

Fitler Family Handbook

2026-2027



Fitler Academics Plus

(215) 400-3610

140 W. Seymour Street

Philadelphia, PA 19144

<https://fitler.philasd.org>

Fitler Academics Plus

Our Vision

- Fitler students will be confident, compassionate and creative critical thinkers with the skills, agency and resources to create their own future and make a positive impact on their community.



Our Mission

- **Create safe, joyful, and inclusive environments** where students can be their authentic selves and all identities are acknowledged and celebrated.
- **Provide high-quality, data-driven instruction** that includes real-world problem solving, collaboration, reflection and celebration tailored to each student's individual interests and needs.
- **Prioritize the whole child** by providing opportunities for student voice, relationship building, fostering empathy, perseverance, resilience and self-awareness.
- **Engage with families and community partners** to support children and provide opportunities for extended learning, leadership, wellness, and creative expression.
- **Dismantle systems of oppression** by creating a culture of high expectations, understanding how the challenges of the past have shaped our present, and creating leaders with the agency, compassion and civic engagement to impact our future.

The School District of Philadelphia
Fitler Academics Plus Elementary School
140 W. Seymour St.
Philadelphia, PA 19144

Dr. Kate Sylvester, Principal
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Learning Network 5
School Phone: (215) 400-3610

August 24, 2026

Dear Fitler Academics Plus Families,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! I trust you all had a restful and enriching summer, and that our students are returning with enthusiasm for the exciting learning journey ahead. We are eagerly anticipating another year of partnership with you, dedicated to nurturing your child's academic, social, and emotional development.

As we embark on this new school year, our commitment to strong home-school communication remains a priority. We believe that a collaborative approach is essential for every student to thrive. Here are some valuable ways you can support your child's success at home:

- Ensure your child attends school regularly and arrives on time each day.
- Prioritize a consistent sleep schedule, aiming for at least eight hours of sleep each night.
- Help establish a regular study routine. Provide a quiet and comfortable space for reading and dedicated time for homework.
- Maintain open communication with your child's teacher through Class Dojo.
- Actively participate in school-wide events, classroom activities, and report card conferences.
- Celebrate your child's achievements, no matter how small they may seem. Your verbal praise and encouragement will foster a love of learning and build their confidence.

To ensure you have all the information you need to stay informed throughout the year, this handbook includes checkpoints for your review and clear guidance in the appendices. A digital copy is also readily available on the [Fitler website](#).

I am confident that this will be an outstanding school year and look forward to working with the staff and community to continue the Fitler Academics Plus School tradition of academic excellence! I look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,

Dr. Kate Sylvester
Principal

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General Information

School Hours

- School hours are 9:00 AM to 3:39 PM daily.

Arrival

- All students will line up in the school yard.
- Kindergarten students must be supervised by a parent/caregiver at all times prior to the school day while in the schoolyard.
- Teachers will pick students up from the schoolyard at 9:00 AM.
- Students arriving after 9:00 AM must enter through Entrance A and get a late pass from the office.
- No vehicles are allowed to drive into the schoolyard.

Dismissal

- Students are dismissed on a staggered schedule.
- There will be no early dismissals after 3:00 PM.
- All teachers will walk students outside.
- No vehicles are allowed to drive into the schoolyard.
- Dismissal Times:
 - K-2 - 3:30 PM
 - 3-5 - 3:35 PM
 - 6-8 - 3:39 PM

Inclement Weather

- All students will enter through Entrance A (main entrance) starting at 8:30AM.
- K-4 will go to the library.
- 5-8 will go to the cafeteria.
- Regular dismissal locations are used.

Bus Transportation

- Provided for students with transportation in their IEPs or 504 Plans.
- Parents will be notified by the School District of Philadelphia of significant bus delays when possible.
- Other bus concerns: School District of Philadelphia Transportation Office at (215) 400-4350.
- Send a note with the driver if your child will not ride the bus.
- Bus expectations:
 1. Remain in the assigned seat.
 2. No cell phone use (except emergencies with driver/attendant approval).
 3. Keep hands inside windows.
 4. Do not open windows without driver permission.
 5. Keep book bags out of the aisle.
 6. Always face forward.
 7. Be respectful to the driver and attendant.

Transpasses

- Students in grades 6, 7 and 8 who live at least 1.5 miles from the school are eligible for SEPTA fare cards.
- Cards will be distributed to eligible students at the beginning of the year by the counselor.
- Students must be responsible for keeping their fare cards safe and damage-free.
- Questions or concerns about fare cards can be brought to the school counselor.

Breakfast

- Research indicates that students who begin school with a healthy breakfast achieve greater academic success.
- Free breakfast is offered to all students at Fitler daily.
- All students will have breakfast in the classroom when school starts.
- A monthly menu is sent home listing all breakfast can be found at <https://philasd.nutrislice.com/>.

Lunch

- Free lunch is offered to all students at Fitler daily.
- Students are also welcome to bring lunch from home.
- A monthly menu is sent home listing all lunch offerings can be found at <https://philasd.nutrislice.com/>.
- As a safety precaution, staff members cannot heat up food for students that they bring in from home.
- Students are not permitted to share food.
- If a child forgets their lunch they will select a school lunch from the cafeteria. We ask that families do not drop off lunches, as it disrupts classroom instruction.

Bathroom Policy

- At Fitler, we want all students to feel comfortable and safe. Our school follows a district policy ([Policy 252](#)) that allows students to use the restroom that matches how they identify.
- We also have all-gender bathrooms in the school, like the ones near the office and in each hallway. These are private, single rooms with one toilet, like a family bathroom. Anyone can use these if they want a little more privacy.
- If you have any questions about our bathroom policy, please feel free to ask the school counselor.

Hall Passes

- Students must stay in assigned classrooms at all times. Teachers will issue hall passes as needed. Students without a pass will be returned to their assigned space.
- Students must have a hall pass to leave the cafeteria or schoolyard during lunch and recess.

Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds

- The Fitler community values health and wellness. Students learn about healthy food choices and active lifestyles through school programming. Shared treats for birthdays and/or celebrations are not permitted due to the serious risk of allergic reactions among our students. Instead, students may bring a healthy snack (e.g., pretzels, fruit, vegetables) or a non-food item (e.g., donate a book to the class library, a small, allergy-friendly toy) to celebrate.

Student Attendance

Attendance

- Research shows that daily school attendance is critical for every student's academic success and social-emotional well-being. Students with good attendance are more likely to:
 - read on or above grade level
 - perform well in math
 - build healthy, lasting relationships at school
 - and successfully graduate high school on time
- Each child's goal is to reach a 95% attendance rate. That means they cannot miss more than 9 days in the school year (excused or unexcused.)
- Punctuality and good attendance are two of the basic principles of good work habits and ensure a student's success in school. Poor attendance and lateness becomes a barrier to learning.
- *The School District of Philadelphia's Attendance Policy can be found here:* [Board of Education Policy 204. Student Attendance.](#)

Early Dismissal

- It is imperative that your child remains in school the entire day in order to maximize the benefits of instruction. Instructional time is valuable and cannot be recouped once it is lost.
- Children with numerous early dismissals quickly fall behind in school so it is vital that parents schedule medical appointments after school and/or during school closures.
- If your child must be dismissed early, he or she must bring in a written note signed by the parents stating the time and reason for the early dismissal.
- *All adults must show ID* to verify they are on the list of adults approved to remove a child for an early dismissal as indicated on the emergency contact sheet.
- The child will then be called to the office.
- For the safety and security of your child, no child will be dismissed without an identified adult (21 and over) to accompany him or her.
- There are no early dismissals after 3:00 P.M.

Emergency School Closing

- School closures due to weather are announced via Class Dojo and School Messenger as well as on TV stations and posted on the [School District's website](#).
- Please ensure your home and emergency contact information is current and review emergency home plans with your child. All emergency updates will be shared promptly on Class Dojo; please [sign up here](#).

Excused Absences

- To have an absence marked as excused, parents/guardians must do one of the following within 3 days of the absence:
 - Complete the [Fittler Excused Absence Form](#).
 - Submit a written absence note to the teacher.
- Failure to provide either of these within 3 days will result in the absence being marked as UNEXCUSED.
- Important Notes:
 - Providing a note does not automatically excuse an absence if there is a pattern of frequent absences or lateness.
 - Absences for family trips or vacations will not be excused.
 - For extended medical or other urgent absences, please notify the school in advance.



