



FAMILY HANDBOOK



2026-2027



PAUL CUFFEE SCHOOL
A Maritime Charter School for Providence Youth

Lower School | 459 Promenade St. | Providence, RI 02908 | P: (401) 453-2626 | F: (401) 566-8876

Middle School | 30 Barton St. | Providence, RI 02909 | P: (401) 453-2711 | F: (401) 291-5486

Upper School | 544 Elmwood Ave. | Providence, RI 02907 | P: (401) 781-2727 | F: (401) 566-8922

ATTENTION: THIS PAGE MUST BE SIGNED.

***You may sign electronically by logging in to your ParentSquare account.
Failure to sign the Receipt of K-12 Handbook Signature Page does not exempt any student,
parent or caregiver from the requirements contained in this handbook.***

Receipt of K-12 Handbook Signature Page

I have read and understand the 2026-27 Paul Cuffee School Student and Family Handbook (K-12).

Printed Student Name _____

Signature of Student _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Date _____



PARENT/STUDENT CONTRACT

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27

STUDENT NAME: _____ GRADE: _____

PAUL CUFFEE SCHOOL

As the Paul Cuffee School, we will provide a quality education for our students and:

- Treat all students and parents with respect.
- Provide standards-based academic instruction for each student.
- Work to enable students to grow in their capacity for self-respect and civic responsibility.
- Communicate regularly and openly with parents about their student's performance.
- Provide a safe and caring community.
- Communicate clearly to parents how they are expected to support their student's academic and social growth.
- Offer opportunities to volunteer and collaborate with the school.

STUDENT

As a Paul Cuffee School student in 2026-27, I will be ready to learn and agree to the following:

- Arrive on time each day in my Paul Cuffee uniform.
- Treat other students, teachers and all school staff with respect.
- Follow the rules of the school and my classroom.
- Bring school communications home each night and return it to my teacher each day.
- Complete daily assignments and homework to the best of my ability. Do only homework during that time. No TV, loud music, games, or phone calls during homework time.
- Come prepared to school with all my materials and ready to learn.

CAREGIVER/GUARDIAN

As a Paul Cuffee School Caregiver/Guardian in 2026-27, I will be a partner in my student's education and agree to the following:

- Support the rules and values of the school as described in the handbook and treat all members of the Paul Cuffee School community with respect.
- Send my student to school on time each day, in the Paul Cuffee uniform.
- Check for communications from school each night and help my student complete homework on time by providing a quiet place.
- Sign up for ParentSquare messages, attend my student's meetings at school, and login to Skyward to review my student's grades.
- Discuss your student's academic and social emotional progress with them on a weekly basis
- Provide current phone numbers and address to the school and be available during the day by phone.
- Call the school office when my student will be out whether s/he has a doctor's appointment, is sick, or is absent or for other reasons and meet the school expectations for excused absences.

We have read and discussed this contract and agree to abide by it.

Signatures:

Student

Caregiver/Guardian

Failure to sign the Parent/Student Contract 2026-27 does not exempt any student, parent or caregiver from the requirements contained in this handbook.

Responsible Use of Technology Policy Signature Page

Network User Acknowledgement and Consent Form

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the [Paul Cuffee School Responsible Use of Technology and Artificial Intelligence Policy](#) and I have read and understood the Terms and Conditions set forth therein. I understand that it is the responsibility of all users, staff and students to ensure that the Paul Cuffee School technology resources are being used for educational purposes.

Staff members and students that are issued a unique account are responsible for its use at all times. It is therefore important that all users log off the computer at the end of each session.

I further agree and understand that all computer systems and equipment, as well as all information transmitted, received, or stored on such systems are Paul Cuffee School's property.

I understand I have no expectation of privacy in connection with the use of any of the Paul Cuffee School's equipment or the transmission, receipt or storage of information on this equipment or network.

I also acknowledge and consent to Paul Cuffee School's monitoring and use of this equipment at any time. Such monitoring may include, but is not limited to, e-mail, web browsing, and computer files to which I have access. Any computer or user is subject to these rules.

Printed Student Name _____

Signature of Student _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Date _____

Failure to sign the Responsible Use of Technology and Artificial Intelligence Policy Signature Page does not exempt any student, parent or caregiver from the requirements contained in this handbook.

Free Breakfast and Lunch for All Paul Cuffee Students

Paul Cuffee School will be officially participating in the federal [USDA Community Eligibility Provision \(CEP\) program](#). Every student across our Lower, Middle, and Upper school campuses is now eligible to receive breakfast and lunch at school daily at no cost to your family.

Table of Contents

Receipt of K-12 Handbook Signature Page.....	3
Parent/Student Contract.....	4
Responsible Use of Technology Policy Signature Page.....	5
Free Breakfast and Lunch for All Paul Cuffee Students.....	5
Mission of Paul Cuffee School.....	8
School History and Philosophy.....	8
Inclusive Community.....	8
Paul Cuffee School Calendar 2026-27.....	9
Faculty and Staff.....	10
Whom to Call.....	14
School Hours.....	15
Parent Responsibilities.....	16
Contact Information.....	16
Attendance, Absences and Tardiness.....	16
Special Dismissal Arrangements.....	18
Special Custodial Arrangements.....	18
Walking, Biking & Public Transportation To and From School.....	19
Student Withdrawal from School.....	19
School Cancellations and Early Dismissal.....	19
School Bus Transportation.....	19
School Bus Safety.....	20
Positive Behavior and Discipline.....	22
Physical Restraint.....	25
Health, Wellness and Safety Guidelines.....	26
School Nurse and Health Office.....	27
Mandated Reporting of Suspicion of Abuse or Neglect.....	28
Celebrating Holidays, Birthdays, and Snack.....	28
Social Worker.....	29
Breakfast, Lunch and Snacks.....	29
Home School Communication.....	29
Automated All-School Telephone Notification.....	30
Family-School Partnership.....	30
Family Engagement.....	30
Academics.....	33
Report Cards.....	34
Parent/Advisor/Student Conferences.....	34
Saturday School (Middle School).....	34
Retention.....	34
Class Assignments.....	34
Homework.....	35
Academic Honesty.....	35
Dress Code.....	36
Extra Clothing, Uniform Exchange.....	42

Lost and Found.....	42
Toys from Home.....	42
Field Trips.....	42
Upper School Special Section.....	43
PROGRAM OVERVIEW.....	43
COURSEWORK.....	43
COMMUNITY.....	45
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.....	46
ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS.....	46
WORK COMPLETION.....	47
ONE-TO-ONE Technology.....	47
STUDENT CHROMEBOOK CONTRACT.....	48
ADVISORY AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL GROWTH.....	49
ACADEMIC HONESTY.....	49
ASSESSMENT AND GRADING.....	50
PARENT/ADVISOR/STUDENT CONFERENCES.....	51
PROMOTION AND RETENTION.....	52
SKIPPING SCHOOL/CLASS.....	52
LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS.....	52
PARKING.....	52
DISMISSAL.....	52
PICK-UP.....	52
ATHLETICS.....	52
ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETICS, AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS, OR SCHOOL-BASED EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.....	53
AFTER-SCHOOL ENRICHMENT.....	54
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE.....	54
LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS.....	55
VIOLENCE AND WEAPONS.....	55
TOBACCO, TOBACCO SUBSTITUTES, ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES, AND SUSPECTED SUBSTANCE ABUSE.....	56
STUDENT SEARCHES AND QUESTIONING.....	56
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.....	58
PROFICIENCY CREDIT ATTAINMENT POLICY.....	59
GRADUATION DECISION APPEALS.....	61
GRADE PROMOTION.....	62
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PROMOTION.....	62
CONCURRENT AND DUAL ENROLLMENT.....	63
Peanut and Tree Nut Allergy.....	65
Title IX Policy.....	66
Bullying.....	77
Transgender and Gender Identity Policy.....	83
Directory Information and Opt-Out Rights.....	88
Notification of Rights under FERPA for Schools.....	89
Annual Notice to Parents/Guardians: School Safety and Emergency Drills.....	92
Responsible Use of Technology & Artificial Intelligence Policy.....	93
Education of Homeless Youth.....	96
Policy on Responsible use of Personal Electronic Devices.....	102
Title I Yearly Notification.....	103
Annual Asbestos Management Plan Notification.....	104

Mission of Paul Cuffee School

Paul Cuffee School, a K-12 public charter school of choice, educates a diverse community of students from Providence, Rhode Island. We respect each individual and the world we share. This quality of our community is central to our mission.

In the spirit of Paul Cuffee's life, we teach students to value and practice personal initiative, perseverance, and social responsibility. Our School accomplishes these goals through a rigorous academic program which, enriched with maritime experiences, fosters discovery and critical thinking. We prepare students for higher education, lifelong learning, and active citizenship.

School History and Philosophy

The Paul Cuffee School opened in 2001. It is a public charter school approved by the Rhode Island Board of Regents. The School is named in honor of Captain Paul Cuffee, a wealthy sea captain, and Quaker whose mother was a Wampanoag Indian from Martha's Vineyard. His father was a freed African American slave, born in Ghana. Paul Cuffee became a successful ship captain, merchant, philanthropist, and educator. He founded one of this country's first integrated schools in Westport, MA in the late 18th century. Paul Cuffee and his wife were buried in Westport.

The long-term success of the Paul Cuffee School will be measured by the competence, the conviction, the compassion, the courage, and the conscience of our students over the course of their lives. The Paul Cuffee School will have succeeded if, in the coming decades, our graduates enter adulthood fortified with the conscience, convictions and courage to do what is right, even when it is not easy, with compassion for those who suffer sorrow and hardship, and with the competence to be effective in the world. (Based on the words of the philosopher, Newton Garver.)

Our hands-on approach and small class size allows teachers and students to work closely together and establish relationships where we all learn to take care of ourselves, each other, our school community and the world we share.

Inclusive Community

We strive to be an inclusive community. Just as our approach to academic learning is based on a hands-on curriculum, our approach to responsible citizenship is accomplished by example and the setting of clear, high expectations. We teach children to behave respectfully by treating them with respect. We teach children to accept and value differences among their peers by discussing those differences respectfully. The aim is to create understanding and build a strong sustainable, accepting community.

Our community is enriched by the cultural, religious, racial, ethnic and linguistic diversity of our families, students and staff. We welcome the differences in sexual orientation and gender identity brought to our school by our staff and families. Our families' varied compositions—traditional or single parent or same sex parent, nuclear or extended, adoptive or blended—reflect the larger community in which we live and illustrate for our children the many different ways we build our families. We celebrate our differences and we are committed to creating a safe, caring environment where everyone can be him/herself without fear of harassment, ridicule, or rejection.

In choosing to send your children to Paul Cuffee School, you have chosen for them not only a rigorous academic program taught by dedicated teachers in small classrooms, you have also chosen to broaden your children's world view through their friendships and conversations with others.

Paul Cuffee School Calendar

August 27	First Day of Classes Grades 1 - 12
June 15	Last day of School (TENTATIVE)

HOLIDAYS

School is closed on these days.

September 7	Labor Day
September 9	Statewide Primaries
October 12	Indigenous Peoples' Day
November 3	Election Day
November 11	Veterans' Day
November 26-27	Thanksgiving Recess
December 24 - January 1, 2027	Holiday Recess
January 18	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February 15-19	Winter Recess
April 19-23	Spring Recess
May 31	Memorial Day

2-HOUR EARLY RELEASE DAYS (K-8)

Lower and Middle Schools ONLY

October 7	February 10
December 2	April 7
January 13	May 27

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE DAYS

No school for students on these days.

September 9	Teachers' Professional Development Day
November 3	Teachers' Professional Development Day
December 11	Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences
March 22	Teachers' Professional Development Day
April 9	Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences*

Faculty and Staff

All staff emails are first initial last name@paulcuffee.org, ex: Alison Smith is asmith@paulcuffee.org

All School Staff

Dr. Sandra Forand

Superintendent

Becky Coustan

Assistant Superintendent

Becky Bueno

Director of Multilingual Language Learners (MLL)

Andrea Carrera

Director of Human Resources

Jeffrey Dronzek

Director of Finance and Administration

Ben Harris

Director of Technology and Institutional Services

Lilly Ngolvorarith

Manager of Admissions & Family Services

Robin Yabroudy

Director of Special Education

Jenny Carrera

Special Education Secretary

Susan Celis

Data Information Specialist/Payroll Clerk

Henry Leite

Supervisor of Facilities and Maintenance

Kevin Rivera

Application Specialist

Dulibel Ureña

Communications & Development Coordinator

TBD

Admissions & Family Services Assistant

Board of Trustees

Kevin Briggs, Board President

Brian Gagnon, Vice President

Babak Taleghani, Treasurer

Su Almeida (Descendant), Trustee

Ashley Laferriere, Trustee

Jason King, Trustee

Sylvia Mburu, Trustee

Tia McElroy, Trustee

Lower School Staff (LS)	
ADMINISTRATION	TEACHING PARTNERS
Josie Batista , Principal Ana Dias , School Secretary/Receptionist Sherri Poirier , Dean of Students Bryanna Melo , Social Worker Steven Gomes , School Nurse/Teacher Betzaida Feliz , Building Maintenance	Kiana Bonilla Karla Cardenas Gabrielle Cepeda Karla Garcia Sarah Lefrancois-Vickey Ivette Maldonado Nicole Maynard Booth O'Connell Charlayne Osborne Loida Olivo Devvin Sosa Ky'ree Tannenbaum Deyshawn Tengeh
TEACHERS	SPECIAL SERVICES TEACHERS
Anaiz Flores , Kindergarten Samantha Girard , Kindergarten Jennifer Gomes , Kindergarten Melanie Cunningham , Grade 1 Susana Hernandez , Grade 1 Allison Merrill , Grade 1 Alison Jasper , Grade 2 Sarah Masterson , Grade 2 Marie Waring , Grade 2 Jennifer Bifulco , Grade 3 Robert Capellan , Grade 3 Mekahla Krug , Grade 3 Christian Burnham , Grade 4 Stephanie Claudio , Grade 4 Kelley Stanton , Grade 4 Alysia D'Urso , Grade 5 Kendra Pelo-Joaquin , Grade 5 Alex Saban , Grade 5 Jessica Pelletier , Library Media Specialist, K-8 Jennifer Rado , Physical Education Teacher Christian Staton , Integrated Arts Teacher, K-8 Kathleen Walck , Visual Arts Teacher, K-8	Brooke Beach , Math Instructional Coach, K-8 Amy Burnett , MLL Teacher Cassidy Cabral , Speech & Language Pathologist Marisa Colucci , MLL Teacher Randy Fedoruk , Occupational Therapy K-12 Lauren Fournier , Title I Reading Kathleen Hartrey , Math Interventions Specialist Andrew Kovalenko , MLL Teacher Erica Kupferschmidt , Special Education/Resource Leslie McCrea , Special Education/Resource Kristin McGrath , Speech, Language Pathologist Melissa Paradis , Literacy Interventions Specialist Noah Provost , Special Education/Resource Michaela Wnuk , RI Reads Coach <i>*Tara Thisse, Physical Therapist</i> <i>*Tatum Fontana, Physical Therapist-Adaptive</i> <i>*CBS Therapy Consultant</i>

Middle School Staff (MS)	
ADMINISTRATION	TEACHING PARTNERS
Andrea Summers , Principal Aribeliz Perez , Assistant to the Principal Anazinha Monteiro , School Secretary/Receptionist David Williams , Social Worker Steven Boss , Dean of Students Leonardo Cruz , Building Maintenance	Janell Blyden Rose Clapprood Lina Gallego Derrick Perry Tiffany Dos Reis , Behavior Support
TEACHERS	SPECIAL SERVICES TEACHERS
Catherine Ellis , Grade 6 English Lisa Kenney , Grade 6 Math Tracey Reaves , Grade 6 Science Megan Carmody , Grade 7 English Chelsea Galley , Grade 7 Math Marlene Schuster , Grade 7 Science Louis Amodio , Grade 8 Science Nair Goncalves , Grade 8 English Michael Sack , Grade 8 Math Bradley Procaccini , Social Studies, 6-8 Alyssa Alvez , Physical Education/Health Teacher Jessica Pelletier , Library Media Specialist, K-8 Christian Staton , Integrated Arts Teacher, K-8 Kathleen Walck , Visual Arts Teacher, K-8	Brooke Beach , Math Instructional Coach, K-8 Randy Fedoruk , Occupational Therapy K-12 Christin Goff , Literacy Interventions Teacher Andrea Lahlum , Special Education/Resource Nada Samih-Rotondo , MLL Teacher Yulisse Santana , MLL Teacher

Upper School Staff (US)	
ADMINISTRATION	TEACHER PARTNERS
Genevieve Schultz , Principal Adelaris Ortiz , Assistant to the Principal Anazinha Monteiro , School Secretary/Receptionist Jeff Rackauskas , Academic Dean Bowen Lee , Dean of Student Culture Gisele Polanco , Social Worker Claudia Arroyave RN , School Nurse Teacher Katherine Wilson , School Counselor Kerry Caparco , Library Media Specialist Narciso Rodriguez , Building Maintenance	Jayden Lewis , Student Success Teaching Partner
TEACHERS	SPECIAL SERVICES TEACHERS
Sean Geoghegan , Math Teacher Doug Hopping , Math Teacher Kimberly Maynard , Math Teacher Emily Mora , Math Teacher Jack Kernochan , English Teacher Samantha Lowry , English Teacher Kristin Proft , English Teacher Elias Ramos , English Teacher Eric Fulford , History Teacher Griffin Quirk , History Teacher Carolyn Urvaez , History Teacher Bernice Escobales , Science Teacher Michael Rannacher , Science Teacher Patricia Shiebler , Science Teacher - Colby Johnson , Long-Term Substitute Teacher Albert Castelli Jr. , Physical Education/Health Teacher Kelly Lee , Visual Arts Teacher Sybille Oroja , Music Teacher Catherine Reyes , Spanish Teacher Sandra Severinkangas , Spanish Teacher	Carter Adams , MLL Teacher Jeremy Bourget , Special Education/Resource Thay Chuk , MLL Teacher Bronwyn Ellis , Special Education Teacher Andre Green , Student Success Manager Gerri Lallo , Literacy Intervention Specialist Hilda Sullivan , Special Education/Resource

Whom to Call		
Lower School (LS) (401) 453-2626	Middle School (MS) (401) 453-2711	Upper School (US) (401) 781-2727

Category	Person to call, (Office Location)
Application process	<i>Manager of Admissions & Family Engagement (LS)</i>
Your child's health, medication, medical forms	<i>School Nurse Teacher (LS/MS/US)</i>
Your child's progress	<i>Classroom Teacher (LS)</i> <i>Advisor (MS/US)</i>
Curriculum questions	<i>Classroom Teacher (LS/MS/US)</i> <i>Principal (LS/MS/US)</i>
Transportation	<i>School Secretary (LS)</i>
Classroom issues	<i>Classroom Teacher (LS)</i> <i>Advisor (MS/US)</i> <i>Principal (LS/MS/US)</i>
Information on special education services	<i>Director of Special Education (US)</i> <i>Principal (LS/MS/US)</i> <i>Your child's special education teacher/case manager (LS/MS/US)</i>
Information on Title I	<i>Principal (LS/MS/US)</i>
Information on MLL Services	<i>MLL Teacher</i> <i>Director of MLLa</i>
Counseling	<i>Classroom Teacher (LS)</i> <i>Advisor (MS/US)</i> <i>Social Worker (LS/MS/US)</i>
Athletics & After School Partnerships	<i>Athletics & Afterschool Partnership Liaison</i>
Fundraising/donations	<i>Superintendent(US)</i>
School Governance	<i>Superintendent(US)</i>
Getting involved	<i>Principals (LS/MS/US)</i> <i>Manager of Admissions & Family Engagement (LS)</i>
Updating your contact information	<i>School Secretary (LS/MS/US)</i> <i>Assistant to Principal (LS/MS/US)</i>

School Hours

Lower School: Visitors must always sign in at the main office.

- School begins at 7:50 AM. The Lower School building opens at 7:35 AM. Parents should drop off at Promenade St. Do not double park. Children must exit from the passenger side of the vehicle.
- Classes begin promptly at 7:50 AM. Please be on time.
- To ensure the safety of all children, all building doors except the main entrance door will be kept locked after 7:50 AM. Children arriving after 7:50 AM will be considered tardy and must be signed in at the main office by a parent or guardian.
- The school day ends at 2:16 PM. The school does not provide after school care.
- We ask families to be punctual picking up their children. If you need to pick up your child early, please send a note to your child's teacher in the morning, and see the section below on early dismissal. The School will not dismiss students after 2:05 PM for an early dismissal because it can delay the dismissal process for everyone.
- Early Release Pick up/Drop Off: On early release days, student arrival and breakfast will take place between 7:35 and 7:50 AM. Students who arrive after 7:50 AM will be considered late. The school day will run from 7:50 AM to 12:25 PM, with dismissal occurring from 12:25 to 12:45 PM. All students must be picked up by 12:45 PM.

Middle School: Visitors must always sign in at the main office.

- The Middle School building opens at 7:55 AM.
- Classes begin promptly at 8:05 AM.
- The school day ends at 2:40 PM.
- We ask families to be punctual picking up their children. If you need to pick up your child early, these occasions should be rare in nature. Please send a note to your child's teacher in the morning, and see the section below on early dismissal.
- Early Release: On early release days, student arrival and breakfast will take place between 7:55 and 8:05 AM. The school day will run from 7:55 AM to 12:50 PM, with dismissal occurring from 12:50 to 1:00 PM. All students must be picked up by 1:00 PM.

Upper School: Visitors must always sign in at the main office.

- The Upper School building opens at 8:45 AM.
- Classes begin promptly at 8:55 AM.
- All building doors will remain locked.
- The school day ends at 3:20 PM. Most Mondays, students that are up-to-date on all of their assignments will be eligible to leave school at 2:30 PM.
- If you need to pick up your child early, these occasions should be rare in nature. Please send a note to your child's teacher in the morning, and see the section below on early dismissal.

Parent Responsibilities

Paul Cuffee School parents and guardians are expected to assume the following responsibilities:

- **Your Contact Information:** You are expected to keep contact information up to date at all times during the school year. This includes providing an up to date home phone, cell phone, and e-mail information as well as home address and emergency contacts.
- **Your Child's Wellbeing:** You are asked to provide the School with any information (medical, social, and emotional) that will enable your child's teacher to work effectively for the overall health, safety and wellbeing of your child.
- **Academic Supervision:** You are expected to support and supervise the academic work of your child. Paul Cuffee School is a college preparatory school, and your support is essential in your child's academic success. Make sure that your child's homework is completed by the time she/he leaves for school every morning. You must also come to Parent/Teacher Conferences and stay in communication with your child's teacher during the school year. We expect that all families will be equal partners in their child's education.

