



## Family Handbook

(970) 317-2151

[hello@pagosapeakopenschool.org](mailto:hello@pagosapeakopenschool.org)

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[www.PagosaPeakOpenSchool.com](http://www.PagosaPeakOpenSchool.com)

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## School Vision & Mission

To create a community of empowered, life-long learners by providing a multi-age learning environment designed to foster confidence, high academic achievement, and the joy of learning through original and meaningful work.

### Goals

- To inspire a love of learning with a curriculum compiled of real-life experiences and relevant work
- To promote deeper thinking and self-driven learners by providing a supportive environment built on mutual respect
- To foster community ties and cultural awareness to cultivate compassionate, empowered, active citizens
- To encourage appreciation of health and the natural world, establishing personal and environmental responsibility
- To nourish well-rounded understandings of the real world with the integration of the arts and sciences

## Philosophy & Culture

To read more about our school's philosophy and culture, professional development goals, how we serve exceptional and educationally disadvantaged students, and more, please visit:

[www.pagospeakopenschool.org](http://www.pagospeakopenschool.org)

### About Charter Schools

- Charter Schools are public schools
- Charter schools are tuition-free
- Charter schools operate separately from the school district and has its own board of directors
- Charter schools are accredited
- Charter schools accept students with IEP and 504 Plans
- Charter schools ARE mandated to participate in state testing
- Charter schools are not required to follow certain Colorado Laws, including hiring "certified teachers"

### About Open Schooling

The "Open School" framework that we've chosen to adopt refers to the elimination of barriers in education that can prevent broader ideas of success and recognition. Open education is motivated by a belief that children have a natural desire to learn, and that desire can be encouraged when given access to multiple avenues to obtain the knowledge that interests them. The means in which this type of learning is facilitated generally involves hands-on experiences, where children take responsibility for their educational decisions, and students are able to experience the emotional and physical side of education. Open education allows children to have a deeper understanding of how education and community is related. Teachers in turn become the learning assistant. Teachers are to observe, guide, and provide materials for the learners; they facilitate not dominate the learning process.

### Project-based Learning

Pagosa Peak Open School has chosen "Project Based Learning" (also known as "PBL") as its core educational model in all grade levels. The experience of thousands of teachers across all grade levels and subject areas, backed by research, confirms that PBL is an effective and enjoyable way to learn and develop deeper learning competencies required for success in college, career, and civic life. PBL is not merely an excellent tool for learning academic skills; it also strengthens a child's ability to successfully collaborate, and to persevere in the face of challenges. As we see it, PBL is an excellent way to prepare children for "real life."

PBL is essentially intensive hands-on learning with minimal direct instruction... it requires all students to become experts on what their studying; it demands a significant amount of revision of work,

meaningful classroom and community critiques, and carries the expectation that every child is capable of producing high quality work. When kids are given the opportunity to absorb, master, and go beyond the basic learning material, learning becomes more meaningful and empowering.

Public presentations will be created by the students for an audience beyond the classroom, compelling students to reflect on and articulate what they've learned, how they've learned, explain the research they conducted, their areas of strength, and their struggles. Students will present their projects for their classmates regularly, and for the community at least semi-annually. These presentations are an opportunity to make learning public, so that it is even more meaningful and memorable – and thus, more valuable.

### **Shared Responsibility & Democracy**

Our students are immersed in the operations and decisions of the school as much as possible in order to instill a sense of responsibility. Children not only have a say in their education, via collaboration on their Independent Learning Plans, and the education of their peers in mixed-age classrooms, but the functioning of school government and school environment. When there is a strong sense of equal responsibility, a student culture is cultivated where there is little to no bullying.

One of the most compelling reasons to adopt Place-Based Education (where students use their local environment as their main source of curriculum material) is to provide students with the knowledge and experiences needed to actively participate in the democratic process. Democratic education begins with the premise that everyone is unique, so each of us learns in a different way. This approach helps children learn about themselves, engage with the world around them, and become positive and contributing members of society.

### **“Highly Qualified” versus “Certified” Instructors**

Colorado charter schools are allowed to hire "highly qualified" instructors without necessarily requiring a teaching certificate... and we have chosen to embrace this option— as do many charter schools in Colorado — because we feel it will support our program. We believe that the experiences these instructors can offer students is valuable in a Project-based environment within on a community of learners. Our classrooms are very different from the traditional public school classroom, and thus require a specific type of classroom management that is not typically taught at traditional colleges. All our teachers receive professional training specific to our program.

Our hiring process is vigorous and will eventually be inclusive of representatives from all areas of our school: the administration, the instructors, the students and the parents. It will require in-person interviews as well as the teaching of a mock classroom lesson. Like all public school leaders, charter leaders aim to hire talented, passionate, and qualified instructors who will boost student achievement

and contribute to a thriving school culture.

### **Year-Round School**

In order to facilitate PPOS's stress on environmental education and health, the school will operate on a year-round schedule, thus providing access to summertime activities — hikes, outdoor science experiments, and our "Edible Schoolyard".

### **Assessments**

Assessments will reflect the ongoing change and growth innate in this community-driven system. Although the assessments legally required by the state of Colorado will be performed as required, the staff, students and parents/guardians will be involved in creating a much broader assessment system to track whether the individualized instruction is succeeding to meet its stated goals.

The in-school assessment system will include both formative and summative assessments, which will be created collaboratively based on input from all participants.

### **Discipline & Restorative Justice**

PPOS's philosophy is that children feel more secure and act more responsibly when expectations are clear and understood, and when students and parents/guardians are involved in defining expectations and consequences. Principles will be developed for each classroom, in a collaborative manner, and will be displayed in every classroom and used as reference for appropriate behavior. Discipline is a set of habits, routines and beliefs that students evolve in order to do excellent work, accept failure gracefully, and ultimately develop a sense of achievement.