- For absences of 3 or more consecutive days, a doctor's note is required in addition to a parent/caregiver message via Class Dojo.
- It is the student's and parent's responsibility to ask the teacher about any missed make-up work, tests, or assignments.
- 10 unexcused absences will lead to a truancy referral to court/DHS and suspension from school activities, following the [School District of Philadelphia's Response to Truancy Protocol](#).
- Reasons for Excused Absence (with proper documentation as required):
 - 01 - Other Urgent Reason
 - 05 - Illness
 - 06 - Quarantine
 - 07 - Recovery from Accident
 - 08 - Required Court Attendance
 - 09 - Death/Funeral Related Absence
 - 10 - Educational Tour, Trip, or Activity with Prior Principal Approval
 - 11 - Observance of a Religious Holiday, with Prior Principal Approval

Late Policy

- Punctuality sets the tone for the school day. Students who are constantly late disrupt the instructional program and quickly fall behind in school. Students arriving at school after 9:00 AM are considered late and must enter through the main entrance and obtain a late note from the front desk.
- *Chronic lateness will be investigated.*
- If a student arrives after 10:30 AM or leaves before 1:30 PM without a valid excuse note, the student will be marked in our Student Information System (SIS) as half a day unexcused.
- Two half days will add up to one full day in the SIS.
- Please note, students will be marked as tardy starting at 9:01AM.

Families, did you...

- ☐ Bookmark the [Fitler Excused Absence Form](#) link?

School Uniforms

School Uniform

- Acceptable Tops (Plain Colors Only: Burgundy, Gold, or Gray):
 - Polos
 - Button-down shirts
 - Sweatshirts (no hoods)
 - Sweaters
 - Cardigans
- Acceptable Bottoms (Plain Colors or Plaid: Gray, Burgundy, Black, or Plaid):
 - Pants
 - Skirts
 - Shorts (weather appropriate)
 - Jumpers
 - Leggings or tights worn *under* skirts or jumpers
- Acceptable Fitler Branded Items:
 - T-shirts (with Fitler logo)
 - Crewneck sweatshirts (with Fitler logo)
 - Sweatpants (with Fitler logo)
 - Fitler hoodies (with Fitler logo) - *This is the ONLY hooded item allowed.*
- Additional Information:
 - Fitler branded items will be sold throughout the year.
 - Fitler branded items can also be "purchased" with PBIS points in the PBIS store.
 - Contact our counselor for uniform assistance.

Unacceptable Items

- Ripped pants, non-Fitler hoods/logo shirts, undershirts as outerwear, leggings/tights as pants (without coverage), revealing clothing, indoor outerwear, large/dangling jewelry (safety), sandals, open-toe shoes, and non-religious/medical head coverings. Athletic wear with large, non-Fitler logos is also not permitted.

Lost and Found

- Please label all of your child's belongings and include their room number.
- Our Lost and Found is located in the cafeteria.
- Items in the Lost and Found will be donated at the end of each marking period.
- The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please work with your child to make sure they are responsible for their possessions.

Families, did you...

- ☐ Secure enough uniforms for each week?
- ☐ Label your child's belongings?

Family Communication

Calendars

- Monthly newsletters and calendars will be sent home via the Communication Folder and Class Dojo. You can also subscribe to the [Fitler Google Calendar](#) or find it on the [Fitler Website](#).

Class Dojo

- The administration sends important information through the School Story on Class Dojo. You can also directly contact your child's teachers and other school staff using Class Dojo. Scan the QR code or [click here](#) to join!



Communication Folders

- Every student will have a school-provided Communication Folder sent home weekly. This folder will contain important information (calendar, permission slips, forms).

Fitler Family Newsletter

- The Fitler Family Newsletter will be sent home monthly and will include updates, reminders, school wide events and important data.

Media Release

- At the beginning of the school year, you will receive a form regarding permission for the school to use your child's image, voice, video, work, and/or first name. This usage may include news media, district communications, and educational purposes.
- If you DO NOT object to the school using your child's media as described above, you do not need to return the form. Only if you OBJECT to the school using your child's media, please complete and return the form to the school. If we do not receive a completed form indicating an objection, we will assume that you have granted permission.

Meeting Requests

- Providing a high-quality education, supporting your child's well-being, and ensuring the safety of everyone at Fitler Academics Plus are our most important responsibilities. To consistently focus on these priorities for all students, we require scheduled appointments for meetings.
- This is not intended to be dismissive. Rather, it ensures that we can dedicate our time effectively to delivering excellent instruction and maintaining a safe and supportive environment for every child throughout the school day. Unscheduled interruptions can impact our ability to meet these commitments.
- We strongly encourage you to reach out to the school whenever you have a question or concern. To schedule a meeting with a specific staff member, please contact them directly through Class Dojo or call the main office. We will work with you to find a convenient time to connect.

Parent Portal

- Access the [Parent Portal](#) via the School District of Philadelphia's [Family & Community Engagement website](#) to view your child's grades and absences in SIS. For a Parent Portal code, message the school secretary on Class Dojo. You'll need your student's ID, a personal email, and access to the phone number on file for registration. Please sign up; contact the School Technology Coordinator on Class Dojo for account help.

Parent & Guardian Expectations for a Safe and Respectful School

- We rely on our families to model respectful and responsible behavior, contributing to a positive climate for all. We ask all parents and guardians to adhere to the following expectations:

- Use respectful, appropriate, and non-threatening language in all interactions (in-person, phone, email, etc.).
- Remain calm and non-threatening while on school property.
- Do NOT approach or interact directly with any student other than your own child(ren). If you have a concern about another student, please bring it to the attention of a staff member.
- All school staff members have the right to end a conversation at any time if they feel uncomfortable, threatened, or if the communication becomes inappropriate.
- Visitors must have photo identification on them at all times.
- We appreciate your partnership in creating and maintaining a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for every child at Fitler Academics Plus. Failure to adhere to these expectations can have serious consequences and may lead to exclusion from the school community.

Policy for Unscheduled Visits

- Unscheduled meetings with staff are not permitted, as they disrupt classroom instruction and school safety protocols.
- Any visitor who arrives without a scheduled appointment will be asked to complete a Parent & Guardian Concern Form and vacate the school premises immediately thereafter.
- The staff can not and will not discuss student information with anyone other than those indicated as guardians in the Student Information System (SIS). Emergency contacts are NOT guardians unless specifically indicated in the system.
- Law Enforcement Notification: If a visitor refuses to leave school property after being instructed to do so by a staff member or administrator, the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) will be immediately notified to escort the individual from the premises to ensure the safety and well-being of our students and staff.

Problem Solving and Addressing Concerns

- Consistent communication about your child's progress is key to a strong parent-teacher partnership, and you have a right to regular updates. If you have a concern or question, please follow the outlined process.

How to resolve a concern at Fitler Academics Plus Parent & Guardian Concern Process

<u>Academic Concerns</u> Step 1: Contact the Teacher Step 2: Contact the School Based Teacher Leader Step 3: Contact the Principal	<u>Guidance & Behavioral Health Concerns</u> Step 1: Contact the School Counselor Step 2: Contact the Principal
<u>Special Education Concerns</u> Step 1: Contact the Teacher Step 2: Contact the Special Education Compliance Monitor Step 3: Contact the Principal	<u>Attendance and Early Dismissals</u> Step 1: Contact the Teacher Step 2: Contact the Main Office Step 3: Contact the School Counselor
<u>Behavior Concerns</u> Step 1: Contact the Teacher Step 2: Contact the Climate Liaison Step 3: Contact the School Based Teacher Leader Step 4: Contact the Principal	<u>Health Concerns and Medical Accommodations</u> Step 1: Contact the Nurse Step 2: Contact the Principal

- Important Note: If you have not received a response within two business days, proceed to the next step.

- Email addresses are located on the Fidler [website](#). Emails or Class Dojo are usually the best method of communication except in cases that require immediate action.

