

# Peekskill Middle School

## Student HANDBOOK

### 2024-2025



212 Ringgold Street  
Peekskill, NY 10566  
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<https://www.peekskillcsd.org/Domain/11>

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## **PEEKSKILL MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

Mr. Donald Peters, Principal  
Dr. William Toro, Assistant Principal  
Ms. Iris Sepulveda, Assistant Principal  
Dr. James Gordon, Assistant Principal

# **“BUILDING OUR FUTURE”**

## **District Mission Statement**

Our mission is to educate and empower all students to strive for excellence as life-long learners who embrace diversity and are contributing members of a global society.

### **We Believe That:**

- all people can learn, contribute and have value
- embracing and understanding cultural diversity is imperative to strengthening and enriching a school community
- when a community provides a respectful, safe, supportive, resource-rich environment, people thrive and meet their goals
- a school district excels when strong partnerships exist among families, schools and community
- educating the whole child will develop life-long learners who are compassionate, confident, critical thinkers
- a school district is responsible for aligning and carrying out the conditions for learning leadership and commitment.

## **Mission and Philosophy**

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### **WE BELIEVE THAT:**

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- a school district is responsible for aligning and carrying out the conditions for learning, leadership and commitment

Peekskill Middle School is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents, and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The School and Peekskill City School District has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty, and integrity.

Students are expected to follow and abide by the directives of teachers and administrators. They are expected to be in their assigned classes at all times unless released by a pass to go elsewhere. Students are not to leave the building without permission from the administration. This is necessary not only for educational reasons but also for reasons of safety, health, and accountability.

We, the faculty, parents, administration and community of Peekskill Middle School, believe that the primary purpose of Peekskill Middle School is to promote the idea that education is an ongoing process and to instill in students the desire to continue their education after they leave the high school. Our goal is that all students will become thoughtful and productive members of society.

We acknowledge that school should provide an atmosphere that encourages cooperation and respect among all students and teachers, where the feelings of all are considered, diverse points of view are recognized, and effort is rewarded.

**Peekskill Middle School Administration**

**Mr. Donald Peters ~ Building Principal & 8th Grade Administrator**

**Dr. William Toro ~ Assistant Principal & 7th Grade Administrator**

**Ms. Iris Pagan ~ Assistant Principal & 6th Grade Administrator**

**Support Staff**

**Mrs. Mojica ~ Secretary to the Principal**

**Mrs. Nimmons ~ Guidance Secretary**

**Mr. Coster ~ School Counselor**

**Mr. Fernandez ~ School Counselor**

**Ms. Kilanowski ~ School Counselor**

**Dr. Castelli ~ School Psychologist**

**Ms. Detres ~ School Psychologist**

**Ms. Bean ~ Social Worker**

**Ms. Norman ~ Library Media Specialist**

**Mr. Hatch ~ Security Officer**

**Mr. Draper ~ Security Officer**

**Ms. Venero ~ Security Officer**

**Mr. Leon ~ Security Officer**

**Ms. Amanda Hugh ~ Student Assistance Services Counselor**

**Ms. Rawlins ~ Margaret's Place**

**A Quick Guide to Services in the School**

**IF YOU NEED/WANT:**

TO SIGN IN LATE  
TO SIGN OUT ILL  
TO SIGN OUT EARLY DISMISSAL  
TO REPORT AN ACCIDENT  
HELP WITH A LOCKER  
FOR WORKING PAPERS  
BUS INFORMATION  
LOST AND FOUND  
PARENT CONFERENCE  
REPORT CARD  
FOR HOMEWORK  
HELP WITH A PROBLEM

**GO TO:**

SECURITY DESK or MAIN OFFICE  
NURSE FOR APPROVAL  
MAIN OFFICE  
MAIN OFFICE/NURSE  
TEACHER/ADMINISTRATOR/SECURITY  
GUIDANCE OFFICE  
MAIN OFFICE  
MAIN OFFICE / SECURITY OFFICE  
GUIDANCE OFFICE  
GUIDANCE OFFICE  
CHECK WEBSITE/ GUIDANCE OFFICE  
ANY ADULT IN THE BUILDING

## **Bell Schedules**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>7:30 - 8:10</b>
<b>Student Arrival to School</b>	<b>8:00</b>
<b>Homeroom</b>	<b>8:10 - 8:52</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>8:55 - 9:35</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>9:38 - 10:18</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>10:21 - 11:01</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>11:04 - 11:44</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>11:47 - 12:27</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>12:30 - 1:10</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>1:13 - 1:53</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>1:56 - 2:36</b>
<b>Check and Connect</b>	<b>2:36 - 3:00</b>



### **What does Bullying Mean?**

Bullying is deliberate and hurtful behavior meant to belittle, frighten, hurt or exclude someone. Bullying usually does not happen just once. It continues to happen over and over.

