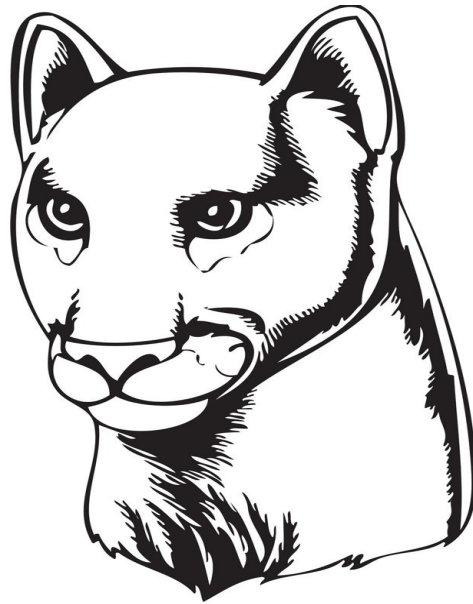


*Putnam County  
Elementary School Panthers*



*Where all students will learn and succeed  
AND ALL MEANS ALL*

**PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2009-2010**

**Table of Contents**

Academic Standards.....	1-2
• Report Cards	
• Grading Scale	
Acceptable Use for Internet.....	2
Alcohol, Controlled Substance, Look Alikes.....	2
Asbestos Materials.....	3
Attendance.....	3-5
• Computation	
• Acceptable Reasons For Absence	
• Unacceptable Reasons For Absence	
• Perfect Attendance	
• Make Up Work	
• Homework Requests	
• Pupil Absence For Vacation	
• Excessive Absences	
• Consideration For Absences After the 10 <sup>th</sup> Absence	
Building Policies.....	5-7
• Dress Code	
• Party Invitations	
• Class Parties	
• General Rules Of Conduct	
Bus Conduct.....	7-8
• Expectations	
• Consequences	
• Gross Misconduct	
Bus Passes.....	8
Use of Video Cameras on School Busses.....	8
Cafeteria.....	8-9
Calendar.....	25
Discipline.....	9-10
Emergency School Closing.....	10
Explosives, Incendiaries, Firearms, and Look Alikes.....	10-11
Fee Waiver.....	11
Harassment/Sexual Harassment/Discrimination.....	12
Health/Safety.....	12-13
• Immunizations	
• Physical Examinations	
• Emergency Information	
Home School Communication.....	13
Homework Policy/Homework Voucher.....	14
Integrated Pest Management Plan.....	14-15
Medication at School.....	15-16
No Child Left Behind Act and RTI.....	16
Parent Advisory Committee.....	16
Parent/Teacher Conferences.....	16

Pediculosis (Head Lice)..... 16-17

Placement, Promotion, Retention..... 17

Police Assistance..... 17

Publication of Student Directory Information..... 17

Recess..... 16-17

Records Access-Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act..... 18-19

Residence..... 20

Routine Dismissal Procedures..... 20-21

School Hours..... 21

School Program..... 21

School Safety..... 21

Search and Seizure..... 22

Security Cameras..... 22

Signature Page..... 26

Student Assistance Program..... 22

Suspicion-Based Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy..... 22

Testing and Assessment..... 22-23

Title I..... 23

Transitional Program of Instruction..... 23

Vision and Hearing Screening..... 23

Visitors..... 23

Wellness Plan..... 23

Withdrawals and Transfers..... 24

The School Board and School Administration reserve the right to amend this Parent-Student Handbook.  
 Parents will be promptly notified if changes are made.

**Board of Education Mission Statement**

***Putnam County School District--Where all students will learn and succeed, and all means ALL.***

**Belief Statements**

- CHARACTER COUNTS! in school, at home and in our community.
- All students will become responsible, productive citizens of good character.
- Best educational decisions will be made within financial means.
- All grade levels are of equal importance.
- With appropriate instruction, all students can learn.
- Application of knowledge and problem solving is an essential part of education.
- Education is a team effort between school, community, students and parents.
- Education is NOT limited to the classroom, to the school, nor to the school year.
- Technology will enhance the educational process.
- A school environment that is caring, supportive and promotes mutual respect  
is the most conducive to learning.