Report Card Conferences

- Report Card Conferences will be held at the end of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd marking periods.
- Final report cards will be available on the Parent Portal at the end of the year.
- This year's Report Card Conferences will be held on the following dates:
 - 11/16/26 - School closed for students
 - 1/29/27 - School closed for students
 - 4/16/27 - School closed for students

School Advisory Council (SAC)

- School Advisory Councils (SACs) are peer-elected teams of parents (majority), the principal, teachers/staff, and community members. They meet at least every other month to collaboratively focus on improving student achievement, teaching, parent/community engagement, and home-school communication through data-driven discussions. More membership information will be provided in the Fall. SACs have 7-21 members following specific representation guidelines for parents, students (optional for elementary/middle), staff, and community members, as outlined in their bylaws.

School Messenger

- The School District of Philadelphia sends important updates via all-calls, texts, and emails to the contact information in the Parent Portal. If you aren't receiving these, please log in to the Parent Portal to verify your phone number and email.

Student Portal

- Students have access to the Student Portal where they can access online programs and resources.
- Students access this using their student ID number.

Translation & Sign Language Interpretation Services

- Translation and sign language interpretation services are available. Please inform the teacher or main office to take advantage of these services.

Families did you...

- ☐ Provide updated and accurate phone numbers and email addresses to the school?
- ☐ Sign up for the Parent Portal and ensure that a current phone number and email address is on file?
- ☐ Sign up to receive phone, text and/or email alerts through the Parent Portal?
- ☐ Sign up for [ClassDojo](#)?

School Safety & Security

Emergency Contact Forms

- Emergency contact forms will be sent home the first week. Update and return them promptly. Inform the school of any changes during the year. You can also view this information and make changes in the [Parent Portal](#).

Legal Custody

- Please inform the main office and teacher of any custody agreements and provide a copy of the custody decree. School decisions regarding your child (e.g., pick-up authorization) will be based on these legal documents. Custodial parents/guardians are also asked to provide copies of any restraining orders.

Safety Drills

- Student and staff safety is a top priority. We practice emergency and crisis response plans through various drills throughout the school year to ensure a safe learning environment.

Fire Drills

- Purpose: To ensure student understanding and preparedness, reducing fear.
- Exit Routes: Posted in each classroom, indicating designated stairwell and exit.
- Alarm Procedure: Upon hearing the alarm, students quietly exit with their teacher.
- Before Exiting: Close doors and windows, turn off lights, ensure all students have left.
- Mandatory Evacuation: Everyone must leave the building during a fire drill.
- Supervision: Teachers remain with their class and accompany them to the designated Safe Area (open spaces away from the building, fire lanes, and parked cars).
- Safe Area Procedures: Teachers will take roll immediately and report any missing students to the principal.
- Return Signal: An "all clear" via walkie-talkies to safety committee members will signal when it is safe to return to classrooms.
- Conduct: Running, playing, or rough conduct during drills is prohibited.

Lockdown Drills

- A lockdown drill, securing the building and sheltering everyone inside for safety from internal or external threats, will be conducted within the first 90 school days. During a lockdown, all perimeter doors are locked, and no one enters or leaves until authorized by authorities.

Shelter-In-Place Drills

- A shelter-in-place drill will be held once per year to prepare for moving to a safe location inside the building during severe weather or tornadoes.

Special Release

- Student safety is our priority. School staff follow strict guidelines for releasing students, requiring proper photo ID from adults listed on the emergency contact form. Please review the district's [letter and policy](#) at the end of this handbook. Thank you for helping keep Fitler safe.

Visitors

- For staff and student safety, all visitors must enter through the designated visitor entrance, report to the main office, sign in, show ID, and obtain a visitor's pass before accessing the building. They must also sign out upon departure. This ensures an accurate record of everyone in the building. Visitors may not enter through school yard doors.

Volunteer Clearances

- Pennsylvania law requires the following clearances for volunteers: PA State Police criminal history, Child Abuse History.
- The School District of Philadelphia also requires a Volunteer Code of Conduct, Volunteer Affirmation OR FBI Background Check (if out-of-state in the last 10 years), and a Volunteer Orientation.
- See the [FACE website](#) for district protocols. A checklist is in the back of this handbook.
- Volunteer packets must be on file in Fitler's office.
- These steps are required to chaperone field trips.

Families, did you...

- ☐ Review the drills with your child and explain that we practice them to keep everyone safe?
- ☐ Update your emergency contacts?
- ☐ Ensure that the main office has any custody agreements or other legal paperwork on file?
- ☐ Complete your volunteer registration packet?
- ☐ Complete your child's emergency contact form with the full and correct information on any adult that may pick up your child (including you)?

Student Health Services

About Student Health Services

- School nurses support student health and safety by promoting healthy development, addressing health issues, and connecting students with necessary resources. They collaborate with medical and educational teams to optimize student well-being and academic success. Nurses conduct state-mandated screenings, manage immunizations, and ensure adherence to safety protocols.
- Learn more about the School District of Philadelphia's student health services by clicking [here](#).

School District Nurses:

- Provide medical care for student illnesses, injuries and emergencies
- Maintain health and immunization records on all students
- Perform state-mandated health screenings
- Administer doctor prescribed medications
- Perform nursing procedures
- Assist physicians and dentists with school examinations
- Provide health counseling and referrals
- Provide classroom instruction on health related topics
- Serve as a parent and classroom consultant in health related matter

Immunization of Students

- PA law requires all students (K-12) to be vaccinated while attending school. Students that do not have the required immunizations may be excluded from school until they have received the appropriate vaccines. Submit written documentation of vaccines to your school nurse.

Immunization Disease:	Required for Attendance in School Grades (k-12)
DTaP(Diphtheria, Tetanus and acellular Pertussis)	Five Doses (only 4 needed if #3 was after 4th birthday)
Polio (IPV)	Four Doses (only 3 needed if #3 was after 4th birthday)
MMR(Measles, Mumps, Rubella)	Two Doses (first must be after 1st birthday)
Hepatitis B	Three Doses
Varicella (Chickenpox)	Two Doses (administered on or after the first birthday), or past disease
Tetanus, Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Acellular Pertussis (Tdap)	1 Dose
Meningococcal Conjugate (MCV4)	1 Dose

Medication

- Any medication to be administered during school hours requires an order from the student's physician.
- If your child requires medication in school, please see the nurse for a [MED 1](#) form.
- *Please do not send medication to school with your child until you have contacted the school nurse.*

Nurse

- Fitler Academics Plus has a nurse on-site 5 days a week. Please call 215-400-3610 to schedule an appointment. The nurse will notify you in writing about routine school health examinations. School policy requires all nurse-dispensed medications to be in original containers. Students should not bring medication to school without informing the nurse.

Annual Student Emergency and Medical Information Form (S-865)

- The annual health history form ([S-865](#)) is crucial for emergency medical information. It allows the school nurse to administer over-the-counter pain relievers (Acetaminophen/Ibuprofen) and, if prescribed, Albuterol/EpiPen, with written parental consent.

Physicals

- All students entering kindergarten and all students entering the district for the first time are required to turn in a physical form completed by their primary care provider.

Health Guidelines for School Attendance

- Healthy Attendance: Send your child to school if they are generally healthy and able to participate in daily activities.
- Uncertainty: If your child feels unwell and you're unsure, keep them home to observe for worsening symptoms.
- Reporting Absence: Notify the school secretary or nurse about the absence and their symptoms.
- Stay Home Criteria: Keep your child home until symptoms are gone or improved AND they are free of diarrhea, vomiting, or fever (without medication) for at least 24 hours.
- Worsening Symptoms: See a doctor if your child's symptoms don't improve or worsen.
- Return to School: Once improved and symptom-free (including no fever, vomiting, or diarrhea without medication for 24 hours), your child should return to in-person learning.
- Nurse's Judgment: School nurses may use their clinical judgment regarding exclusion due to illness.
- Full Guidelines: See the [Student Health Services](#) website for complete details.

Families, did you...

- ☐ Complete the Annual Student Emergency and Medical Information Form ([S-865](#))?
- ☐ Contact the nurse with any immunization questions?
- ☐ Have your physician complete the [MED 1](#) form, if needed?

Student Counseling Services

Role of the Guidance Counselor

- Meets with students individually, in groups, and through classroom lessons.
- Consults with staff to support students' academic, career, and personal growth.
- Partners with parents/guardians to enhance student success.
- Connects families with community resources.
- Supports school-wide behavioral programs (Peer Mediation, buddy system, mentoring).
- Coordinates school-wide guidance events (Peace Day, Career Day, etc.).