Thank you for taking a leadership role in your child's education. The Paul Cuffee School is a stronger community because of YOUR involvement!

Contact Information

We require that you provide your current address, place of work, and home, work, cell, and emergency contact phone numbers.

- Emergency contacts should be the people who can come to school to pick up your child(ren).
- If your address or phone numbers change, you must inform the school right away. It is required by law that we have a way to contact parents in case of an emergency. When changes occur please come to the office to fill out necessary paperwork.

Attendance, Absences and Tardiness

Students are required to be in school every day that school is in session and must arrive on time.

Attendance and Truancy

Rhode Island General Law 16-19-1 requires all students between the ages of six and eighteen years to be registered in and attend school regularly. Studies show a positive correlation between good school attendance and academic success. Absenteeism, tardiness and early dismissals disrupt the continuity of learning. Attendance at school is part of a student's permanent records and parents/guardians are urged to assist the school by supporting the attendance policy. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to encourage and monitor school attendance, report absences according to the attendance policy, and work cooperatively with the school to solve any attendance issues. Encouraging regular school attendance is a multi-pronged effort, including:

- Establishing a school environment that engages students
- Having all students known and monitored by at least one adult
- Clearly articulating the expectation that students will attend and complete school
- Having consequences that encourage students to attend school
- Understanding and responding to why a student is not attending school

Students who demonstrate chronic absenteeism, which is 10% or greater absences, will be referred to the School's truancy team for the purpose of determining referral to the Rhode Island Family Court truancy process.

DEFINITIONS

Absence

Any day in which students attend school for *less than 50% of the school day* is considered an absence.

Excused Absences

Excused absences include a student's participation in an approved school-sponsored activity, suspension days, religious holidays, family emergencies (to be approved by an administrator), doctor or medical professional excused illness or injury (a note from a doctor or medical professional must be submitted within 3 days of the absence) or funerals, and acute or chronic illness.

Acute Illness: When a student has a medical need that does not require on-going/long term care, (i.e.: knee surgery, etc.). A note from a doctor or medical professional must be given to the school. Subsequent absences due to the nature of the care will be considered excused. Families must give the reason for absence(s) due to the nature of the illness or follow-up care.

Chronic Illness: A student that requires continued medical care with a doctor or medical professional, (i.e.: type II diabetes), must provide documentation at the onset of treatment. Subsequent absence(s) due to the nature of the illness or follow-up care will be considered excused. Families must give the reason for the absence(s) due to the nature of the illness or follow-up care.

Appointments: All students are expected to attend school. Appointments with doctors, dentists, etc. should be made at times other than during school hours.

Absence and school-related activity: Students absent due to illness or suspension on the day of a school-related activity (e.g., athletic event, drama, dances, etc.) may not attend that activity. Extenuating circumstances may be presented to an administrator for consideration.

Unexcused Absences

Every absence is considered "unexcused" unless there is a documented medical reason. If a parent/guardian calls the school then this will be considered a "verified absence," which is not an excused absence. For an absence that is one or more days in length to be considered excused, a note from a doctor or medical professional must be received within 3 days of the absence. Student absence from class for purposes of family travel or vacation is considered an "unlawful absence." The number of days missed will be counted as unexcused absences. Please note: Parental/guardian permission in and of itself is not recognized as a legitimate reason for absence.

- Only absences that count as excused are those for which we receive a doctor's note. Any absences for which the parent tells us or sends a note will be marked "verified" but do not count as excused in official state records.
- If students are sick, then they should stay at home. If they have a contagious condition they may not be in school. If your child is sick, please notify the school office by 9:00 AM. Children who come to school sick with fever will be sent home. Parents must be available to pick up their sick children and provide a physician's note upon the child's return to school. Students who are well enough to be in school are expected to participate in all activities (including swimming, physical education, recess) unless a doctor's note says otherwise.
- Parents of children with chronic absenteeism and tardiness should expect the school's involvement in order to improve this record. A number of interventions for truancy includes mandatory parental meeting, student make-up time, and other interventions as determined by the school's administrator.

- If you know that your child will miss school, please write a letter to the principal, listing dates that your child will miss and the reason for the absences.
- Families should not plan vacations while school is in session for the reason that a vacation is considered an unlawful absence. If circumstances arise which make time away from school a necessity, you must consult with your child's teacher and principal.
- (Please see the section below on Health and Safety Guidelines for additional information.)
- Upper School Specific:
 - If a student has multiple unexcused days at which he or she is late to school or absent, consequences may be assigned including, but not limited to, parent conference, make-up time, loss of eligibility for athletics and extracurriculars, and other consequences as assigned by the school's administration. Repeated tardiness to school will result in referral to the Social Emotional Support Team and/or Truancy Court.
 - Students who are 18 years of age but who have not completed 4 full years of high school must comply with all PCS attendance policies, including that
 - Students are expected to stay in school for the full school day
 - If a student must leave school early due to illness, doctor's appointment, or some other unavoidable scheduling conflict, the student is expected to provide appropriate documentation (a note from a parent is not sufficient).

Tardy

Any day in which a student signs in to school after the official instructional start time.

Special Dismissal Arrangements

We expect that your child will have a normal pick up routine, and that sometimes plans may change. Any time your child is to go home in a way that is different from their regular routine, you must send a written note in advance explaining what is to happen:

- If the student is to be dismissed early, the note should specify the time the student will be picked up and the name of the adult who will pick up the student. This adult must be listed as an emergency contact in order for the School to dismiss the student.
- Students who do not take the bus and who need to go home with someone other than their parents or guardians must bring a signed note from home naming the person who will pick them up. Please ensure this person is on the emergency contact list for your child.
- If your child's teacher does not receive the written note, he/she will follow the regular dismissal procedure.

Special Custodial Arrangements

Parents who are listed on the child's birth certificate will be considered legal custodians, otherwise a copy of the court document must be on file.

Walking, Biking & Public Transportation To and From School

- Students in Grades 6-12 are permitted to walk or bike to and from school and/or take public transportation. Parents/guardians of students in grades 6-8 must send written permission to the office including:
 1. The route the student will walk, and
 2. Whom to contact in case of emergency.
- Lower and Middle School students will not be permitted to walk or to take public transportation unless we have written permission on file in the office.

Student Withdrawal from School

Parents who wish to withdraw their child from the Paul Cuffee School must notify their child's teacher and the admissions office at least five days prior to actual withdrawal. Parents must complete and sign a withdrawal form. Classroom and library materials and school technology must be returned and cafeteria accounts cleared.

School Cancellations and Early Dismissal

Paul Cuffee School officials will do their best to make timely decisions regarding school closings, delayed openings and early dismissals.

- Any closings or delays will be announced through local media. Parents and guardians will also receive notification from ParentSquare in the event of an early school closing, cancellation, or other announcement.
- It is very important that the school has your current phone number and that you are registered with ParentSquare so you get these messages in case of an emergency.
- In the event of an unplanned early dismissal, families should make arrangements for their children's care in case no one is at home when a child arrives, and make certain that the children understand these arrangements.

School Bus Transportation

Paul Cuffee School provides public transportation to school for all students who live further than 1 mile (Lower School); 1.5 miles (Middle School); 2.5 miles (Upper School). Students are picked up at predetermined depot stops. Families are assigned the stop they request or the one closest to their house.

- Requests for changes to bus stops must be made in writing through the [Transportation Appeal Form](#). Paul Cuffee School does not guarantee that requests will be approved.
- The school will help families stay informed about bus transportation and will relay information regarding buses as it becomes available.
- Paul Cuffee School contracts bus service with Ocean State Transit (K-8) and RIPTA (9-12).
- Specific questions about late buses or items left on the bus should be directed to the school campus.

- Paul Cuffee Upper School provides bus passes for each child who lives more than 2.5 miles from the school. The school will receive and distribute bus passes monthly. Please ensure that your child safeguards their bus pass, as the school will not have replacement passes.

School Bus Safety

K-8 Paul Cuffee School Bus Expectations

The school bus is an extension of our school community. Every student has the right to a safe, respectful, and positive ride to and from school. To help ensure everyone's safety, students are expected to follow these expectations each day.

Bus Expectations

Students will:

- Remain seated and stay in their seat until the bus reaches their stop.
- Use appropriate voice levels (0-2):
 - **Voice Level 0:** Silence
 - **Voice Level 1:** Whisper
 - **Voice Level 2:** Quiet indoor or restaurant voice
- Use respectful and appropriate language.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
- Bring only water on the bus. Food, snacks, juice, soda, and other beverages are not permitted.
- <LS Version> Follow the Paul Cuffee Lower School **expectations** at all times:
 - **Take Care of Self, others, and our school community**
- <MS Version> Follow the Paul Cuffee Middle School **Cuffee Compass** at all times:
 - **Be Safe**
 - **Be Respectful**
 - **Be Supportive**
 - **Show Integrity**

Additional Bus Expectation

- Toys and toy replicas (including toy guns, toy knives, water guns, or similar items) are not permitted in school and on the school bus. These items will be confiscated and referred to school administration for disciplinary action.

When Expectations Are Not Met

Our goal is to help students learn from mistakes while maintaining a safe environment for everyone.

First Bus Referral

- Problem-Solving Conference with the student
- Parent/Guardian contact

Second Bus Referral

- Additional consequences may be assigned based on the behavior and may include suspension from bus privileges.

School administration may assign additional consequences for repeated or more serious violations of the bus expectations.

Serious Safety Concerns

Student safety is our highest priority. Any behavior that places students, the bus driver, or others at risk—including physical aggression, fighting, hands-on horseplay, throwing objects, or other unsafe actions—may result in an immediate suspension from riding the bus, **even if it is the student's first bus referral or first incident**. Depending on the severity of the behavior, the suspension may be for several days or, in serious cases, for the remainder of the school year. School administration will review each incident individually.

Bus Expectations (K-8)

Be Respectful:

- Use inside voice and speak only to those sitting near you
- Do and say kind things
- Avoid swearing, using profanity, and other unkind or disrespectful words
- Make room for others; if not assigned seating, allow others to sit with you
- Ask an adult for help, if needed
- Always wear headphones when using technology

Be Responsible:

- Follow adult directions
- Bus furniture is school property so treat it as such
- Watch for your stop and be ready
- Use restroom before getting on bus, if needed
- Keep track of your belongings
- Save snacks for home
- Observe the School's Responsible Use of Technology Policy
- Keep the bus clean

Be Safe:

- Keep your hands and feet to yourself
- Always stay seated on bus (bottoms on the seat)
- Face forward
- Keep legs in front
- Keep aisles clear
- Keep body parts and belongings inside the bus

Positive Behavior and Discipline

We are committed to fostering the social and emotional wellbeing of all students. Teaching social and emotional skills is part of our core curriculum in all grades. We believe mistakes are an opportunity for learning – whether they are academic or behavioral mistakes. Students are expected to assume responsibility for their behavior and to grow in their capacity for self-discipline and their understanding of responsible citizenship. Additionally, all students are expected to contribute to our learning community by building trust, by encouraging honest conversation, by promoting safety, by doing their best, and by valuing different backgrounds, perspectives and experiences. We expect all PCS students to act responsibly and respectfully at all times. Our staff and faculty model and teach these skills all day, everyday.

All students are expected to contribute to our safe and positive school community by demonstrating excellent behavior. There are many ways to demonstrate positive behavior. Our school pledge sums up the behaviors into three sections: taking care of ourselves, taking care of others, taking care of the school.

“I will take care of myself.”

Students are expected to follow the school rules and listen to instructions at all times. Teachers will set up clear expectations for their classrooms and the students will have many opportunities to practice the routines and expectations. When students are doing exactly what they are supposed to do, everyone is safe. All staff and faculty work hard to acknowledge positive behaviors each day. We hope that our PCS students will demonstrate these behaviors when they are out in their neighborhoods. You can help with this effort. When students act in responsible and respectful ways they are being positive role models for everyone.

“I will take care of others.”

Taking care of others means that students are being respectful and kind to others. We teach about the Golden Rule: treat others how you would want to be treated. The adults at PCS adhere to this rule as well. Students will not tease others, make fun of others, bully others, hurt other people’s bodies, and/or property. Students are expected to be kind, friendly, honest, and in control of their bodies. This way, everyone is taken care of and safe. Students are taught to ask for help if they need help solving a problem.

“I will take care of the school.”

Taking care of the school means treating it how you would like your own property to be treated. We try very hard to keep all of the furniture clean and usable. We work hard to make sure that the walls are clean and white and that our spaces are cleaned up after we are finished with them. Our janitorial staff works very hard to keep our building clean and in good-repair and our students have a responsibility to this end as well.

Physical abuse, verbal abuse, bullying and destructive behavior will not be tolerated. The school and state has developed a clear policy to eliminate bullying. Consequences will be imposed for rule or policy violations. Students may not possess guns, toy guns, other weapons, fireworks, knives or matches at any time. Students may not possess drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes.

The Paul Cuffee School is committed to being a trusting community and a learning community free of harassment of any kind. This includes sexual harassment by students or adults. Sexual harassment hurts individuals, it hurts the school community, and it is unlawful. Several examples of sexual harassment are unwanted touching, poking, teasing, bumping against another child, threats, insults, obscenities, and pressure for sexual activity.

Prevention

Successful individual student behavior support is linked to school climates that are effective, efficient, relevant, & durable for all students. (Zins & Ponti, 1990)

Paul Cuffee School builds relationships that help to prevent problem behaviors through several community centered and individualized practices that increase social skills and academic engagement, establish positive classroom climate, increase student investment and independence, and decrease disruptive behaviors, including:

- **Morning Meeting and Advisory:** A daily routine that builds community, creates a positive climate for learning, and reinforces academic and social skills.
- **Rules and Logical Consequences:** A clear and consistent approach to discipline that fosters responsibility and self-control.
- **Classroom Organization:** Strategies for arranging materials, furniture and displays to encourage independence, promote caring and maximize learning.
- **Guided Discovery:** A format for introducing materials that encourages inquiry, heightens interest, and teaches care of the social environment.
- **Academic Choice:** An approach to giving children choices in their learning that helps them become invested, self-motivated learners.
- **Reaching out the Parents/Guardians:** Ideas for involving parents or guardians as true partners in their children's education (Northeast Foundation for Children [NEFC], 2003).
- **All-School Meetings:** Monthly and weekly gatherings of entire school campuses provides a school-wide community atmosphere where "We're all in this together."

On many occasions, student misbehavior is handled with a re-direction to expectation, a re-teaching of the skills, and/or a conference where the teacher identifies what has happened and assists the child in figuring out how to fix the situation. On those occasions when students engage in behavior that is unsafe and puts other at risk, the school will use the following structures to help students regain control of their behavior:

In-class consequences

These are logical consequences that teachers assign in the classroom. They are designed to teach students to apologize for their actions, repair relationships, and move on. They may include taking a break, moving into a buddy classroom, losing a privilege, fixing the situation, making an apology for action, meeting with parents/guardians, or implementing behavior plans. Students are expected to de-escalate themselves, to reflect on what has gone wrong, and to fix things respectfully. Adults will provide assistance as needed, which may include helping the student process what has happened, take responsibility for their actions, and create a plan for going forward.

Additional consequences

In the case of more serious or repeated rule-breaking, a student can expect more extensive in school loss of privilege, contact with the family, and other consequences determined by administration. Administration works with faculty to assign consequences that are logically related to the behavior and that help the student repair the damage done to others and the larger community.

Defined Rule Violations (Norm-Violating Problem Behaviors)

MINOR

- **Inappropriate Language** is considered to be language that is generally inappropriate for school and also is not threatening, intimidating, demeaning, harassing or swearing (examples of which are considered abusive language).
- **Physical Contact** involves physical touch that an adult would not consider intent to cause physical, bodily, or emotional harm (which is considered physical aggression).

- **Minor Defiance** occurs when a student does not follow the explicit direction of an adult and does not include outright refusal to follow or comply with adult directed tasks or requests (which is considered overt defiance).
- **Minor Disruption** involves behaviors that interfere with learning. It may involve calling out of turn, making inappropriate noises, movement intended to distract others, or any other behaviors that disturb learning.
- **Property Misuse** involves the use of materials for any reason other than what is its intention.

MAJOR

- **Abusive Language** is language used with the intent of causing fear, intimidation, harassment, or bullying, including (but not limited to) swearing.
- **Fighting/Physical Aggression** involves aggressive physical touch that an adult or involved peer would consider intent to cause physical, bodily, or emotional harm.
- **Overt Defiance** involves a student's refusal to comply with adult directed tasks.
- **Harassment/Teasing/Taunting** is any behavior that is perceived by an adult or involved peer to be intended to cause fear, embarrassment, ridicule, or a diminished sense of self-worth, including any such references regarding race, gender, ethnicity, perceived sexual orientation, perceived intelligence, socio-economic status, physical size, appearance, and hygiene.
- **Major Disruption** involves significant disruption to learning that cannot be categorized in the above-listed behaviors.

Administrative Decisions in Response to Rule Violations

- Loss of privilege refers to the loss of any desired activity not considered essential learning.
- Time in office refers to isolation from peers and adults held in the main office, Refocus, or another area designated as appropriate by school administration. Refocus refers to a designated classroom managed by the Restorative Support Team that a student attends in isolation from their peers.
- Conference with students refers to any re-direction/re-teaching of school-wide expectations and/or problem solving.
- Parent contact refers to any contact made with a parent or legal guardian including telephone or school conference and note sent home.
- Saturday School and Time for Time refers to students assigned to mandatory make-up time outside of normal school hours. At the Upper School, Time for Time refers to the accumulation of time that a student owes back to the school as a result of tardiness, skipping or cutting class, or any other act of sustained academic disengagement. Students are expected to pay back this time during lunch, tutoring, or another mutually agreed upon time.
- Individualized instruction refers to the removal of students from the general education classroom, special education resource, or academic intervention for a specific period of time with individualized adult academic support.
- In-school suspension refers to half or full day isolation in the main office, refocus room, or another appropriate space managed by a designated staff member
- Out of school suspension refers to full day isolation outside of school.

Being part of our school community includes the agreement to abide by our community's rules and policies. All students are expected to comply with consequences assigned to them. Families are expected to support

administration in ensuring students complete consequences. Additionally, escalating consequences will be assigned by administration if students fail to comply with consequences already assigned to them.

Parents and guardians who wish to appeal the building administrator's decision related to out-of-school suspensions may arrange to meet with the Superintendent by contacting the Superintendent directly by phone or email.

Physical Restraint

We realize that some students may have difficulty controlling themselves at times of emotional crisis. We recognize that students are learning how to control their feelings and emotions in various situations. Sometimes, events happen that make it impossible for some students to successfully do so. In these situations, they may physically lash out at themselves, other students, teachers or faculty that may result in physical injury to themselves or others.

As it is our goal to ensure the safety of all, physical intervention may be necessary. Faculty, staff and teachers will try several intervention strategies to assist the child in de-escalating and regaining control. Should all such interventions fail, physical restraint will be used as a LAST RESORT ONLY.

To ensure safety, certain faculty members have been trained in physical restraint techniques. These faculty members, and only these faculty members, will respond in situations where physical restraint is needed. Physical restraint is used to assist an individual who has lost control of their body in regaining control. In the event that a child needs to be restrained or physically escorted out of the classroom, the classroom teacher will institute an up and out procedure whereby students will be escorted to a safe place. A trained faculty member may hold a child in a predetermined fashion. As stated earlier, this is only done as a LAST RESORT when all other possible strategies to assist the child in regaining control have failed and the risk of the continued behavior is greater than that of restraining the child. Although the intent of restraining a child is to prevent severe injury to the child or others, accidental injuries may result in which case first aid protocols will be followed. In all cases, a parent will be provided with written notification of the restraint.

It should be clear that Paul Cuffee School does not use physical restraint as a form of punishment or consequence. It is done strictly to ensure the safety of all at Paul Cuffee School as a last resort when all other strategies have been tried unsuccessfully. A restraint will not result in automatic suspension; that will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. As part of crisis intervention protocol, once a child is calm and in control, the situation will be processed. The adult responder and child will meet to discuss the incident, determine consequences and formulate a future plan. The future plan may refer to strategies for what to do in similar situations in the future, as well as possible referral for support services.

Health, Wellness and Safety Guidelines

School is a place for healthy children. Children who become ill while at school must be picked up by a parent or guardian and taken home.

- If your child has a fever he or she will be sent home. It is important that the school has emergency numbers in the event we are unable to contact you if your child has become ill or has sustained an injury while at school.
- DO NOT send your child to school if he/she has had any of the symptoms referenced below within the previous 24 hours. We need your cooperation in order to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. If your child is ill, please report this to the school office as soon as possible. In the event of a contagious illness in individual classrooms, parents in that class may be notified that a child in the class has become ill to facilitate prompt recognition of symptoms in their own families.

Infectious/Communicable Illness

1. **Diarrhea:** When a child has diarrhea, their temperature will be taken and if the child has two or more loose stools, a parent/guardian will be notified and asked to pick up the child. The child may return to school 24 hours after the symptoms are gone.
2. **Fever:** If a child has a fever then a parent/guardian will be notified and the child must be picked up from school promptly. The child may return to school when he/she has been without a fever for 24 hours – without the use of fever-reducing medication.
3. **Rash:** If a child develops a rash while at school, parents/guardians will be notified to pick the child up. Rashes of unknown origin will require diagnosis by a physician. A note from the physician will be required when the child returns to school.
4. **Conjunctivitis (pinkeye):** Conjunctivitis is contagious. Children with suspected conjunctivitis should be diagnosed by a physician and given appropriate treatment if necessary before returning to school.
5. **Head Lice:** If we notice lice in your child's hair we will notify you to pick up your child. The child may return to school after appropriate treatment is completed.
6. **Vomiting:** If a child has been vomiting, he or she should be kept home from school. If a child vomits while at school, parents/guardians will be notified and the child must be picked up promptly. They may return to school 24 hours after symptoms are gone.
7. **Sore Throats:** Students with persistent sore throats associated with fever should be excluded from school. Medical evaluation should be sought. If your child is diagnosed with strep throat he/she must be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
8. **Ringworm/Scabies:** Ringworm is contagious. If you suspect your child has ringworm, please contact your healthcare provider. Your child may return to school after appropriate treatment is instituted. If a student has a rash suspicious for scabies, medical evaluation is necessary. Students may return to school when appropriate treatment is received or an alternative diagnosis is made by his or her health care provider.
9. **Respiratory Illnesses:** Students with cold symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, body aches) that may interfere with learning should not be in school. If your child has a persistent cough or a cough associated with fever, please have your child seen by a physician. Please inform us of the diagnosis and any medication they are on.

