUST BE ADDRESSED BY THE PRINCIPAL PRIOR TO THE ABSENCE.**

## **PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCES**

One week prior to a pre-arranged absence, parents/guardians must submit a note to school stating the student’s full name, date of expected absence, and the contact number of the parent. Upon receipt of this note, approval of the principal is required prior to the student being issued a pass from the front office. The pass should be signed by each of the student’s teachers prior to the planned absence. The signatures permit the student to make up any schoolwork missed as a result of the absence. The teacher of the student’s last class of the day will keep the form and send it to the office to be filed.

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

Make-up work for credit is allowed for all excused absences. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain all assignments missed due to an absence and complete them in a reasonable amount of time (number of days absent, plus one day). Incomplete and/or missing assignments will be reflected in the student’s grade. A minimum twenty-four hour notice is required to gather class work for an absent child before it can be picked up in the front office.

## **TARDINESS**

Students arriving at school after 9:45 a.m. are considered tardy and must report to the main office for the appropriate admission pass. In order for the tardy to be excused, a parent/guardian **MUST come to the main office to sign in their child OR send the student with a signed note stating reason for late arrival.** Habitual tardiness is defined as being tardy six times within an academic quarter. Unless excused, accumulated tardiness will be recorded as unexcused absences. Habitual tardiness may result in disciplinary action as stated in the *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12*.

## **EARLY SIGN-OUT REQUESTS**

Students who must leave school before the end of the day must present a written request from a parent/guardian stating the reason and time the student will be leaving. This note should be brought to the main office for approval upon arrival in the morning or given to the homeroom teacher. The student will be released from his/her classroom once a parent/guardian arrives in the office to sign out the student. Please note there is no early student sign-out after 3:30 p.m. unless prior arrangements for early dismissal have been approved by administration. **This process minimizes disruptions to the learning environment. Parents must come to the office to sign out the student and provide proper photo identification. On special event days, such as Pep Rallies, Presentations or Whole-School Events, students must arrange to be picked up before the beginning of these events. Students may not be permitted sign-out during whole-school events when they cannot be reached.**

# Bullying

Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gestures, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation.

<i>Are you being bullied?</i>	<i>Do you bully others?</i>	<i>Do you witness bullying?</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adults are here to help end bullying, it is important for you to tell an adult immediately if you are being bullied.</li> <li>If you stay in a group with others, you will be less of a target for bullying. Other students around you can also help you get out of a bad situation.</li> <li>Remember, it is not your fault. No one should be bullied.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do you make others feel? Put yourself in their shoes and think about their feelings.</li> <li>Hurting others physically, by your words or attitude is never cool! Think about how you want to be treated.</li> <li>Respect yourself and treat others with respect. If you have a hard time doing this, talk to the school counselor or other trusted adults who can help you make good choices and change your behavior.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try to be friends with someone who is being bullied, include them in your activities, or talk with them. They will need support from a friend.</li> <li>Stand up to the person who is being a bully. It is not easy to stand up and do the right thing, but by standing up to them can stop them.</li> <li>Report the bullying to an adult. Kids who bully will stop if they know they cannot get away with this kind of behavior.</li> </ol>

## BUS INFORMATION

Riding the bus is a privilege. Section 1006.10, Florida Statutes gives school bus drivers the authority to monitor and control the behavior of students anytime they are being transported to and from school or school functions. The bus driver is in full charge of the bus. It is the responsibility of each student to abide by the rules when riding the bus to ensure the safety of all students. These rules are in the interest of student safety and apply to all students when they are being transported on a school bus. Anything interfering with student safety *will not* be permitted.

### BUS RULES & REMINDERS:

- Students must report to their assigned seats and remain seated, facing front, keeping aisles and exits clear.
- Students may only ride the bus to which they have been assigned by the School District of Lee County.
- Students shall enter and exit the bus only at the stop designated by the School District of Lee County and may not enter or exit the bus at any other stop except in the case of emergency or as approved in advance by administration.
- Students must be courteous and respectful to fellow students and the bus driver; profanity and/or abusive language will not be tolerated.
- Unnecessary noise and confusion diverts the driver's attention from the road and might result in a serious accident. Therefore, students must not engage in loud talking, horseplay, and/or fighting.
- Students must keep the bus clean and sanitary. Vandalism will not be tolerated!
- Students must not extend any part of their bodies or any objects out of the bus windows.
- Students may only carry objects that can be held securely in their laps while on the bus.
- Electronic devices, glass containers, animals, balloons, fireworks, toys, sharp objects, etc. are not permitted.
- Students may not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus.
- Students are to remain silent at all railroad crossings until the bus has completely crossed the tracks and the driver gives the all clear.