**Putnam County Elementary School--Mission Statement**

***Putnam County Elementary School will provide a climate and a curriculum that allows children to develop skills in order to become life-long learner and productive contributors to society.***

## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to Putnam County Elementary School!

Putnam County Elementary offers a fully certified teaching staff and a well-trained support staff, all of whom are also certified, as well as a fully certified administrator. These dedicated professionals fulfill a very real commitment to the students. Careful planning, preparation, and instructional practices are focused toward providing the best possible education for our students.

The climate in building is purposefully geared to the needs of the students who attend the school. Great care is taken to provide a climate that is developmentally appropriate as well as academically challenging.

Parents are encouraged to visit their child's school at least once during the school year. A parent's presence at school is one of the most effective ways of letting the child know that he/she is important and that his/her education is a top priority. Visiting, even if only briefly, also helps to build a positive and mutually supportive relationship with the child's teacher(s); this can be of tremendous benefit to the child, the parent, and the school. **For the safety of all, any person entering the building during the school day is to stop in the office before proceeding to a classroom or other areas of the building.**

This handbook has been prepared as a source of information to assist the parents and students of Putnam County Elementary School with regard to rules and regulations mandated by Illinois State Statute as well as Board of Education and building policies and procedures.

After reading this handbook, keep it in a convenient place for future reference. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the building principal.

**Please take a moment to sign the statement on the last page, pull it off the handbook, and send that sheet to school with your child. This will help us in our efforts to be certain that each family has received a copy of the handbook.**

The faculty and staff of Putnam County Elementary School extend a warm greeting and express the hope that the coming school year will be a positive experience for both you and your child.

Sincerely,  
Mr. Michael McCann, Principal

## **ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

Academic excellence is the goal that all instruction, both formal and informal, targets. Curriculum and instructional practices are evaluated in a continuous manner so as to provide the best opportunity for each student to reach his/her potential. Report cards are issued every nine weeks (quarter) of the school year in an effort to keep parents informed of the student's progress.

Formal parent/teacher conference times are set aside in the school calendar each semester and teachers contact parents as needed throughout the school year in an effort to build a partnership in support of the student's effort and progress. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher any time if there are questions or insights they might wish to share.

Students in grade three, students receive a report card at the end of each quarter. Indication of the student's progress with regard to ACADEMICS is marked in READING, SPELLING, ENGLISH, SCIENCE, MATH, AND SOCIAL STUDIES; the student's progress with regard to NONACADEMICS is marked in HANDWRITING, MUSIC, ART, and PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

In grade four and grade five, students receive a report card at the end of each quarter. Indication of the student's progress with regard to ACADEMICS is marked in SPELLING, READING, ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, SOCIAL STUDIES, and SCIENCE; the student's progress with regard to NONACADEMICS is marked in HANDWRITING, ART, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, and MUSIC.

The percentage scale for ACADEMIC AREAS is as follows:

- A = 100% - 94%
- B = 93% - 87%
- C = 86% - 77%
- D = 76% - 70%
- F = Below 70%
- Inc. = Incomplete

The marking key for NONACADEMIC AREAS is as follows:

- E = Excellent
- S = Satisfactory
- U = Unsatisfactory

The marking key for CONDUCT and EFFORT/WORK HABITS is as follows:

- X = Very good/Outstanding Achievement
- / = Indicates need for improvement
- No mark indicates satisfactory improvement

Report cards are distributed on the last school day of the week following the ending date of the grading period (quarter). Signed report cards should be returned to the school on the Monday following distribution. If a parent/guardian wishes a conference with a teacher or teachers, the request should be indicated by marking the box next to the parent/guardian signature line on the back of the report card or phone the school (882-2800) for an appointment.