### **Free & Reduced Lunch Eligibility**

PPOS does not currently offer a lunch service. All students need to bring a sack lunch to school each day. Please see our Healthy Lunch & Snack policy on page 13.

### **Special Education**

Special Education teachers are required to be fully certified teachers by the state of Colorado.

The ESSA maintains the requirement that a person employed as a special education teacher in elementary school, middle school, or secondary school has:

- Obtained full certification as a special education teacher (including certification obtained through alternative routes to certification), or passed the State special education teacher licensing examination,
- Holds a license to teach in the State as a special education teacher,

- Holds a bachelor's degree.

### **Student Activities Fee**

**Student activity fees are \$250**, due upon acceptance or may be made in installments. Please see the activity fee policy on page 21.

## School Contact Information

(970) 317-2151 | [hello@pagosapeakopenschool.org](mailto:hello@pagosapeakopenschool.org)

<i>Staff Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>	<i>Email Address</i>
James Lewicki	School Director	608 632 4752	<a href="mailto:jlewicki@ppos.co">jlewicki@ppos.co</a>
Chenni Hammon	Business Manager	970 731 6188	<a href="mailto:chammon@ppos.co">chammon@ppos.co</a>
Linda Bright	Office Manager	970 317 2151	<a href="mailto:lbright@ppos.co">lbright@ppos.co</a>
Karla Parker-Choat	Kindergarten Advisor	908 268 0660	<a href="mailto:kparkerchoat@ppos.co">kparkerchoat@ppos.co</a>
Kelle Bruno	1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Advisor	770 605 8005	<a href="mailto:kbruno@ppos.co">kbruno@ppos.co</a>
Kobe Biederman	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Advisor	603 547 5449	<a href="mailto:kbiederman@ppos.co">kbiederman@ppos.co</a>
Thomas Davenport	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Advisor	972 632 0005	<a href="mailto:tdavenport@ppos.co">tdavenport@ppos.co</a>
Emily Murphy	1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Advisor	480 213 7092	<a href="mailto:emurphy@ppos.co">emurphy@ppos.co</a>
April Rossetti	Kindergarten Assistant Advisor	781 820 8438	<a href="mailto:arossetti@ppos.co">arossetti@ppos.co</a>
Gina Boaz	Reading Specialist, Art & Drama Advisor	970 889 9696	<a href="mailto:gboaz@ppos.co">gboaz@ppos.co</a>
Gloria Bissmeyer	School Counselor	619 261 6038	<a href="mailto:gbissmeyer@ppos.co">gbissmeyer@ppos.co</a>
Jennifer Banks	School Counselor	307 760 0422	<a href="mailto:jbanks@ppos.co">jbanks@ppos.co</a>
Chris Hicklin	Testing & Assessments Coordinator	970 507 1887	<a href="mailto:chicklin@ppos.co">chicklin@ppos.co</a>

**[www.pagosapeakopenschool.org](http://www.pagosapeakopenschool.org)**

If you have questions or concerns for your student, you can call and leave the advisors (teachers) a voicemail or you can email them. Staff will do their best to address your concerns within 24 hours. If it is an immediate concern or emergency you can call the front office at (970) 317-2151 or come in to speak with our school director.

## Annual Calendar

To support the Project-Based Learning educational foundation, Pagosa Peak Open School will operate on a year-round calendar structured into seven blocks consisting of 5-8 weeks each. This multi-week block structure allows Advisors and students ample time to plan, implement, augment, and present Projects and lessons in a relevant and timely manner. Blocks conclude with a week or more of vacation to allow downtime for students to absorb, reflect and incorporate information learned. There will be no school on Fridays during June and July.

## PAGOSA PEAK OPEN SCHOOL | 2018-2019 CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER '18							3	Labor Day (no school)
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
						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								

MARCH '19						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					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						

OCTOBER '18							8	Columbus Day (no school)
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
	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					

APRIL '19						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	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				

NOVEMBER '18							1-2	Advisor in-service days (no school for students)
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
				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			

MAY '19						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				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

DECEMBER '18							21-31	Holiday break (no school)
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
						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							

JUNE '19						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						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						

JANUARY '19							1-7	Holiday break (no school)
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
		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				

JULY '19						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	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			

FEBRUARY '19							15	Advisor in-service day (no school for students)
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
					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				

AUGUST '19						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				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

MARCH '19							1	Advisor in-service day (no school for students)
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
						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							

APRIL '19							19	No school
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
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							

MAY '19							10	Advisor in-service day (no school for students)
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
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						

JUNE '19							14	No school
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
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							

JULY '19							1-5	Independence break (no school)
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
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						

AUGUST '19							1	Last day of school
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
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						

- School closed / breaks
- Family conferences
- Staff in-service days
- First and last day of school

## Transportation

With the small size of our school, and the high costs associated with school buses, PPOS will not be offering official transportation at this time, but reserves the right to re-evaluate this decision in the future. Due to the year-round school program, PPOS will be unable to utilize the school district's bus system.

If any qualifying student (homeless, IEP or 504 plan) is unable to provide their own transportation, the school will work with the families to come to a solution that may include district school bus options. PPOS is committed to ensuring each student has a reliable and safe ride to school.