### **Common Forms of Bullying**

Physical bullying - Verbal bullying - Social bullying - Cyber bullying

### **Why does someone Bully?**

Most bullies have a hard time understanding or being sensitive to another person's feelings.

#### **The bully may:**

- Feel powerful by bullying others;
- Feel bad about themselves and bullying makes them feel smarter, stronger or more popular;
- May have been bullied themselves;
- Blame the victim by saying the person is annoying, different, or deserving of being bullied.

## **Who gets bullied?**

Usually the nice, ordinary people young and old become victims of a bully. Both boys and girls can be bullies and both boys and girls can be a target. Anything that makes a person different is a target: too short - too thin - too big - too smart, etc. Bullies pick on people who lack confidence. Victims are often too afraid or embarrassed and think telling an adult is tattling or is a bad thing to do. Everyone has the right to feel safe in and out of school. Oftentimes, once a trusted adult becomes aware and involved, the bully will stop or back off.

### **How can you help a victim?**

1. Don't join in or encourage the bully
2. Do your best to calm the situation
3. Offer your support to the bullied person
4. When your support doesn't help, tell a teacher/admin. what is happening
5. Be a friend to the victim
6. Stand up to the bully

***Bullying isn't OK here!***



**This section of your Student Handbook is designed to answer some questions you may have. We hope you will find it useful throughout the school year.**

### **Guidelines for School Success**

1. **Attend school on time every day.**
2. **Come to school ready to learn.**
3. **Respect all adults in authority.**
4. **Follow all safety regulations.**
5. **Wear suitable school clothing.**
6. **Treat the property of others with respect.**
7. **Get involved in school activities.**
8. **Follow all school expectations.**

### **Attendance**

Scholars are expected to attend school every day. Excessive absence often results in poor schoolwork. Parents should make every effort to make appointments after school. However, if a scholar must be excused, **parents should send a note in the morning.** The note should be brought to the Main Office immediately to be verified.

## **BEFORE LEAVING SCHOOL,**

### **A PARENT/GUARDIAN MUST SIGN THE STUDENT OUT IN THE MAIN OFFICE.**

Parents should communicate in advance regarding an excuse for any student requiring early sign-out. The time, date and the name of the family member picking up the child should be provided to ensure the student is called down in a timely manner. As a proactive step, parents can also provide students with signed notes for the main office on the day of early checkout. Students will be required to stay in class until someone in the main office calls for them to be dismissed or until the parent gives permission for the student to walk home. **Children will be released only to their parents or to individuals named on the Emergency Card.**

**Students may not be signed out after 2:30 as this poses a concern and disruption of the instructional process.**

## **Tardiness**

**School begins promptly at 8:10 a.m.** Students are considered tardy when they are not in their classrooms ready to receive instruction at that time. Any student arriving at school after 8:10 a.m. must report to the front security desk to receive a tardy slip before going to the classroom. Tardiness is disruptive to the learning environment and has a negative impact on student achievement for all students in the classroom. Scholars who are late to school without a legal absence are subject to disciplinary action.

## **Visitors**

Visitors must sign in at the security desk and report immediately to the **Main Office** upon entering the building. A visitor **MUST** have a picture ID in order to be granted access to the building. It is unlawful to loiter in or around a school building and on the grounds during school hours. Permission to visit the school will be granted by the Principal or Assistant Principal. **Teachers will not be available for conferences during the school day unless prior arrangements have been made.**

## **Lost and Found**

The Lost and Found is located in the main office. Large items are in the cafeteria and small items are kept in the main office. Scholars who find articles are asked to take them to the main office. Items will be discarded after a designated amount of time.

## **Telephones**

Scholars may use the phone in the Main Office for **emergency purposes only**. Parents are not to call during the school day to request to speak with their child unless there is a true emergency. **Scholars must have a pass to enter the main office.** **Please wait your turn and be respectful to office staff.**

## **Hall Passes**

Scholars **must have a pass** if they are in the hallways or other parts of the building during scheduled periods.