Student Referral

- Anyone can refer a student using available forms, dropped off in the counselor's mailbox or office.
- The counselor can observe students with behavioral difficulties upon teacher or administrator request.
- In an emergency, call the counselor immediately.

Visiting the Guidance Counselor

- Students may visit the guidance counselor:
 - During Class: Only with a pass from a teacher, administrator, or the counselor.
 - Emergency: Teacher will immediately inform the counselor for visibly distressed students, self-harm threats, or knowledge of outside trauma; parents will be contacted.

McKinney-Vento Act: Supporting Homeless Students

- This federal law ensures educational rights for students experiencing homelessness, including those sharing housing, in shelters/motels, or unaccompanied.
- Key Rights:
 - Immediate Enrollment: Even without standard documents.
 - School of Origin: Right to continue attending if feasible.
 - Transportation: To/from school of origin if feasible.
 - Equal Education: Access to all programs.
 - No Stigma: Right to non-discrimination.
 - Dispute Resolution: Promptly address enrollment/placement issues.
- We support homeless students with enrollment, transportation options, resources, community connections, and confidentiality.
- If you have questions or think your child qualifies, contact the school counselor. We're here to help.

Parent Conferences

- The counselor will periodically need to meet with parents.
- If a parent wants the teacher present, the counselor will try to schedule the meeting during the teacher's prep time.
- If the teacher can't attend, they will provide the counselor with a brief update on the student's classroom performance.

Academic Programs

Chromebooks

- Each student receives a district Chromebook and must care for it appropriately, avoiding inappropriate websites. Willful damage or misuse may result in restitution or loss of privileges. Students must follow the School District's technology policies.

Core Curriculum

- Fittler provides a rigorous, student-centered curriculum, adapting to individual learning styles and interests. Teachers engage in ongoing professional development. Core subjects (Reading - Expeditionary Learning, Mathematics - Illustrative Math, Science - Amplify Science, Social Studies) are taught daily, alongside specials: Digital Literacy, Health & Physical Education, Music, and Social-Emotional Learning.

English to Students of Other Languages

- Students whose primary language is not English and meets the requirements for ESOL services will receive language instruction from an ESOL teacher.

Highly Qualified Staff

- Federal legislation requires principals to inform parents of their right to request teacher qualifications (notice in September). Parents will also be notified if a non-highly qualified substitute teacher for four consecutive weeks (notice in late September and regularly if needed).

Homework

- Homework is expected for practice and preparation. It must be completed on time. Daily reading expectations: K-20 min, 1-2-30 min, 3-5-30-50 min. Parents can support learning by setting a routine, providing materials, reviewing work, and communicating with teachers.

Instrumental Lessons

- Grades 5-8 can opt for instrumental music (4-5 week trial). Continued participation is expected until graduation if progress, effort, desire, and instrument responsibility are shown.

MTSS

- Students who are at-risk either academically and/or behaviorally will be referred to Tier II of MTSS, Multi-Tiered System of Support.
- Parents will be informed of the process and are invited to be active participants.
- Children in Tier 2 or Tier 3 of MTSS receive research-based intervention programs.

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

- The annual PSSA (grades 3-8 ELA/Math, grades 5 & 8 Science) assesses student proficiency in state academic standards. Individual scores inform instruction, and school scores guide curriculum improvement. Algebra I students take the Keystone Exam.

Retention of Students

- In grades 1 and 2, students must pass reading and math.
- In grades 3 through 7, students must pass reading, math, and science.
- In grade 8, students must pass reading, math, science, and social studies.
- Students can not be retained if there is no evidence of a Tiers 2 or 3 plan and consistent implementation of appropriate and applicable interventions and progress monitoring.

Special Education

- Students who have been identified with special needs will receive special education services in the Least Restrictive Environment as indicated in the Evaluation Report and Notice of Recommended Educational Program (NOREP) and as delivered by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- In some cases, the Least Restrictive Environment will mean services must be provided at another location.
- Your child may be eligible for special education if your child:
 1. Has an intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, deafness, a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities *and*
 2. Needs special education, as determined by an evaluation team.
- *Your child must meet both qualifications in order to be eligible for special education.* In Pennsylvania, all children eligible for special education have the right to a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE).

Title I Program

- As mandated by federal law, parents receive information about student achievement, educational choices, school performance, and teacher qualifications. The Parent Engagement Policy and School-Parent Compact are at the end of this handbook.

Trips

- Educational trips will occur, with teachers providing detailed permission slips (purpose, destination, logistics, cost, deadlines). General policies: money and signed slips due by deadline, cash only to teacher, no siblings, chaperones (21+, cleared volunteers) must return with the class, no refunds for absence/disciplinary exclusion.

Virtual Learning

- In case of emergencies, the district may implement virtual learning via synchronous Zoom instruction and assignments on Google Classroom.

Xello

- Career Readiness (Future Ready PA Index) requires students to produce career-related evidence in Xello across grade spans (3-5: 6+ pieces, 6-8: 6+ additional). These artifacts address Career Awareness, Acquisition, Retention, and Entrepreneurship. Xello is the district platform for these lessons and evidence collection.

504 Plans

- Section 504 service agreements, also known as 504 plans, are formal documents that schools develop to give students with disabilities (who do not qualify for special education services) the support they need.
- These plans prevent discrimination and protect the rights of students with disabilities in school.
- Students are covered under the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which is a civil rights law that protects individuals from discrimination based on disability.
- Under this law, individuals with disabilities may not be excluded from or denied the opportunity from certain programs.
- If you believe your child is in need of a 504 Plan please reach out to the school nurse and/or school counselor.

Families, did you...

- ☐ Notify your child's teacher of any of the above supports that he or she should be receiving?

Student Behavior Expectations

Fitler Student Expectations

A Fitler Student:

- Is On Time, Every Day
- Is In Uniform Everyday
- Stays in Assigned Areas
- Uses Appropriate Language
- Uses Technology Appropriately
- Does Not Eat or Drink in the Classroom
- Keeps their Hands, Feet and Objects to Themselves



Fitler Student Expectations

- Student expectations are necessary to maintain a safe and orderly environment where all students can learn. We appreciate your partnership in ensuring that Fitler Academics Plus Elementary School remains a positive and productive place for everyone.
- Any student who puts their hands on another student or continuously walks out of class without permission will be sent home immediately in order to ensure the safety of the school community. If the child is not picked up they will not be able to return the following day without a parent or guardian. Any subsequent incident will result in more severe disciplinary action.

Student Behavior Management

- Creating a safe and secure learning environment through routine, clear expectations, and collaboration between school staff and families is a shared responsibility.
- Fitler uses restorative practices to resolve conflict and prevent harm by proactively building healthy relationships and community. This includes peer mediation (student-led conflict resolution) and community meeting (effective conflict prevention and response for students and educators).
- Families are vital partners in fostering positive behavior, respect, and responsibility in their children, which significantly influences their conduct at school. This is an ongoing effort.
- All students are expected to behave in an acceptable and responsible manner while at school, on field trips, riding the bus, in the school yard, lunchroom and other school related situations. Positive behavior, courtesy and cooperation are essential to learning.
- Fitler School adheres to the *School District of Philadelphia Student Code of Conduct*.

Middle School Behavior Contract

Every student deserves a school environment free from disruption. This contract provides a transparent roadmap of consequences while offering structured support to help students succeed.

- The following behaviors are strictly prohibited. Engaging in any of these actions will enact the progressive disciplinary steps outlined below.
- Attendance & Supervision
 - Cutting Class: Being absent from an assigned class while present on school grounds
 - Eloping: Leaving the classroom, assigned area, or school building without explicit staff permission
 - Refusal to Report: Intentionally failing to go to an assigned area (e.g., the classroom, the office, or the cafeteria) when directed
- Safety & Violence
 - Fighting, Assault, or Instigation

- Reckless endangerment, threats, or intimidation
- Threatening mass violence (Subject to immediate legal/police notification)
- **Illegal Items & Substance Use**
 - Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol, drugs, or paraphernalia
 - Possession or use of a weapon or incendiary device
- **Conduct & Property**
 - Harassment, bullying, or cyberbullying
 - Inappropriate touch/exposure
 - Inappropriate use of technology – Including but not limited to, cellular phones and smartwatches, personal tablets, iPads, and laptops, Bluetooth headphones, AirPods, and/or earbuds
 - Students are required to store or remove all personal electronic devices immediately upon entering the building or when directed by school staff. Devices must be powered off or placed in "Do Not Disturb" mode to prevent notifications that disrupt the learning environment.
 - Failure to comply with a staff member's request to store a device or use of a device without explicit pedagogical permission constitutes inappropriate use of electronic devices
 - Destruction of school or personal property or theft of school or personal property
- When an incident occurs, the family will be notified and asked to come to the school immediately to meet with a member of the leadership team and take the child home. The formal consequence will be enacted on the following school day.
- Each infraction—regardless of the category—moves the student one step further down the scale.