Non infectious medical conditions

1. **Orthopedic injury:** If your child has sustained an orthopedic injury (fracture, dislocation, sprain/strain), please inform us of the appropriate plan of care. If a fracture (broken bone) has occurred, a physician's note detailing any restrictions that need to be addressed in school, must be provided (examples- physical education, recess, sports, after school activities).
2. **Asthma:** All students with asthma should be known by the school nurse teacher, classroom teacher and physical education teacher. They should have an asthma action plan completed by their doctor and access to a peak flow meter and rescue medication as prescribed. The rescue medication should be sent to school at the beginning of the school year with the completed medication form.
3. **Allergic Reactions:** All students with allergies should be known to all staff. If a student has a life threatening allergy, he or she must have an emergency plan and emergency medications in school as prescribed by his or her physician. This emergency plan and medication should be provided to the school at the beginning of the school year along with a completed medication form. An allergy list of students with their picture on it will be distributed to all staff and cafeteria workers.
4. **Diabetes:** All students with diabetes should have a diabetes care plan and diabetes emergency action plan prior to the start of each school year or prior to school reentry after a new diagnosis of hyperglycemia/diabetes. Guidelines of how to treat hyperglycemia should appear in the written physician's orders and the student's diabetes care plan.
5. **Seizures:** All students with a known seizure disorder should be known to all staff and they should have a medical management plan. Emergency medications, if prescribed, should be readily available along with completed medical form.

School Nurse and Health Office

Paul Cuffee School believes that an important role of the school nurse teacher is to ensure students enter the classroom in optimal health and ready to learn. With this goal in mind, each school campus employs a school nurse teacher to manage each Health Office. The school nurse teacher is responsible for helping to maintain the overall health and well-being of each student. The school nurse teacher serves within the school as an advocate, liaison, and provider of care. As a health educator, in collaboration with school staff, the school nurse teacher is responsible for teaching a planned, sequential health curriculum that addresses the physical, emotional and social dimensions of health.

Medication

If your child needs to take medication at school, you must complete a Medication at Paul Cuffee School form. Please return the completed form to your child's classroom teacher, who will give it to the Health Office. All medication must be brought to school by a parent/guardian. Medication forms must be renewed annually.

Paul Cuffee School will administer prescription medication during school hours only as approved by a licensed physician. All prescription medication must arrive at school in the original container; they will be stored in a locked cabinet in the health office. Students may not carry medication with them, with the exception of Epi-pens and inhalers with physician approval. All medication will be dispensed under the supervision of the school nurse, except for children approved for self-medication by both a parent/guardian and the prescribing physician (excluding controlled substances).

Paul Cuffee School will administer over-the-counter medications approved by a child's parent/guardian under the discretion of the school nurse in consultation with the school's physician. Over-the-counter medications may be provided by a student's parents/guardians as needed. Over-the-counter medications sent in by parents/guardians require a signed parental consent and must be in the original container. A limited supply of the more commonly prescribed medications (Tylenol, Motrin, Robitussin DM, Benadryl and Mylanta) will be available in the Health Office for the treatment of unanticipated ailments during the school

day. A note will be sent home to parents if medication is given in school. Parental authorization is required and forms will be sent home to be signed at the beginning of each school year. For school sponsored field trips, accommodations will be made for the safe administration of medicine if the child is unable to self-medicate, and if a parent/guardian is unavailable to attend the trip.

Allergies and Special Diet

If your child has any food allergies or dietary restrictions, please inform the school nurse teacher and discuss this with your child's teacher by the first day of school. Awareness of dietary restrictions is especially important if your child participates in special occasions in the classroom and the school meal programs. Please provide a physician's note documenting the allergy.

If you have any questions or concerns about your student's health needs, please feel free to contact the school nurse.

Mandated Reporting of Suspicion of Abuse or Neglect

Rhode Island General Law requires all school employees to report to the Department of Children, Youth and Families any suspicion of abuse or neglect.

40-11-1 Policy – The public policy of this state is: to protect children whose health and welfare may be adversely affected through injury and neglect; to strengthen the family and to make the home safe for children by enhancing the parental capacity for good child care; to provide a temporary or permanent nurturing and safe environment for children when necessary; and, for these purposes, to require the mandatory reporting of known or suspected child abuse and neglect, investigation of those reports by a social agency, and provision of services, where needed, to the child and family.

Celebrating Holidays, Birthdays, and Snack

Birthdays can be special occurrences for children and are celebrated in various ways in the classroom, however, **Paul Cuffee School does not celebrate individual student or staff birthdays with food. Please do not send in any food for the purposes of celebrating your child's birthday.** If you are having a party outside of school and plan to invite children from the Paul Cuffee School, please do not distribute invitations at school unless every child in the class is invited.

Classrooms at the Paul Cuffee School do not celebrate any religion or any religious holiday. As a public school we do not want to elevate any one religion or religious tradition above others. At the same time we want to educate children about different religions, different cultures, and the part that religions have played in different cultures, different countries, and different worldviews. So, while students will not be celebrating any religious holidays at school, our students will be sharing religious traditions and customs, reading stories containing religious convictions and exploring the many questions and answers which face us as human beings, as we try to learn who we are and define our convictions. We think these questions and answers are an important part of our social studies curriculum.

As a matter of philosophy, Paul Cuffee School does not formally celebrate other holidays such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Valentine's Day, Mothers' Day, or Fathers' Day. This does not mean that these special days cannot be acknowledged or discussed in the classroom; on some occasions, such as Thanksgiving or Memorial Day, these occasions can be important opportunities for instruction, discussion, or writing exercises.

Social Worker

Paul Cuffee School believes that teaching social/emotional skills is as important to the future success of our students as is their mastery of the academic material. With this goal in mind, each school campus employs a social worker to help the student body with any school-based social, emotional or behavioral needs that may come up throughout the year. The counselor is responsible for helping all of the students at the school. This assistance may come in the form of inclusion in social skills groups, short-term solution focused individual counseling, occasional mediations to help resolve conflicts, intermittent crisis counseling, and teaching/co-teaching wellness classes. The social worker makes a practice of trying to get to know as many of our students as possible, so that the students are aware of where to go if they have a problem. If the need arises, the counselor will also help connect interested families to long term or more intensive social services.

If you have any questions or concerns about your student's social needs, please feel free to contact the school social worker:

Lower School: Bryanna Melo, 453-2626 or bmelo@paulcuffee.org

Middle School: David Williams, 453-2711 or dwilliams@paulcuffee.org

Upper School: Gisele Polanco, 781-2727 or gpolanco@paulcuffee.org

Breakfast, Lunch and Snacks

Breakfast is served to students between 7:35-7:50 AM at the Lower School, between 7:55-8:05 AM at the Middle School and between 8:35-9:00 AM at the Upper School.

Lunches are provided by Sodexo and served by their staff. Students may, of course, bring their own lunches if they prefer. Candy, soda and caffeinated beverages are not allowed. If brought to school students will not be able to keep them. Students are not permitted to order food to be delivered to the school. In the rare case that a parent must drop off food/lunch at school, they must do so before their child's scheduled lunch time. It needs to meet the above-named requirements and must be eaten during the designated lunch time. As a general rule, students will not be allowed to miss class to eat lunch.

At the Lower School, families are not allowed to share snacks this year. Please contact your child's advisor if you have any questions. **Students may not bring glass bottles or energy drinks to school at any time. At no time is food or drink allowed at computer stations or near laptop computers.**

Home School Communication

We believe that good communication with families is very important. Families and caregivers are encouraged to communicate with teachers/advisors and administrators by telephone or e-mail, in conferences, ParentSquare, or by using the Puffin (LS) or Cuffee (MS) Files. Upper School parents should monitor their children's performance through the online Skyward Parent Portal.

If you would like to meet with your child's teacher, simply put a note to that effect in the Puffin/Cuffee File, or call the school office to schedule a convenient meeting time. During class time, teachers will not take their attention away from their students, so scheduling meetings in advance is essential. Whenever you have any questions or concerns, we need to hear from you.

Unless it's an emergency, we will not interrupt classes to allow you to speak to your child during the school day. Should you need to be in touch with your child while school is in session, please call the school office; we will be more than happy to deliver a detailed message.

Special note: Parents should not call or text their children during the school day. It can be disruptive. If there is an emergency, please call the office and we will pull your child from class.

Automated All-School Telephone Notification

Sometimes, it is necessary for the school to call all families to inform them of important events (delays, cancellations, reminders of important meetings, etc.). To help us reach all students' families quickly, we rely on an automated notification system, ParentSquare. It is extremely important that Paul Cuffee School have accurate contact information for these communications, and especially in case of any emergency. Please ensure that your contact information is current and updated throughout the years. We are required by law to have this information in writing. When changes occur please come to the office to fill out necessary paperwork. Please make sure your ParentSquare account is active and accurate at all times.

Family-School Partnership

Children perform better in school when their families are involved in their education and their school. Our Family-School Partnership Coordinator is dedicated to developing programs to meet the needs of families, strengthening the connection between home and school, and increasing family involvement. Families are encouraged to make suggestions and share ideas with the school about ways to better serve the Paul Cuffee School community. The following Family Engagement section describes how we involve families.

Family Engagement

If you have any questions about family engagement, please feel free to contact the office at (401) 453-2626 ext 227.

Communication

We are committed to encouraging frequent, open, two-way communication between the school and home.

We establish common and clear expectations by outlining the responsibilities of families, students and the school in the school contract, and by giving families access to the Family Handbook each year which includes our mission, philosophy and all relevant updated school information.

We keep families informed of school activities and happenings through our website, a frequent electronic school newsletter, an automated phone system, bulletin boards, and teacher phone calls, newsletters, and notes.

We strive to eliminate communication barriers by using inclusive, clear, respectful language, and by providing all written communication in both English and Spanish and other languages, as needed. In addition, we provide translation at all parent meetings and enlist bilingual staff or outside providers for translation at individual meetings.

We actively seek input from families about their experiences both formally and informally through periodic surveys, brief evaluations of events, and direct mail. We also encourage families to bring their questions and concerns directly to teachers, administrators, and Parent Association co-chairs.

In addition to the communication described above, we foster ongoing dialogue about students' progress by using Puffin/Cuffee files, Friday forms, and e-mail for direct communication between teachers and families, holding two Parent/Teacher/Child conferences each year, and sending home report cards three times each year, with narrative comments once a year. Progress reports are sent home at mid-trimester twice a year. Families of students who are identified as needing additional services—Special Education or Title 1—are included as active participants in the evaluation process and in the design of the IEP (Individual Education Plan) or PLP (Personal Literacy Plan). Meetings with teachers are always available at a mutually convenient time.

Parenting

We recognize that families know their children best, and that parenting styles and philosophies reflect individual and cultural values. Respecting families' expertise, we strive to offer support, information and access to a variety of resources.

In response to interests expressed by families, we offer workshops on topics such as homework help, curriculum, assessment standards, students' performance on statewide tests, Title 1 services, Kindergarten, Middle and Upper school transition, summer camps, nutrition, child development and parenting issues such as college and career readiness and social media safety, financial aid, and computer literacy classes. Child care and food are usually provided to allow families to participate, and meetings are planned to accommodate the schedules of working families as best we can.

We continually seek adult education opportunities through community-based organizations and share the information with our families through multiple media.

Student Learning

Our families value education and want their children to succeed in school. Through frequent dialogue with families about their children's progress and ongoing communication about expectations, we enlist families as full partners in their children's education.

Once students and families are enrolled, teachers begin to establish relationships with families through home or school visits. We hold orientations for Kindergarten, 6th, and 9th grade students and families. Through new student academic screenings and initial assessments, we are able to tailor our instructional programs to meet the needs of our students. We inform families of their children's academic standing, share their accomplishments through Parent/Teacher/Child conferences (see school calendar for dates), report cards, individual results from standardized state testing and we plan with parents to continuously improve student achievement. Final report cards demonstrate students' performance on grade level standards.

We invite families to grade level and school wide events to showcase the academic curriculum. We provide homework assignments that require family participation.

We are developing on-line resources on topics of parenting, education and child development, as well as information on affordable educational and recreational destinations.

Any time a child is identified as needing additional services, whether support services, special education, or behavioral/psychological/social and emotional support, the family is informed and encouraged to participate in the assessment and intervention planning process.

Volunteering

Volunteerism is highly valued in the school community. We encourage all families to volunteer whether from home, in the classroom, in the cafeteria, at school-wide events, in fundraising for the school, or in offering special programs for the children.

In order to volunteer, you must obtain a BCI background check as required by law. You may obtain this at the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office at 4 Howard Avenue, Cranston (Pastore Center); or at your local police station. You may then contact the school, and bring a valid ID with you.

We advertise volunteering opportunities and reach out to potential volunteers in various ways. Each year, a volunteer interest form is mailed out to all families and the resulting database is used to mobilize volunteers.

We encourage parents to reach out at any time of the year to teachers or administrators with their ideas and willingness to help.

Power Sharing

Families are seen as invaluable resources, not only in the education of their children, but also in the leadership of the school. Families play important roles in defining the policies and priorities of the school.

Parents serve on the Board of Trustees, School Improvement Team, and the Family-School Partnership Committee. The Family-School Partnership Committee helps to design family engagement programs and helps plan, review and improve support services offered under Title 1, Special Education and ELL programming. In addition, this committee conducts a survey of all K-12 families every spring to assess the family engagement program. Based on the findings, recommendations for improving the program are made.

To support teachers' efforts to fully engage families and work with families as equal partners, professional development addressing issues of inclusive education and family engagement is offered each year. Where appropriate, families are invited to help design or implement the training.

Community Partnerships

We value developing community partnerships in order to better support our students and families. We raise awareness of resources in our state and city, and through the network of our extended Paul Cuffee community. We work to create broader experiences, connecting families, cross-fertilizing ideas, and inspiring one another.

Development and Review

The Family Engagement section was developed by the Family-School Partnership Committee which consists of staff, faculty and parents, and was approved by the full committee before adoption. The completed policy was distributed to all families in both English and Spanish. The policy will be reviewed annually by the FSP committee and the Parent Association leadership to make any necessary changes to meet the needs of families and the school.

Family Responsibilities

All parents, guardians and extended family of Paul Cuffee students are members of the Paul Cuffee Community. An important benefit of our community is enjoying the activities during the school year that would not be possible without the community members' support and leadership initiatives including town meetings, potlucks, plays, sports and special literacy and math events.

At the same time the school has identified three specific responsibilities that parents and guardians are expected to assume at Paul Cuffee School:

Your Contact Information: Parents are expected to keep contact information up to date at all times during the school year. This includes providing an up-to-date home phone, cell phone, and e-mail information as well as home address and emergency contacts.

Your Child's Wellbeing: You are asked to provide the school with any information (medical, social, and emotional) that will enable your child's teacher to work effectively for the overall health, safety and wellbeing of your child.

Academic Supervision: You are expected to support and supervise the academic work of your child. Paul Cuffee School is a college preparatory school, and your support is essential in your child's academic success. Please encourage independent reading every night and make sure that your child's homework is completed by the time she/he leaves for school every morning. You must also come to Parent/Teacher Conferences and stay in communication with your child's teacher during the school year. We expect that all families will be equal partners in their child's education. You are expected to have your child attend school the entire day, with the exceptions of documented excused absences, late arrivals, and/or early dismissals.

Thank you for taking a leadership role in your child's education. The Paul Cuffee School is a stronger community because of YOUR involvement!

Academics

The State of Rhode Island has adopted the Common Core State Standards for academic growth in all basic skill areas. We evaluate our students informally several times during the year, and formally two times per year. We use these assessments in math, writing and reading to help us measure student progress and to evaluate our instructional programs. We send report cards home or post report cards to Skyward, our student information system multiple times each year. During the school year parents can expect this reporting schedule:

During the 1st Trimester (LS & MS)

- Mid Trimester Progress Report
- Report card
- Parent Conference

During the 2nd Trimester

- Interim report
- Report card
- Parent Conference

During the 3rd Trimester

- Interim report
- Report card

During the First Quarter (US Only)

- Mid-Quarter report
- Report card
- Parent Conference

During Second Quarter

- Mid-Quarter report
- Report card

During Third Quarter

- Mid-Quarter report
- Report card
- Parent Conference

During Fourth Quarter

- Mid-Quarter report
- Report card

- Additional meetings to discuss students' progress can be set any time, as needed. We will make every effort to keep you informed about your child's progress, but you should always feel free to call your child's teacher, particularly if you have any concerns.
- Beginning in grade 4 students are eligible to be named to the Head of School's List in recognition of exemplary citizenship and leadership in the school community.

Report Cards

There are three marking periods (trimesters) at Lower and Middle School each year. Students will receive a report card at the end of each trimester and a less formal progress report at the mid-point of each trimester. Final report cards demonstrate students' performance on grade level standards and include extensive narrative comments from each teacher. Upper School uses quarters, four times yearly. Upper School report cards and progress reports will be available in Skyward, the student information system.

Parent/Advisor/Student Conferences

At two points in the year, one in the fall and another in the early spring we require parents/guardians to come to three-way (parents/advisor/student) conferences, which are led by the student. These conferences are a chance for the student to showcase the work they have done during the year. It is also a chance for the student to practice giving a formal presentation. Therefore, it is essential that the student be present. We cannot hold the meeting if the student is not present. If parents/ guardians wish to schedule a meeting with the teacher or advisor without the child present, that can be done at a different time.

Saturday School (Middle School)

If a student is failing a course, or has an unsatisfactory grade, the student may be enrolled in Saturday School in order to support the student in passing the course. Parents of students being assigned to Saturday School will receive notice by the student's advisor.

Retention

All decisions to retain a child in a grade level for the upcoming school year are made in consultation with parents/guardians, and are based on academic expectations, social maturity, relevant emotional issues, and chronological age. We make these decisions around the whole child, not around any one factor. At the Upper School, retentions are based on the number of credits students have earned.

Class Assignments

When assigning continuing children to particular teachers, the Principal consults with the children's current teachers and specialists to ensure that the best possible match is made. Our goal is to meet the needs of each individual child while structuring our classrooms so they are balanced and diversified in every respect. This process is usually completed before the end of the school year so that parents can be informed about their child's class assignment on the final report card in mid June. Parent/guardian requests for particular teachers are not guaranteed and must be made in writing to the principal on or before April 1, 2026.

Homework

Homework is an important part of the educational program at Paul Cuffee School. Homework is an extension of the day, and an opportunity for additional practice in reading, writing and math. Your involvement and supervision is essential. Letting your child know that you think completing homework with care and on time is a priority reinforces classroom expectations. Please provide a quiet place with necessary materials, such as paper, pencil, etc., for your child to do homework and the reading assigned each night and shut off the radio or TV until after homework and reading are done. While the amount will vary, homework will always be an amount that a high school student can reasonably be expected to complete in one evening (1.5 – 2 hours).

Academic Honesty

The following are definitions of important terms when considering academic honesty:

- **Plagiarism:** copying or paraphrasing text, work, or ideas of someone else without providing proper credit to the source; examples include copying from a book or website without using citations, paraphrasing another student's homework or class notes, submitting an essay written by a sibling or friend as your own work, asking AI to generate an assignment and submitting the work as if it were your own
- **Cheating or Fraud:** taking credit for work that is not entirely your own, seeking an unfair advantage over others, or aiding another student in such activities; examples include using unapproved notes or the knowledge of another student on a test, collaborating on assignments without teacher approval, including sources in a bibliography that were not actually used, copying another student's homework.
- **Multiple Submissions:** submitting academic work multiple times to get credit for work that was completed only once; examples include turning in the same essay for both freshman and junior capstone.

Cheating and/or plagiarism are regarded as very serious offenses. Copying or paraphrasing material/text from the work of another student, from published sources (i.e. Cliff Notes, Monarch Notes, books, magazines, newspapers, etc.) and/or from the Internet without proper documentation constitutes academic theft. Furthermore, providing a peer with work so they can copy or paraphrase is also prohibited. Using Artificial Intelligence to complete assignments that the student has deemed as their own can also violate our expectations around academic honesty. The consequences for academic dishonesty may include:

- no credit for the assignment with no opportunity to revise
- a report to school administration
- a note in the student's discipline file

Other consequences may include:

- apology of action
- assignment of Plagiarism Research paper
- meeting with parent, student, advisor, administration
- loss of privilege to attend extracurricular school activities
- other consequences as determined by administration

Dress Code

Having students wear uniforms minimizes superficial distractions, contributes to the calm atmosphere in your child's classroom and helps to create the feel of a professional working environment. Students are expected to wear clothing that meets the Paul Cuffee School dress code as outlined for the 2026-27 academic year. In addition to a uniform shirt and pants, shoes or sneakers must be worn at all times.

NOTE: Advisors check dress code in the morning and parents may be called to bring in clothing that meets the dress code requirements.

Lower School Dress Code

<i>DRESS CODE</i>
<i>Shirts</i> • Shirts with collars, short or long-sleeved • Solid navy blue • With or without school logo
<i>Trousers/Skirts</i> • Slacks or shorts • Skirts (knee-length), shorts, jumpers or slacks • Khaki color
<i>Shoes</i> • Regular shoes or sneakers • No open toe shoes • No flip flops • No sandals • No house slippers
<i>Tights/leggings</i> • Solid colors: navy blue, white, khaki

Shirts and sweatshirts imprinted with photos, pictures, prints, or logos are not permitted. The shirts must be solid navy blue. Long-sleeved shirts worn underneath the short sleeve uniform shirt must be the color of the uniform shirt. Sweaters or sweatshirts worn indoors/outdoors for warmth must be navy blue. Shirts must be tucked in or no more than a few inches below the waist if untucked. Pants must be worn on the natural waistline—no sagging or visible underwear. There will be no hats in the buildings. Suggestive or inappropriate clothing (for example, very short skirts) is not allowed. Due to limited facilities, students will not be permitted to change for P.E. or after school sports. Teachers and Administrators will use discretion in cases when clothing is deemed distracting or inappropriate.

The purpose of the dress code is to make life easier for students and their families. We appreciate your effort to help your children honor the dress code. We thank your children regularly for their dress code efforts throughout the year. When they forget, here are the steps we will take:

- Their teacher will send a reminder note home.
- The student will be given the choice to call home to ask that a uniform be brought or to change into an extra uniform provided by the school.
- The student may lose the privilege to participate in the next “dress down day.”
- If the student is out of uniform repeatedly, the student may be asked to go home to change, and the teacher/advisor will call the parents/guardians to schedule a meeting on the issue.

Please label all clothes. Our lost and found has a sea of blue shirts, sweaters and sweatshirts with no hope of return without a name.