**We highly encourage our families to consider carpooling to help ease school congestion. Please visit our office, mobile app, or website for our Carpool Family Sign-up, location/info database and map.**

## Lunch Program

**During the development phase of our food program, students will be required to bring a snack lunch from home.**

It is the mission of Pagosa Peak Open School to provide students with meaningful experiences that encourage lifelong learning habits. We believe that in order to set students up for success, their basic needs have to be met. This includes a steady diet of healthy foods and practices around meal times. With this in mind, the staff at Pagosa Peak Open School has built the following guidelines around food practices:

- **All students will be responsible for providing a class snack once a month.** Snack days and items to bring will be assigned to families, and a calendar with the information will be posted by the third week of each month for the upcoming month. On a student's snack day, they will be a part of the "kitchen staff" that will help prepare and deliver snacks to classrooms.
- **All students will participate in a morning snack after a recess.** According to the National Education Association, play prior to eating has been shown to reduce food waste and reduce inappropriate mealtime and classroom behavior.
- In addition, **families are asked to pack a healthy lunch for their child every day.** Families of students K-2 are asked to pack an additional afternoon snack, marked "Snack" in their lunchbox. Healthy snack and lunch ideas are listed below.
- In order for students to participate fully in their school day, they need access to healthy foods while limiting treats. For this reason, **PPOS has decided to keep classrooms free of things that contain high quantities of sugar** (for example - candy, soda, Gatorade, chocolate covered granola bars). These items will be put back in students' backpacks for consumption at home, and a healthier option will be provided.
- **All students will have a 20-minute lunch period after a 20-minute lunch recess.** Please make sure to pack nutritionally-dense foods and include at least one source of protein (for example: beans, yogurt, cheese, meat) and one piece of produce (fruit or vegetable).
- **Students will be responsible for set-up and clean-up of their lunch space.** Jobs for sweeping and washing tables will rotate through classrooms in an attempt to bring more awareness to caring for our shared space.

- Students and staff enjoy sharing in birthday and other special celebrations. In order to continue supporting healthy living, PPOS has decided to set guidelines for birthday treats. **Once a month, all students with birthdays that month will be celebrated with a schoolwide birthday cooking project.** Birthday students will participate in preparing a healthy treat that will take the place of morning snack. The school will provide ingredients for the birthday treat, although parents are welcome to join in preparation and celebration.
- **Parents are always welcome to join their children to eat lunch and to play during recess.** Parents visiting will not have supervisory positions in a lunchroom setting (unless specifically volunteering to do so). Parents visiting will be welcome at the table to chat and model appropriate mealtime behavior for their child and others only.

### **Healthy Snack Ideas**

Pretzels or cut veggies with hummus, apples with peanut butter, yogurt with fruit, popcorn, cut cheese with crackers, carrots with ranch dressing, whole wheat pita bread with cream cheese, hard boiled egg, cottage cheese, edamame, quesadilla on a whole wheat tortilla, raisins with nuts, veggie soup, veggie “roll-up,” peanut butter and crackers, string cheese, beet chips, granola bars with limited sugar.

## Campus Policies

### Closed Campus

Pagosa Peak Open School (PPOS) is a closed campus. PPOS school hours are between 8:00 AM and 3:15 PM Monday through Thursday, and between 8:00 AM and 1:15 PM on Fridays.

During June and July there will be no school on Fridays. When on campus, students must always be in class and under the supervision of an adult. Students who leave campus without authorization will receive a consequence. Students, who need to leave campus early, must have a written note signed by a parent/guardian presented to the main office in advance or must be picked up by a parent/guardian or authorized individual.

Parents/Guardians/Individuals authorized must sign the student out in the Sign In/Sign Out log before the student leaves.

### Student Attendance Daily Attendance

The high expectations PPOS has for each student makes it imperative that students are in school each day. Daily participation in class and community is critical to student learning and growth. More than 10 absences due to repeated unexcused absences will result in academic and disciplinary actions. Students who are absent must take the responsibility for getting make up assignments and bringing them completed the day he/she returns, or at the latest, the following day.

In the event of a necessary absence, a parent/guardian must either call the main office at (970) 317-2151 and report the absence by 8:10 AM or register the student as absent using the PPOS mobile app. The parent/guardian needs to include the child's name, date of absence, and the reason for the absence and a contact number for the parent/guardian. The notification and explanation of the absence is only that and does not automatically excuse the absence. Excused absences are granted in accordance with school policy (see Excused/Unexcused Absence Policy).

Should your child need to be excused early for a doctor's appointment or other circumstances, the parent/guardian must deliver a signed note a prior to the appointment detailing the time to be excused, reason for leaving, approximate time of return and a phone number to reach the parent/guardian. The student will be given an early dismissal slip to be excused from class. The student will be excused from class when a parent/guardian or authorized individual

comes into the main office to sign the student out.

### **Standardized Testing and Interim and Performance Assessment (IA/PA)**

To assess the effectiveness of the rigorous, integrated and personalized academic curriculum, students are required to be present and take various scheduled standardized tests and final exams. Attendance is required and promptness is expected in all classes and is essential for assessing progress of the student. The opportunity to adequately assess learning is lost due to absences.

Under the Place-based and Project-based model, authentic assessments of learning (demonstrations) are essential. The ability to communicate what has been learned through writing and speaking are included in the expectations. We use rubrics to determine the level of proficiency with these tasks. We use NWEA assessments in literacy and math as an interim assessment administered in both spring and winter. These assessments provide useful tools that teachers use to differentiate instruction and set growth goals. Many schools throughout the State use these assessments. It is a longitudinal tool which we can use to monitor students K-8 and measure academic growth. NWEA also meets the State requirements outlined in the READ Act for testing students in grades K-3. PARCC is the new test required by the State of Colorado to measure math, reading and writing levels, while CMAS is used for science and social studies. These tests are required for all publically funded Colorado schools.