Step	Violation	Consequence
1	First Offense	1 Day Reset: Student must remain at home to reflect and recalibrate.
2	Second Offense	1 Day OSS: Formal Out-of-School Suspension
3	Third Offense	2 Day OSS: Extended Out-of-School Suspension
4	Fourth Offense	3 Day OSS: Final Warning; Mandatory Parent & Administration Conference
5	Fifth Offense	Disciplinary Transfer Request: An application will be submitted for an alternative education placement.

**Severe infractions involving weapons, drug distribution, or threats of mass violence may result in an immediate move to Step 5.*

- **Supporting Our Students:** To assist students in meeting these expectations, the contract includes a Student Support Plan, featuring:
 - Check-in & check-out: Daily morning and afternoon meetings with a case manager.
 - Daily report: Period-by-period feedback on behavior and attendance.
 - Cool-down space: Access to a supervised area to prevent elopement when feeling overwhelmed.

Bullying & Harassment Policy

- Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated at Fitler Academics Plus.
- In an effort to be as responsive as possible the School District of Philadelphia has created a centralized reporting form. This system ensures a consistent, immediate response and allows for collection of data to further inform our decision making. This procedure starts by filling out the Bullying and Harassment

Reporting and Investigation form which can be found on the school district website. Schools are required to investigate all reports within two (2) school days after receipt of the form.

- Bullying is defined as an intentional electronic, written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at a student or students, which occurs in a school setting, off-campus conduct, including online or social media conduct, that has a continuing effect on the campus, and which is severe, persistent, or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:
 1. Substantially interfering with a student's education;
 2. Creating a threatening school environment; or
 3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.
- Harassment is verbal, nonverbal, written, graphic, virtual or physical conduct relating to an individual's known or perceived protected classification. It is conduct that may be harmful or humiliating or interfere with a person's school or school-related performance. Such conduct is:
 1. Subjectively and objectively offensive; and
 2. So severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school.
 3. Protected Classification: Classifications which are defined under federal, state or local law as being protected. These classes include race, color, ethnicity, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation (known or perceived), gender identity or expression (known or perceived), shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, English language proficiency, veteran status, and disability.
 4. Title IX: (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972) is a federal law that prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs and activities. This includes sex-based harassment which is defined as quid pro quo sexual harassment; unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to a District education program or activity; or sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking.
- School District of Philadelphia's information and policies:
 - [Student Rights & Responsibilities](#)
 - [Policy 248: Harassment & Discrimination](#)
 - [Policy 249: Bullying & Cyberbullying](#)

Personal Electronics

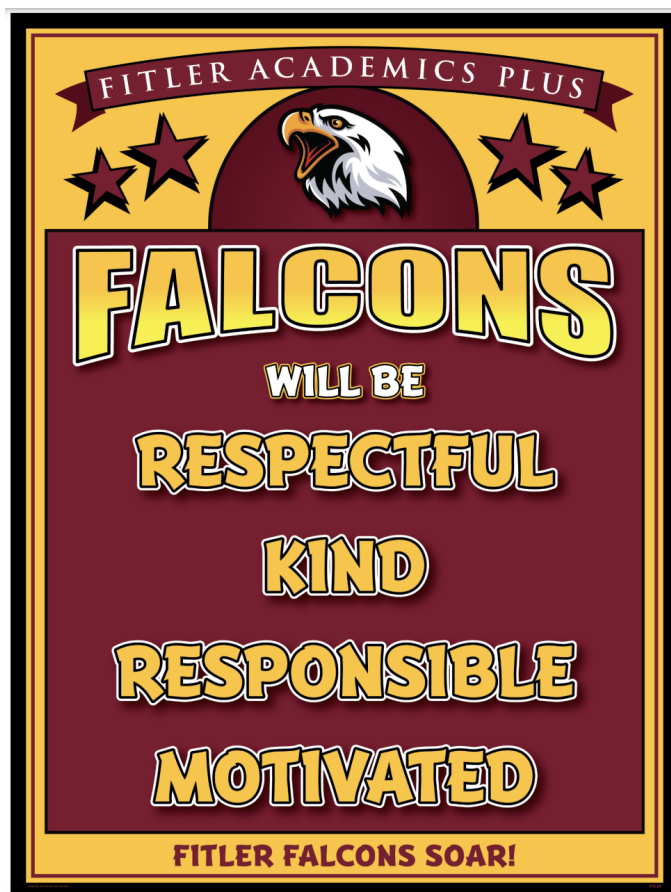
- Personal electronics includes cell phones, iPads, headphones, earbuds, hand-held video games, smart watches and any other non-District electronic device.
- All students must turn their devices in to their teacher at the beginning of the day. They will be secured for the day and returned at dismissal.
- If a child takes a phone or other device out without the teacher's permission, the teacher or adult will take the device and turn it into the main office. The child can retrieve it at the end of the day.
- Repeated offenses will result in consequences including phone calls and/or messages home, loss of privilege and behavior contracts created with the teacher and child.
- If a student brings a device or game to school and that device is lost, broken, or stolen, Fitler Academics Plus is not responsible and will not do an investigation to recover said lost or damaged item.
- Fitler adheres to [Policy 237](#), which can be found at the end of this Handbook.

CR-PBIS

- Culturally Responsive Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (CR-PBIS). CR-PBIS is a decision-making program designed to improve student academic and behavioral outcomes by using positive universal language and norms, consistent behavioral teaching practices, consistent behavioral

response guidelines, and data to guide how Fitler implements positive behavior procedures and policy decisions.

- Research suggests that by having consistent norms across the school, explicitly teaching behavioral norms, acknowledging positive, prosocial behaviors, and handling behavioral concerns consistently, the school environment can be positively impacted. CR-PBIS is designed to produce positive changes in the school's climate.
- The staff and students at Fitler will consistently implement the following behavioral norms of being:
 - Respectful
 - Kind
 - Responsible
 - Motivated
- Our areas of focus are classroom, schoolyard, cafeteria, hallways/stairwells, restrooms, transportation, in our community. Throughout the school year, teachers/staff members will reinforce how we will positively represent ourselves in the various focus areas.
- Students will receive points for exhibiting positive behaviors. In each classroom, teachers will set up the PBIS rewards system. Additionally, there will be a monthly school-wide PBIS event and/or rewards.
- Parents and students are able to view points earned on the PBIS app.



Families, did you...

- ☐ Review the CR-PBIS expectations with your child?
- ☐ Review the Code of Conduct with your child?

Important Resources, Communications and Policies from the School District of Philadelphia

1. [Parent and Family Engagement Policy](#)
2. [School-Parent Compact](#)
3. [Fitler Behavior Expectations](#)
4. [Volunteer Requirements](#)
5. [Administrative Procedures for Student Use of Electronic Devices](#)
6. [Early Release Procedures for School District of Philadelphia Students](#)
7. [Excused Absence Form](#)
8. [Join Class Dojo CR Code](#)
9. [2026-2027 Academic Calendar](#)

Fitler Academic Plus School
Parent and Family Engagement Policy
School Year 2026-2027
Revision Date: 03/6/2026

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Fitler Academic Plus School receives Title I, Part A funds and therefore must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by section 1116(b) and (c) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the school's expectations for parent and family engagement and describes how the school will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and it is incorporated into the school's plan submitted to the local educational agency (LEA).

Fitler Academic Plus School agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

Involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under Title I, Part A, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parent and family engagement policy and the joint development of the schoolwide program plan under Section 1114(b) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

- Update the school parent and family engagement policy periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school, distribute it to the parents of participating children, and make the parent and family engagement policy available to the local community.
- Provide full opportunities, to the extent practicable, for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the schoolwide program plan under Section 1114(b) of the ESSA is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the local educational agency.
- Be governed by the following statutory definition of parent and family engagement and will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parent and Family Engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

- A. Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
- B. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school
- C. Parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child
- D. Other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA

DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE SCHOOL WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED SCHOOL PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

Section A: JOINTLY DEVELOPED

Fitler Academic Plus School will take the following actions to involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs, including opportunities for regular meetings, if requested by parents, to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.