Middle School Dress Code

DRESS CODE	NOT PERMITTED
<i>Shirts/Tops:</i> • Solid navy blue shirts with collars, short or long sleeved (all students). Wording or logos other than Paul Cuffee School is not permitted. • Shirts must be tucked in or no more than a few inches below the waist if untucked.	• Bare shoulders, sleeveless shirts, denim shirts, tank tops, sheer shirts, exposed cleavage, exposed stomachs. • Shirts imprinted with photos, pictures, prints, words or logos
<i>Undershirts:</i> • Solid navy blue or white, short or long sleeved	• Undershirts imprinted with photos, pictures, prints, words or logos
<i>Sweatshirts/Hoodies/Sweaters/Cardigans/Sweater-vests/Blazers:</i> • Solid navy blue only. Again, no logos or wording. Students must wear a solid navy blue collared or uniform shirt underneath. • Spirit Friday exception: Any top that says Paul Cuffee School or shirt that was created at Paul Cuffee School is acceptable.	• Photos, pictures, prints, words or logos • Hoods or hats on the head • Coats in the classes unless authorized by administration
<i>Bottoms:</i> • Solid khaki dress pants, pants, capris • Shorts & Skirts (no shorter than 4 inches above the knee), khaki	• Pants must be worn at the natural waistline -no sagging or visible underwear • Mini-skirts • Leggings are not pants and may only be worn under a dress/skirt or pants (Needs to be Navy blue in color or white) • Sweatpants • Cargo pants
<i>Jumpers/Dresses:</i> • No shorter than 4 inches above the knee • Either solid navy blue or solid khaki • Must either have an attached collar or a collared, uniform shirt must be worn underneath.	• Mini-skirts
<i>Tights/leggings:</i> • Must be opaque	• Leggings are not pants and may only be worn under a skirt or pants/Capri
<i>Shoes:</i> • Regular shoes or sneakers	• No open toe shoes • No flip flops • No sandals • No house slippers • No heels • No slides

- Physical Education Uniform Dress Code
 - T-shirts that cover stomach completely
 - Tank tops that cover stomach completely
 - Athletic shorts no more than 4 inches above knee
 - Joggers or sweatpants
 - Sneakers required
- No cleavage/chest visible
- No “short-shorts”
- No see-through or overly tight clothing
- Outdoor, winter coats are not allowed to be worn in school.
- Hats, head scarves (except where clothing meets religious observance), hoods, picks, brushes, durags and bandanas are not permitted in the school building and must be removed upon entering the school. Other headwear may not be permitted if it is determined by the School’s administration to be distracting to the learning environment.
- Bags, purses, backpacks must be kept in the student’s advisory classroom during the day.
- Additional dress down day information:
 - Midriffs, shoulders, and cleavage may not be exposed
 - Hats, head scarves (except where clothing meets religious observance), hoods, picks, brushes, durags, and bandanas
 - Skirts or dresses must still be no more than 4 inches above the knee

Uniform Infractions

We appreciate your effort to help your children honor the dress code and we acknowledge your children regularly for their dress code efforts throughout the year. Teachers and administrators will use discretion in cases when clothing or accessories are deemed distracting or inappropriate.

If a student is out of uniform, he or she will be kept out of class until the infraction is fixed in one of the following ways:

- Remove unauthorized item
- Change into proper clothing
- Borrow a uniform shirt/pants from the school for the day, if available. The student must leave an item of importance as collateral - ex. house keys, bus pass, cell phone - which will be returned at the end of the day when the borrowed item is returned.
- Call home to have someone bring the item needed to school
- All pants must be worn at the natural waist (no sagging). Students who sag their pants will be considered “not in uniform” and will face appropriate consequences, which may include being required to wear suspenders
- Students with a pattern of being out of uniform will be required to have a meeting with their parents, advisor and administrator.
- The student may lose the privilege to participate in the next “dress down day”.

Upper School Dress Code

Students are required to keep an extra uniform (shirt, pants, hoodie/sweater) in their locker. Students must remember that inappropriate clothing is not allowed. Although we encourage individual expression through accessories, teachers may ask students to remove distracting or inappropriate jewelry or make up.

The current Upper School Dress Code for Students - Grades 9-12 (except where noted) is listed below. Please note that in rare circumstances the school administration may need to make adjustments to this policy midyear. If so, a formal communication will go out to students and families.

ITEM	PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED
<i>Shirts / Tops</i>	• Solid navy, white, or khaki colored shirts; short- or long-sleeved • Cuffee branded clothing • Logos & symbols are discouraged	• Patterns, prints, stripes, checks, plaids, denim, tie dye, even if they are part of the uniform colors • Any color other than navy blue, white, or khaki • Bare shoulders or stomach, undergarments showing through • Imprint or embroidery that is distracting or offensive • Denim, leggings, yoga pants
<i>Sweaters / Sweatshirts / Vests / Cardigans / Blazers / Hoodies</i>	• Solid navy, white, or khaki colored sweater • Cuffee branded clothing • Coats and jackets may be worn indoors during inclement weather at the discretion of the School's administrator	
<i>Bottoms / Skirts / Dresses / Shorts</i>	• Solid navy, white, or khaki pants or shorts • Must be an appropriate length and material for a professional or work setting	
<i>Shoes</i>	• Regular shoes or sneakers • Open-toed with a back strap • Flats or low heels up to 1"	• Flip flops, slippers, platforms, slides, etc. • Heels greater than 1" • Any footwear that impedes urgency and safety during an emergency
<i>Accessories</i>	• Headbands • Headwraps and turbans	• Headphones • Shiestys • Hoods • Sunglasses • Any headwear that covers the ears, face, or obscures a person's face/identity

Uniform Rules for Physical Education ONLY

All students must wear clothing approved by the physical education teacher. Students must wear closed-toed shoes for physical education.

Uniform Rules for Athletes and Other Extracurricular Activities

On days when school sponsored athletic games/activities (i.e. soccer game, track meet, etc.) or special extracurricular events (i.e. debate tournament, step performance, etc.) are scheduled, student participants are able to wear the uniform top that coincides with said event as long as the staff overseeing the event has given permission and has notified the rest of the school staff in advance.

Dress Up Day Expectations (e.g., Capstone presentations, career/professional day, etc.) :**

- What is permitted:
 - Business or professional attire; dress as you would for an interview
 - E.g., slacks with a button-down dress shirt and tie; knee-length dress with cardigan; dress shoes, etc.
 - Clothing should be modest and completely cover torso, chest, and shoulders
- What is not permitted:
 - Jeans or denim, leggings, t-shirts, sneakers, shoes without a backstrap, spaghetti straps, athletic gear

Friday & Dress Down Day Expectations:**

- What is permitted:
 - Any item permitted in “Friday Dress Expectations” or the Dress Code list
 - Jeans and pants; jeans or pants with rips should be tasteful and show minimal skin
 - Skirts / dresses / shorts must be of a length appropriate to a professional setting
 - Clothing should be modest and completely cover torso, chest, and shoulders
 - Durags and bonnets
 - Shoes with a backstrap
- What is not permitted:
 - Any clothing item that contains imprints (photos, pictures, messages, words, logos, etc.) that are inappropriate for a professional setting
 - Spaghetti straps

****Only those students designated for the dress down or dress up day may participate.**

Uniform Infractions

We appreciate your effort to help your children honor the dress code and we acknowledge your children regularly for their dress code efforts throughout the year. Teachers and administrators will use discretion in cases when clothing or accessories are deemed distracting or inappropriate.

Consequences

If a student is out of uniform, they will be asked to correct their infraction. If they are unable to correct the infraction, a caregiver will be called and expected to bring the needed uniform item(s).

All pants must be worn at the natural waist (no sagging). Students who sag their pants will be considered “not in uniform” and will face appropriate consequences

Students with a pattern of being out of uniform will be placed on Community Hold which may include loss of the privilege to participate in the next “dress down day” as well as other extracurricular activities and/or meeting with their parent, advisor and the Dean of Students to remedy the issue. Students on Community Hold will be notified via email on Thursday afternoons, and their caregivers will be notified via ParentSquare on Thursday evening.

Administration and teachers retain the discretion to make determinations as to whether clothing is out of compliance, inappropriate or distracting.

Extra Clothing, Uniform Exchange

Kindergarten and first grade students must have a complete extra set of clothing at school throughout the school year, including: extra uniform shirt and pants, underwear, and socks (all clothing must be labeled with your child's name). Your child's labeled items will be kept in a plastic bag in your child's cubby. This is very important. If your child has a bathroom accident and we do not have extra clothes, we will have to call you to come to school with clean clothing.

All children need to wear appropriate outdoor clothing so that they remain dry, safe and comfortable when playing outside. During the winter, every child must have boots, mittens, a hat, a warm coat, and snow pants or an extra pair of pants each day.

Paul Cuffee families are invited to participate in the Uniform Exchange. If you have uniforms that your children have outgrown, you can donate them to the Family-School Partnership Coordinator who will make them available to other families. If you need additional or larger uniforms for your children, please feel free to go to the Family Resource Center (at the Lower School) and take anything that fits from the Uniform Exchange cupboard.

Lost and Found

We have a Lost and Found box and clothing rack in the Lower School cafeteria. Families and students are encouraged to check the Lost and Found regularly. If you label ALL of your child's belongings, when they are found, they will be returned directly to his or her locker. Unfortunately, because of our limited storage space, unclaimed Lost and Found items will be given away to local shelters in December, April and June, so *please look for your lost items frequently.*

Toys from Home

Children are welcome to bring books to school, but because toys, stuffed animals, electronic toys, trading cards, etc. can be distracting, we ask that all toys remain at home!

Field Trips

Students at the Paul Cuffee School will have opportunities to go on various field trips throughout the school year. For some field trips, families will be asked to help defray costs. Teachers will select and plan field trips that are relevant to the topics studied in class. Permission slips will be sent home prior to each field trip. Please return the signed permission slips on time so that we can all go on the trips. Students who do not hand in signed permission slips on time will not be allowed to take the trips. If chaperones are needed for a field trip, you will be notified by your classroom teacher. Please keep in mind that only Paul Cuffee students and adult family members serving as chaperones may go on field trips; younger siblings may not attend. Students that are under a disciplinary action may not be able to attend field trips. This will be determined by school administration.

Upper School Special Section

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Paul Cuffee Upper School program nurtures the development of individuals within a vibrant and supportive community of learners. We provide a rigorous curriculum focused on the development of independent, critical thinkers, and involved citizens.

We use the Common Core Standards, Next Generation Science Standards and other national standards, and the framework of Developmental Designs, as the basis for our work. We empower students to take responsibility for their own learning, take leadership roles in the classroom and community, and to change their own behavior as they grow, and we support them in learning the skills necessary to do so.

Each grade level consists of a team of teachers who work closely together and meet frequently to monitor and support student growth. Students take three or four core courses from mathematics, sciences, English, social studies, and world languages. All courses focus on student-centered, inquiry-based learning in which students gain knowledge, ask questions, and find answers for themselves. Literacy instruction (reading, writing, listening, speaking) is woven into all courses, as well as through support courses as needed. Students are offered additional coursework in English, math, science, social studies, visual and performing arts, Spanish, Advanced Placement, and math and reading and writing support.

COURSEWORK

ENGLISH

Paul Cuffee School has adopted the Odell Education Curriculum for core English courses. This curriculum is considered to be High Quality Instructional Material, aligned to the RI Common Core ELA standards. In English courses, students will develop their reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities using both fiction and non-fiction texts.

SCIENCES

Paul Cuffee School has adopted the OpenSciEd curriculum for Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. These are High Quality Curriculum Materials approved by the RI Department of Education. In science courses, students focus on learning to think like scientists. Through activities that teach critical science content, students learn the skills of developing questions and hypotheses as well as researching, evaluating, and communicating their findings. This means they will have the scientific background knowledge to understand the world. They will be in the habit of asking thoughtful questions and critically examining information. Biology, Chemistry, and Physics are offered in 9th, 10th & 11th grade, with additional science electives available.

MATHEMATICS

Paul Cuffee School has adopted the enVision Algebra, Geometry, Algebra II, Precalculus & Statistics course. These are considered to be “High Quality Instructional Materials” aligned to the RI Common Core Mathematics Standards. To prepare for college-level studies, all students will develop mastery in algebra, geometry, numbers and operations, and data, statistics & probability, through courses in algebra, geometry, algebra 2, pre-calculus, statistics, and calculus and electives.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Paul Cuffee School social studies courses are aligned to the RI Social Studies Standards. Our social studies curriculum focuses on the ways in which the past shapes the present, as well as how present policies can impact the future. Social studies courses prepare students for active citizenship by developing skills needed to understand and influence complex issues. Students practice analyzing evidence, presenting ideas and arguments clearly, and seeing connections between historical ideas and different time periods. The course requirements emphasize applying understanding of the world to issues students will face in their own lives.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Paul Cuffee School world language courses align to the RI World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages. The study of world languages is an important part of developing as a citizen of the world. Courses are designed to address the various abilities of a diverse study body. Students will achieve communicative proficiency in the target language through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Emphasis will be on cultural understanding, linguistic connections, and real-world usage. Currently, Paul Cuffee Upper School offers Spanish 1, 2, and 3 and AP Spanish Language & Culture.

VISUAL ARTS

Paul Cuffee School arts courses align to the National Core Arts Standards. Students will learn to navigate their creative process while gaining skills in a variety of media including painting, drawing, sculpture, and printmaking. Historic and contemporary artworks that affirm multiple ethnicities and cultures will be studied. The visual arts will provide a mirror into the self and window onto the world as students explore their own stories while also engaging with other perspectives. All students have the opportunity to take Introduction to Art in the 9th grade as a prerequisite to other visual arts courses.

MUSIC

Paul Cuffee School music courses align to the National Core Arts Standards. In music courses, students learn to read, write, and perform the language of music through active participation. Students learn to master these skills by using their singing voice, individual instruments and their bodies to perform and create music. We work to develop aural and oral tonal and rhythm skills necessary to perform music, as well as emphasize the importance of relating the sight of music to the appropriate sound. All students have the opportunity to take Introduction to Music, which teaches the basics of reading, writing, and performing on instruments. Students can then choose areas of study to focus specifically on different aspects of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & HEALTH

Paul Cuffee School arts courses align to the RI Health and Physical Education Standards. All students take physical education and health for one semester each school year. They will participate in a variety of athletic activities. In health education, the students are taught the content areas of personal health, mental and emotional health, sexuality and family life, substance use and abuse prevention, nutrition, injury prevention, and disease prevention and control. Students will learn about behaviors that enhance their healthy lifestyles and promote wellbeing. Instruction is driven by the Rhode Island health education standards.

PCUS EXAM PROCESS

In order to complete their high school requirements and properly prepare for college, all students are required to take exams in each of their courses. Exams are scheduled in January and the end of the school year and will account for a portion of the students' final grade in each course.

Students must be present on the day of exams. Only students with excused absences will be able to make-up a missed exam.

Students with high grades *may* be able to exempt exams with the prerequisite teacher and Academic Dean approvals, but no student may exempt any mid-year exam.

MULTILINGUAL LANGUAGE LEARNER SUPPORT

Multilingual Language Learners receive literacy support in some of their core academic classes as well as direct instruction in small groups. Classes and groups are rich with activities that strengthen and develop skills in the four domains of language: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Students are encouraged to embrace the value of multilingualism, and to see themselves as able leaders in their school and their community through projects that highlight their cultural and linguistic competence.

HOMEWORK & WORK COMPLETION

Homework is an important part of the educational program at Paul Cuffee School. Homework is an extension of the day, and an opportunity for additional practice. Your involvement and supervision is very important. Let your child know that you think completing homework with care and on time is critical because, in this easy way, you reinforce classroom expectations. It is our policy that homework be completed each night and turned in when it's due. Homework will be assigned each school night and typically over the weekend as well. Students may also be assigned long-term projects to be completed at home.

Students who do not complete certain assignments by the assigned due dates may be required to stay for work completion on Monday afternoons.

COMMUNITY

According to Ernest Boyer, a famous teacher and educational philosopher, community is “the glue that holds an effective school together.” Through a rigorous academic program, clearly-defined rules and procedures, and an advisory program that fosters interconnections among all members of our community (faculty, students, and staff), Paul Cuffee School puts Boyer’s philosophy into practice by adhering to our school’s six expectations

- *Be Scholarly*
- *Be Reflective*
- *Be Responsible*
- *Be Supportive*
- *Be Respectful*
- *Be Brave*

All students will have an active role in fostering the development of this community in their advisory groups, in their classes, in their clubs, and activities, and throughout the school day.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Paul Cuffee students will demonstrate proficiency in the state standards, applied learning standards, and technology standards through a Proficiency Based Graduation System that provides multiple measures of success, in alignment with the Rhode Island Board of Education's Basic Education Plan. To graduate, each senior must demonstrate proficiency in three graduation components:

1. Required coursework
2. Portfolio (this is a collection of student work, post-secondary plans, and personal reflection)
3. Capstone research

Students will work on these components during high school. *See Paul Cuffee School Graduation Policy, Appeals Policy, and Waiver Policy; and Academic Expectations and Promotion Policy in the Appendix.*

Students must return all library books/fines, instruments, uniforms, textbooks, Chromebooks, and other school materials before they receive their diplomas and transcripts, or senior related items.

ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS

Paul Cuffee offers a range of support for students as they work to develop proficiency. These include support courses in reading strategies, writing, research, and mathematics. We offer English Language Learner support for students who need it. Our Special Education services are based on an inclusion model in which special educators work with students in their regular classes. After school tutoring is available free of cost to all students.

Teachers closely monitor student progress and offer additional support if necessary throughout the year to assist students in achieving proficiency on all standards. They work closely with advisors, support personnel, administration, parents/guardians, and students on this. We routinely review student progress, create individualized supports, and monitor supports. We also support individual teachers in creating strategies to support individual students or groups of students. Examples of academic and behavioral supports include:

- Individualized in class intervention strategies
- Additional coursework
- After school tutoring
- Individualized plans
- Safety Net in school supports
- Work Completion
- Summer Extended Year Academy: Available by recommendation of the IEP team.
- Summer School: Costs for summer school are the responsibility of the student and family
- Repeating the course
- Other supports and strategies as developed by the team

WORK COMPLETION

If a student has not completed assigned tasks for one or more of their classes, they will be expected to participate in work completion from 2:20-3:20 PM on Mondays. Students who do not need to participate in work completion will be dismissed from school at 2:20 PM.

ONE-TO-ONE Technology

Paul Cuffee School uses a blended learning approach in many of our classrooms. Blended learning allows us to enhance the educational experience of all students by differentiating and personalizing learning. At the Upper School, all students will receive a Chromebook to use during the academic year.

Students are responsible for their Chromebook and Chromebook charger, and will be expected to pay for repairs, damages, or lost/stolen Chromebooks, screens, cases, chargers, etc. Costs for replacements, damages, repairs range from \$20-\$225.

Below are the expectations outlined in the students one-to-one Chromebook contract:

Student Chromebook Contract

- I will follow the Responsible Use of Technology Policy
- I will use the Chromebook number that has been assigned to me by my teacher
- I am responsible for safekeeping of my assigned Chromebook during class use
 - I am responsible for damage from misuse
 - I will let the teacher know if there's a problem with the Chromebook immediately
 - I will not use another student's Chromebook. If my Chromebook is not working, I will notify my teacher and my teacher will assign another one to me
 - If there is any damage to the Chromebook after I use it, there will be disciplinary/restorative consequences for misuse
- I will keep my passwords private. I will not share my username or password with anyone else.
- The Chromebook is a tool for learning and I will always handle it with care
 - I will always carry the Chromebook with two hands
 - I will never run while carrying the Chromebook
 - I will never put food or drinks anywhere near the Chromebooks or the cart
 - I will always place the Chromebook flat on the desk (not on books, papers, etc.) and I will never place heavy objects on top of the Chromebook
 - I will not touch the screen (with pencils, pens, hands, etc.)
 - I will open and close the Chromebook carefully, I will type gently, and I will not change any settings
 - I will always return the Chromebook to the correct slot in the cart
 - I understand that student use is a privilege, not a right, and that privilege can be revoked
 - I will not put stickers on my Chromebook
- I will listen to the teacher's instructions
- I will keep the Chromebook in the classroom at all times
- I will practice correct network etiquette
 - I will always use polite and appropriate language when using the Chromebook ○ I will never share any personal information, usernames, or passwords with anyone else in person or online
 - I am aware that all information, communication, and email is not private
 - I will respect copyright laws
 - I understand that Chromebooks are for school use only

I have read, understand, and agree to follow all responsibilities as outlined in the PCS Student Chromebook Contract.

Student Signature: _____

Teacher Name: _____

Date: _____

ADVISORY AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL GROWTH

Caring, compassionate relationships are the cornerstone of any successful community. To meet the unique combination of social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of our students, we have implemented an approach designed to keep young people safe, connected, responsible, and engaged in learning. Healthy, enjoyable relationships are the foundation for success in school. In order to establish and maintain those relationships, teachers must know their students; students must come to know and appreciate each other; clear parameters for acceptable behavior must be drawn and consistently maintained; and learning must be engaging, exploratory, relevant, and varied.

A key component of our approach is the daily advisory. Each student is assigned to an advisory group led by 1-2 staff members. Students come to advisory first thing in the morning, where they will eat breakfast together and participate in activities aimed at learning community building, conflict resolution, and good citizenship. The advisors serve as the student's primary advocate and is the primary communicator between home and school.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The following are definitions of important terms when considering academic honesty:

- **Plagiarism:** copying or paraphrasing text, work, or ideas of someone else without providing proper credit to the source; examples include copying from a book or website without using citations, paraphrasing another student's homework or class notes, submitting an essay written by a sibling or friend as your own work, asking AI to generate an assignment and submitting the work as if it were your own.
- **Cheating or Fraud:** taking credit for work that is not entirely your own, seeking an unfair advantage over others, or aiding another student in such activities; examples include using unapproved notes or the knowledge of another student on a test, collaborating on assignments without teacher approval, including sources in a bibliography that were not actually used, copying another student's homework.
- **Multiple Submissions:** submitting academic work multiple times to get credit for work that was completed only once; examples include turning in the same essay for both freshman and junior capstone.

Cheating and/or plagiarism are regarded as very serious offenses. Copying or paraphrasing material/text from the work of another student, from published sources (i.e. Cliff Notes, Monarch Notes, books, magazines, newspapers, etc.) and/or from the Internet without proper documentation constitutes academic theft. Furthermore, providing a peer with work so they can copy or paraphrase is also prohibited. Using Artificial Intelligence to complete assignments that the student has deemed as their own can also violate our expectations around academic honesty. The consequences for academic dishonesty may include:

- no credit for the assignment with no opportunity to revise
- a report to school administration
- a note in the student's discipline file

Other consequences may include:

- apology of action
- assignment of Plagiarism Research paper
- meeting with parent, student, advisor, administration
- loss of privilege to attend extracurricular school activities
- other consequences as determined by administration

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Each course of instruction at Paul Cuffee School is designed to provide students with the tools to become proficient in the knowledge and skills defined by the State of Rhode Island and the school itself. Students are assessed through informal and formal assessments and/or projects in their progress in meeting state and school-wide knowledge and skills expectations throughout the school year.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS MONITORING

Paul Cuffee Upper School uses Renaissance STAR, nationally referenced assessments, to gauge student learning needs and measure growth in English Language Arts and Mathematics. This computer-based assessment is given at least twice a year – fall and spring.