While families have the legal authority to opt out of State-required standardized tests, we ask them to reconsider this option. PPOS will be penalized by receiving zero-scores (0) for all students that opt out, which will drop our school-wide score – potentially impacting our credibility and funding. Please speak to a school board member or our school director if you would like to further discuss withdrawing your student from Standardized Testing days.

### **Excused/Unexcused Absence Policy**

**Excused Absences:** Excused absences are those resulting from: illness, injury, physical disability, mental disability, emotional disability, family emergency, or absences excused by the school director through prior requests of parents/guardians, absences which occur when a student is in custody of a court or of a law enforcement authority. The school may require suitable proof of an excused absence including written statements from medical sources.

**Unexcused Absences:** Unexcused absences are those absences deemed unacceptable by the Directors regardless of the prior approval or knowledge of the parents. Unexcused absences

include those resulting from suspensions and recommendations for expulsion. Absences not properly reported by the parent are unexcused.

### Other Attendance Policies

**Notification of Absences:** When a student is truant from school or from assigned classes, the school office will make a reasonable effort to notify parents, guardians, or legal custodians by phone as quickly as possible. If a student's academic progress is compromised because of absence, reasonable effort will be made to notify the parents/guardian in advance so remedial action can be taken.

**Academic Consequences:** Students with excused or unexcused absences are responsible for work missed and are expected to make it up for their own benefit.

**Habitually Truant Students:** Truancy is an absence from school without the permission of the student's parent/guardian, the teacher in charge or the school director. Students who have achieved the age of seven but are under 16 years of age, who have three or more unexcused absences from school or from class on three or more different days in a one-month period, or 10 or more unexcused absences from school or from class on 10 or more different days in a school year, are considered to be "habitually truant" under state law. Absences due to suspension or recommendation of expulsion will not be considered for purposes of determining habitual truancy. Once a student is determined to be habitually truant, the school director will notify the student's parents/guardians in writing of the student's unexcused absences and of the fact that the student is habitually truant. At that time, the school will develop a plan with the goal of assisting the child to remain in school. School personnel will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent/guardian to review and evaluate the reasons for the child's truancy. Further unexcused absences may result in the student's withdrawal from PPOS and return to his/her home school.

**Tardiness:** Being prompt to all school commitments is an important expectation of each student. If a student is late to school or to class 2 or more times in a week, a parent/guardian will be notified of this problem and the parent/guardian will be expected to implement a plan to correct the problem. Should there be an emergency that prevents a student from being on time, a parent/guardian may call the office or send a signed note, which will excuse the tardy.

### Arrival and Dismissal

**Drop-off:** Monday through Friday at 7:45 AM. Early drop-off beginning at 7:30 AM can be arranged with the school office.

**School day begins:** Monday through Friday at 8:00 AM

**School day ends:** Monday through Thursday at 3:15 PM; Fridays at 1:15 PM

**Pick-up:** Monday through Thursday by 3:30 PM; Fridays by 1:30 PM.

### Pick-up and Drop-off

PPOS students can only be dropped off at the main “Kiss and Go” drop off area, unless their parents are walking them to the building from the parking lot.

Please pick up your student inside their classroom to foster a stronger relationship between your family and your child’s advisor.

### Dress Code

The purpose of the TRCS dress code is to create a professional, safe and respectful community where students can place their sole focus on learning. The dress code is in effect from the start of the school day until the end of the school day. Standards for dress and appearance at PPOS will support the academic setting and emphasize that learning is our main purpose. The purpose of having a dress code is to emphasize that school is the students’ and staffs’ place of work and that respect for other members of society and oneself places some restrictions on the nature of dress and grooming.

Attire of both students and staff should meet generally accepted standards of decency in an academic environment. Attire shall not be disruptive or distracting to the learning process. Clothing should be neat, clean, tasteful, and modest.

For example, clothing that is revealing, sheer, tight, and/or short is not appropriate. Students should be covered from their neck to their mid-thigh. Tops that expose the midriff and sagging pants that show underwear are examples of clothing unacceptable for school. Shorts and skirts should be no shorter than mid-thigh. Another way to measure shorts and skirts is to drop your arms down at your sides. If shorts or skirt is shorter than where your fingertips reach they are too short. Shoes must be worn. Clothing that in any way promotes gangs, obscene language, or illegal substances is not allowed at school. Students will be warned about inappropriate clothing, asked to change, and if noncompliant, parents will be contacted. Students who habitually dress inappropriately are considered insubordinate and could face possible suspension.

The faculty and staff of PPOS reserve the sole right to interpret and enforce the student dress code. Students who violate the dress code will be asked to change. (A phone call home for appropriate clothing to be brought to school for the student, or the student being sent home

for failure to comply is solely determined by the PPOS Administration.)

### **Parents/Guardians and Visitors**

All parents and visitors must sign-in and sign-out at the front desk when they enter or leave the building.

Parents/guardians are expected to abide by the school's visitor rules in all their interactions with faculty, staff, administration, and other parents and students. Parents/guardians will be asked to leave the school campus if the rules are not practiced.

### **Student Telephone Usage**

In order to limit disruption to the classroom, students will not be called to the telephone except in cases of extreme emergency. With permission from a member of the staff, students may use the office telephone to make necessary phone calls.

Students are prohibited from using their cell phones during the school day. Students may use their cell phone before or after school. If a student has a cell phone on their person that they take out and use during the school day, the phone may be confiscated. A parent/guardian will have to come in and pick up the phone in order to get it back. Students are expected to have cell phones turned off and stored in a backpack during the school day. Teachers may opt to have a drop box for these devices in their classroom and collect/return them each day

### **Deliveries for Students**

If a student leaves items at home, they may be delivered to school and left in the main office for the student to pick up.