Parents are invited to attend the Spring Title I meeting with school administrators to discuss and review last year's Policy and Compact. This meeting provides parents and school leadership with an opportunity to jointly develop the School-Parent Compact and this Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Parents are then given the opportunity to make suggestions and provide input into this policy. This year, parents were invited to attend the Spring Title I meeting held on March 6, 2026.

Fitler Academics Plus School's principal promotes communication and collaboration with families, including but not limited to the School Advisory Council.

Section B: ANNUAL TITLE I MEETING

Fitler Academic Plus School will take the following actions to conduct an annual meeting, at a convenient time, and encourage and invite all parents of participating children to attend to inform them about the school's Title I program, the nature of the Title I program, the parents' requirements, the school parent and family engagement policy, the schoolwide plan, and the school-parent compact.

The Annual Title I meeting will be held in the Fall of 2026. At this time, the principal or designee will share information about the requirements of Title I, Part A, parent rights to know, the Parent and Family Engagement Policy, state and local assessments including the PSSAs, school curriculum, how to work with educators and to track student progress. Parents will be invited by a flyer, Class Dojo, and school website to attend the meeting. The preferred meeting time is 5:00PM-7:00PM in conjunction with Back to School Night.

Section C: COMMUNICATIONS

Fitler Academic Plus School will take the following actions to provide parents of participating children with

1. Timely information about the Title I programs
 2. Flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening
 3. Transportation, child care or home visits, as such services relate to parent and family engagement and may use Title I funds
 4. Information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
-

- *A monthly calendar, which illustrates all Fitler Academics Plus School's activities and meetings, is given to each student every month to take home to parents and guardians.*
- *The school's web page and The School District of Philadelphia's calendar is another vehicle for communication with parents as well as teacher Class Dojo and the School Messenger System.*
- *Flyers will go home to inform parents of meetings, workshops, and activities in clear, parent-friendly language. Translations are available as needed through the District's Family and Community Engagement office.*
- *Communication folders will be provided through Title I funds to enable teachers and parents to communicate with regard to homework and academic requirements.*
- *Parents are invited to provide feedback about the timing of the parent meetings and any other potential barriers to parental engagement on the parent survey.*
- *School will utilize student's email addresses as an additional form of communication between the school and families.*

Section D: SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

Fitler Academic Plus School will take the following actions to jointly develop with parents of participating children a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards.

The Spring Title I meeting provides an opportunity for parents and school leadership to jointly develop the School-Parent Compact and this Family and Community Engagement Policy. Parents are invited to attend this meeting with school administrators to discuss and review last year's policy. Parents are then given the opportunity to make suggestions and provide input into this policy. This year, parents were invited to attend the Spring Title I meeting held March 6, 2026 and Fitler posted a survey for feedback from families.

Section E: RESERVATION OF FUNDS

If applicable, Fitler Academic Plus School will take the following actions to involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent by:

- *Parents are invited to the Winter Title I meeting to review the school's budget. The parents can provide input on how the 1% Title I parental involvement set aside funds are budgeted in addition to providing input on the needs and spending priorities for the school.*
- *We held our Winter Title 1 Meeting on January 15, 2026 and discussed our current year budget and school level plan, record parental input and needs of our students and possible solutions to those needs.*

Section F: COORDINATION OF SERVICES

Fitler Academic Plus School will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children by:

- *The school will work in partnership with the parents to provide math and literacy workshops for parents to assist their children in academics at home.*
- *The Fitler Academics Plus School has a parent resource table located in the main office. This resource provides parents with academic information and resources available to them in the community.*
- *Parents will be connected with our Family and Community Engagement Liaison to be made aware of parent workshops being offered at the School District central office or at the school.*
- *Parents will utilize summer reading materials purchased with Parental Involvement Title 1 funds that are provided to students at the end of the school year.*

Section G: BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS

Fitler Academic Plus School will build the parents' capacity for strong parent and family engagement to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following:

- Providing parents with a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of the challenging State academic standards; and
- Materials and training to help parents to work with their child to improve their child's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parent and family engagement
- Providing assistance to parents of participating children, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following:
 - The challenging State's academic standards
 - The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments
 - The requirements of Title I, Part A
 - How to monitor their child's progress
 - How to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child

- *The Annual Title I meeting will be held in Fall 2026. Parents will be invited by flyers to attend a meeting with school-based personnel to review Title I requirements, parent documents, schoolwide plan, curriculum, academic standards, assessments, how to monitor your child's progress and how to work with educators.*
- *Provide workshops to parents on supporting student achievement, literacy, STEAM, and parent engagement.*
- *Work with the Family and Community Engagement Office to continue workshops on volunteer opportunities.*

Section H: BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF

Fitler Academic Plus School will provide training to educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school by:

During a District designated professional development day during the Fall or Winter, the school will educate their instructional and non-instructional staff on the many strategies they can use in working with parents and guardians as equal partners and how to communicate effectively. Results from parent surveys will inform the discussion.

Fitler Academic Plus School will provide other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities under Section 1116 as parents may request by:

- *Staff/Parent Meetings available per Parental Request*
- *Workshops/Training provided to parents based on survey and parents' needs*
- *Before and After-School Clubs offered*
- *Provide summer reading materials for families*
- *Provide coordination of professional development efforts through the Office of Teaching and Learning.*

Principal's Signature: *Kate Sylvester*

Date Signed: *May 1, 2026*

**Fitler Academic Plus School
School-Parent Compact
School Year 2026-2027
Revision Date: 03/6/2026**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

JOINTLY DEVELOPED

The parents, students, and staff of Fitler Academic Plus School partnered together to develop this School-Parent Compact for achievement. Parents are encouraged to attend annual revision meetings held Spring of each year to review the compact and make suggestions based on student needs and school improvement goals. Parents are also encouraged to participate in the School Family Engagement survey that is also used as a tool to collect parent feedback regarding the current Title I programs, policies and family engagement.

To understand how working together can benefit your child, it is first important to understand the district's and school's goals for student academic achievement. [The Board of Education's updated Goals and Guardrails are available on the School District Website at www.philasd.org.](http://www.philasd.org)

Fitler Academics Plus School GOALS

1. Literacy: Students in grades 3-8 PSSA ELA proficiency rate will increase from 35.7% in August 2019 to 65% by August 2026
2. Literacy: 3rd grade students PSSA ELA proficiency rate will increase in will grow from 32.5% in August 2019 to 62% by August 2026
3. Math: Students in grades 3-8 PSSA Math proficiency rate will increase from 21.5% in August 2019 to 52% by August 2026

To help your child meet the district and school goals, the school, you, and your child will work together:

SCHOOL/TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Fitler Academics Plus School will:

- Host a training for parents on how to navigate Parent Portal and SchoolNet
- Offer literacy, math, or STEAM nights for parents at least twice a year
- Hold three report card conferences to support individual achievement
- Provide frequent reports to parents on their child's progress
- Provide reasonable access to staff
- Provide parents with opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class
- Provide proper school supplies
- Keep parents informed regarding the needs of the school

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

We, as parents, will:

- Monitor attendance
- Make sure that homework is completed
- Monitor the amount of screentime
- Volunteer in my child's classroom with appropriate clearances
- Participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my child's education
- Promote positive use of my child's extracurricular time

- Stay informed about my child's education and communicate with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school or the school district either received by my child or by mail and responding, as appropriate
- Serve and attend, to the extent possible, on policy advisory groups, such as the School Advisory Council and Title 1 Meetings

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Do my homework every day and ask for help when I need it.
- Read at least 30 minutes every day outside of school time.
- Give to my parents or guardian all notices and information received by me from my school every day.
- Get a good night's rest (8-10 hours)

COMMUNICATION ABOUT STUDENT LEARNING

Fitler Academic Plus School is committed to frequent two-way communication with families about children's learning. Some of the ways you can expect us to reach you are:

- Report Card conferences
- Class Dojo
- Monthly calendars
- Monthly Fitler Family News
- Student communication folders
- School messenger system
- School website

ACTIVITIES TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS:

Fitler Academics Plus School offers ongoing events and programs to build partnerships with families.