GRADING

Students receive a numerical grade for each content standard.

4 – Advanced mastery of the standard: Students performing at this level demonstrate a high level of knowledge and skills as described in the state or school-wide expectation.

3 – Meeting the standard: Students performing at this level demonstrate the knowledge and skills as described in the state or school-wide expectation.

2 – Approaching the standard: Students performing at this level demonstrate gaps in knowledge and skills as described in the state or school-wide expectation but have demonstrated some knowledge of these state and school-wide expectations.

1 – Minimal mastery of the standard: Students performing at this level demonstrate extensive and significant gaps in knowledge and skills as described in the state or school-wide expectation.

0 – Not meeting the standard/Insufficient evidence: Students performing at this level do not demonstrate any knowledge of the state or school-wide expectation OR the student has not shown sufficient evidence; this commonly occurs when students do not submit work.

Grade
4 Advanced mastery of the standard Passing Grade
3 Meeting the standard Passing Grade
2 Approaching the Standard Passing Grade
1 Minimal mastery of the standard Failing Grade
0 Not meeting the standard/Insufficient evidence Failing Grade

REPORT CARDS

Students will receive a report card at the end of each quarter. The report card will list each state and school-wide expectation taught during the quarter and the student's proficiency in meeting that expectation, as well as an overall standing. The overall standing is a combination of standards-based grades and habits of a learner. The overall standings will range from a 0.0-4.0, where a 4.0 represents advanced mastery of the standard and a 0.0 represents either no mastery of the standard or insufficient evidence. Any grade of a 2.0 or above is considered passing; any grade below a 2.0 is considered failing.

The final grade for the course indicates a student's overall standing. This is the grade that will be factored into their GPA and will determine whether the student has earned credit for the course. Students must earn a 2.0 or better to earn credit for the course. In addition to formal report cards, a less formal progress report will be provided in Skyward. Parents and caregivers are expected to review these progress reports with their student.

Honors: Students are eligible to be named to the Head of School's List in recognition of exemplary citizenship and leadership in the school community. Students are also eligible to receive Scholar's Awards for excellence in academic achievement.

HONORS AND AWARDS

PCUS likes to honor students for their dedication and commitment to their studies and the school community. Thus, at the end of each quarter, students who have met the criteria below will be awarded the following recognitions:

- **Head of School's List** – Recognizes exceptional citizenship, particularly that which contributes significantly to the school community. Students who routinely model school expectations and contribute to the positivity of the school community will earn this recognition.
- **Scholar's List** – Recognizes diligence, commitment, and success in academic performance. Students must have a quarter GPA of at least 3.0 and not have received a failing grade in any of their classes.
- **6B's Awards** – Recognizes seniors who demonstrate an exceptional ability to uphold one or more of the school's expectations: be brave, be responsible, be respectful, be supportive, be scholarly, and be reflective.

Students must return all library books/fines, instruments, athletic uniforms, textbooks, and other school materials before they will receive their report cards, transcripts, and diplomas at the end of the year. They may not be permitted to attend school events until these items are returned or paid for.

PARENT/ADVISOR/STUDENT CONFERENCES

PCUS believes that it is vital for students, caregivers, and teachers to work in partnership in order to create the best outcomes for our students. Because of the importance of this partnership, and to promote leadership and professionalism, *all PCUS students are required to attend parent/teacher conferences and lead the conference*, discussing their strengths and next areas of growth with their families. Advisors work closely with students to prepare them for the conferences and provide information and guidance at the conferences as well. We cannot hold the meeting if the student is not present. If parents/guardians wish to schedule a meeting with the teacher or advisor without the child present, that can be done at a different time.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Our Promotion & Retention policies are designed to help ensure that students progress at a pace that will result in them having sufficient credits to meet Rhode Island's graduation requirements by senior year. Please refer to the Graduation Credit Requirements and Promotion Policy in the Appendix.

SKIPPING SCHOOL/CLASS

If a student cuts class, leaves class without permission, or skips class (which is defined as being out of the classroom for more than 10 minutes), their caregiver will be notified and they will be required to pay back the time they missed. If this behavior persists, the student may earn one of the following consequences: family meeting; hallway restrictions; phone contract; in school suspension; out of school suspension.

PARKING

Students are not permitted to park in the staff parking lot. Vehicles in the staff lot will be subject to towing at the student's expense.

DISMISSAL

Paul Cuffee Upper School releases students at 3:20 PM. On most Mondays, some students will be eligible to leave at 2:30 PM if they are not required to stay for work completion.

PICK-UP

Some of our students wait to be picked up after school. Our staff supervise dismissal from 3:20-3:30 PM. At 3:30 PM, students are expected to be in an after school activity location or to be on their way home. We will not provide supervision for students after 3:30 PM.

ATHLETICS

PCUS partners with the Providence Public School Department for all athletic programming. PCUS students will be eligible to try-out and participate in sports with the PPSD assigned partner school.

Students who are selected for athletic teams and have schedules that conflict with the PCUS bell schedule may be provided with alternative dismissal times. These decisions will be made on a sport-by-sport basis in conjunction with PCUS administration and the coaches and athletic director of the PPSD partner school.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETICS, AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS, OR SCHOOL-BASED EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

All students must have the following forms on file to participate in any after school program:

- Recent Enrichment Program form
- Signed Enrichment/Athletics Program Agreement
- Recent physical and insurance information in accordance with RILL and other league rules (for athletes)

The following are the academic eligibility requirements:

- PCUS believes that performing well in school is critical for future success. Any student who receives more than one failing grade (less than a 2.0) on a quarter report card (for any course) is ineligible for extracurricular activities. Students remain ineligible until the end of the next quarter grading period.
- Eligibility for the fall season will be based on the final grades a student received for the previous school year.
 - If a student's final grades make them ineligible for fall sports, they can become eligible for fall sports if they received enough summer school credits so that they have no more than 1 failing grade.
 - This portion of the policy excludes all 9th graders who are completing their first year of high school; they will be eligible for fall sports at the start of the school year.
- Regardless of current eligibility, all students are able to try-out for athletic teams.

The following are the attendance eligibility requirements:

- Students must be in school all day (arriving no later than 10 AM) to participate in any school based event, practice or game.
- Students who are chronically absent or late to school (meaning 10% or more of the school days at any point in the school year) will be ineligible to participate in athletic and extracurricular events unless they are meeting attendance related goals set by school administration.
- Students who skip a class during the day of an event will not be able to participate.
- Students who are absent from school are not eligible to participate in after school activities on that day. This includes students who have received an in-school or out of school suspension.
- Students who have been assigned to work completion or tutoring must attend those events before attending any extracurricular event, practice or game.
- Students who arrive more than 10 minutes late to school without a written excuse will be ineligible to leave school early on that day for any extracurricular activities or athletic events.
- Students assigned to work completion are not able to miss work completion for an athletic or extracurricular activity.
- Students who plan to attend tutoring or extracurricular activities must remain on campus between dismissal and the start of the tutoring session. Students who leave campus will not be allowed back into the building to engage in extracurricular activities.

NOTE: All extra-curricular eligibility determinations are ultimately at the discretion of administration in collaboration with teachers, coaches, and the athletics coordinator.

AFTER-SCHOOL ENRICHMENT

Paul Cuffee Upper School offers daily enrichment programs typically from 3:30 – 4:30 PM on designated days. The enrichment program includes extra-curricular activities, sports, clubs, and tutoring. Students will have the opportunity to select activities of interest and will be afforded the opportunity to participate in them during the enrichment period. After School Enrichment ends at 4:30 PM. Please pick up your child promptly as there is no supervision after 4:30 PM.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

Caring and respect are an integral part of our school life. Students are expected to take responsibility for their behavior and to grow in their capacity for self-discipline and their understanding of responsible citizenship. Additionally, all students are expected to contribute to our learning community by building trust, by encouraging honest conversation, by promoting safety, by enabling themselves and others to do their personal best, by listening to the concerns and perspectives of others, and by respecting and valuing different backgrounds, perspectives and experiences which others bring to the school.

Teachers will set and communicate clear classroom guidelines and rules so that the students and their families understand what is expected of them in class. Problem solving skills and conflict resolution techniques are included in the classroom curriculum and are used by the students so that they can learn to interact with each other in positive ways. All members of the Paul Cuffee School community (students, staff, and families) will be expected to practice and promote responsible behavior, which includes:

- Supporting each other's learning.
- Promoting a feeling that the school is a safe place for every member of the school community and all visitors.
- Refraining from teasing or making fun of others, including over the internet.
- Respecting others' property and the property of the school community.
- Taking care not to put anyone at risk of injury.
- Acting with compassion by listening, refraining from interruption, and being mindful of others' feelings when speaking.
- Refraining from intentionally hurting oneself, other students, or members of the faculty and staff.

At PCUS, we believe that students, caregivers, teachers, and administration are entitled to respect. Physical abuse, verbal abuse, and destructive behavior will not be tolerated. Consequences will be imposed for rule violations. Students may not possess guns, toy guns, other weapons, fireworks, knives or matches at any time. Students may not possess drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes.

The Paul Cuffee School is committed to being a trusting community and a learning community free of harassment of any kind. This includes sexual harassment by students or adults. Sexual harassment hurts individuals, it hurts the school community, and it is unlawful. Several examples of sexual harassment are unwanted touching, poking, teasing, and unwanted bumping against another student, threats, insults, obscenities, and pressure for sexual activity.

Consequences of Misbehavior

Being a part of our school community includes the agreement to abide by our community's rules and policies. All students are expected to comply with consequences assigned to them. Parents are expected to support administration in ensuring students complete consequences. Additionally, escalating consequences will be assigned by administration if students fail to comply with consequences already assigned to them.

On those occasions when students engage in behavior that is unsafe and puts others at risk, the school will use the following structures to help students regain control of their behavior:

In-class consequences

These are logical consequences that teachers assign in the classroom. They are designed to teach students to apologize for their actions, repair relationships, and move on. They may include taking a break, moving to a buddy classroom, losing a privilege, fixing the situation, making an apology of action, meeting with parents/guardians, or implementing behavior plans. Students are expected to de-escalate themselves, to reflect on what has gone wrong, and to fix things respectfully. Adults will provide assistance as needed, which may include helping the student process what has happened, take responsibility for their actions, and creating a plan for going forward.

Additional consequences

In the case of more serious or repeated rule-breaking, a student can expect more extensive in school loss of privileges, assignment to the Refocus Room for a period to a day or more, community service, restitution, suspension from school, or other consequences determined by administration. Administration works with faculty to assign consequences that are logically related to the behavior and that help the student to repair the damage done to others and the larger community. Students may be assigned to the Refocus Room if they are not able to follow classroom expectations. Refocus Room provides a silent, supervised work space where students are provided with work they have missed in class.

In most cases, the students will remain in school, but the advisor and other relevant faculty members will create a specific program for that student which may include removal from the classroom or other activities. The student will be responsible for making up all missed work.

If a student is suspended from school, parents/guardians will be contacted and must pick the student up from school immediately. In order to return to school, the parent/guardian and student are required to attend a return meeting with the advisor and an administrator. In the meeting, we will review what happened and support the student to create a plan to return to school. The student and parent must agree to and sign the Return Contract.

Students with Individual Educational Plans who are suspended beyond 10 days will receive a manifestation hearing regarding their disability.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students at PCUS will enjoy many off-campus trips in conjunction with their course of study at the school. []In order to attend any off-campus trips, students must have a signed permission slip from their parent/caregiver. Students are not able to leave school grounds during the school day unless they are signed out by their parent/caregiver or another person previously authorized by their parent/caregiver. This policy also includes students separating from a group that may be off-campus. Students choosing to engage in this behavior will be subject to disciplinary action.

VIOLENCE AND WEAPONS

The safety of all members of our community is our first concern. Paul Cuffee Upper School does not allow any violent behavior, harassment, threats of physical harm, weapons possession, or illegal activity. Any reporting of false threats is a crime that is punishable by law. Consequences for such serious breaches of our school's expectations will be severe and may include:

- Referral to the Providence Police Department
- Out of school suspension from 5 days to indefinitely, in accordance with state law
- Loss of privilege to attend school events and activities
- Other consequences as determined by administration

Any object brought to school that is considered to be a potential cause of danger to others will be confiscated and disciplinary action will occur. This will likely include referral to the Providence Police Department and a range of disciplinary actions that may result in exclusion from school from 5 to 180 days or for a duration in accordance with state law.

TOBACCO, TOBACCO SUBSTITUTES, ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES, AND SUSPECTED SUBSTANCE ABUSE

TOBACCO

As per Rhode Island state law, smoking is prohibited within 100 feet of the school building. Tobacco products and Tobacco Substitutes of any kind are not permitted anywhere on school grounds or school sponsored events. Any student caught with tobacco products or substitutes or using them will face appropriate disciplinary consequences.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

When a student is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs during the school day or at a school event, the nurse will evaluate them. Depending on the nurse's assessment, the principal or the principal's designee will contact parent/guardians and consequences may be assigned. If there is reason to believe that the student is in possession of illegal substances, the police may be called.

POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES, INCLUDING ALCOHOL

Students found in possession of illegal substances or alcohol at school or school related functions will be immediately excluded from those functions and consequences will be assigned which may include:

- Referral to social worker and substance abuse counseling
- Referral to the Providence Police Department
- Suspension
- Loss of privilege of participating in school events
- Other consequences as determined by administration

STUDENT SEARCHES AND QUESTIONING

Students are not entitled to any "Miranda-type" warnings before being questioned by school personnel, and school personnel are not required to contact a student's parent before questioning a student. Paul Cuffee staff will tell students why they are being questioned. School personnel may conduct searches of a student's belongings that are minimally intrusive, such as touching the outside of a book bag, so long as there is a legitimate reason for the very limited search. A student may be required to empty a book bag, purse, or pockets. PCUS staff may search a student or a student's belongings, including the contents of a student's locker, based on information received from a reliable informant or from monitoring technology (vape detectors, cameras). Please see additional information on locker searches below. In conducting such a search, staff should attempt to get the student's permission for the search. Whenever possible, searches will be conducted in the privacy of administrative offices, and students will be present when their possessions are being searched. If a student refuses a search of their person or belongings, the police may be contacted or a caregiver will be required to come and pick them up. If a student leaves school in the process of a search or questioning, that student may incur disciplinary consequences including but not limited to regular searches when arriving to school, suspension, etc.

SEARCHES OF STUDENTS' LOCKERS AND LOCKER CONTENTS

Lockers are School Property

All lockers assigned to students are the property of Paul Cuffee School. At no time does the school relinquish its exclusive control of its lockers. The principal or their designee shall have custody of all combinations to all lockers or locks. Students are prohibited from placing locks on any locker without the advance approval of the principal or their designee.

Legitimate Use of School Lockers

The school assigns lockers to its students for the students' convenience and temporary use. Students are to use lockers exclusively to store school-related materials and authorized personal items such as outer garments, footwear, grooming aids, or lunch. Students shall not use the lockers for any other purpose, unless specifically authorized by the principal, in advance of students bringing the items to school. Students are solely responsible for the contents of their lockers and should not share their lockers with other students, nor divulge locker combinations to other students.

Search of Locker Contents

Random searches of school lockers and their contents have a positive impact on deterring violations of school rules, ensure proper maintenance of school property, and provide greater safety and security for students and personnel. Accordingly, the principal or designee may search lockers and locker contents at any time, without notice, and without parental/guardianship or student consent.

The principal or their designee shall not be obligated but may request the assistance of a law enforcement officer in conducting a locker search. The principal or their designee shall supervise the search. In the course of a locker search, the principal or their designee shall respect the privacy rights of the student regarding any items discovered that are not illegal or against school policy and rules.

When conducting locker searches, the principal or their designee may seize any school property and any illegal or unauthorized items, items in violation of policy or rules, or any other items reasonably determined by the principal or their designee to be a potential threat to the safety or security of others. Such items include, but are not limited to the following: firearms, explosives, dangerous weapons, flammable material, illegal controlled substances analogues or other intoxicants, contraband, poisons, and stolen property. Law enforcement officials shall be notified immediately upon seizure of such dangerous items, or seizure of items that schools are required to report to law enforcement agencies under the Statewide School Safety Information Policy. Any items seized by the principal or their designee shall be removed from the locker and held by school officials for evidence in disciplinary proceedings and/or turned over to law enforcement officials. The parent/guardian of a minor student, or a student eighteen (18) years of age or older, shall be notified by the principal or their designee of items removed from the locker. The principal may also retrieve school property stored in a locker without permission.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

PLEASE NOTE: The Rhode Island Department of Education has revised the state graduation requirements for the Class of 2028 and beyond. Both sets of requirements are listed below.

For students entering high school prior to the 2024-2025 school year (classes of 2026, and 2027): To qualify for a diploma and participate in the Paul Cuffee graduation ceremony, all students must meet all of the following requirements for graduation:

- Successfully complete their Capstone project AND
- Successfully complete their Graduation Portfolio AND
- Successfully complete no less than 20 credits, including the following, at a minimum:
 - 4 courses in English
 - 4 courses in Math
 - 3 courses in Science
 - 3 courses in Social Studies
 - .5 credits in Financial Literacy
 - 5.5 additional credits in electives or other courses, including 4 years of Physical Education/Health

To qualify for a diploma and participate in the Paul Cuffee graduation ceremony, all students must meet all of the following requirements for graduation:

- Successfully complete their Capstone project AND
- Successfully complete their Graduation Portfolio AND
- Successfully complete no less than 20 credits, including the following, at a minimum:
 - 4 courses in English
 - 4 courses in Math including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and an advanced math course
 - 3 courses in Science; 2 must be lab science courses
 - 3 courses in Social Studies
 - 2 courses of world language in the same world language
 - 1 additional course of college preparatory coursework. College preparatory coursework is typically in the field of math, English, science, social studies, or world language
 - .5 credits in Financial Literacy
 - 3 additional credits in electives or other courses which must include the arts, computer science, and physical education/health

Students who have missed more than 10% of the school year due to absences can receive their diploma, but they will be unable to participate in the school's graduation ceremony.

The following additional honors and commendations are available to students who meet the requirements:

- Rhode Island Seal of Biliteracy
- Rhode Island Commissioner's Seal

Proficiency Credit Attainment Policy

The Rhode Island Department of Education has approved Readiness-Based Graduation Requirements for the Class of 2028 and beyond. Adopting these requirements has set the default expectation that students will demonstrate proficiency in math, English, social studies, science, world language, the arts, physical education/health, financial literacy, and computer science. It is possible that students demonstrate proficiency in some coursework via assessment or during middle school. This policy outlines those expectations.

World Language Proficiency by Assessment

Two credits of World Language (consecutive levels, in the same language) are required to graduate from high school. Students may demonstrate proficiency via assessment to obtain one or both required World Language credits. This particularly applies to multilingual learners, students who participated in dual-language programs during grades K-8, and any student who participated in world language learning experiences beyond the minimum 2-credit requirement before entering high school.

Paul Cuffee School students can receive credit for World Language if they demonstrate proficiency using the AAPPL World Language assessment. In most languages, students are assessed in interpretive reading, interpretive listening, interpersonal speaking, and presentational writing. The lowest score received in any of these four tested areas is considered the overall score for the assessment.

Language course placement and credits may be awarded based on a student's AAPPL test score as follows:

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines	AAPPL Performance Score	Credit Attainment & World Language Placement	AAPPL Test Form	
Advanced Low	A-1	4 credits; equivalent to passing level 1, 2, 3, and 4 world language courses		Form B
Intermediate High	I-5	3 credits; equivalent to passing level 1, 2, and 3 world language courses		
Intermediate Mid	I-4	2 credits; equivalent to passing level 1 and 2 world language courses	Form A & E	
	I-3			
	I-2			
Intermediate Low	I-1	1 credit; equivalent to passing level 2 world language course		
Novice High	N-4	1 credit; equivalent to passing level 1 world language course		
Novice Mid	N-3	No credit; student starts in level 1 World Language Course		
	N-2			
Novice Low	N-1			

Math Proficiency by Assessment

Students who enter high school and have taken required math coursework--Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II--prior to high school may be able to earn credit. Eligible students will be assigned to take the curriculum-aligned end of course assessment for the coursework completed in middle school. If they demonstrate proficiency on that assessment, the student earns the equivalent high school coursework credit and will be placed in the next math course based on typical student sequencing.

Computer Science by Proficiency

If in middle school a student completed and demonstrated proficiency in a computer science course aligned to the Rhode Island computer science standards they will be awarded that credit in high school.

Other Coursework by Proficiency

Paul Cuffee School understands that each student has a unique profile when entering high school. If a student may have completed high school level coursework outside the world language, math, and computer science disciplines, school administration will work collaboratively to determine whether it's appropriate for high school credit to be awarded.

Graduation Readiness Determination

Graduation readiness recommendations shall be made by the Upper School Principal in consultation with faculty at least five days prior to the date of graduation. Final approval for graduation is made by the Superintendent.

Communication of High School Graduation Requirements

The Principal or their designee shall be responsible for ensuring adequate and timely communication of the high school graduation requirements to Paul Cuffee School students and families. This notification shall include both general notifications and targeted mailings to students at risk for academic failure.

Graduating with Honors

There are four opportunities to receive honors on graduation requirements. While any one of these awards are commendable, Paul Cuffee School reserves graduation honors for students who succeed in most, if not all, aspects of their academic life.

There are four areas in which a student can earn honors

- Grades
- Portfolio
- Capstone project paper
- Capstone project presentation

Students who earn honors in three of the four categories will be distinguished as **Graduating with Honors**. Students who earn honors in all **four** categories will be distinguished as **Graduating with High Honors**.

Grades:

To earn honors, a student must have a 3.5 cumulative grade point average at the end of 12th grade year.

Final Portfolio:

To earn honors, students must complete the honors requirements described in the Portfolio Handbook.

Capstone Project Paper:

To earn honors, students must receive an average grade of honors on their paper.

Capstone Project Presentation:

To earn honors, students must receive an average grade of honors on their presentation.

Students graduating with honors or high honors will be recognized at the graduation ceremony by wearing honor cords, special notation in the graduation program, and recognition during the ceremony.

GRADUATION DECISION APPEALS

Students who fail to meet Paul Cuffee School's minimum requirements for graduation have the right to appeal.

Each level of the appeals process requires written notification to the party indicated below. The process and levels of the Paul Cuffee School-managed appeals process include:

Level 1 Appeal

A student may request an appeal if they've been determined to be ineligible for a diploma. Level 1 Appeals will be made in writing addressed to the Principal of the Upper School. Level 1 Appeals are the responsibility of the Paul Cuffee Upper School principal and may include faculty designees. The principal will respond within 5 days and must meet with the family and student at their request.