### **Cleaning Classroom Area**

PPOS Students are responsible for cleaning their classroom area every day before they go home. Additionally, several times a year we organize a school clean up. Classes will be assigned regular responsibility to maintain certain areas of the school and/or daily duties like recycling.



## Student Fees

Colorado state law (C.R.S. 22-32-117) allows Pagosa Peak Open School to authorize the collection of the following fees:

### Student Activity Fees

Student Activity Fees are to offset costs associated with consumable supplies, field trip expenses, additional educational programming, transportation, parking, community service, and or technology. Scholarships are available upon request. The Request for Scholarship form must be received by 5pm on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Priority for requested scholarships are given to families that qualify for free or reduced lunch or students who are verified as homeless, unaccompanied, and/or foster children. Families with multiple PPOS students will receive a discount for each additional child.

The current Student Activity Fee schedule is as follows:

**\$250 first student + \$100 per each additional sibling.**

**50% due by Oct 15 remaining 50% due December 15**

### Kindergarten Tuition

The state of Colorado does not financially provide for full day Kindergarten. Half day option is available at no extra charge. Half day kindergarten release is 11:30am. Students not picked up by noon each day will be considered full day enrollment and will be charged tuition. PPOS requests parents wishing to utilize the full day Kindergarten programming pay Kindergarten Tuition.

A 10% discount is applied when paid in full by October 1 or upon enrollment if after Oct.1 of each school year. Scholarships are available upon request. The Request for Scholarship form must be received by 5pm on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Priority for requested scholarships are given to families that qualify for free or reduced lunch or students who are verified as homeless, unaccompanied, and/or foster children. Families with multiple PPOS Kindergarten students will receive a discount for each additional child.

The current Kindergarten Tuition fee schedule is as follows:

**\$900 Annually First K Student** 10% discount if paid in full by Oct 1

(+ \$450 for each additional K sibling)

**25% down by Oct 1 \$220**

**8 monthly payments of \$85 due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month**

Nonpayment of tuition will require in half day attendance and will be strictly enforced.

## General School Policies

### Non Discrimination Statement

It is the policy of the Pagosa Peak Open School to recruit, hire, train, educate, promote, and administer all personnel and instructional actions, without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual preference, age, national origin, disability, marital status, or public assistance. We will not tolerate any discrimination, and any such conduct is prohibited. The school also prohibits any form of discipline or retaliation for reporting incidents.

### Volunteer Guidelines for Overnight Trips

It is the policy of Two Rivers Community School to provide guidelines for overnight volunteers who attend trips with students. Volunteers must have successfully completed a background check prior to the trip. In addition, if they are driving, then a copy of the driver's license and current insurance must be on file. The driver must also be at least 21 years of age.

### Student Records

The school maintains important information files on each student. You and your parent(s)/guardian(s) may review those records with reasonable advance notice given to the school.

School officials may obtain access to your records for educational purposes only. All individually identifiable educational information is confidential except for "directory" information. Directory information includes the student's name, date of birth, place of birth, participation in officially recognized sports and activities, height and weight (for athletic teams), dates of attendance, degrees and other honors awarded.

### Media Release

PPOS will periodically create publications to highlight student achievement, school life and school events. These publications will be developed for the purposes of admissions, public relations, fundraising, and other uses that promote the school. From time to time, the school may also get media requests to highlight the school and its students.

We will honor the Student Media Consent and Release Form completed by families at this handbook. Please be sure to sign it and return it to the school office as soon as possible if you do NOT give permission to use media that include your child(ren) in said materials.

## Distribution of Materials or Documents

### School Materials

Publications prepared by and for the school by students may be posted or distributed to the greater community, with prior approval by the Directors. Such items may include school posters, brochures, murals, etc. The school newspaper and the yearbook are available to students. All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the Director and may be taken down at the sole discretion of the school.

### Non-School Materials

Unless a student or parent/guardian obtains specific prior approval from the school director, written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials may not be posted, sold, circulated, or distributed at school or on any part of the campus. Materials displayed without this approval will be removed.

### Commerce

Students may not sell any articles on school property without the permission of the school director. They may not make a collection of money or materials for their own purposes or for an organization to which they belong outside of school without prior permission from the school director.

## Parent Groups

There are a number of formal and informal ways in which parents can become involved in their child's education. We encourage parents to participate in at least one group for one term.

### The School Accountability Committee (SAC)

The School Accountability Committee (SAC) will meet at least quarterly to discuss and relay information to school leadership, governing board of PPOS through dialogue and reports disseminated to PPOS Board as well as school newsletter highlights.

SAC will determine:

- Whether school leadership, personnel, and infrastructure are advancing or impeding implementation of the public school's performance, improvement, priority improvement, or turnaround plan, whichever is applicable or other progress pertinent to the public schools' accreditation contract.
- Safety issues relative to the school environment.
- Community concerns and input regarding aforementioned duties and responsibilities through forum, surveys and dialogue.

The SAC will consist of at least five members, with representation from the leadership team, teachers, two parents, and one community member.

### Community Outreach Committee

The Community Outreach Committee is responsible for coordinating parent volunteers and for maintaining communication between the school, parents and community.

The primary responsibilities of the Community Outreach Committee will be:

- Planning and recruiting volunteers for fundraising events, school-wide gatherings, and community presentations.
- Collaborating with school director the Finance Committee and the SAC when necessary.
- Advertising for said events.
- Initiating community connections with local businesses that may not have been approached or followed up with.
- Facilitating monthly or bi/monthly meetings in person, by phone or email with teacher liaisons.