- School Advisory Council
- Report Card Conferences
- Family Workshops
- Fundraisers
- Additional club and extra curricular activities after school
- Volunteer opportunities for the following activities (with appropriate clearances):
 - Class trips
 - Math and/or reading tutoring
 - Career day
 - Classroom visits
 - Assemblies
 - Play day

FITLER ACADEMICS PLUS



IN THE BATHROOM

BE RESPECTFUL

- Use voice level 0 or 1
- Knock before entering the stall
- Wait for others to be finished

BE KIND

- Keep your body and other objects to yourself
- Use polite words
- Be mindful of personal space

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Wash your hands
- Flush the toilet
- Ask permission to use the restroom

BE MOTIVATED

- Return to class quickly
- Report problems/vandalism to an adult
- Dispose of trash in the correct containers

FITLER FALCONS SOAR!

FITLER ACADEMICS PLUS



ON THE SCHOOLYARD

BE RESPECTFUL

- Line up when the bell rings or when the whistle is blown
- Stand an arm's length away from your neighbors
- Use voice level 0 when in line
- Check for your personal property

BE KIND

- Play safely
- Be mindful of your surroundings and others
- Be a good sport
- Share and take turns with the play equipment and areas

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Walk during inclement weather
- Stay in designated areas (avoid the dumpster and other No-Zones)

BE MOTIVATED

- Quickly line up
- Listen for the whistle and directions that follow
- Place trash in the trash cans
- Report any problems to an adult

FITLER FALCONS SOAR!

FITLER ACADEMICS PLUS



TRANSPORTATION

BE RESPECTFUL

- Follow driver's directions at all times
- Use voice level 1
- Always report to your assigned seat
- Use positive language

BE KIND

- Use polite words
- Keep your body and other objects to yourself
- Assist your peers
- Be polite to pedestrians and other motorists

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Stay in your seat
- Ensure no one is left behind
- Keep area clear of debris

BE MOTIVATED

- Quickly board the vehicle upon arrival
- Quickly exit the vehicle at your stop

FITLER FALCONS SOAR!

FITLER ACADEMICS PLUS



IN OUR COMMUNITY

BE RESPECTFUL

- Put your trash in a trashcan or hold it until you get to one
- Use positive language
- Recycle

BE KIND

- Be aware of your surroundings
- Keep your body and other objects to yourself
- Use polite words when speaking with community members

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Remind fellow students to always behave when traveling to/from home
- Refrain from walking on community members' property

BE MOTIVATED

- If you drop something, pick it up
- Be aware of your surroundings
- Conduct yourself as if your parent/guardians are with you

FITLER FALCONS SOAR!



IN THE HALLWAY

BE RESPECTFUL

- Keep an arm's length of distance from hallway displays
- Acknowledge adults or peers with a silent hello
- Use voice level 0 or 1

BE KIND

- Keep your body and other objects to yourself
- Use polite words
- Be mindful of personal space

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Have a hall pass
- Stay in line with your class
- Stay to the right side of the hallway

BE MOTIVATED

- Walk quickly to your destination
- Report any problems to an adult
- Place trash in the trash cans

FITLER FALCONS SOAR!



IN THE CLASSROOM

BE RESPECTFUL

- Listen to adult directions the first time
- Be an active listener to all classroom members
- Accept others opinions
- Use the voice level directed by the teacher

BE KIND

- Resolve conflicts peacefully
- Use polite words
- Encourage your classmates
- Keep your body and other objects to yourself

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Take ownership of your behaviors
- Come to class on time
- Bring all necessary materials to class

BE MOTIVATED

- Work to your best ability
- Be willing to try new things and take risks
- Be an active participant
- Report any problems to an adult

FITLER FALCONS SOAR!

What you need
to do before you
volunteer!

Volunteer Paperwork Checklist



The following documents are required to begin volunteering.
When completed, bring your volunteer paperwork to your school's main office.



Volunteer Code of Conduct

Go to www.philasd.org/face/#volunteer to read, print, and sign our standards of behavior agreement, called the Volunteer Code of Conduct.



PA Child Abuse History Clearance

Go to www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home to fill out. Find directions at www.philasd.org/face/#volunteer.



PA State Criminal Background Check

Go to epatch.pa.gov to fill out. Find directions at www.philasd.org/face/#volunteer.



FBI Background Check OR Signed Volunteer Affirmation

If you have NOT lived in Pennsylvania for the past 10 years, go to uenroll.identogo.com and use code 1KG6ZJ to obtain an FBI Background Check (\$23.25). If you HAVE lived in Pennsylvania for the past 10 years, go to www.philasd.org/face/#volunteer to print and sign the Volunteer Affirmation.



Certificate of Volunteer Orientation Completion

You have 45 days from your volunteer start date to complete our Orientation, either online or in-person. Go to www.philasd.org/face/#volunteer to learn about both options.

Questions? Need Assistance?

www.philasd.org/face/#volunteer | volunteer@philasd.org | 215-400-4180, Option #6

Updated August 2024

Administrative Procedures for Student Use of Electronic Devices (Attachment for Policy No. 237)

Purpose

The purpose of these Administrative Procedures is to effectuate Policy 237 - Student Use of Electronic Devices and guide students, staff, and families regarding appropriate uses of electronic devices by students, consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, the Acceptable Use Policy, or as designated in an individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan. These Administrative Procedures also provide guidance to school leaders for creating school-specific protocols for student use of cell phones and wearable devices.

Definitions

Electronic devices: All devices that can take photographs; record, play, or edit audio or video data; store, transmit, or receive calls, messages, data, or images; perform online applications; or provide a wireless, unfiltered connection to the Internet.

Computing device: Includes but is not limited to any laptop computer, desktop computer, Chromebook, tablet/iPad, or similar technology equipment that is designed for end-user personal computing, information processing or information consumption.

Wearable device: Any technology that is designed to be used while worn on a person's body. This includes but is not limited to smartwatches, fitness trackers, Bluetooth headphones, and VR headsets.

Procedures

As a general rule, District students may not use personal computing devices, including for educational purposes, while inside District buildings and should instead use their District-issued computing device. A personal computing device includes any computing device that was not purchased or issued by the School District of Philadelphia.

All use of District-issued devices and networks shall be in conformity with [Policy 815 - Acceptable Use of Internet, Technology, and Network Resources](#). Any District staff member can submit a request to unblock an internet resource (website, application, browser extension) via the [Internet Filtering Exception Request application](#) found in the Employee Portal. Most requests must be evaluated by a school or department administrator before being reviewed by the Office of Information Technology. Staff members are encouraged to discuss requests with their administrator(s) prior to submission.

When using any computing device, cell phone, or wearable device, students are expected to adhere to the [Student Code of Conduct](#), if applicable. If any individual desires to make a

complaint, please refer to [Policy 219 - Student Complaints](#) and [Policy 906 - Addressing Student and Constituent Concerns](#).

School-Specific Protocols for Student Use of Cell Phones and Wearable Devices

As a general rule, District students should not use cell phones or wearable devices in classrooms unless permitted by a school staff member, or permitted by this Policy expressly. Each school shall create their own protocols that set rules for student use of cell phones and wearable devices. Schools may create protocols that designate areas within the school and times of day where student use of cell phones or wearable devices is permitted, among other rules for student use of cell phones or wearable devices during school hours. Notwithstanding any such designation, any school community may suspend such an allowance.

Guidance for creating school-level protocols for cell phones and wearable devices includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Decisions related to school protocols should be made in collaboration with the broader school community which includes, but is not limited to, students, school staff, parents/guardians, School Advisory Councils, and community partners.
 - Input gathered from the school community does not have to be unanimous; however, school leaders should engage in discussion with various school and community stakeholders to establish protocols that are responsive to their communities and informed by diverse perspectives.
- Protocols should take into consideration the safety concerns associated with use of cell phones and wearable devices or lack thereof (e.g., emergencies, student travel to/from school).
 - *Note:* Using phones in the event of certain emergency situations within the school building can be detrimental to student and staff safety.
- Protocols should take into consideration how student use of cell phones and wearable devices may interrupt or interfere with educational programming.
- Protocols should take into consideration the social and emotional benefits of students having access to cell phones and wearable devices (e.g., connection to friends and family, break time/relaxation, autonomy and responsibility of students).
- Protocols should take into consideration other individual student needs (e.g., services designated by a student's Individualized Educational Plan, translation needs, other requests for accommodation).
- Protocols should include information about communicating safe and responsible use of computing devices, cell phones, and wearable devices to staff, students, and parents/guardians.
 - Please see [this resource](#) from the Office of Educational Technology for consideration.
- Prior to finalizing school-level protocols, school leaders should consider the resources needed to implement decided-upon protocols (e.g., staffing, finances, time).
- Once protocols are finalized, school leaders should communicate to students, parents/guardians, staff, and the broader school community about the reasoning for the decided upon rules and their associated consequences.