Level 2 Appeal

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the Level 1 Appeal, the student may appeal to the Superintendent or his or her designee in writing. The Superintendent or their designee will respond within 5 days and a review will be scheduled.

Level 3 Appeal

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the Level 2 Appeal, the student may appeal to the Paul Cuffee School Board of Trustees in writing. The President of the Paul Cuffee School Board of Trustees will respond within 5 days and a review will be scheduled.

GRADE PROMOTION

Paul Cuffee Upper School uses the guidelines below to determine promotion to the next grade level.

To be promoted to **sophomore year** students typically need:

Minimum Total Credits	Specific Courses (must pass all)
4	• English (9) • Math (9) • Science (9)

To be promoted to **junior year** students typically need:

Minimum Total Credits	Specific Courses (must pass all)
9	• English (9 & 10) • Math (9 & 10) • At least one science and one social studies credit

To be promoted to **senior year** students typically need:

Minimum Total Credits	Specific Courses (must pass all)
14	• English (9, 10 & 11) • Math (9, 10 & 11) • Science (2 credits) • Social studies (2 credits) • At least one world language credit

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PROMOTION

What happens if I am not promoted to the next grade?

- You will remain in your current grade level advisory
- You can attend summer school to make up failed courses. If passing grades are submitted to the school prior to the start of the school year and you meet the promotion requirements, then you can be promoted in time for the start of the school year.

CONCURRENT AND DUAL ENROLLMENT

The Upper School Academic Dean will oversee Paul Cuffee Upper School's Concurrent and Dual Enrollment Program ("CDEP").

DEFINITIONS

- **Concurrent Enrollment:** Coursework offered at Paul Cuffee School that confers college credit for proficient work, through a partnership with an institution of higher learning
- **Dual Enrollment:** Enrollment at an institution of higher learning for a particular course. Proficiency in the course that confers college and high school credit.

RECRUITMENT

Each spring, the Academic Dean will notify all rising 11th & 12th graders about the school's CDEP program, including eligibility criteria, application process, scheduling, university prerequisites, and academic expectations for CDEP courses. Applications will be available via email and through the office of the Academic Dean.

ELIGIBILITY & APPLICATION FOR CDEP

In order to be eligible for the school's CDEP, a student must apply in the spring before the application deadline closes. S/he/they must:

- Be a rising junior or senior for the year for which s/he/they is applying
- Have a GPA of 3.0 or better.
- Complete any required advanced coursework applications or paperwork.
- Be accepted to the program by recommendation of their teachers.
- Demonstrated successful attendance record (no more than 10% combined absences or tardiness).

Students interested in dual enrollment courses at CCRI, RIC, and URI should refer to those schools' course catalogs. Our Academic Dean will provide links to those websites upon request. If eligible, students may request to take any Dual Enrollment course that is not offered at Paul Cuffee Upper School.

Students must complete applications by the deadline in order to be considered.

ENROLLMENT IN DUAL AND CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT COURSES

Once accepted, PCUS administration will enroll students in Concurrent Enrollment courses. For Dual Enrollment courses, the student must enroll him/herself in the course by the deadline for the particular college or university. Students may choose any course that is offered outside of school hours. Once the student is enrolled, s/he/they must submit evidence of enrollment to the PCUS Academic Dean. If the student needs assistance, s/he/they must make an appointment with the PCUS Academic Dean.

GRADING POLICY

After Paul Cuffee's drop/add period for Concurrent Enrollment courses or the college/university's drop/add period for dual enrollment courses, students may not drop Concurrent or Dual Enrollment courses. If the student does not complete the course, the student will receive a grade of U.

Grades from Dual Enrollment courses will be recorded on the student's Paul Cuffee transcript as pass, if he/she earned credit from the awarding institution, or fail, if he/she did not earn credit from the awarding institution. An official transcript must be provided to the Academic Dean in order to award PCUS credit.

HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT

In order to earn high school credit, a student must earn a Partially Satisfactory or above, or a grade of C or above. Three credits of college level coursework will be granted 1 credit at Paul Cuffee Upper School (the equivalent of a one year course).

COSTS

Paul Cuffee Upper School will purchase textbooks for students who are accepted into and enroll in Paul Cuffee Upper School's Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Program.

ACCOMODATIONS

Students who need accommodations as per Individual Educational Plans should work with their special education case manager.

Peanut and Tree Nut Allergy

Rhode Island General Law 16-21-13 ensures that schools have both the responsibility and authority to do what is necessary to protect students with life-threatening food allergies, without creating undue burdens for schools with students needing only limited or no protective measures. In keeping with this statute, Paul Cuffee School will:

- Post a notice within the school at every point of entry and within the cafeteria providing notice that a student in the school has an allergy to peanuts/tree nuts;
- Prohibit the sale of peanuts/tree nuts, peanut butter and other peanut-based products in the school cafeteria;
- Designate one peanut/tree nut free table and one peanut/tree-nut table in the cafeteria; and
- Designate one classroom per grade to be peanut/tree nut free.

The notice shall not identify the individual student(s). Paul Cuffee School shall include the development of an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) and of an Emergency Health Care Plan (EHCP) for each student identified with a peanut/tree-nut allergy with potentially serious health consequences.

When a student has been identified with a peanut/tree-nut allergy with potentially serious health consequences, in accordance with the local policy, the school is required to develop and sign an IHCP and an EHCP for the student. This will be done by the school nurse in collaboration with the student's health care provider, the parents/guardians of the student, and the student, if appropriate. Depending on the nature and extent of the student's allergies, measures listed in these plans may include, but are not limited to:

- Posting additional signs (e.g. in classroom entryways); .
- Prohibiting the sale of particular food items in the school;
- Designating special tables in the cafeteria; .
- Prohibiting particular food items from certain classrooms or the cafeteria; .
- Completely prohibiting particular food items from the school or school grounds;
- Educating school personnel, students, and families about food allergies; and/or
- Implementing particular protocols around cleaning surfaces touched by food products, washing of hands after eating, etc..
- Implementing a protocol, consistent with the IHCP and EHCP to protect the health and safety of the allergic student while he or she is attending school or participating in school sponsored activities.

Title IX Policy

A. Purpose

This Policy is established in adherence with the federal 2020 Title IX regulations (“Title IX”) and all applicable Rhode Island statutes and regulations. Paul Cuffee School is committed to maintaining and promoting an education environment free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of sex and gender. The civil rights of all school community members are guaranteed by law, and the protection of those rights are important to Paul Cuffee School.

This Policy applies equally to all of Paul Cuffee School’s students, employees, authorized volunteers, parents, and other members of Paul Cuffee School community. This Policy applies to conduct at school, at school events, and away from school in all other instances where Paul Cuffee School has a duty to investigate.

B. Notice of Non-Discrimination

Paul Cuffee School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, veteran, genetic information, or marital status in the delivery of its education programs and activities, and indeed, Paul Cuffee School is required pursuant to Title IX not to discriminate in such a manner. If any member of the Paul Cuffee School community has any questions or concerns with respect to this Policy and/or Title IX, he/she may contact the Paul Cuffee School Title IX Coordinator and/or the Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights. Paul Cuffee School’s Title IX Coordinator is identified within this Policy and shall be available to answer all questions concerning this Policy.

Paul Cuffee School’s policy of non-discrimination in its educational programs and activities extends to employment and admission considerations.

C. Definitions

- *Advisor* means a person chosen by a party to accompany the party to meetings, interviews, or hearings related to the resolution process and to advise the party on that process.
- *Complainant* means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment based on a protected class; or retaliation for engaging in a protected activity.
- *Complaint (formal)* means a document submitted by a Complainant or their parent/guardian or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment or retaliation under this Policy and requesting that the district investigate the allegation.
- *Confidential Resource* means a non-Paul Cuffee School employee who is not a Mandated Reporter of notice of harassment and/or retaliation.
- *Day* means a school day when the Paul Cuffee School is in normal operation.
- *Education program or activity* means locations, events, or circumstances where Paul Cuffee School exercises substantial control over both the Respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs.
- *Final Determination*: A conclusion by preponderance of the evidence that the alleged conduct did or did not violate policy.

- *Finding*: A conclusion by preponderance of the evidence that the conduct did or did not occur as alleged (as in a “finding of fact”).
- *Formal Grievance Process* means the method of formal resolution designated by the district to address conduct that falls within the policies included below, and which complies with the requirements of the Title IX regulations (34 CFR §106.45).
- *Grievance Process Pool* includes any investigators, Decision-makers, hearing officers, appeal Decision-makers, and/or Advisors who may perform any or all of these roles (though not at the same time or with respect to the same case).
- *Decision-maker* refers to those who have decision-making and sanctioning authority within the Paul Cuffee School’s Formal Grievance process.
- *Investigator* means the person or persons assigned by Paul Cuffee School to gather facts about an alleged violation of this Policy, assess relevance and credibility, synthesize the evidence, and compile this information into an investigation report and file of directly related evidence.
- *Mandated Reporter* means an employee of the Paul Cuffee School who is obligated by policy to share knowledge, notice, and/or reports of harassment and/or retaliation with the Title IX Coordinator and/or their supervisor.
- *Notice* means that an employee, student, parent/guardian, or third-party informs the Title IX Coordinator or other Official with Authority of the alleged occurrence of harassing, discriminatory, and/or retaliatory conduct.
- *Official with Authority* (OWA) means any Paul Cuffee School employee.
- *Parties* include the Complainant(s) and Respondent(s), collectively.
- *Paul Cuffee School* means a K-12 education program that receives federal funding.
- *Remedies* are applied following a Resolution to the Complainant and/or the community to address safety, prevent recurrence, and restore access to the Paul Cuffee School’s educational program.
- *Respondent* means an individual who has been reported as having engaged in conduct that could constitute sexual harassment or retaliation under this Policy.
- *Resolution* means the result of an informal or Formal Grievance Process.
- *Sanction* means a consequence imposed by the Paul Cuffee School on a Respondent who is found to have violated this policy.
- *Sexual Harassment* is the umbrella category including the offenses of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, and domestic violence.
- *Title IX Coordinator* is the official(s) designated by the Paul Cuffee School to ensure compliance with Title IX and the Paul Cuffee School’s Title IX program. References to the Title IX Coordinator throughout this policy may also include a designee of the Title IX Coordinator for specific tasks.
- *Title IX Team* refers to the Title IX Coordinator, any deputy coordinators, and any member of the Grievance Process Pool.

At School:

In a classroom, all school common areas, on or immediately adjacent to school premises, on school property, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at a school bus stop, or at any school-sponsored or school-related activity or event whether or not it is on school grounds.

Authorized Volunteer:

Any person who 1) is not employed by the school, 2) does not receive any compensation from the school, 3) has undergone school-required criminal background checks, and 4) is permitted to provide services approved by Paul Cuffee School to the community, including students, employees, and other partners.

Discrimination:

Treating persons differently or interfering with or preventing them from enjoying the advantages or privileges afforded to others because of their membership in a protected class.

Harassment:

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on their actual or perceived membership in a protected class that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit the person's ability to participate in Paul Cuffee School's programs or activities by creating a hostile educational environment. The harassing conduct does not have to be directed towards a particular individual when other members of the same protected class are considered the victim of harassment by virtue of being exposed, even indirectly, to the harassing conduct.

Sexual Harassment:

Unwelcome, sexual, sex-based and/or gender-based verbal, written, online and/or physical conduct.

Hostile Environment Created by Sexual Harassment:

Sexual harassment that is sufficiently severe, or persistent or pervasive, and objectively offensive that it unreasonably interferes with, denies or limits someone's ability to participate in or benefit from Paul Cuffee School's education and/or employment opportunities.

Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature by a person having power or authority over another when submission to such sexual conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of rating or evaluating an individual's educational or employment progress, development, or performance, including access to the benefits of any educational or employment opportunity.

Sexual Contact:

Intentional contact with the breasts, buttock, groin, or genitals, or touching another with any of these body parts, or making another touch you or themselves with or on any of these body parts; or any other intentional bodily contact in a sexual manner.

Consent:

The clear, knowing, affirmative, conscious, and voluntary words or actions that give permission for specific sexual activity.

Non-Consensual Sexual Contact:

Any intentional sexual touching, however slight, with any object, by a person upon another person that is without consent and/or by force. Sexual intercourse. Includes vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, object, tongue or finger, and oral copulation, no matter how slight the penetration or contact.

Non-Consensual Sexual Intercourse:

Any sexual intercourse however slight, with any object by a person upon another person that is without consent and/or by force.

D. Title IX Coordinator

The Title IX Coordinator's responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinating Paul Cuffee School's compliance with Title IX, including Paul Cuffee School's procedures for resolving Title IX Complaints;
- Drafting and publicizing procedures for reporting possible Title IX violations;
- Overseeing the prevention of and response to Title IX reports and complaints;
- Overseeing all investigations related to and/or arising from this Policy and ensuring fair, equitable, and timely resolution of complaints;
- Identifying and addressing any patterns or systemic problems revealed by such reports and complaints;
- Providing confidential (to the extent possible) written reports to the Superintendent as requested, Reports shall be kept in a separate and secure Title IX file;
- Providing training to Paul Cuffee School's employees, authorized volunteers, and other members of the [insert school name] community with respect to Title IX and Paul Cuffee School's implementation of this Policy.

The Title IX Coordinator shall understand and have knowledge of the Title IX requirements and Paul Cuffee School's own policies and procedures on sexual harassment, bullying, and positive behavior/discipline.

Each and every report or complaint filed with Paul Cuffee School pursuant to Title IX or reasonably related to Title IX must be provided to the Title IX Coordinator.

The Title IX Coordinator for Paul Cuffee School is:

Andrea Carrera
459 Promenade St
Providence, RI 02908
Tel: (401) 453-2626
acarrera@paulcuffee.org

E. Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment and sexual violence are prohibited and will not be tolerated. Paul Cuffee School expressly prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence at school of or by a student to another student; a student of or by a member of the staff; student organizations; teachers; administrators; staff; and third parties (such as parents/guardians, guests, visitors, volunteers, and invitees. This Policy also prohibits sexual harassment and/or sexual violence by and among Paul Cuffee School's employees and authorized volunteers. To this end, Paul Cuffee School commits its staff to the implementation of a comprehensive and preventive approach that addresses the underlying reasons for this behavior and helps to create a better school community that supports learning and teaching for students and adults.

F. Grievance Process

Paul Cuffee School will act on any formal or informal notice/complaint of violation of the Policy that is received by the Title IX Coordinator or any other employee by applying these procedures.

The procedures below apply **only** to qualifying allegations of sexual harassment (including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, as defined above) involving students, staff, administrator, or faculty members.

If a dismissal occurs under these procedures or the allegations fall outside of the jurisdiction of these procedures, as determined by the Title IX Coordinator, the applicable procedures under the Student Handbook or the applicable employee handbook will be used to resolve the complaint.

The procedures below may be used to address collateral misconduct arising from the investigation of or occurring in conjunction with reported misconduct (e.g., vandalism, physical abuse of another). All other allegations of misconduct unrelated to incidents covered by the Policy will be addressed through procedures described in the Family and Employee handbooks.

G. Notice/Complaint

Upon receiving a complaint or notice, the Title IX Coordinator initiates a prompt initial assessment. The Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures and will assist with an informal resolution and/or begin the formal grievance process. The Title IX Coordinator will then determine if the conduct constitutes a potential Title IX violation, whether a Violence Risk Assessment is necessary.

The Paul Cuffee School must dismiss a formal complaint or any allegations therein if, at any time during the investigation it is determined that the conduct would not constitute sexual harassment, the conduct did not occur at Paul Cuffee School, or the complainant is not part of the Paul Cuffee Community.

The Paul Cuffee School may dismiss a formal complaint if the Complainant wishes to withdraw the complaint, the Complainant is no longer a member of the Paul Cuffee Community, or specific circumstances prevent the Paul Cuffee School from gathering the necessary evidence to reach a determination on the complaint. Dismissals are appealable under the procedures in the Paul Cuffee School Title IX Coordinator's Manual.

The Paul Cuffee School is obligated to ensure that the grievance process is not abused for retaliatory purposes. The Paul Cuffee School permits the filing of counterclaims but uses an initial assessment, described above, to assess whether the allegations in the counterclaim are made in good faith. Counterclaims by a Respondent may be made in good faith, but are, on occasion, also made for purposes of retaliation. Counterclaims made with retaliatory intent will not be permitted.

Counterclaims determined to have been reported in good faith will be processed using the grievance procedures below. Investigation of such claims may take place after resolution of the underlying initial allegation, in which case a delay may occur.

H. Right to an Advisor

The parties may each have an Advisor of their choice present with them for all meetings, interviews, and hearings within the resolution process, if they so choose. Choosing an Advisor who is also a witness in the process creates potential for bias and conflict-of-interest. A party who chooses an Advisor who is also a witness can anticipate that issues of potential bias will be explored by the hearing Decision-maker(s).

The parties may be accompanied by their Advisor in all meetings, interviews, and hearings at which the party is entitled to be present, including intake and investigation interviews. Advisors should help the parties prepare for each meeting and are expected to advise ethically, with integrity, and in good faith.

I. Resolution Processes

Resolution proceedings are private. All persons present at any time during the resolution process are expected to maintain the privacy of the proceedings in accordance with Paul Cuffee School policy. Although there is an expectation of privacy around what investigators share with parties during interviews, the parties have discretion to share their own knowledge and evidence with others if they so choose, with the exception of information the parties agree not to disclose related to Informal Resolution, discussed below. Paul Cuffee School encourages parties to discuss any sharing of information with their Advisors before doing so.

J. Grievance Process Pool

The Formal Grievance Process relies on a pool of administrators (“the Pool”) to carry out the process. Members of the Pool are announced in an annual distribution of this policy to all students, parents/guardians of students, employees, prospective students, and prospective employees. [They are also listed in the Annual Title IX Report published by the Title IX Office].

K. Notice & Investigation

The Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of the investigation and allegations (the “NOIA”) to the Respondent upon commencement of the Formal Grievance Process. This facilitates the Respondent’s ability to prepare for the interview and to identify and choose an Advisor to accompany them. The NOIA is also copied to the Complainant, who is to be given advance notice of when the NOIA will be delivered to the Respondent.

The Paul Cuffee School will make a good faith effort to promptly investigate the allegations with consideration given to the nature of the allegations, the ability to promptly access evidence, and other circumstances that may delay the investigation and decision making process.

Once the Title IX Coordinator decides to begin a formal investigation, the Title IX Coordinator appoints Pool members to conduct the investigation (typically using a team of two Investigators), usually within two (2) [school days of determining that an investigation should proceed.

Any individual materially involved in the administration of the resolution process including the Title IX Coordinator, Investigator(s), and Decision-maker(s), may neither have nor demonstrate a conflict of interest or bias for a party generally, or for a specific Complainant or Respondent.

The Title IX Coordinator will vet the assigned Investigator(s) to ensure impartiality by ensuring there are no actual or apparent conflicts of interest or disqualifying biases. The parties may, at any time during the resolution process, raise a concern regarding bias or conflict of interest, and the Title IX Coordinator will determine whether the concern is reasonable and supportable. If so, another Pool member will be assigned and the impact of the bias or conflict, if any, will be remedied. If the source of the conflict of interest or bias is the Title IX Coordinator, concerns should be raised with the Superintendent.

The Formal Grievance Process involves an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence obtained, including evidence that supports that the Respondent engaged in a policy violation and evidence that supports that the Respondent did not engage in a policy violation. Credibility determinations may not be based solely on an individual’s status or participation as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness.

The Paul Cuffee School presumes that the Respondent is not responsible for the reported misconduct unless and until a final determination is made that this Policy has been violated.

Investigations are completed promptly though some investigations may take longer, depending on the nature, extent, and complexity of the allegations, availability of witnesses, police involvement, etc.

The Paul Cuffee School will make a good faith effort to complete investigations as promptly as possible and will communicate regularly with the parties to update them on the progress and timing of the investigation.

The Paul Cuffee School may undertake a short delay in its investigation (several days to a few weeks) if circumstances require. Such circumstances include but are not limited to a request from law enforcement to temporarily delay the investigation, the need for language assistance, the absence of parties and/or witnesses, and/or accommodations for disabilities or health conditions.

L. Steps in the Investigation Process

All investigations are thorough, reliable, impartial, prompt, and fair. Investigations involve interviews with all relevant parties and witnesses; obtaining available, relevant evidence; and identifying sources of expert information, as necessary.

All parties have a full and fair opportunity, through the investigation process, to suggest witnesses and questions, to provide evidence and expert witnesses, and to fully review and respond to all evidence on the record.

The Investigator(s) typically take(s) the following steps, if not already completed (not necessarily in this order):

- Determine the identity and contact information of the Complainant.
- Commence a thorough, reliable, and impartial investigation by identifying issues and developing a strategic investigation plan, including a witness list, evidence list, intended investigation timeframe, and order of interviews for all witnesses and the parties.
- Meet with the Complainant to finalize their interview/statement, if necessary.
- Provide each interviewed party and witness an opportunity to review and verify the Investigator's summary notes (or transcript) of the relevant evidence/testimony from their respective interviews and meetings.
- Provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during any grievance proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisor of their choice.
- When participation of a party is expected, provide that party with written notice of the date, time, and location of the meeting, as well as the expected participants and purpose.
- Interview all available, relevant witnesses and conduct follow-up interviews as necessary.
- Allow each party the opportunity to suggest witnesses and questions they wish the Investigator(s) to ask of the other party and witnesses, and document in the investigation report which questions were asked, with a rationale for any changes or omissions.
- Complete the investigation promptly and without unreasonable deviation from the intended timeline.
- Provide regular status updates to the parties throughout the investigation.
- Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, provide the parties and their respective advisors an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in a formal complaint, including the evidence upon which Paul Cuffee School does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or other source, so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to the conclusion of the investigation.

Witnesses (as distinguished from the parties) who are employees of the Paul Cuffee School are expected to cooperate with and participate in the Paul Cuffee School's investigation and resolution process. Failure of such witnesses to cooperate with and/or participate in the investigation or resolution process constitutes a violation of policy and may warrant discipline. Student witnesses and witnesses from outside the school community are encouraged to share what they know about the complaint.

Although in-person interviews for parties and all potential witnesses are ideal, circumstances (e.g., summer break) may require individuals to be interviewed remotely. Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, WebEx, or similar technologies may be used for interviews if the Investigator(s) determine that timeliness or efficiency dictate a need for remote interviewing. The Paul Cuffee School will take appropriate steps to reasonably ensure the security/privacy of remote interviews.