## **Health Office**

The Health Office is located on the 2nd floor across from the staircase. The nurse is available during the school day. If the nurse is not available, please report to the main office for assistance. You **must** have a pass to enter the Health Office.

## **Fire Drills/Emergency Evacuations**

The fire alarm is a series of loud repeated rings. Follow the directions on the Fire Exit sign posted in classrooms and your teacher. Walk quickly and quietly out of the building. Fire Drills are a serious matter. **ALWAYS assume that any fire drill alarm could be the real thing.** Please stay with your teacher when you exit the building. When returning to the building, scholars must remain quiet for further instructions.

## **Student Support Services**

The Student Support Services Department includes Counselors, Social Workers, and School Psychologists. These offices are located in the Guidance Suite (7<sup>th</sup> grade wing, 2nd floor).

Mr. Coster ~ School Counselor  
Mr. Fernandez ~ School Counselor  
Ms. Kilanowski ~ School Counselor  
Mr. Castelli ~ School Psychologist  
Ms. Detres - School Psychologist  
Ms. Bean ~ Social Worker  
Ms. Rawlins ~ Margaret's Place Social Worker  
Ms. Hugh ~ Student Assistance Services Counselor

Guidance services are provided for each grade level. These services include working with individuals and groups of scholars. Counselors discuss educational and occupational information with scholars. Counselors also assist scholars in dealing with problems and concerns. Scholars may see their counselor during the school day by obtaining a pass from his/her teacher.

## **Homework/Policy**

Homework is an integral part of education. Homework is assigned on a regular basis and scholars are expected to complete all assignments on time. Any scholar who expects to be out of school for more than (2) days should request classwork.

Contact your school counselor and the assigned work can be picked up in the Guidance Office and/or emailed to you.

## **Clubs and Activities**

(Mr. Goldberg - Athletic Director [agoldberg@peekskillschools.org](mailto:agoldberg@peekskillschools.org))

Scholars are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities. Some activities at Peekskill Middle School include:

### **Modified Sports Grades 7 and 8 :**

Please visit [www.peakskillathletics.org](http://www.peakskillathletics.org)

BASKETBALL	SOFTBALL		
BASEBALL	FOOTBALL		
WRESTLING	SOCCER	TRACK	LACROSSE

### **After school activities:**

MY BROTHERS KEEPER

LEAP Extended Day (MORNING/AFTERSCHOOL) PROGRAM

## **School and Behavior**

In order for teaching and learning to take place in a classroom, good order must be maintained. Scholars are reminded that they must adhere to a code of conduct, not only for their benefit, but also for the benefit of others. The Peekskill City School District rules and regulations are located at <https://www.peakskillcsd.org/Domain/592> However, some important things to remember are:

- 1. Weapons or other items**, which may be hazardous to the safety of anyone in the building or school bus may interfere in some way with school operations, will be impounded.
- 2. Unlawful acts** taking place on school grounds or buses not only make the scholar subject to penalties, which the courts may prescribe, but can result in suspension from school.

**3. Possession of drugs and/or alcohol and their use** on school property or at school-sponsored events are prohibited. Anyone found possessing, selling, purchasing, or using drugs on school property or at a school-sponsored event can be referred to the police and the Superintendent of Schools for a disciplinary hearing.

**4. Scholars are expected to behave appropriately while walking to and from school.** Scholars not behaving appropriately are subject to disciplinary action.

### **Intimidation, Bullying and Sexual Harassment**

Demeaning, bullying, or any other form of intimidation will be addressed, and possible punishment will be imposed. Any forms of unwelcome sexual advances, verbal or nonverbal, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

### **Fighting**

Arguing, fighting, play fighting, or threatening to fight are not permitted. Scholars should seek the assistance of an adult, if necessary, to resolve a problem with another student.

### **Safety Regulations**

Running, pushing, play-fighting, wrestling and excessive noise are not permitted in school. Shoes and shirts must be worn at all times. All shoes must have a backing to it, "**slides**" are not permitted.