Students who violate these rules will face disciplinary consequences as stated in the *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12* and may be suspended from the bus. Students serving a bus suspension are still required to attend school. Parents will be responsible for transportation to and from school during a student's bus suspension period.



## BUS CHANGES

Per *School Board Policy 7.02*, students are assigned to a bus by the School District according to their place of residence currently on file. **Students may not change buses or get off at any stop other than his/her assigned stop.** Both written parent permission and administrative authorization are required to do otherwise.

**Written requests to ride a bus, other than the one assigned, will not be approved – unless it is deemed an emergency by administration.** Riding another bus for the purpose of going to an after school program, going home with friends, going to a meeting or club, taking private lessons, and other personal conveniences **WILL NOT BE APPROVED.**

**Students must bring bus requests to the office at the start of the school day. Requests made at the end of the day will not be honored.**

## TRANSPORTATION HOTLINE

Contact the Transportation Department at 334-0211 or the South Zone Transportation Department at 495-3700 if you have specific questions or concerns regarding transportation issues. General bus route information can be obtained from Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School at 334-1357.

## CAFETERIA

### COST

**ALL STUDENTS EAT BREAKFAST AND LUNCH WITHOUT CHARGE AT PLDMS.** Other items such as juice, water, and snacks are available during the week at an additional cost. Snack line is viewed as a privilege. Students can deposit money into snack line accounts on Monday, or the first day of the week, during breakfast or lunch time. Students must have their tray or bagged lunch in hand at the snack line in order to purchase – this ensures all students are eating a healthy lunch in addition to snacks.

### RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

While in the Cafeteria students are expected to behave, respect the rights of others, and follow the directions of adults supervising lunch.

A student is expected to:

- ✓ Walk to and from the cafeteria in a quiet, orderly line and follow traffic patterns established in the lunchroom.
- ✓ Remain seated at assigned table unless otherwise directed.
- ✓ Keep aisles clear of obstructions, including legs and backpacks.
- ✓ Use proper table manners while eating.
- ✓ Refrain from disruptive behavior, including: speaking in a loud voice, making noise, changing seats, and throwing food or objects.
- ✓ Leave table and floor areas clean and perform cafeteria duties when assigned.
- ✓ Confine eating and drinking to the cafeteria.

Students who violate cafeteria rules will face disciplinary consequences in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12.*

## CELEBRATIONS

PLDMS enjoys celebrating special events with our students. However, students are not allowed to have balloons, flowers, or gifts delivered to them in the classroom or carry them throughout the day. Any items delivered to school for students will be held in the office until dismissal. Balloons are not allowed on school buses as they are a distraction for the driver.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Parents are required to notify the school if there is a change in residency, custody, home/work/cell phone numbers, parent e-mail addresses, or emergency contact information. Accurate information helps facilitate communication between home and school and allows immediate contact in case of an emergency. Acceptable proof of change in residence can be an electric bill, water bill, or lease statement.

## **CHROMEBOOKS**

Students are issued a Chromebook at the start of the year, as well as a charger and a case. Chromebooks should be charged nightly at home and come to school fully charged. Chromebook chargers should be left at home as the school assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen chargers. Damaged Chromebooks can be replaced in the Media Center. Any damage deemed by administration to be intentional, an act of vandalism or destructive will also be fined. A new Chromebook will be issued, but the fine will remain.

In the event of a charge, and new Chromebook will be issued even without full payment, but the fine will remain with the student throughout the time in Lee County.

## **CLINIC**

The school nurse or clinic assistant provides temporary care for injuries or illnesses. Students who are injured or become ill while at school must report to the clinic with a pass signed by their teacher. Parents will be contacted in cases of a serious nature. If a student is ill, parents are requested to keep their child home. The school is not equipped to keep sick or injured students for extended periods of time.

Any student found abusing clinic privileges will be reported to an administrator and parents will be contacted. Any injury sustained at home or away from school is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. The use of an assistive device at school, such as crutches and wheelchairs, requires medical documentation from a physician.

Emergency cards must indicate all diagnosed medical conditions of your child. Please indicate the condition(s) on the *Student Emergency and Health Information, MIS 357* form along with all emergency contact phone numbers.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS, SCREENINGS & INSURANCE**

All students must have an updated immunization card from the State of Florida and a physical on record to be in compliance with State regulations. (See page 2 for more information.)

All sixth graders will receive a state mandated Health screening which includes vision, hearing, scoliosis, and BMI.

Low cost school insurance is available to all students. Because the school does not pay for injuries accidentally sustained on school property, parents are encouraged to purchase this insurance. Information about this insurance is available at the start of the school year. Purchase of this insurance is optional and is either primary or supplementary insurance based on family coverage.