At the beginning of each academic year, summer programming, and at points throughout the year, schools shall review with students, staff, and families the school's protocols, the District's Acceptable Use Policy, and practices regarding safe and responsible use of electronic devices, the internet, and social media platforms. It is encouraged that schools provide new students with information about the District's Acceptable Use Policy upon enrollment.

Exceptions and Accommodations

The building administrator may grant approval for possession and use of a telephone paging device/beeper by a student for the following reasons:

1. Student is a member of a volunteer fire company, ambulance, or rescue squad.
2. Student has a need due to the medical condition of an immediate family member.
3. Other reasons determined appropriate by the building principal.

If a student requires access to a cell phone or wearable device as a part of their educational program, please make a request for accommodation from the Office of Diverse Learners. Use of a cell phone or wearable device by students during educational programming may and should be addressed as part of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/or 504 Plan.

Disclaimer

The District shall not be liable for the loss, damage, or misuse of any cell phone or wearable device unless it is lost or damaged while it is in the custody of the District (i.e. if it has been confiscated). The District shall provide no technical support, troubleshooting, or repair for personal electronic devices.

Please use the following link to submit a claim for a lost or damaged device while in the custody of the District:

<https://www.philasd.org/generalcounsel/programsservices/tortcivil-rights-litigationclaims/>

Maintenance Schedule

These Administrative Procedures shall be reviewed upon review of the Policy, or upon the occurrence triggering event. Schools, students, and families will be notified when this Policy and Administrative Procedures are revised.

Related Information:

[Student Code of Conduct](#)

EARLY RELEASE PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA
STUDENTS

EFFECTIVE DATE: [SEPTEMBER 9, 2013](#)

REVISED DATE: [OCTOBER 13, 2017](#)

I. Protocols

A. Only the principal or the principal's designee may grant the early release of students during the school day. The principal and designee must be fully informed regarding procedure and process.

B. All of the following procedures apply to all of the students in the building, including pre-kindergarten students.

C. Under no circumstance may a pre-kindergarten through 12th grade pupil be released to an adult who is not properly identified. In addition to obtaining valid identification from the individual who is picking up the student, school-based staff must also check the student's pocket/record to determine if the child's parent or legal guardian has approved or denied the individual's access to the student. Please enter all court orders into the SIS. Please also check the SIS to see if there are any current legal alerts. If there are any Judicial orders in the student's record/pocket and there are any concerns about those orders please call the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities at 215-400-4830.

D. Valid identification must include the photograph and signature of the individual picking up the student. A government issued ID is preferred.

E. The release must take place in the school office and not in any other location in the school. Students may not be released from the nurse's office. Under no circumstance are non-school staff to be wandering unaccompanied in the school building.

F. Visitation by parents/guardians that do not have an educational purpose will not be permitted.

G. If there is not an emergency situation, those individuals listed on the emergency pickup card cannot remove the child from school without the parent/guardian's approval.

H. When a written request is received by the parent/guardian to release any student to someone other than the guardian, the authenticity of the request must be established. Telephone requests must be carefully screened. Parents/guardians should be advised that approval of release of their child to another adult, based on written or telephone requests, may be refused.

For all students released early, the following information must be recorded in the school office:

1. Date
2. Pupil's name
3. Room Number

4. Time of dismissal
5. Adult's name (printed and signed)
6. Relationship to student
7. Type of identification used
8. Staff initials
9. If age-appropriate, student initials

Please See the attached Early Dismissal Log to be initiated daily

- I. All of the above procedures must also be followed when the school day has officially ended and there are remaining students who are being picked up late.
- J. When confirming an identification, all adults who are picking up students must remove their headwear, including but not limited to burqa, chadar, boshiya, niqab, or hats. All staff should be culturally sensitive in asking adults to remove these items and this activity should take place if at all possible in a private area and by the same gender.
- K. All students, including pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students, must enter through the main door.
- L. During the school day, parents/guardians may not come into the schoolyard during recess without the expressed approval of the school principal. Students may not, under any circumstance, be dismissed early from the schoolyard. All early dismissals must occur in the main office.
- M. All schools must establish and communicate a protocol whereby visitors are permitted into the building, (by Aiphone or another method). All visitors must be carefully monitored when entering a school building to ensure each travels directly from the entrance to the school's main office.
- N. All staff must wear their School District of Philadelphia identification badges, at all times, in part to distinguish staff from visitors.
- O. Emancipated minors with a court order may be released without an accompanying adult.
- P. Students 18 years of age or older, who live independently without a guardian, may be released without an accompanying adult.
- Q. All emergency contact information must be entered into the SIS. Please contact the SDP help desk for assistance.
- II. Circumstances That Warrant an Early Release of a Pupil to be Granted

A. Medical and Dental Appointments

1. Dismissal of students for medical or dental appointments may be permitted only for emergency purposes. A note from a physician or a dentist should certify the emergency (need not be submitted in advance).
2. The School Handbook distributed to parents at the beginning of the school year must inform parents that medical and dental appointments should be scheduled during non-school hours. This policy should be reiterated during the school year, as needed.
3. If a student is released for emergency medical or dental treatment, the date, time of the release and time of return must be on file in the school office

B. Illness or Injury

1. A parent or other responsible adult must be contacted to come to the school when a student's illness or injury requires immediate notification.
2. The parent, guardian, or other designated adult representative of the family who comes to school must report to the office and provide valid identification, checked against school records, before the student is released.

C. Suspensions

1. Students are to remain in the building until the close of the school day unless released to the parent, guardian or other responsible adult. The identification of the adult must be verified in accordance with this procedure.

D. Hearings

1. When a student or parent presents a summons from Juvenile Court, the principal must dismiss the student in accordance with this procedure.

Note:

- It is the responsibility of the principal to inform and review with all school staff the Early Release Procedure, as well as post this procedure prominently throughout the school and on the website in multiple languages. This procedure should also be distributed throughout the year, at multiple occasions.
- Schools should forward reminders to parents, at every opportunity, to update: (1) parental contact information, (2) list of approved individuals who may pick up their child (once identification is confirmed), and, (3) court orders or special instructions regarding their child.
- All school staff must sign the accompanying form demonstrating receipt of this procedure and their acknowledgement of their understanding of the procedure. The signed, and dated form is to be maintained in the employee's folder.

Fitler Academics Plus Elementary School
Excused Absence Form



SCAN ME

Must be completed within 3 days of your child's absence.



Join Fittler Academics Plus on ClassDojo



Scan to join our School

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA **2026-2027**
ACADEMIC CALENDAR

August 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 2026

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27	28	29				

October 2026

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November 2026

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December 2026

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January 2027

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February 2027

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March 2027

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April 2027

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May 2027

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June 2027

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
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July 2027

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25	26	27	28	29	30	

Term 1

Dates: 8/24/26 – 11/5/26
 Full Instructional Days: 48
 Interim Reports Due: 9/29/26
 Report Card Conf: 11/16/26

Term 2

Dates: 11/6/26 – 1/25/27
 Full Instructional Days: 42
 Interim Reports Due: 12/10/26
 Report Card Conf: 1/29/27

Term 3

Dates: 1/26/27 – 4/6/27
 Full Instructional Days: 41
 Interim Reports Due: 2/25/27
 Report Card Conf: 4/16/27

Term 4

Dates: 4/7/27 – 6/9/27
 Full Instructional Days: 42
 Interim Reports Due: 5/6/27
 Graduation Window: 6/7/27 – 6/9/27

Key

- 1st Day of School for Students
- 1st Day of School for Students in Kindergarten
- Last Day of School
- School Closed for Students/Staff
- School Closed for Students Staff Professional Dev. (Full Day)
- School Closed for Students Report Card Conference (Full Day)