### **RESPECT**

All scholars are to respect all staff members (this includes not only teachers but teaching assistants, guidance staff, office staff, administrators and other support staff) and their possessions. Please not use abusive and vulgar language. **Treat others the way you would like to be treated.**

### **Entering/Leaving the Building**

6th Grade Entrance/Exit - Main Entrance (Ringgold St)

7th Grade Entrance/Exit - Main Entrance (Ringgold St)

8th Grade Entrance/Exit - Main Entrance (Ringgold St)

Breakfast - 7:40 a.m. - 8:10 a.m.

### **Loitering**

Students may not loiter in the building or on school grounds after dismissal. Scholars must have a valid reason for staying after school. Valid reasons include school activities, sports and extra academic help.

### **Dress**

Scholars can dress to express one's personality as long as it does not distract/disrupt the learning environment.

Scholars are not permitted to wear hats, durags, head wraps, bandanas, sunglasses, and backpacks **in school** (Unless for Religious Purposes), these items **are required** to be placed in a locker at arrival to school. No scholar will be able to wear any of these items **IN** school.

### **Scholar Property**

DO NOT bring valuables, large sums of money, or any unnecessary items to school. The school will not take responsibility for these items.

### **Bicycles, Skateboards, Roller Skates & Hover boards**

Skateboards, hoverboards, etc. may not be brought to school. They can cause injury to the rider or others. Bicycles and scooters can be brought to school and locked on the bike rack at a student's risk. The school is not responsible for stolen bicycles.

### **School Property**

Scholars may not deface or otherwise damage school property, including books, furniture, walls, desks, etc. Any scholar doing such damage will be required to repair, replace or pay cash for damaged items and be subject to disciplinary actions

### **Lockers**

Each scholar will be assigned a locker. Scholars should keep their combinations private. Lockers should be free of magic markers and other permanent marks. Posters and pictures inside the locker are acceptable decorations. Lockers belong to the school district and may be opened at any time by school district officials.

### **Smoking**

Scholars may not smoke or “vape” in school, on school buses, on school grounds or at school events.

### **Gambling**

Card playing, throwing dice, pitching coins, etc. are not allowed on school grounds or at school sponsored events. NO BETTING!

### **Food Service**

(Mr. Andrew Weisman aweisman@peekskillschools.org)

Breakfast and lunch are served each day and is **free of charge to all students.**

### **Student Code of Conduct**

All students will be required to agree to abide by the PCSD Student Code of Conduct

### **Acceptable Use of Technology - Terms and Conditions**

1. **Acceptable Use:** Network/Internet use must be consistent with the educational objectives of the district. Students will use only their school district assigned username and password to gain access to the computer network.

#### **2. The following are considered unacceptable uses of the district network:**

- Attempts to obtain access to restricted sites, servers, files, databases, etc. are prohibited. Unauthorized access to other systems from district computers (e.g. “hacking”) is prohibited.

Use of Internet games, multi-user internet games (Halo, World of Warcraft, etc.) are not allowed.

- Use of online radio (Pandora, etc), audio broadcast or video streaming unrelated to class curriculum is not allowed.
- Use of social forums (e.g. Google Classroom, My Big Campus, Edmodo) must be related to educational research and not used for personal activities.
- Transmission of any material in violation of any law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secrets.
- Use of district network to communicate personal addresses, phone numbers, and/or financial information is not allowed.
- Use of the internet for commercial purposes, financial gain, personal business, product advertisement, or political lobbying is prohibited.
- Vandalism is not permitted and will be strictly disciplined. Vandalism of data is defined as any attempt to harm or destroy data of another user or of another agency or network that is connected to the Internet.

Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, the uploading, downloading, or creation of computer viruses. It also includes attempts to gain unauthorized access to any network. Vandalism of hardware/software includes intentionally making computer systems inoperable by deleting, disconnecting or disabling components.

- Harassment, intimidation or bullying, including any intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, also called cyber bullying, is not acceptable.

3. **Privileges:** Network/Internet use is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a loss of network privileges, disciplinary action, and/or referral to legal authorities. At the direction of the district administration, student user access and /or accounts may be denied, revoked, or suspended as a result of misuse of network privileges.

4. **Etiquette:** Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) the following: Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other language inappropriate in a school setting.

5. **Services:** The district makes no guarantees of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The district will not be responsible for any damages an individual suffers while on this system. These damages include loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors, or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. The district specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

6. **Security:** If a student identifies a security problem, he/ she must notify school personnel immediately. He/she is not to demonstrate the problem to other users. Students may not use the Internet to discuss or disseminate information regarding security problems or how to gain unauthorized access to sites, servers, files, etc.