## **MEDICATION AT SCHOOL**

Medication may be given at school only if failure to take it could jeopardize student health. When a student requires medication to be given during school hours, it must be brought to the clinic in the original container, fully labeled and accompanied by a completed *Parent Permission for Medication, MIS 398* form. If prescribed medication is to be taken longer than 2 weeks, or if the medication is an over-the-counter medication, such as cough drops, cough syrup, or Tylenol, a *Physician's Permission for Medication, MIS 401* form must be completed and signed by a physician.

## **CLUBS & ACTIVITIES**

Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School students have the opportunity to be involved in a variety of after-school clubs and activities. Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities as part of their middle school experience. Appropriate student behavior is expected whenever a student chooses to participate in an extracurricular activity.

# COMMUNICATION

Communication between home and school is essential. PLDMS provides many opportunities for communication throughout the school year and encourages family support and assistance. The list that follows identifies some of the tools and methods we use for communication.

## E-MAIL

E-mail is a very effective form of communication for teachers, families, and students. E-mail addresses for staff members can be found on our school's website (<http://dun.leeschools.net>).

A weekly email, called The Happenings, is sent out every Friday evening and contains information about school events and extracurricular activities for the following weeks.

## INTERIM REPORTS & ACADEMIC CHECKPOINTS

Interim reports are now electronic and are no longer sent home. An electronic message will be sent to remind parents to check your child's academic grades, however, students and parents are encouraged to monitor grades consistently on Focus Parent Portal.

## PARENT CONFERENCES

Parents, teachers, or administration may request a conference to address academic and/or behavioral concerns. Parents may request conferences by contacting grade-level team leaders.

## PARENT RESOURCES ON THE STUDENT CHROMEBOOK

### FOCUS PARENT PORTAL

Login information is sent home at the beginning of the year. Parents AND students should activate their accounts and use them to monitor grades as frequently as they desire.

### GOOGLE CLASSROOM – PARENT/STUDENT TOOLKIT

Students will be given access at the first grade level meeting – the classroom contains valuable information about school functions, policies and procedures.

### CASTLE STUDENT PORTAL

Student discipline and standard tracking information is available through the Student Castle Portal at any time. Parents should check their students Castle accounts weekly to monitor student engagement.

## REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be printed and sent home with students during homeroom at the end of each academic quarter. The final report card will be mailed by the Lee County School District.

## SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

A monthly School Newsletter will be sent via Parentlink message, accessible from the school website, or hard copies are provided in the front office. Newsletters include information regarding special events and other important information.

## SCHOOL WEBSITE

Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School maintains a website at <http://dun.leeschools.net>. This site is updated regularly with information about the school, staff, upcoming events, and links to school district information.

# COMPUTER USE

PLDMS has developed a school-wide Technology Implementation Plan. Students will have opportunities to learn technology skills based on the National Education Technology Standards (NETS) while learning content area curriculum.

Students will be expected to use the computers and Internet in an appropriate and responsible manner. Inappropriate use of technology or equipment may result in disciplinary action according to the Lee County School District *Student Code of Conduct*. Consequences may include loss of privileges to use equipment, suspension, and full restitution if damage occurs.

In accordance with *School Board Policy 2.20*, the following expectations establish the minimum acceptable standards for computer/technology use at Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School to be interpreted and enforced by the school administration and staff. The minimum technology expectations are as follows:

- ✓ Students may not bring software or removable storage devices into the building for any reason. Installation of a program that introduces a virus is cause for disciplinary and/or legal action.
- ✓ Students may use the Internet for educational and research purposes only.
- ✓ Students will use their proper network ID and password at all times. Use of another student's ID number is prohibited.
- ✓ Students may not alter menus, operating systems, files, desktop configurations, or access inappropriate sites on the internet.
- ✓ Students are prohibited from vandalizing any technology. Students who damage school property will be responsible for restitution.

## **ELECTRONIC STUDENT CONDUCT**

### **EAGLE CARD**

Minor disciplinary infractions are recorded and tracked electronically with progressive disciplinary consequences. These cards were developed as a behavior intervention tool that allows students to monitor their behavior and enables them to take responsibility for their education with the guidance of their parents and teachers. As you review student conduct, please remind your child how their choices impact their education.

### **SOARING EAGLE CELEBRATIONS**

Students will be rewarded monthly for positive behavior and clean Eagle Cards with focus area spot checks during homeroom.