Witnesses may also provide written statements in lieu of interviews or choose to respond to written questions, if deemed appropriate by the Investigator(s), though not preferred.

No unauthorized audio or video recording of any kind is permitted during investigation meetings. If the investigator(s) elect to audio and/or video record interviews, all involved parties must be made aware of and consent to audio and/or video recording.

The investigation does not consider: 1) incidents not directly related to the possible violation, unless they evidence a pattern; 2) questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior, unless such questions and evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct alleged, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the Respondent and are offered to prove consent.

While respecting the limitations above, character witnesses or evidence may be offered. The investigation and hearing will determine if the character evidence is relevant. If so, it may be considered. If not, it will be excluded.

M. Referral to a Decision-maker

If the complaint is not resolved through Informal Resolution, and after the final investigation report is shared with the parties, the Title IX Coordinator will refer the matter to a Decision-maker to make a determination regarding responsibility. The Decision-maker cannot make a determination regarding responsibility prior to ten (10) school days from the conclusion of the investigation – when the final investigation report is transmitted to the parties and the Decision-maker—unless all parties and the Decision-maker agree to an expedited timeline. The Paul Cuffee School will designate a single Decision-maker from the Pool, at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator, and inform the parties/advisors.

N. Evidentiary Consideration By the Decision-Maker

Any evidence that the Decision-maker(s) determine(s) is relevant and credible may be considered. The Decision-maker will not consider: 1) incidents not directly related to the possible violation, unless they evidence a pattern; 2) questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior, unless such questions and evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct alleged, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the Respondent and are offered to prove consent.

Previous disciplinary action of any kind involving the Respondent may be considered in determining an appropriate sanction upon a determination of responsibility. This information is only considered at the sanction stage of the process and is not shared with the Decision-maker until then.

The parties may each submit a written impact statement for the consideration of the Decision-maker(s) at the sanction stage of the process when a determination of responsibility is reached.

The Decision-maker determines based on [the preponderance of the evidence; whether it is more likely than not that the Respondent violated the Policy as alleged.

The Decision-maker will facilitate the exchange of written questions between the parties and direct any written questions to any witnesses before a final determination is made.

O. Deliberation, Decision-making, and Standard of Proof

The Decision-maker(s) will then deliberate to determine whether the Respondent is responsible or not responsible for the policy violation(s) in question.

When there is a finding of responsibility on one or more of the allegations, the Title IX Coordinator will determine appropriate sanction(s).

P. Notice of Outcome

The Notice of Outcome will then be shared with the parties simultaneously. Notification will be made in writing and may be delivered by one or more of the following methods: in person, mailed to the local or permanent address of the parties as indicated in official Paul Cuffee School records, or emailed to the parties' Paul Cuffee School-issued email or otherwise approved account. Once mailed, emailed, and/or received in-person, notice will be presumptively delivered.

Q. Disciplinary Sanctions

Students:

Disciplinary sanctions any violation of this Policy may include, but are not limited to, loss of privilege to participate in extracurricular activities including school social events; loss of school bus transportation; assignment of additional school work or community service; and—depending on the extent of involvement in the prohibited activity—suspension or removal from school campus.

Employees:

Disciplinary sanctions for any violation of this Policy may include, but are not limited to, suspension, termination, or filing of criminal charges as warranted.

Volunteers/Parent:

Disciplinary sanctions for any violation of this Policy may include, but are not limited to, denial of access to school premises, school-related events, or school-sponsored events; suspension or termination of volunteer activities; or filing of criminal charges as warranted.

R. Confidentiality

Investigations of discrimination, including harassment, shall be conducted in such a manner as to disclose information only to those who need to know and as necessary to gain information pertinent to the investigation. Please note, some level of disclosure may be necessary in the course of conducting interviews in connection with investigations of any complaint under this policy. Paul Cuffee School shall endeavor to keep such information as confidential as it can without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation.

S. Enforcement Agencies

Nothing in this Policy is intended to prohibit or discourage individuals from contacting the applicable state and/or federal enforcement agencies with complaints or concerns, including but not limited to:

Office for Civil Rights
Boston Office U.S. Department of Education
5 Post Office Square
8th Floor Boston, MA 02109-3921
Tel: 617-289-0111 | E-mail: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (EEOC)
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203-0506
Tel: 800-669-4000 | TTY: 800-669-6820

Rhode Island Department of Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903
Tel: (401) 222-4600
<http://www.ride.ri.com>

APPENDIX A

Paul Cuffee School School Title IX Grievance Form

Today's Date_____

Complainant's Name(s)_____

Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial
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Home address_____

City_____State_____Zip Code_____

Telephone Number_____Email Address_____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)_____

Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial
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Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Contact information_____

Home Address

Phone Number_____Email Address_____

Circle One: Student Parent on Behalf of Student Employee Volunteer

1. Respondent's Name: _____

Address (if known): _____

Contact Information: _____

2. Specifics of Complaint: Describe below, including any dates of alleged discrimination, identities of alleged Respondents, and specific circumstances of alleged discrimination. Attach extra pages if necessary.

3. Witnesses: Include names, any known contact information, and brief description of each witnesses' knowledge of events. Attach extra pages if necessary.

4. Corrective Action: If you wish, please describe any corrective action you would like to see taken with regard to the alleged misconduct. Attach an extra page if necessary.

Signature of Complaint or
Parent/Guardian on Behalf of Complainant

Bullying

Bullying means the use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a student that:

- A. Causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- B. Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to their property;
- C. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment for the student;
- D. Infringes on the rights of the student to participate in school activities; or
- E. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The expression, physical act or gesture may include, but is not limited to, an incident or incidents that may be reasonably perceived as being motivated by characteristics such as: Race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or mental, physical, or sensory disability, intellectual ability or by any other distinguishing characteristic.

Bullying most often occurs as repeated behavior and often is not a single incident between the bullying/cyber-bullying offender(s) and the bullying victim(s).

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, texting or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Forms of cyber-bullying may include but are not limited to:

- A. The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- B. The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages; or
- C. The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of materials on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the creation, impersonation, or distribution results in any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (a) to (e) of the definition of bullying.

At School

"At school" means:

- A. on school premises,
- B. at any school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises,
- C. on a school-transportation vehicle,
- D. at an official school bus stop,
- E. using property or equipment provided by the school, or
- F. acts which create a material and substantial disruption of the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

School Climate

Bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation against any person associated with a report of bullying or the investigation thereof is prohibited in all schools that are approved for the purpose of the compulsory attendance statute (§§16-19-1 and 16-19-2). School staff shall take all reasonable measures to prevent bullying at school. Such measures may include professional development and prevention activities, parental workshops, and student assemblies among other strategies. School faculty, administration and staff, at all times, will model courteous behavior to each other, to students, and to school visitors. Abusive or humiliating language or demeanor will not be accepted. Additionally, students and their families are expected to exhibit courteous behavior to all members of the learning community in school and at school sponsored events.

Policy Oversight and Responsibility

The school principal shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of this bullying policy. The school principal shall provide the Superintendent with a summary report of incidents, responses, and any other bullying-related issues at least twice annually. For public schools, the prevention of bullying shall be part of the school district strategic plan (§ 16-7.1-2(e)) and school safety plan (§16-21-24).

Information Dissemination

The school principal shall ensure that students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians are provided information regarding this Policy. This information shall include methods of discouraging and preventing this type of behavior, the procedure to file a complaint, and the disciplinary action that may be taken against those who commit acts in violation of this policy. This policy shall be:

- A. Distributed annually to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians
- B. Included in student codes of conduct, disciplinary policies, and student handbooks
- C. Posted prominently on the home page of the school /district website.

Reporting

The school principal shall establish, and prominently publicize to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/guardians, how a report of bullying may be filed and how this report will be acted upon (See attached Report Form). The victim of bullying, anyone who witnesses an incident of bullying, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying has taken place may [file a report of bullying](#).

Any student or staff member who believes he/she is being bullied should immediately report such circumstances to an appropriate staff member, teacher or administrator.

Parents/Guardians of the victim of bullying and parents/ guardians of the alleged perpetrator of the bullying shall be notified within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident report. When there is a reasonable suspicion that a child is either a bully or a victim of bullying, the parents/ guardians of the child will be notified immediately by the principal, director or superintendent.

Responsibility of Staff

School staff, including volunteers, who observe an act of bullying or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place must report the bullying to school authorities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Prohibition against Retaliation

Retaliation or threats of retaliation in any form designed to intimidate the victim of bullying, those who are witnesses to bullying, or those investigating an incident of bullying shall not be tolerated. Retaliation or threat of retaliation will result in the imposition of discipline in accordance with the school behavior code.

False Reporting/Accusations

A school employee, school volunteer or student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be disciplined in accordance with the school behavior code.

Reports in Good Faith

A school employee, school volunteer, student, parent/ legal guardian, or caregiver who promptly reports, in good faith, an act of bullying to the appropriate school official designated in the school's policy shall be immune from a cause of action for damages arising from reporting bullying.

Investigation/Response

The school principal shall promptly investigate all allegations of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. If the allegation is found to be credible, appropriate disciplinary actions, subject to applicable due process requirements, will be imposed.

The School Resource Officer or other qualified staff may be utilized to mediate bullying situations. The investigation will include an assessment by the school psychologist and/or social worker of what effect the bullying, harassment or intimidation has had on the victim. A student who engages in continuous and/or serious acts of bullying will also be referred to the school psychologist and/or social worker.

Police Notification

Immediate notification of the local law enforcement agency will be made when circumstances warrant the pursuit of criminal charges against the perpetrator.

Protection

If a student is the victim of serious or persistent bullying:

- A. The school principal will intervene immediately to provide the student with a safe educational environment.
- B. The interventions will be developed, if possible, with input from the student, his or her parent/ guardian, and staff.
- C. The parents/ guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

Disciplinary Action

The disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall be determined by the school's appropriate authority. Disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The severity of the disciplinary action shall be aligned to the severity of the bullying behavior. The range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. Admonitions and warnings
- B. Parental/ Guardian notification and meetings
- C. Detention
- D. In-school suspension
- E. Loss of school-provided transportation or loss of student parking pass
- F. Loss of the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities

- G. Loss of the opportunity to participate in school social activities
- H. Loss of the opportunity to participate in graduation exercises or middle school promotional activities
- I. Police contact
- J. School suspension: No student shall be suspended from school unless it is deemed to be a necessary consequence of the violation of this Policy.

Social Services/Counseling

Referral to appropriate counseling and/or social services currently being offered by schools or communities shall be provided for bullying victims, perpetrators and appropriate family members of said students.

Social Networking

Students shall be prohibited from accessing social networking sites in school, except for educational or instructional purposes and with the prior approval from school administration.

Other Redress

This section does not prevent a victim of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation from seeking redress under any other available law, either civil or criminal. This section does not create or alter any tort liability.



BULLYING AND/OR CYBERBULLYING REPORT FORM

Name of person experiencing bullying: _____ Grade: _____

Student ID: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____ School: _____

Please answer the following questions about this reporting incident:

List the name of the alleged bully, and/or cyberbully. If name is not known, provide any other identifiable information:

Relationship between you and the alleged bully, and/or cyberbully:

Describe the incident: _____

When and where did it happen? _____

Were there any witnesses? ☐ YES ☐ NO *If yes, who?* _____

Other information, including previous incidents or threats:

Student or parent declines to complete this form: Initial: _____ Date: _____

I certify that all statements made in the complaint are true and complete. Any intentional false statement of fact will subject me to appropriate discipline. I authorize school officials to disclose the information I provide only as necessary in pursuing the investigation.

Signatures:

Student: _____ Date: _____

School official receiving complaint: _____ Date: _____

School official conducting follow-up: _____ Date: _____

THIS DOCUMENT SHALL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL

Last Updated 11/1/22

ADMINISTRATION ONLY

Bullying found? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please provide details of the investigation:

[illegible]

Please identify the supportive measures being provided to the student experiencing bullying (if bullying was found), including school psychologist and social worker supports:

Please attach any other documentation, including office disciplinary referral of perpetrator of bullying.

Transgender and Gender Identity Policy

As a gender inclusive school, Paul Cuffee School recognizes that gender impacts all students, and will endeavor to interrupt binary notions of gender, normalize gender diversity, question limited portrayals of gender, support students self-reflection, and, above all else, teach empathy and respect. Consistent with federal, state, and local laws, it is the policy of Paul Cuffee School, its administration, and its Board of Trustees to provide an equal opportunity and safe environment for all students and employees, regardless of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, genetic information, gender identification or expression, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, citizenship status, or veteran status.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Paul Cuffee School is committed to ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. It is committed to ensuring that all educational professionals and other school staff be supportive role models and strong advocates for the safety and well-being of students. All students need a safe and supportive school environment to progress academically and developmentally. The most specific purpose of this policy is to ensure that students who are transgender or gender non-conforming are provided with and ensured a safe school environment in which to continue to grow and develop, while fostering social integration and minimizing stigmatization. Therefore, this policy shall endeavor to:

- Foster an educational environment that is safe and free from discrimination for all students, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression;
- Ensure compliance with state and federal law concerning bullying, harassment, and discrimination;
- Reduce the stigmatization of and improve educational integration of transgender and gender nonconforming students, maintain the privacy of all students, and foster cultural competence and professional development for school staff; and
- Support healthy communication between educators and parent(s)/guardian(s) to further the successful educational development and well-being of every student (see: "Privacy and Confidentiality" paragraph 4).

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are not for the express purpose of labeling a student, but rather to provide common terminology and to assist in understanding this policy:

- *"Gender Identity"* describes a person's deeply held sense or psychological knowledge of one's own gender. One's gender identity can be the same or different than the gender assigned at birth. All people have gender identity. Gender identity is an innate, largely inflexible characteristic of each individual's personality that is generally established at a very early age, although the age at which individuals come to understand and express their gender identity may vary.
- *"Gender Expression"* describes the manner in which a person represents or expresses one's gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice or mannerisms.
- *"Gender Non-conforming"* describes people whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectations, such as "feminine" boys, "masculine" girls, and those who are perceived as androgynous. This includes people who identify outside traditional gender categories or identify as both/neither gender.
- *"Sexual Orientation"* describes a person's romantic or sexual attraction to people of the same or opposite gender or multiple genders. Some common sexual orientations are straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, queer, etc. A transgender or gender nonconforming person can have a sexual orientation.
- *"Transgender"* describes a person whose gender identity or expression is different from that traditionally associated with an assigned sex at birth. Transgender is an umbrella term. A

transgender male is someone who identifies as male but was assigned the sex of female at birth. A transgender female is someone who identifies as female, but was assigned the sex of male at birth.

- “Transition” describes a process in which a person goes from living, identifying, and expressing oneself as one gender to living, identifying, and expressing oneself as another. Transition is a process that is different for everyone, and it may or may not involve social, legal or physical changes. There is no one step or set of steps that an individual must undergo in order to have their gender identity affirmed and respected. Transgender individuals may undergo transition at any stage of their lives, and gender transition can happen swiftly or over a long duration of time.

Critically, Paul Cuffee School recognizes that terminology and language describing individuals who are transgender may differ based on region, ethnicity, age or culture. Persons who identify as transgender or gender non-conforming may use a number of words and expressions to describe their lives and experiences. Examples include but are not limited to: trans, transsexual, transgender, male-to-female, female-to-male, bi-gender, agender, and gender neutral. Similarly, transgender or gender non-conforming students may use general neutral pronouns to identify themselves, including, for example, they/them/their in the singular form; Ze (instead of he/she/they); and Hir (instead of him/his/he/theyr/hers/they/theirs) A general recommendation is to avoid assumptions and employ the term that the student uses to describe themselves.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In order to foster a safe and supportive school environment for all students, Paul Cuffee School shall strive to incorporate education and training about transgender and gender non-conforming students into its curriculum, training, and professional development whenever possible. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Terms, concepts, and current developmental understandings of gender identity, gender expression, and gender diversity in children and adolescents;
- Developmentally appropriate strategies for communication about issues related to gender identity and gender expression that protect student privacy;
- Reinforcements of developmentally appropriate strategies for preventing and intervening in bullying incidents, including cyber bullying;
- Access to resources regarding transgender students and gender identity.

ACCEPTANCE

When a student has expressed an intent to transition, Paul Cuffee School shall work closely with the student and/or family in devising an appropriate plan to ensure that Paul Cuffee School provides a supportive and safe environment. Each situation should be individually assessed by Paul Cuffee School and its leadership to ensure the healthy development of the student.

Paul Cuffee School should balance the goals of supporting the student with the desire that parents be kept informed about their children. However, if Paul Cuffee School leadership determines that notifying the student’s family carries risks for the student, it should work closely with the student to assess the degree to which, if any, the family will be involved in the process and must consider the age, health, well-being and safety of the student when making the determination.

Similarly, if a gender identity issue is presenting itself and creating challenges for a student, or if a student or parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student indicates an intention on behalf of the student to transition, Paul Cuffee School should make every effort to work with the student and the child’s parent(s)/guardian(s) to put in place measures for supporting the child and creating a sensitive, supportive environment at Paul Cuffee School.

Paul Cuffee School shall accept a student’s assertion of his or her gender identity when there is: (1) a consistent and uniform assertion of the student’s gender identity; or (2) any other evidence that the student’s gender identity is sincerely held. However, Paul Cuffee School shall remain cognizant that there are times when a student may not consistently and uniformly assert their gender identity because of the threat of discrimination or violence.

The intentional or persistent refusal to respect a student's gender identity is a violation of this policy and may result in disciplinary action.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

All Paul Cuffee School students have the right to keep private one's transgender status or gender non-conforming expression at school. A student has the ability to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and decide when, with whom and how much of their private information to share with others.

Information about a student, including assigned birth sex, name change for gender identity purposes, gender transition, medical or mental health treatment related to gender identity, or any other information of a similar nature, shall be maintained in confidence by Paul Cuffee School. Only Paul Cuffee School personnel with a legitimate educational or medical need should have access to a student's records or other information contained in those records.

Paul Cuffee School personnel shall not disclose information that may reveal an individual's gender identity, transgender status, and/or gender non-conforming presentation to persons other than that particular student, including that student's parents (other than a student's own parents or guardians if the student has yet to attain the age of eighteen), other students, volunteers, and other school personnel, unless legally required to do so or unless the student has explicitly authorized such disclosure.

When contacting the parent or guardian of a student who is transgender or gender non-conforming, school personnel should use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's gender assigned at birth unless the student, parent, or guardian has specified otherwise. However, Paul Cuffee School employees should first speak with the student before discussing that student's gender non-conformity or transgender status with that student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

OFFICIAL RECORDS

Paul Cuffee School is required to maintain a mandatory permanent pupil record that includes a student's legal name and legal gender. However, Paul Cuffee School is not required to use a student's legal name and gender on other school records or documents. Paul Cuffee School will change a student's official record to reflect a change in legal name and/or legal gender only upon receipt of documentation that such change has through legal means. The documentation required for a legal change of name and/or gender is a court order or federally issued document demonstrating the student's new name.

Paul Cuffee School shall collect or maintain information about students' gender only when necessary. In situations where school staff or administrators are required by law to use or to report a student's legal name or gender, such as for purposes of standardized testing, school staff and administrators shall adopt practices to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such confidential information.

Requests from former students to change their name and gender on school records shall be handled in the same manner as current students. To the extent that Paul Cuffee School is not legally required to use a former student's legal name or gender on school records and other documents, Paul Cuffee School shall use the name and gender preferred by the former student. In addition, transgender students who transition after having completed high school, have the right to request that Paul Cuffee School amend school records, such as, a diploma or transcript that include the student's birth name and gender. When requested in writing by the student, Paul Cuffee School shall amend the student's record, including reissuing a high school diploma or transcript, to reflect the student's current name and gender.

NAMES AND PRONOUNS

A student has the right to be addressed by a name and pronoun that corresponds to the student's gender identity. For Paul Cuffee School to recognize and use a student's preferred name and/or pronouns for unofficial purposes (e.g., in the classroom, in the hallways, at school-related events, etc.), a court-ordered name or gender change is not required, and the student need not change one's official records.

Paul Cuffee School staff shall privately ask the student at the beginning of the school year how the student would like to be addressed in class, in correspondence to the home, or at conferences with the student's parent or guardian. Paul Cuffee School staff shall not engage in discussions with a student concerning that student's preferred name and/or pronouns, unless and until that student has informed that staff member of that student's preferred gender identity.

PARTICIPATION AND ACTIVITIES

Students shall be permitted to participate in any such activities or conform to any such rule, policy, or practice consistent with their gender identity. As a general matter, Paul Cuffee School should evaluate all gender-based activities, rules, policies, and practices and maintain only those that have a clear and sound pedagogical purpose.

DRESS

Paul Cuffee School may enforce a dress code pursuant to Paul Cuffee School's policy. Students shall have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity, within the parameters of the dress code adopted by Paul Cuffee School. Paul Cuffee School staff shall not enforce a dress code more strictly against transgender or gender non-conforming students than other students. Dress codes shall be general statements that ensure the proper dress for all students.

RESTROOM, LOCKER ROOMS, AND CHANGING FACILITIES

All students are entitled to have access to restrooms, locker rooms and changing facilities that are sanitary, safe, and adequate, so they can fully engage in their school program and activities. In meeting with the transgender student and parent to discuss the issues outlined in this policy, it is essential that the building leadership work collaboratively with the student to address the student's access to the restrooms, locker room, and changing facilities. Each situation needs to be reviewed and addressed based on the particular circumstances of the student and the school facilities.

In all cases, the building leadership should be clear with the student and the student's parents or guardians that the student may access the restroom, locker room, and changing facility that corresponds to the student's gender identity. Students who refuse to use a gender-segregated restroom are to be provided with a safe and adequate alternative, such as a gender-neutral restroom or the nurse's restroom. Similarly, students who refuse to use a locker room or changing facility that corresponds to the student's gender identity are to be provided with a safe and adequate alternative.

Some students may feel uncomfortable with a fellow student who is transgender or gender nonconforming using the same gender-segregated restroom, locker room, or changing facility. This discomfort is not a reason to deny access to the student who is transgender or gender non-conforming. A student who refuses to use a restroom, locker room, or changing facility for these reasons also is to be provided with a safe and adequate alternative. Paul Cuffee School administrators and counseling staff are encouraged to work with students to address the discomfort and to foster understanding of diversity, including gender identity, to create a school culture that respects and values all individuals.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ATHLETICS

All students shall be permitted to participate in physical education classes and intramural sports in a manner consistent with their gender identity. According to the Rhode Island Interscholastic Athletic Association Rules and Regulation, all students are permitted to participate in activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

INSTRUCTIVE RESOURCES AND LAWS

As necessary and/or helpful, Paul Cuffee School should look to the following resources and laws for guidance when interpreting and implementing this policy:

- The Rhode Island Department of Education's Guidance for Rhode Island Schools on Transgender and Gender Nonconforming students, as set forth in its June 2016 Guidance;
- The United States Department of Education Guidance on Transgender Students, as set forth in its May 13, 2016 Dear Colleague Letter pertaining to transgender students;
- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (1974), as it pertains to transgender, gender nonconforming and transitioning students; and
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq., as each pertains to transgender, gender nonconforming and transitioning students.