## Weather and Emergency Procedures

### Accident or Medical Emergency

If a medical emergency occurs to a student at school, first aid will be administered and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of that student will be contacted immediately. If parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached, a person listed on the student's health form (or emergency contact card) or the family physician will be contacted. If the situation warrants, the school will call Emergency Medical Service (911).

Please maintain current records in our office.

### School Closings

PPOS will follow the Archuleta School District 50JT (ASD) weather school closing decisions. If ASD closes or has a delayed opening, PPOS will do the same. Every attempt will be made to post the school-closing announcement on the School's website [www.pagosapeakopenschool.org](http://www.pagosapeakopenschool.org) and mobile app, with automated messages sent via email and mobile push notifications.

*If your mobile phone does not have the capability to install our mobile app (available on devices that have the Apple App Store and Google Play), we encourage you to set up your phone to receive alerts when email messages are received.*

Should we need to close school early for other emergency reasons; the school office may call students' homes to inform them of a school closing. If school must close during the school day, every attempt will be made to inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) in order to arrange for transportation.

### Fire Alarms and Building Emergencies

Should an emergency require evacuation of the School, fire alarms will sound. Students will proceed to designated areas with their teachers. Individuals will remain in the areas until a member of the administrative staff gives the all-clear signal. All fire alarms are treated as real and must lead to an immediate evacuation of the building.

Students must follow these evacuation procedures:

- 1) Silently follow staff directions and proceed out the nearest exit.
- 2) Do not grab backpacks or any belongings before exiting.

- 3) Meet in the designated spots with your teachers. Students who fail to follow this procedure will be given a consequence. The school faculty and staff have reviewed and been trained in the emergency management procedures.

## Technology – Acceptable Use Policies

Pagosa Peak Open School provides students and staff with a variety of technology resources for the purpose of supporting our educational mission. This acceptable use policy is intended to explain the responsibilities and limitations of technology use at PPOS. Additional rules may be added as necessary.

It is important that all users of PPOS technology remember that access to these resources is a privilege, not a right. Access to PPOS technology resources is only given to students who act in a considerate and responsible manner. Users of technology are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior and care in the use of computers and school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school library. Violation of these policies will be treated as a disciplinary issue.

### Policies:

1. Inappropriate usage of technology will lead to serious disciplinary consequences.
2. General school rules apply to all use of technology
3. Reference to laptops also includes tablets or other kinds of technology provided or authorized by PPOS.
4. All work created on or by or stored on any PPOS equipment belongs to PPOS and may be reviewed and/or retained for any purpose in line with its educational mission
5. Computer and network storage areas may be accessed by network administrators as needed for school purposes. Users should not expect that files (including email) stored on PPOS servers or computers will be private. Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored.
6. At school and/or during school hours, students will use computers and other technology resources for school-related purposes only, unless they receive specific permission to do otherwise. In classrooms, students will use technology only as directed by the teacher.

## Family Participation Commitment

Families are key partners in supporting student learning and the school community. Regular communication and multiple opportunities for participation encourage families to be strong partners in their children's learning.

Each family is asked to sign a commitment form (at the back of this handbook), which specifies how the family will contribute to the success of the program. Parents represent a wealth of skills, interests, talents, and resources that add to the depth of students' learning. PPOS holds high expectations of student families, just as the families hold the school's professional staff to the highest expectations.

The Family Participation Commitment has four major components:

- Attend all student-led conferences, including goal-setting advisory meetings
- Attend Back-to-School Night and Project Presentation Nights
- Plan for child to participate in all activities
- Attend New Family Orientation upon joining PPOS

The 20-hours of service commitment, (10-hours for single parent homes,) can be carried out by any member of the child's immediate family, individually or as a family unit, depending on the type of task. PPOS strives to ensure that parents/guardians feel that they are welcome and comfortable volunteering in any way they can.

While this parental commitment cannot be enforced — being that PPOS is a public school that is open to any and all students of the public — families are encouraged and supported to participate in school functions through multiple strategies to ensure the highest rate of success for all participants in the learning environment.

### Options for Family Involvement

- Room Parent (including organizing snack and coordinating class tasks)
- Front office volunteer
- Project planning assistant
- Help in classroom
- Plan fieldwork, help with Project research for fieldwork
- Chaperone learning excursions
- Help with building repairs
- Help with garden
- Provide translation
- Chaperone overnight trips

- Serve on a portfolio panel
- Assist with transportation
- Classroom maintenance
- Bring food/supplies to classroom celebrations
- Serve on a committee
- Help coordinate volunteer efforts
- Be a literacy volunteer or math tutor
- Grant writing
- Playground maintenance
- Assist with family forums and/or educational events
- Organize Lost and Found
- Lead class Projects as an expert

**Please sign the Family Contract form on page 36 of this handbook to acknowledge that you have read and agree to the terms of the Family Participation Commitment.**

## Student Discipline Policies

### Overview

The goal of behavioral expectations is to create a safe, respectful, and responsible environment where learning can take place. PPOS expects students to behave responsibly and treat their peers, Advisors, community and environment with respect.

The following rules and guidelines will be summarized in a School Handbook which will be distributed to all staff and families, to make sure all staff, students and parents/guardians are aware of expectations and discipline procedures.

The PPOS philosophy is that children feel more secure and act more responsibly when expectations are clear and understood, and when students and parents/guardians are involved in defining expectations and consequences. Principles will be developed for each classroom, in a collaborative manner, and will be displayed in every classroom and used as a reference for appropriate behavior.

The Pagosa Peak Open School views discipline as the set of habits, routines and beliefs that students evolve in order to do excellent work, accept failure gracefully, and ultimately develop a sense of achievement. At PPOS, students know that they belong, are valued, and are capable of succeeding.