*Soaring Eagle Celebrations* are held quarterly for students who have made good decisions. Students who did not receive a referral or marks on their Eagle Card are eligible to participate in *Soaring Eagle Celebrations*.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Pursuant to the Lee County *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12*, cell phones, text messaging devices, mp3 players, handheld games, e-readers and cameras are not permitted to be used during school hours. School hours are defined as the time a student arrives on campus or boards a school bus.

***It is the standard PLDMS procedure that electronic devices must be turned off and secured in backpacks or purses, and backpacks are placed in the front of the classroom during class. Teachers have discretion to manage classrooms as they see fit, until a concern exists that requires administrative intervention.***

Electronic devices are to be kept out of sight. If they are visible during school hours, the PLDMS administration has the right to confiscate. A parent and/or guardian must pick up any confiscated device. PLDMS is not responsible for any device not claimed by a parent/guardian within 48 hours.

Use of the electronic device is considered a privilege on campus. Continued infractions, use of the electronic device to negatively impact the school environment (i.e. Social media use) or refusal to comply with electronic device policies may result in the privilege being revoked, and a student not being allowed to bring electronic devices on campus for one or more quarters, issuance of a locker and mandatory stowing of the device, to be determined by administration.

## **EMERGENCY CARDS**

All students are required to have a current Emergency/Health card on file in the front office and clinic at PLDMS. Accurate information will help facilitate communication between home and school and allow immediate contact in case of an emergency. Please see "Change of Address" section in this Student Handbook for additional information. Emergency cards must indicate all diagnosed medical conditions of your child. Please indicate the condition(s) on the *Student Emergency and Health Information, MIS 357* form along with all emergency contact phone numbers. Only individuals who are listed on the Emergency Cards will be allowed to pick up students from the school campus.

## EVACUATION AND LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Emergency evacuation and lockdown drills are required by law and will be held at regular intervals throughout the school year. These drills are necessary to ensure student and staff safety in the event of a real emergency. Orderly and quiet behavior is essential during all drills. Maps for all evacuations are posted in each classroom. Students and visitors should review these maps periodically.

## EXTRACURRICULAR POLICY

**STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ARE TO REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE CAFETERIA FOR CHECK-IN. ANY STUDENT NOT IN THE DESIGNATED AREA FOR ATTENDANCE WILL BE ESCORTED TO THE FRONT OFFICE FOR PARENT PICKUP.**

### RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Our teachers work hard to ensure unique activities and experiences for all students to enjoy. The safety, success and security of each student remain the most important goal for the faculty and staff at Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School.

Students have the right to enjoy all activities and the responsibility to make them positive experiences for everyone involved. Honesty, courtesy, and consideration towards all members of the PLDMS including other students, teachers, substitutes, administration, bus drivers, front office personnel, cafeteria assistants, custodians, etc.. Students are not only expected to demonstrate high standards of conduct at all times, but also to accept personal responsibility in the event they exhibit negative behavior.

### PARTICIPATION ELIGIBILITY

In order to be considered eligible to participate in any school-sponsored activity, all students must adhere to Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School's behavior expectations, the *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12*, and all provisions of the law. Additionally, students must have a zero balance for all fees and fines.

The privilege of participating in extra-curricular activities may be forfeited if a student receives a referral resulting in a LOSS OF PRIVILEGE. Based on patterns of repeated misconduct, students may be removed from any or all school-sponsored activities at the discretion of an administrator. **In the unfortunate event your child is unable to participate in any school-sponsored activity, due to problem behavior, NO REFUNDS will be issued.**

**Day-to-day after school activities end at 5:20. Any student not picked up by 5:50, 30 minutes after the end of the activities, will be recorded as a "late pickup". Two late pickups in a quarter will result in loss of extracurricular activities for the remainder of the quarter.**

## GRADING SCALE

The evaluation of student achievement is one of the most important functions of the teacher. The grading scale adopted by the Lee County School Board is as follows:

Percent	Grade
90 – 100	A – Outstanding Progress
80 – 89	B – Above Average Progress
70 – 79	C – Average Progress
60 – 69	D – Lowest Acceptable Progress
0 – 59	F – Failure



## COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

**If a student needs to speak with the school counselor, administrator, or School Resource Officer, he/she should complete a *Counselor Request via Castle*.** The counselor at Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School has special training in helping students solve problems and is always available for emergency situations.

## GUM / CANDY / FOOD

Gum and candy are NOT allowed on campus or on school buses at any time. Students possessing gum or candy will face disciplinary consequences. Food and drinks are only permitted in the cafeteria.

## HALLWAY EXPECTATIONS

### HALLWAY PASSPORT

Each student is assigned up to two passes a day and up to seven passes per week. Students must sign out using their electronic Castle pass and wear a lanyard pass indicating their assigned area. This includes passes to the restroom, office, clinic, media center, or other classrooms.