7. **School Account:** Students will be issued a student account and password. If any information on a student's account changes or the account password is lost or stolen, it is the student's responsibility to notify school personnel.

8. **Google Suite for Education accounts (G Suite):** Peekskill City School District may provide students with Google Suite for Education accounts. G Suite runs on an Internet domain purchased and owned by the district and is intended for educational use. Your student's teachers will be using G Suite for lessons, assignments, and communication. G Suite is also available at home, the library, or anywhere with Internet access. Parents are responsible for monitoring their child's use of G Suite when accessing programs from home. Students are responsible for their own behavior at all times.

9. **Other services:** Peekskill City School District may also utilize computer software applications and web-based services that are operated by third parties. These services include: G Suite, Edgenuity, and other similar educational programs. A complete list of the programs may be viewed on the Peekskill City School District Technology website.

### **Acceptable Use (Privacy and Safety)**

1. Privacy – School staff, administrators, and parents all have access to student accounts for monitoring purposes. Students have no expectation of privacy on the

district systems.

## 2. Safety -

Students may not post personal contact information about themselves or other people. That includes last names, addresses and phone numbers.

- Students will tell their teacher or other school employee about any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Students are responsible for the use of their individual accounts and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Under no conditions should a student provide his or her password to another person.

3. Access Restriction - Access to computer network, internet and Google Suite for Education is considered a privilege accorded at the discretion of the district. The district maintains the right to immediately withdraw the access and use of these systems when there is reason to believe that violations of law or district policies have occurred. In such cases, the alleged violation will be referred to the principal for further investigation and account restoration, suspension, or termination. Peekskill City School District also reserves the right to immediately suspend any user account suspected of inappropriate use. Pending review, a user account may be terminated as part of such action.

## **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated.

If your child is involved with cyberbullying we will follow these steps:

Parent contact and a zero for plagiarism or cheating

School contact and consequences based on Code of Conduct

## **Parent Responsibilities**

**As a parent/guardian you have the duty to support and assist your child and the Peekskill Middle School Staff in the following ways:**

1. Enforcing the Student Code of Conduct
2. Ensuring attendance each and every day
3. Monitoring and maintain academic integrity
4. Provide updated phone numbers, emails, home addresses, emergency numbers & contacts.
5. Please coordinate with the grade level school counselor and grade level administrator when the performance of your child needs to be addressed

## **Rules of Etiquette and Procedures**

General rules of etiquette that students should follow when participating in an online learning session include the following:

To enable the students to fully participate in their learning activities, students should be seated at a desk or table and set up their workspace in a quiet place that is free from distraction (such as siblings, pets, television, food, drinks, etc.). Pencil and paper should be at hand to use, as needed.

To avoid disruptions in access to the online learning session, students should ensure that the batteries of their devices are charged, or that they are plugged into power. Students should not have out or should not use any other electronic devices, such as cell phones or video game consoles, which might distract from learning.

Students should consider using headphones or earbuds while engaging with audio or video content, as it will help them focus on learning and not be distracted.

An online learning session should be regarded just like being in school. Students should maintain respect in speaking, in writing, and in appearance. Students must dress appropriately.

Students should aim to arrive early to their online learning session, usually three to five (3 to 5) minutes before the scheduled start of an online learning session. This will enable the teacher to take attendance and to promptly begin the online learning session. Once the online learning session has started, the teacher has the sole discretion to prohibit late entry by locking the “room”.

Students should be entering the online learning session with their microphones on “mute”. If a student would like to speak, has a question or something relevant to contribute to the session, they should raise their hand, and the teacher will unmute them or allow the student to unmute themselves.

At the teacher’s discretion, the chat feature may be enabled for students to use to ask questions. When utilizing the chat feature, students must be considerate and polite, and should utilize proper spelling and Grammar.

If technical assistance is needed, teachers or students should contact the School District’s administrative offices.

### **Peekskill City School District’s Guidelines for Access and/or Accounts**

Secondary students applying for access and/or an account may be granted an account for as long as they are associated with the district on the following conditions:

- a. All students must read and provide an electronic signature on the online form agreeing to follow all guidelines outlined in the AUP.
- b. Parents of secondary students must provide an electronic signature on the online form. Student user accounts will become inactive upon leaving the district.