All students are held to high expectations and are encouraged to connect their efforts to doing important work for themselves and their communities. Students are asked to reflect on their conduct and how it aligns to the school and classroom rules and guidelines, and make a commitment to align their personal behavior with those rules and guidelines.

Goals for these commitments will be included as learning targets for Projects, other class work and school-wide activities. Non-academic goals will be translated by Advisors into developmentally appropriate language, to be used by Advisors and students to evaluate progress.

Students will reflect on their progress toward demonstrating these commitments informally on a regular basis and formally in student-led goal conferences as well as portfolio passages.

Regular review of expectations in the classroom and at faculty meetings will encourage the ongoing implementation of the philosophy throughout the school.

Developing a positive school climate involves a simple and mutually understood structure, reasonable rules, and consequences that are natural, logical, realistic and enforceable. Students who consistently or habitually violate classroom rules will be required to work with staff and

parents/guardians to help develop an action plan to address the behavior issues.

Upon enrollment in PPOS, parents/guardians and students will receive a printed policy handbook. This policy handbook will be fully developed by the School Director in conjunction with other personnel. Clear discipline guidelines will be printed in this handbook and parents/guardians will be required to sign the PPOS Parent Contract agreeing to these policies.

Each student will develop a one-to-one relationship with an adult Advisor at the school, as well as a consistent and ongoing small-scale peer community. Advisors monitor and support student progress, serve as the student's advocate in difficult academic and social situations, and act as the primary contact point between parents/guardians and the school.

Classroom meetings are used for teambuilding exercises and for group discussions on topical issues to help establish a positive school culture. Yearly, each classroom at PPOS will develop a set of guidelines in the form of a collaboratively-evolved agreement. These guidelines are shared with the school, and posted in classrooms.

PPOS will also evolve a shared set of behavioral guidelines that apply to all students and staff. Because students at PPOS are active members in the community, students and Advisors review and practice appropriate public behavior expectations and safety guidelines.

**Please see our complete Discipline Policy online at our website or on our school's mobile app.**

## Dispute Resolution Process

### Internal Grievance Process

The Internal Grievance Process provides a means by which conflicts can be resolved. Parents/guardians, students, Advisors, or Family Advocates may initiate this process. The procedure for filing concerns is as follows:

The concerned parties will make every attempt to solve the issue themselves, communicating the concern directly to the parent, student, staff member or governing board member in question. An appointment will be set up where the concern can be expressed in private. Care will be taken to express concerns calmly and respectfully so that an environment conducive to resolution can exist. The School Judicial Committee may serve a mediating function if requested by any party. Parties will document their concerns and its resolution (if one is reached) and file it with the School Director.

If the parties are unable to come to a resolution, they may file their concern in writing with the School Director. The School Director will either ask the SJC to become involved or the School Director will become directly involved. Documentation will be recorded regarding the concern and its resolution (if one is reached).

In cases where the concern has been addressed with the School Director and any party remains dissatisfied with the decisions made to resolve the conflict at this level, that party may take their concerns to the PPOS Board of Directors, who will then pass it along to a resolution committee or handle it as a board. Such a complaint will be made in a written statement which details the violation, procedures taken, and requested remedy; the complaint shall be submitted to the President of the PPOS Board of Directors at least one week prior to the next Board of Directors meeting. Complaints submitted after this point will be addressed at the subsequent meeting of the Board of Directors. Emergency issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis, with the board responding at — or prior to — its next regular public meeting.

The Board of Directors may hear arguments from the parties, review prior decisions and evidence, and make inquiries as it deems necessary. The board shall render a written decision within ten (10) business days after the meeting unless additional time is needed. The Board of Directors' decision shall be final.

## **Governing Board Disputes**

The Internal Grievance Process provides a means by which conflicts can be resolved. Parents/guardians, students, Advisors, or Family Advocates may initiate this process. The procedure for filing concerns is as follows:

The concerned parties will make every attempt to solve the issue themselves, communicating the concern directly to the parent, student, staff member or governing board member in question. An appointment will be set up where the concern can be expressed in private. Care will be taken to express concerns calmly and respectfully so that an environment conducive to resolution can exist. The School Judicial Committee (SJC) may serve a mediating function if requested by any party. Parties will document their concerns and its resolution (if one is reached) and file it with the School Director.

If the parties are unable to come to a resolution, they may file their concern in writing with the School Director. The School Director will either ask the SJC to become involved or the School Director will become directly involved. Documentation will be recorded regarding the concern and its resolution (if one is reached).

In cases where the concern has been addressed with the School Director and any party remains dissatisfied with the decisions made to resolve the conflict at this level, that party may take their concerns to the PPOS Board of Directors, who will then pass it along to a resolution committee or handle it as a board. Such a complaint will be made in a written statement which details the violation, procedures taken, and requested remedy; the complaint shall be submitted to the President of the PPOS Board of Directors at least one week prior to the next Board of Directors meeting. Complaints submitted after this point will be addressed at the subsequent meeting of the Board of Directors. Emergency issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis, with the board responding at — or prior to — its next regular public meeting.

The Board of Directors may hear arguments from the parties, review prior decisions and evidence, and make inquiries as it deems necessary. The board shall render a written decision within ten (10) business days after the meeting unless additional time is needed. The Board of Directors' decision shall be final.

## **External Grievance Process**

PPOS agrees to follow the dispute-resolution procedure as stated in C.R.S.22-30.5-107.5: In the event a dispute arises between Archuleta School District 50JT (District) and PPOS concerning governing policy provisions of the school's charter contract, either party may request dispute resolution pursuant to this article upon written notice to the other party.