Students in the hall without a pass during class time are considered to be skipping class and will be disciplined accordingly. Students are not permitted in unauthorized areas without permission. Our school supports a NO-PASS policy during the last 30-minutes of the day.

### HALLWAY RULES

When in the hallways, students are expected to:

- ✓ Walk quietly
- ✓ Arrive on time
- ✓ Leave others alone
- ✓ Keep moving

## HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the Lee County School District to maintain learning and working environments free from harassment and violence. Any form of harassment and violence is prohibited. Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School is committed to providing an environment free from intimidating, hostile, or offensive behavior as outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12*.

No form of harassment will be tolerated whether it is related to, but not limited to: race, religion, nationality, language, physical appearance, gender, sexual orientation, and/or mental capacity. Harassment can take the form of, but is not limited to, verbal and/or written remarks, gestures, innuendos, gossip, symbols or physical contact that are unwelcome, harmful, annoying, bothersome, and/or physically, emotionally, or academically injurious.

It is a violation of this policy for any student to harass another student or any employee through conduct or communication. The PLDMS administration will administer consequences deemed appropriate including warnings, mediations, detentions, or suspensions to end harassment and violence in order to prevent reoccurrence.

All concerns relating to harassment should be reported to a teacher, administrator, or the School Resource Officer. Students should not assume the school is aware of a particular problem and should bring concerns to the attention of an adult on campus to resolve the issue.

## HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of learning and is assigned to reinforce skills and concepts learned in the classroom. Research shows that students learn more from homework when they have a quiet, comfortable place to study, free from distractions. It helps if a consistent time of day is set aside for homework when students do not have additional responsibilities to distract them. Good study habits enhance academic progress, promote success, and help to improve grades. With the transition to Chromebooks, most homework is available electronically. Students can obtain and submit most homework assignments through Google Classroom.

## HONORS & AWARDS

At the end of the school year, grade-level award assemblies are held to honor students' academic achievements and other various distinctions. Families of honorees will be invited to attend the grade-level award ceremonies held at school.

### **Honor Roll Criteria:**

Eagle Honor Roll: Final Grade A's

Honor Roll: All A's and B's

SOAR Awards: Students nominated for demonstrating Spirit, Optimism, Achievement, or Respect

## **INTERVENTIONS**

### **ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIOR**

Here at PLDMS failure is not an option! Students are provided with rigorous instruction in the classroom. Students who demonstrate a need for additional opportunities to demonstrate success have a wide variety of interventions available to them.

11<sup>th</sup> Period Tutoring may be recommended by a teacher to allow individual attention for students who are struggling in their core academic classes, who are currently missing assignments, or need additional academic support in a subject area. Students must either be picked up by a parent/ guardian or they may take the after school activity bus which will drop them off at the school closest to their house. Parents may sign up students for academic support using the permission slip for afterschool activities. Attending 11<sup>th</sup> period tutoring is a privilege and students who are not compliant with the academically focused setting may be asked to not attend.

Students who require further assistance may be assigned Saturday School as an academic or behavior intervention. Students will need to be dropped off by a parent or guardian between 8:00 am and 8:15 am on the assigned Saturday where PLDMS staff and administration will be working with them on targeted academic and/or behavioral needs to ensure their success within the school setting. Saturday School interventions will be assigned by an administrator and students will be expected to attend on the dates specified.

### **LOCKERS**

Locker use is a student privilege. Each student who wishes will be issued a hallway locker and lock for \$5.00. This fee is non-refundable and is required before a locker and lock will be issued. **Only school locks may be placed on hall lockers.** Private locks are unacceptable and will be removed. If the lock is lost, the student will be assessed a replacement fee. Students may visit their lockers immediately before school, directly after school, and once during the course of the day.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

The lost and found is located in the School Resource Officer's administrative area. A student who loses something should notify a staff member and check the Lost and Found as soon as possible. If a student finds something, it should be given to the School Resource Officer. PLDMS is not responsible for lost articles. Large sums of money, iPods, game systems, electronic devices, and other valuables should be left at home. Each year, many items are not claimed. Items not claimed after 30 days will be donated to charity.

### **MEDIA CENTER**

Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School offers a well-equipped media center which provides educational, supplemental, and recreational materials in the form of books, magazines, and audio-visual materials. Subscription databases are available for research at school and home through the PLDMS website. Media Center use is a privilege and requires permission from a teacher. Our Media Center is open from 9:35-3:45 p.m. for students.