Directory Information and Opt-Out Rights

Notice to Parents/Guardians: Directory Information and Opt-Out Rights

Each year, Paul Cuffee School provides families with information about the release of certain student records identified as directory information in accordance with the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** and the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**.

Directory information may include a student's:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number

Federal law requires school districts to provide military recruiters and institutions of higher education with the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of secondary school students upon request, unless a parent or guardian directs the school not to release this information.

If you **do not want** your child's directory information released to military recruiters or institutions of higher education, you must notify your child's principal **in writing**.

Written requests to opt out must be submitted to your child's principal no later than **October 2, 2026**. Once received, the school will not release your child's directory information for these purposes unless you provide future written authorization.

If you have any questions about this notice or your rights under FERPA, please contact your child's principal.

Notification of Rights under FERPA for Schools

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. **The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Paul Cuffee receives a request for access.**

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. **The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.**

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask Paul Cuffe School to amend their child's or their education record should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. **The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.**

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights.

A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board.

A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. **The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the [School] to comply with the requirements of FERPA.** The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

[NOTE: In addition, a school may want to include its directory information public notice, as required by § 99.37 of the regulations, with its annual notification of rights under FERPA.]

Additional Information about FERPA

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))

- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as “directory information” if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student’s case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

Annual Notice to Parents/Guardians: School Safety and Emergency Drills

The safety and well-being of our students and staff is a top priority at Paul Cuffee School. In accordance with Rhode Island law, we are providing families with an overview of the emergency drills and safety training that will take place throughout the school year.

Emergency drills help students and staff practice how to respond safely and calmly during a variety of emergency situations. Drills are conducted in an age-appropriate manner and are designed to prepare everyone to respond effectively if an emergency occurs.

During the school year, students and staff may participate in the following safety drills:

- **Fire Drills** – Practice safely and quickly evacuating the building in the event of a fire or other situation requiring evacuation.
- **Evacuation Drills** – Practice relocating students and staff to a designated safe location outside of the building or campus when necessary.
- **Shelter-in-Place Drills** – Practice procedures used when it is safest for students and staff to remain inside the building due to conditions outside, such as severe weather or an environmental hazard.
- **Lockdown Drills** – Practice procedures used to secure classrooms and school buildings during a potential threat inside or near the school. These drills focus on keeping students and staff safe until the situation is resolved.

All emergency drills are conducted in accordance with Rhode Island school safety requirements and are coordinated with local public safety officials when appropriate. School staff receive training on emergency procedures, and drills are conducted throughout the school year to ensure that students and staff are familiar with established safety protocols.

Parents and guardians will be notified if an actual emergency occurs. If you have questions about our school safety procedures or emergency drills, please contact your child's principal.

Responsible Use of Technology & Artificial Intelligence Policy

(In accordance with Children's Internet Protection Act [CIPA], Rhode Island General Laws 16-21-33 and 16-21-34, FERPA, and applicable state and federal privacy laws)

1. Purpose

Paul Cuffee School provides access to technology resources, including networked devices, digital platforms, cloud-based services, and artificial intelligence (AI) tools, to support teaching, learning, and school operations.

Teaching & learning includes classroom instruction, research, creative and critical thinking, career and college readiness, professional development, and other school-approved activities. Technology and AI resources are intended to enhance learning, not replace human thinking, judgment, or relationships.

Consistent with the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) AI Guidance, Paul Cuffee School is committed to ensuring that AI is used safely, intentionally, ethically, equitably, and in developmentally appropriate ways to improve student outcomes while protecting student privacy and academic integrity.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students, staff, contractors, and volunteers who access Paul Cuffee School technology resources, whether using school-owned or personally owned devices, on campus or remotely, when use is connected to school activities.

Access to technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked for policy violations.

3. Definitions

Technology Resources:

Hardware, software, networks, devices, internet access, cloud services, email systems, learning platforms, and AI-enabled tools provided or permitted by the school.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Computer systems or software that perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence, including generating text, images, audio, code, analysis, recommendations, or personalized learning supports (e.g., chatbots, adaptive learning tools).

Responsible Use

Use that is ethical, lawful, academically honest, secure, developmentally appropriate, and aligned with instructional goals.

4. Availability, Monitoring, and Liability

Paul Cuffee School makes no warranties regarding the availability, accuracy, or reliability of technology or AI-generated information. Users assume responsibility for verifying accuracy and appropriateness of all content, particularly AI-generated output, which may be incomplete, biased, or inaccurate.

The school reserves the right to monitor, review, and audit all use of its technology resources. Users should have no expectation of privacy when using school-owned systems, accounts, or networks.

5. Guiding Principles for AI Use

Consistent with RIDE guidance, AI use at Paul Cuffee School shall adhere to the following principles:

A. Human-in-the-Loop: AI tools must augment, not replace, student learning or educator professional judgment. Teachers remain responsible for instruction, assessment, and grading decisions.

B. Academic Integrity: Students must not present AI-generated content as their own original work. Any permitted AI use must be clearly disclosed and cited, and may require a description of how the tool was used.

C. Developmental Appropriateness: AI use must align with students' age, maturity, and learning needs as outlined by Rhode Island Department of Education regulations, policy and guidance. Younger students may only use AI tools under direct educator supervision, and only with district-approved tools.

D. Equity and Accessibility: AI tools should promote equitable access to learning supports and must not disadvantage students based on disability, language, background, or access to technology.

E. Privacy and Safety: Personally identifiable information (PII) must never be entered into AI tools unless explicitly approved and compliant with FERPA, COPPA, and district data privacy agreements.

6. Acceptable Uses of Technology & AI

When approved by staff and aligned to instructional goals, acceptable uses include:

- Research support, brainstorming, drafting, and revision with appropriate disclosure
- Skill practice and feedback (e.g., writing, language, math)
- Assistive and accessibility supports aligned with IEPs, 504 plans, or multilingual learner needs
- Administrative and professional productivity for staff (lesson planning, differentiation, communication drafts)

All AI use must comply with teacher expectations and assignment guidelines.

7. Prohibited Uses

The following are strictly prohibited:

- Submitting AI-generated work as original student work without disclosure
- Using AI tools to cheat on quizzes, tests, or assignments.
- Personally identifiable information (PII) must never be entered into AI tools or social media unless explicitly approved and compliant with FERPA, COPPA, and district data privacy agreements.
- Using AI tools that have not been approved or vetted for student use
- Generating or sharing harmful, harassing, defamatory, sexually explicit, or threatening content
- Using AI to impersonate others, create deepfakes, or engage in cyberbullying (subject to RI Safe Schools Act)

8. Internet Safety, Security, and CIPA Compliance

Paul Cuffee School complies with CIPA by implementing:

- Technology protection measures (filtering)
- Monitoring of student online activity
- Instruction on digital citizenship, AI literacy, and cyber safety
- Restrictions on access to harmful or inappropriate material

AI tools used with students must meet the same safety and filtering standards as other internet-based resources.

9. Social Media and AI-Generated Content

Users may not post or share AI-generated or human-created content that disrupts the educational process, violates privacy, or harms members of the school community.

All social media and digital communications must remain respectful, professional, and aligned with school values.

10. Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

Personally owned devices may seldom be used by students and only with staff permission and are subject to:

- School network filtering and monitoring
- All provisions of this policy, including AI use restrictions
- Confiscation or loss of privileges for misuse

The school is not responsible for loss or damage to personal devices.

11. Enforcement and Consequences

Violations of this policy may result in:

- Loss of technology or AI access privileges
- Confiscation of devices
- Academic consequences
- Disciplinary action
- Referral to law enforcement when required by law

12. Policy Review and Communication

This policy shall be reviewed annually and updated as needed. Paul Cuffee School will communicate expectations clearly to students, staff, and families and provide ongoing education on responsible technology and AI use.

Education of Homeless Youth

Policy on Education for Homeless Youth

Homelessness exists in our community. Families, children and youths may lose housing for a myriad of reasons. The lack of permanent housing can lead to potentially serious physical, emotional, and mental consequences and be detrimental to a student's ability to progress academically. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all homeless children and youth at Paul Cuffee School have equal access to the same free and quality education and necessary support services as other students. In accordance with the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act and state laws, this policy provides the framework for identifying and supporting homeless students to ensure they have opportunities to succeed academically and participate fully in school activities, despite the challenges they face due to homelessness.

DEFINITIONS

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 11431 et seq.) is a federal law that provides important educational rights and services to Pre K - 12 children and youth experiencing homelessness. The McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines homeless as follows:

Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes:

- Children and youths who are sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Children and youths staying in motels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to the lack of an adequate alternative.
- Children and youths staying in shelters or transitional housing.
- Children and youths sleeping in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or similar settings.
- Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation.
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

Unaccompanied Youth includes homeless children and youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

- A child or unaccompanied youth shall be considered homeless for as long as they are in a living situation described above.

"Enrollment" is defined as attending classes and participating fully in school activities. 42 U.S.C. §11434A(1).

School of Origin "means the school that a child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including a preschool." 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(I)(i).

HOMELESS LIAISON

Paul Cuffee School will designate a McKinney Vento Liaison to serve as the primary point of contact for students and families experiencing homelessness, school personnel, and organizations related to homelessness. Paul Cuffee School is responsible for ensuring the liaison receives appropriate time and training in order to carry out the duties required by law and this policy.

The Homeless Liaison's responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

- Ensure that homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through outreach and coordination with other entities and agencies.
- Ensure that homeless students enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed at Paul Cuffee School.
- Ensure that homeless families, children, and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, as well as referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services.
- Ensure that parents and guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children and youth and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their students.
- Ensure that public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth is disseminated in locations frequented by parents or guardians of such youth, and unaccompanied homeless youths.
- Ensure that the parent/guardian of a homeless child or youth, or any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services and is assisted in accessing transportation services, if available and feasible.
- Assist unaccompanied youth in placement/enrollment decisions.
- Ensure there is support for academic success, including credit accrual and transition to higher education.
- Ensure unaccompanied youth receive support for college readiness, are informed of their status as independent students and receive verification of such status for college financial aid.
- Ensure that enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the dispute resolution provisions and that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment or placement.
- Collaborate and coordinate with school personnel, community organizations and other agencies for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youth.
- Participate in professional development and other technical assistance offered by the state and ensure school personnel have opportunities for professional development, and are informed of the duties of the McKinney Vento liaison.

IDENTIFICATION

In collaboration with the parent/guardian, child, youth, school personnel, agencies and organizations, the Homeless Liaison will identify children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Homeless children and youth will be identified through:

- Self identification by families, children and youths through the application process for enrollment and at other times during the year.
- School personnel recommendations.
- Coordinated activities with other entities and agencies.

To aid in the identification of homeless families, children and youth, and unaccompanied youth the Liaison will:

- Provide training for school personnel on possible indicators of homelessness, sensitivity in identifying homeless families, children and youth, and procedures for forwarding information indicating homelessness to the liaison.
- Instruct school enrollment and office staff to inquire about possible homelessness upon the enrollment and withdrawal of every student and to forward information indicating homelessness to the liaison.
- Ensure that at enrollment and at re-enrollment each year, the Paul Cuffee School includes information about McKinney Vento eligibility and services, a housing questionnaire, and the process to follow if the student lacks a fixed, permanent, and adequate nighttime residence.
- Ensure that public notices of educational rights and information of services for families, children and youth experiencing homelessness are disseminated in easily accessible locations, on the school website, through parent communications and at school events.

Homeless status and data on the number of children and youth experiencing homelessness in the district, where they are living, grades and academic progress and the reasons for any enrollment delays, interruptions in their education, or school transfers is documented in the school's student information system. Student records and indication of homeless status are confidential and not directory information, and only accessible to the homeless liaison and school personnel directly supporting the student during homelessness. Paul Cuffee School will comply with all federal, state, and other data collections and reporting requirements regarding homeless children and youth.

SCHOOL SELECTION

Children and youth experiencing homelessness have a right to select from the following schools:

- The school they attended when permanently housed (School of Origin)
- The school in which they were last enrolled (School of Origin)
- The school in the attendance area in which the student currently resides (School of Residency)

In selecting a school, homeless children and youth shall remain at their schools of origin to the extent feasible, unless that is against the parent or youth's wishes. Students may remain at their schools of origin the entire time they are homeless and until the end of any academic year in which they become permanently housed. The same applies if a child or youth loses his or her housing between academic years. Feasibility shall be a child-centered determination, based on the needs and interests of the particular student and the parent or youth's wishes.

Potential feasibility considerations include:

- Safety of the student
- Continuity of instruction
- Likely area of family or youth's future housing
- Time remaining in the academic year
- Anticipated length of stay in temporary living situation
- School placement of siblings
- Whether the student has special needs that would render the commute harmful

Services that are required to be provided, including transportation to and from the school of origin and services under federal and other programs, shall not be considered in determining feasibility.

If it is determined that staying in the school of origin is not in the student's best interest, the school will facilitate the transition to a new school in a way that minimizes disruption to the student's education.

Once permanent housing is found, the family has a choice to stay in the school of origin or attend the school in the attendance area where they found housing. If a family chooses to stay at Paul Cuffee School (school of origin), transportation will be provided until the end of that given school year.

ENROLLMENT AND RECORDS

Homeless students may be identified at the time of enrollment (through self-reports). Paul Cuffee School is a public charter school, and therefore a school of choice rather than assigned district school, placement decisions are based solely on parent request through the application process and a blind admissions lottery.

Homeless youth will not be discriminated against in the application process. Homeless children and youth accepted to Paul Cuffee School via the admissions lottery, will be allowed to apply for enrollment in accordance with current Paul Cuffee School enrollment policy even if the parent/guardian is unable to provide the school with the records normally required for enrollment such as previous academic records, birth certificate, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation.

The Paul Cuffee School admissions coordinator shall immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain the relevant records. If the student needs to obtain immunizations or does not possess immunization or other medical records, the admissions coordinator shall refer the parent/guardian to the homeless liaison. The liaison shall assist the parent/guardian in obtaining the necessary immunizations or records for the student.

In the case of an unaccompanied youth accepted to Paul Cuffee School via the admissions lottery, the homeless liaison shall assist in the enrollment process. Unaccompanied youth shall be immediately enrolled if space is available even if unable to provide the school with the records normally required for enrollment, and despite lack of parent or legal guardian's supervision or permissions, or "power of attorney" by supervising adult.

In accordance with current Paul Cuffee School enrollment policies and state regulations regarding charter schools, if the grade level for which a homeless child or youth has applied has more applicants than spaces available, a random public lottery will take place once annually in order to determine enrollment for the following school year. If a homeless child or youth applies for admission after the annual random public lottery, they will be placed on the waitlist in the order in which the application was received, even if the application is incomplete at the time of submission.

Any confidential record ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or medical records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs, of each homeless child or youth will be maintained so that the records are available, in a timely fashion, when a child or youth enters a new school or school district.

SERVICES

Children and youth experiencing homelessness shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school, including:

- Extracurricular activities
- Programs for at-risk students
- Title 1 services
- Academic services
- School supplies
- Counseling services
- Tutoring
- Educational services for which the student meets eligibility criteria, including special education and related services and programs for English language learners
- Transportation services
 - Students experiencing homelessness will receive transportation to and from Paul Cuffee School during the period of homelessness, even if the student is living outside of the district.
 - Once permanent housing is found, the family has a choice to stay in the school of origin or attend the school in the attendance area where they found housing. If a family chooses to stay at Paul Cuffee School (school of origin), transportation will be provided until the end of that given school year.

When applying any district policy regarding tardiness or absences, any tardiness or absence related to a child or youth's living situation shall be excused.

School personnel must also inform parents of all educational and related opportunities available to their children and provide parents with meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education. All parent information required by any provision of this policy must be provided in a form, manner, and language understandable to each parent.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth have the right to dispute:

- School selection
- Eligibility
- Enrollment

If a disagreement arises over school selection or enrollment, the student must be immediately enrolled in the school in which they are requesting enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute. Enrollment is defined as "attending classes and participating fully in school activities."

The school must refer the student, parent, or guardian to the homeless liaison to carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible. The homeless liaison must ensure the dispute resolution process is also followed for unaccompanied youth.

A written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment must be provided if a parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth disputes such a school selection or enrollment decision, including the right to appeal. The written explanation shall be complete, as brief as possible, simply stated, and provided in a language that the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth can understand.

If the dispute remains unresolved at the district level or is appealed, then the district homeless liaison shall forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the homeless liaison at the Rhode Island Department of Education. The RIDE homeless liaison will review these materials and determine the school selection or enrollment decision and will notify Paul Cuffee School and parent or unaccompanied youth of the decision.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Families experiencing homelessness will be informed of their rights and the services available to them and their children under the McKinney Vento Act and state law. Families will receive an Eligibility Letter once identified, and a Re-verification Form at the end of the school year. Information will be provided in a language and manner that families can understand. The Homeless Liaison will be the main point of contact for such families and will work with the parent/guardian to assess needs and facilitate access to housing, food, transportation and other needed services, including the needs of their children attending other district schools. The liaison will support the family during their homelessness, removing barriers and providing opportunities to meaningfully participate in the education of their children.

TITLE 1

- Children and youth experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible for Title I services, regardless of what school they attend.
- The district shall reserve such funds as are necessary to provide comparable services to homeless children and youth.
- Reserved funds will be used to provide education-related support services to children and youth experiencing homelessness, both in school and outside of school, and to remove barriers that prevent regular attendance.
- Homeless children and youth shall be assessed, reported on, and included in accountability systems, as required by federal law and U.S. Department of Education regulations and guidance.

STAFF TRAINING

- The liaison will conduct training for all staff members each year.
- The liaison will share resources and district training opportunities with staff.
- The training and activities will be designed to increase staff awareness of homelessness and ability to identify families and students, facilitate immediate enrollment, ensure compliance with this policy, and increase sensitivity to families, children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Policy on Responsible Use of Personal Electronic Devices

Purpose and policy:

In order to reduce distractions, maintain an environment focused on learning and protect the privacy and safety of students and staff, students are prohibited from the use of personal electronic devices on school grounds and during school-sponsored activities.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this policy, a “personal electronic device” means a smartphone, mobile phone, tablet, computer, smartwatch, or other electronic device not owned or provided to a student by the Paul Cuffee School that is capable of communication through the internet or a wireless network.

Prohibition on use or access to personal electronic devices:

Students are prohibited from physically accessing personal electronic devices during the school day as defined by the department of education and the commission of elementary and secondary education pursuant to R.I.G.L. §§ 16-2-2 and 16-2-9 and any regulations promulgated thereunder including, but not limited to, 200-RICR-20-05-1.

Exemptions:

Student personal devices used to provide access to assistive technology necessary to comply with individualized student 504 plans, individualized education plans (IEP), medical needs such as glucose monitoring, and/or a plan to support emergent multilingual learners (MLL) students with appropriate language access programs and services to ensure the provision of appropriate, meaningful public education are exempt from this policy. Any such exemptions shall be written into the student’s identified plan and approved by the appropriate team or coordinator. Students provided an exception to this policy shall not be segregated from students without such exception. Exceptions shall also be made in the event of an emergency.

Title I Yearly Notification



Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to a new school year! As you may know, our school receives federal funds as a Title 1 school and with these funds come extra staff support, resources and information for you about Title 1 and your child's education.

This letter is to inform you that you have the right to request information about the qualifications of the classroom staff working with your child. I can assure you that currently all staff at Paul Cuffee School are designated "highly qualified". You will be notified by the school if at any time your student will be taught for four (4) or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

If you are interested in more details about the credentials of our staff, the answers to the following questions can be provided on request:

Has your child's teacher met state licensing requirements for the grade level and subject they are teaching?

What are the college degree majors and specialties or certificates the teacher holds?

You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of our teaching partners (paraprofessionals) who are working with your child. We will provide the answers to the following on request:

Is your child receiving Title 1 services from a paraprofessional?

If yes,

- Has s/he/they completed at least two years of study at an institution of higher learning?
- Has s/he/they completed an associate's degree or higher?
- Has s/he/they met the state's certification procedure for paraprofessional staff?
- Does s/he/they have the knowledge and ability to assist in instructing in reading, writing and math or the knowledge and ability to help with learning activities such as homework, reading readiness and work skills coaching?

If you would like to request this information, please contact me by phone at change or via e-mail at jdriscoll@paulcuffee.org

We look forward to partnering with you around your child's education.

Robin Yabroudy
Director of Special Education

Annual Asbestos Management Plan Notification

To: Paul Cuffee Lower School Community
From: Jeffrey Dronzek, Business Manager
Subject: ANNUAL ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN NOTIFICATION
Date: 2026

I am pleased to report that any and all hazardous material that was identified in the hazardous material survey conducted prior to the construction/renovation of this building for a school was abated or encapsulated.

A licensed abatement contractor removed and properly disposed of all asbestos containing material that was identified, and further either removed from the site or covered existing surfaces with new material to completely encapsulate any identified lead in the building.

Certification that all new construction was free of either asbestos or lead or any other known hazardous substances was provided to the Paul Cuffee School when an accredited SEA inspector completed the site inspection on July 19, 2003.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 453-2626.

To: Paul Cuffee Middle School Community
From: Jeffrey Dronzek, Business Manager
Subject: Notification of AVAILABILITY OF ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN
Date: 2026

This is to inform all staff, students, and parents that the requirements of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) 40 CFR Part 763 have been fulfilled in regards to the inspection of the Paul Cuffee Middle School building for asbestos containing materials.

A management plan has been developed by an accredited asbestos planner and is on file in the school's administrative office. This document contains information concerning asbestos containing materials identified to be present in this school building.

If you have any questions concerning the content of this document, please contact Jeffrey Dronzek, Business Manager, phone 401-453-2626.

To: Paul Cuffee Upper School Community
From: Jeffrey Dronzek, Business Manager
Subject: ANNUAL ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN NOTIFICATION
Date: 2026

I am pleased to report that any and all hazardous material that was identified in the hazardous material survey conducted prior to the renovation of this building in 1993 has been abated or encapsulated.

A licensed abatement contractor removed and properly disposed of all asbestos containing material that was identified, and further either removed from the site or covered existing surfaces with new material to completely encapsulate any identified lead in the building.

Certification that all new construction was free of either asbestos or lead or any other known hazardous substances was provided to the Providence School Department.

All previous Asbestos Management Plans and re-inspection records are kept on file at the school location and in the school's administrative office.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 453-2626.