Written notice of intent to invoke this process must include a brief description of the matter in dispute and the scope of the disagreement between the parties.

Within thirty (30) days of receipt of written notice, PPOS and the District shall agree to any form of alternative dispute resolution to resolve the dispute. Any form chosen must result in final written findings by a neutral third party within one hundred twenty (120) days after receipt of such written notice. The neutral third party shall apportion all costs reasonable related to the mutually agreed upon dispute resolution process. PPOS and the District may agree to be bound by the written findings of said neutral third party, in which case such findings are final and not subject to appeal.

If the parties do not agree to be bound by such written findings of the neutral third party, the parties may appeal such findings to the State Board of Education. The party appealing the findings must provide the State Board of Education and the other party with a notice of appeal within thirty (30) days after the release of such findings, and the notice of appeal shall state a brief description of the grounds for appeal. The State Board of Education may consider such written findings, along with other relevant materials in reaching its decision, or it may, after sufficient notice, conduct a de novo review and hearing on the underlying matter. The State Board of Education shall issue its decision on the written findings of the neutral third party within sixty (60) days of receipt of notice to appeal.

If the State Board of Education decides to conduct a de novo review, it will make its own findings within sixty (60) days of its own motion for a de novo review. If the State Board of Education finds that either of the parties has failed to participate in good faith or comply with a decision reached after agreeing to be bound to it, the State Board of Education shall resolve the dispute in favor of the aggrieved party. The decision of the State Board of Education is final and not subject to appeal.

## Family Contract

In order to uphold our mission we have included a Family contract as part of the student registration process, we are asking that students and their families review and commit to the following terms. Student and Family Contract This contract is between \_\_\_\_\_, his/her parent(s) or guardian, and Pagosa Peak Open School for the 2018-2019 school year.

### Student:

- I agree to attend school every day, be on time, and ready for instruction
- I agree to give my best effort to all of my academic work. I will actively participate in class, ask questions when I don't understand something, and seek extra help when I need it.
- I agree that, should I not understand something or give my best effort on an assignment and keep my materials organized, I may be required to attend additional academic sessions during break times or after school.
- If I am absent, I will take responsibility for bringing in documentation, getting missed assignments and making them up the following day
- I agree to be a positive participant in all aspects of the PPOS programs including, but not limited to field trips, academic advisory, group discussions, physical education activities, horticultural/building maintenance projects, testing, and all other instruction deemed appropriate by the PPOS staff.
- I will abide by the dress code (included).
- I understand that I am responsible for my own behavior, and I agree to comply with all the rules and policies of the PPOS Family Handbook.
- I agree to follow all computer policies and procedures as stated in the Family Handbook
- I agree to refrain from destroying or damaging private or school property, and I agree to pay, either by cash or by school service, for anything I damage. I understand that if I damage computing equipment my privileges concerning the use of this equipment may be temporarily or permanently revoked.

I understand that PPOS will have consequences for the following issues:

- Academic Honesty: I agree to complete my own academic assignments and understand that cheating and plagiarism is not allowed
- Drugs: I agree to refrain from the use or possession of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other illicit drugs or intoxicants on campus

- Weapons: I agree to refrain from the possession of knives, guns or any other type of weapon on campus. d. Violence: I agree to refrain from all forms of violence, assault, and bullying.
- Harassment: I agree to refrain from verbal abuse of anyone at the school on the basis of race, gender, religion or sexual preference.
- School Rules: I agree to follow all the school rules g. I understand that attending PPOS is a privilege, not a right. I understand that if I do not give the appropriate effort or meet any of the above commitments, loss of privileges, suspension, or expulsion could result.

Parent:

- I agree to promote and support the staff, programs, and policies of the PPOS outlined in the Family Handbook and accept the responsibility to work cooperatively with the staff on behalf of my child.
- I agree to see that my child attends school every day and arrives on time.
- I agree to attend all meetings scheduled between myself and the PPOS staff, including but not limited to parent support meetings, progress meetings, and discipline conferences.
- I agree to come to school for a meeting if my child is suspended and I understand that this meeting may occur before my child returns to class.
- I agree to allow my child to travel and to participate in all field trips arranged by PPOS, and I hereby authorize my child to receive emergency medical treatment if I am unavailable.
- I agree that I will not knowingly allow my child to participate in an off-campus activity where drugs, alcohol or other illicit substances are consumed.
- I agree that I have read and agree to the PPOS Grievance Policy on page 33 of this handbook.
- I have read and agree to the PPOS Fees policy located on page 21 of this handbook.
- I have read and agree to the PPOS Discipline policies located on page 31 of this handbook.
- I acknowledge that all families must contribute 20 hours per year (10 hours for single-parent families) to contribute Family Participation Hours, as explained on page 29 of this handbook. These are the ways in which we are able to contribute: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

We have reviewed the 2018-2019 Family Handbook either online or have requested a copy from the front office to review. We are familiar with and will abide by all the contents, responsibilities and policies contained within.

We understand that these policies govern student and family conduct in the school and will be enforced at school or on school grounds, at school sanctioned activities or events, or while being transported by school approved vehicles, or occurring off school property.

Parent Signature\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_

## Pagosa Peak Open School 2018-2019 Field Trip Permission Form

I give permission for my child \_\_\_\_\_ in grade \_\_\_\_\_ to attend field trips during the 2018-2019 school year. I understand that locations and details will be posted in the classroom newsletter every two weeks and on the PPOS mobile app. I will send my child with the appropriate clothing, food, and money for the trip and will attend any appropriate field trips for which I am available. In case of an emergency, I give permission for my child to receive medical treatment.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_