Students are responsible for the books they have checked out from the Media Center and are to return them on time. Books may be renewed if the student needs them for a longer time. As referenced in *School Board Policy 4.32*, students may be charged a modest fine for library books returned late.

As per *School Board Policy 4.24*, each parent/guardian of a student to whom materials have been issued shall be held liable for any loss or damage to such materials or for the failure of the student to return the materials when directed to by the principal or designee. Students shall pay for, replace, or repair District property loaned to them that they subsequently lose or damage. Until paid in full, assessed fees will follow students throughout high school and may result in the loss of extracurricular activities or community service activities at the school as determined by the administration.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL PROMOTION/RETENTION

### HOUSE BILL 7087 A++ PLAN: REQUIRED CREDITS

State legislation was passed that requires students to successfully pass twelve academic courses during the three middle school years in order to be promoted to ninth grade. The School District of Lee County has decided to call them “credits” so students will become accustomed to earning credits in high school. **The required academic credits include:**

- ✓ Three (3) year-long middle school or higher credits in English.
- ✓ Three (3) year-long middle school or higher credits in Mathematics.
- ✓ Three (3) year-long middle school or higher credits in Social Studies.
- ✓ Three (3) year-long middle school or higher credits in Science.
- ✓ One 1/2 credit in Career Education.

Student must earn a minimum cumulative grade of 60% at the end of the year to complete the course successfully. A student who does not pass a course must retake the course, even if promoted to the next grade level. Students who fail a required course may have the opportunity to attend summer school to retrieve missing credit.

### GRADE LEVEL DESIGNATION

Students will advance from one grade level designation to the next based upon completion of a school year of attendance. This will be known as the zero progression plan, whereby students begin their first year of middle school as a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student, their second year as a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student and their third year as an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student. Students will then remain an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student until all promotion requirements are met.

## NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

To qualify for NJHS a student must have a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.5 or better based on all grades earned in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, plus the first three quarters of 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The traits of leadership, character, service, and citizenship are also considered for membership. Induction of new members is held late in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade year for active membership during 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION



The Physical Education (P.E.) staff is dedicated to developing your child mentally, emotionally, socially, and physically. Per course description, all students are required to dress out in their PLDMS PE uniform and participate daily. Students failing to adhere with this policy will be subject to consequences as outlined in Lee County District Code of Conduct, listed under Dress Code and/or Insubordination. Uniforms must be purchased through the P.E. department at a cost of \$18 per set.

The PE department also requires the use of athletic shoes. During cool weather, sweatshirts and pants are permitted in any color. All students are encouraged to use sunscreen, hats, and sunglasses while participating in outdoor activities.

A combination lock is also required and can be purchased from the school store or any retail store for use in the P.E. locker rooms only. Additional information can be obtained from the P.E. staff.

## **PROHIBITED ITEMS**

Many items are considered hazardous to the safety of others or a distraction to the learning environment. The School District of Lee County specifically prohibits drugs, alcohol, weapons, fireworks, tobacco products or other paraphernalia. Personal electronic devices including cameras, iPods, hand-held games, laser pointers, pagers, etc. are prohibited on campus. Additionally, aerosol cans, glass containers, toys, skateboards, cards and any other nuisance items are prohibited as they are disruptive and distract from the specific purpose of the school. Furthermore, large sums of money or other valuable items should not be brought to school.

Students in possession of these items will face consequences with the Lee County School District as well as law enforcement agencies. Prohibited items will be confiscated and turned over to a parent/guardian. It is the student's responsibility to notify the parents of the seizure. Parents/guardians will need to come to school to claim seized items. PLDMS is not responsible for items not claimed by a parent/guardian within 48 hours. Violators of this policy are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Lee County *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12*.

## **RESPECT FOR FACILITIES**

All students are encouraged and expected to assume responsibility for the care of the school and school property. If accidental damage occurs, it may be repaired at the student's expense. Willful or malicious damage must be repaired or replaced at the student's expense. In addition, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken for offenses in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12*.

## **RESTROOM**

Students are expected to keep rest rooms clean and sanitary. Teachers monitor restroom privileges. Students must register a pass in the Castle system or via other teacher system to allowed out of class. Students may only use the restroom or water fountain closest to their currently assigned classroom.

## **SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Every school has a School Advisory Council (SAC) comprised of parents, teachers, the principal, support staff, and other representatives of business and the community. The SAC is responsible for assisting in developing and approving the School Improvement Plan (SIP) which addresses issues such as curriculum, budget, discipline, training, instructional materials, technology, staffing, and student support services.

SAC meeting dates and times are printed in our school newsletter, advertised on the school marquee, and posted on both the school and district websites. All parents are invited to attend SAC meetings.

## **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER**

Our School Resource Officer (SRO) is a sworn Deputy with the Lee County Sherriff's Office and serves as a resource in matters concerning law enforcement. School Resource Officers often council students, parents, and staff and serve as positive role models on campus. They may also assist with school clubs and activities. Students may contact the SRO with confidential information and remain anonymous.

## **SCHOOL STORE**

PLDMS has a school store located by the grid in the main mall area of our campus that is run by the Bookkeeper. The school store is open for students to purchase assorted school supplies during posted days and hours.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

If at any time there is reason to believe that a student is concealing stolen or illegal property, alcohol, drugs, weapons, tobacco products or contraband, the administrative staff has the right to search the student and his/her personal property.

## **SEVERE WEATHER**

The School District of Lee County will always consider student and staff safety when making a decision to close school due to the threat of severe weather. Unless there is a clear threat of danger, the decision to close school will be made around 5:00 a.m. The decision will be announced through local television morning news shows and via NOAA Weather Alert Radio. Families and staff should listen to local media beginning at 5:00 a.m. for the latest information pertaining to school closures.

## **S.O.A.R**

PLDMS encourages a positive environment which supports all students' quests to achieve Spirit, Optimism, Achievement, and Respect. With this in mind, students are able to attain Soaring Eagles throughout the school year. When a student demonstrates the "SOAR" attributes, PLDMS staff has the option of rewarding that student with a Soaring Eagle. Soaring Eagles can be used to attain various levels of rewards throughout the school year at the P.B.S store located in the main hallway. Students are encouraged to demonstrate the attributes which reflect the "SOAR"ing spirit of our school community.

## **SPORTS**

Intramural sports offered at PLDMS include basketball, cross-country, volleyball, soccer, track, golf and tennis. Tryouts for these teams are announced to all students. Those selected for the extramural team will compete against other middle schools in Lee County.

### **PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS**

Requirements to participate in after school sports activities:

- ✓ All participants must provide proof of insurance.
- ✓ A student's intramural participation form must be completed and on file before a student may participate.
- ✓ A student must achieve a minimum grade point average of 2.0 from the previous quarter to be considered eligible for selection to our competitive team.
- ✓ A student must maintain good behavior (no referrals) during entire intramural and extramural season.

### **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

Low cost school insurance is available to all students. Because the school does not pay for injuries accidentally sustained on school property, parents are encouraged to purchase this insurance. Information about this insurance is available at the start of the school year. Purchase of this insurance is optional and is either primary or supplementary insurance based on family coverage. Students participating in athletics must show proof of accident/health insurance.



# STUDENT CONDUCT

PLDMS staff is responsible to monitor student behavior and provide a safe and productive learning environment for all students. Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School has high expectations for appropriate behavior from every student. Our goal is to develop students that are self-disciplined and are able to make good decisions about acceptable behavior. Disruptive behavior and acts of disrespect for rules and for others interferes with the learning environment.

Students are expected to behave at all times in a manner that will bring credit to themselves, their school, family, and community. Each student is responsible for his/her own individual behavior while attending school, traveling to and from school, or participating in a school-sponsored activity.

In order to be considered eligible to participate in any school-sponsored activity, all students must adhere to Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School's behavior expectations, the Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12, and all provisions of the law.

## BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

### District Student Code of Conduct

During the first week of school, all students receive a copy of the Lee County *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12*. The *Student Code of Conduct* lists offenses that disrupt the classroom or endanger others. A student who commits an act not listed in this booklet will be subject to the authority of the school principal who will assign the consequence. Parents are asked to review this booklet with their child, fill out requested information and return completed forms to the school.

### PLDMS Student Code of Conduct

In addition to the expectations outlined in the Lee County *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12*, students are also expected to follow the rules and policies of Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School.

Student behavior expectations are explained by each teacher to each class within the first two weeks of the school year. Rules and expectations for behavior are also posted in each classroom. When a student chooses to disregard school rules, he/she will face the consequences for those choices.

Behavior interventions and/or discipline referrals will be issued to students upon repeated or serious infractions of the rules.

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE

When a student receives a warning, a classroom consequence or a referral to the office, he/she should be aware that:

- ✓ The teacher's prime responsibility is to teach the entire class, and therefore, he/she does not have time to explain discipline decisions on the spot;
- ✓ The teacher's authority cannot be challenged by students. This also means that when the teacher is disciplining one student, other students are not to interfere by "defending" the disciplined student or by criticizing the teacher's decision;
- ✓ Students have the right to know why they are being disciplined, but they must wait until the teacher has time to meet with them to discuss the situation in a mature, respectful manner.

## CONSEQUENCES FOR MISCONDUCT

### Lunch Detention

Students assigned lunch detentions are to report to the supervising adult in the cafeteria. Students in lunch detention have lost cafeteria privileges for that day.

### Time-Out

Students assigned to time-out are removed from the regular classroom due to disruptive or repeated disciplinary infractions. Time-out assignments are typically of a short duration. Students in time-out are required to work on academic coursework in the Student Affairs room. Disruption of the Student Affairs room will result in additional consequences as outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12*.

### Work Detail

Students assigned work detail must report to the supervising adult on duty after school in order to fulfill their obligation.

### After-School Detention

Students assigned after-school detentions are required to stay after school.

### **Phoenix Room (Alternative to Suspension)**

Students assigned to the Phoenix Room are removed from the regular classroom setting and all related school functions for a specified number of days. Students in the Phoenix Room are not considered absent and are expected to complete missing work. Disruption of the room will result in additional consequences as outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct, Grade 6-12*.

### **Out of School Suspension**

Students assigned OSS are removed from school and all related school functions for a period of 1 to 10 days. Students serving OSS are expected to complete all missed assignments. These absences are excused. Being on School District Property while on OSS is trespassing and may result in further disciplinary action and law enforcement intervention.

### **Alternative Reassignment**

Referral to the Success Academy is the consequence for students who commit felonies, who cause serious disruptions and who do not respond to counseling or other measures to change the offending behavior, who are continually disruptive to the learning environment, or who otherwise are not able to perform in the regular school setting by virtue of their behavior.

## **STUDENT COUNCIL**

The PLDMS Student Council is a representative group of 6-8<sup>th</sup> grade students who meet regularly, sharing in the life of the school. The purpose of Student Council is to provide a venue for students to talk about real problems, discuss possible solutions, and help plan, organize, and implement ideas for the betterment of the school. Representatives are elected from each Social Studies class in the school. This allows representatives to gather a variety of student perspectives when issues arise throughout the year

## **SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS**

Surveillance cameras aid in the protection and welfare of the school community. PLDMS has surveillance cameras installed at strategic points throughout the building and grounds. Hallways, parking lots, and bus ramp are monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## **TELEPHONE USE**

### **CALLS TO STUDENTS**

The school telephone number is 239-334-1357. Parents/Guardians should call the school office to leave only emergency messages for a student. Every effort will be made to deliver emergency messages to the student. Parents should not call or text message the student's cell phone during the school day. Students using cell phones during the school day will be disciplined and the phone will be confiscated.

### **CALLS FROM STUDENTS**

Students may use the school telephone located in the front office in emergencies with permission of the staff. **Students are not allowed to use cell phones or classroom telephone during school hours.**

## **TEXTBOOKS**

Students are responsible for all textbooks assigned to them by the school. Students should check textbooks thoroughly when received and report any prior damage. All textbooks should be covered for their protection. Students are responsible for damage to or loss of textbooks assigned to them. As per *School Board Policy 4.24*, each parent/guardian of a student to whom materials have been issued shall be held liable for any loss of or damage to such materials or for the failure of the student to return the materials when directed to by the principal or designee. Students shall pay for, replace, or repair lost or damaged books. Until paid in full, assessed fees will follow students throughout high school and may result in the loss of extracurricular activities or other privileges.

## **UNAUTHORIZED AREA/OUT-OF-AREA**

Student safety and supervision is a paramount concern at PLDMS – students are expected to be supervised at all times, and when not, be accountable to an adult in the building by way of a pass or other granted permission. Students using unauthorized stairwells or hallways, traveling through planning rooms or facilities that are not permitted student areas are subject to Unauthorized Area consequences, including No-Pass Policies and removal of privileges.

## **VISITORS**

In support of a safe environment, all visitors to the school, including parents, guardians, and siblings, must report to the main office with a valid driver's license in order to be signed in and out. All visitors will receive a visitor badge which must be worn on campus at all times. Any visitor without a visitor's pass will be considered trespassing.

School-aged children from other schools, in or out of the district, including former PLDMS students, are not allowed to visit school during school hours or attend school dances.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School is fortunate to have dedicated volunteers who take time out of their busy schedules to assist our teachers and our office staff. Volunteerism is open to all parents. If you are interested, please stop by the front office with a valid driver's license and complete a Volunteer Application.

## **WITHDRAWALS AND TRANSFERS**

The parent/guardian must initiate a withdrawal or transfer of a student. Such requests may be made in person with the registrar in the front office, by telephone, or through written communication. *All school property must be returned, all fees must be paid, and a withdrawal form must be completed by the parent prior to leaving the school.*