The missing work that resulted in an "Incomplete" must be made up by the end of the following grading period. Whatever work has been complete by the end of the following quarter will be evaluated and a grade marked for the "Incomplete" at that time. "Incomplete" will not be marked for the fourth quarter.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR INTERNET USE**

All use of the Internet shall be consistent with the District's goal of promoting educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. Rules and guidelines for the use of the Internet are aligned with *Authorization for Internet Access*, 623.0E2 of the School Board Policy Manual. Each student, teacher, or community member must sign the *Authorization*, agreeing to follow the District's rules as a condition for using the District's Internet connection. **The failure of any user to follow the terms of the *Authorization for Internet Access* will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.** The authorization form must be signed each year and no student may access or use the Internet without a signed form on file in the school. The use of the District's Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. The Building Principal will make all decisions regarding whether or not a user has violated this *Authorization* and may deny, revoke, or suspend access at any time; his or her decision is final.

## **ALCOHOL, CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, LOOK ALIKES**

Students are prohibited from bringing any kind of alcohol, controlled substances, or look-alike substances to school or any school function.

"Look-alike substance" means a substance other than a controlled substance which:

- (1) by overall dosage unit appearance, including shape, color, size, markings or lack thereof, taste, consistency, or any other identifying physical characteristic of the substance, would lead a reasonable person to believe that the substance is a controlled substance or
- (2) is expressly or implied represented to be a controlled substance or is distributed under circumstances which would lead a reasonable person to believe that the substance is a controlled substance.

For the purpose of determining whether the representations made or the circumstances of the distribution would lead a reasonable person to believe the substance to be a controlled substance, the court or other authority may consider the following factors in addition to any other factor that may be relevant:

- (a) Statements made by the owner or person in control of the substance concerning its nature, use or effect
- (b) Statements made to the buyer or recipient that the substance may be resold for profit
- (c) Whether the substance is packaged in manner normally used for the illegal distribution of controlled substances;
- (d) Whether the distribution or attempted distribution included an exchange of or demand for money or other property as consideration, and whether the amount of the consideration was substantially greater than the reasonable retail market value of the substance.

## **ASBESTOS MATERIALS**

State statutes require school districts to update parents and employees annually on the presence of asbestos-containing materials throughout its school buildings.

In accordance with AHERA regulations, the buildings of Putnam County CUSD No.535, have been reinspected for asbestos-containing building materials by an accredited inspector. Also, an Asbestos Management Plan has been prepared by an accredited Management Planner. Both the Inspection Report and Management Plan are on file in the Office of the Superintendent and are available for public review during normal business hours. Copies of these reports are available upon notification.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is required at PCES, as mandated by law. Students who are irregular in attendance develop insecurity about their place in the school environment; this insecurity often forms the basis for poor academic achievement and behavior problems. Being on time for school is also a part of regular attendance. Tardiness, too, can play a part in both poor academic achievement and behavior problems. Students are required to be in class on time so that the student's day can begin in a positive and confident manner.

In the event of illness or other excused absence, parents/guardians are to call the school absentee reporting line, **882-2800**, for their son/daughter by 9:00 A.M. on the day the student is absent. It will be assumed that the student is truant unless a parent/guardian calls before 10:00 A.M. on the day of the student's absence.

When there is the possibility of a student being absent for more than one day, the parent/guardian should inform the school of this possibility and no further call will be necessary. A physician's note is required to return to school after any of the following: contagious diseases, rashes, surgery, illness requiring a physician, and excuses from physical education class. In order to preserve the instructional time of PCES students, children other than enrolled students, are not allowed to attend classes at the elementary buildings.

### **ATTENDANCE COMPUTATION**

Tardy	Arriving after 8:25 A.M.
Full Day Attendance (Grades 2 - 5)	In School At Least 5 hours
Half Day Attendance (Grades 2 - 5)	In School At Least 2 ½ hours

### **ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

- Student illness
- Illness in the family of such nature that the student's help is needed at home
- Death in the family
- Medical and/or dental appointments that cannot be arranged outside the school day

### **UNACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

Oversleeping	Missing the bus	Hunting/Fishing
Shopping	Unexplained "personal reasons"	

When it is necessary for a student to be released from school before regular dismissal time, the parent/guardian must send a dated, signed written note explaining the reason for the early dismissal to the office. The student may then be picked up by the adult designated in the note. The student will be picked up in the school office.

**PERFECT ATTENDANCE RECOGNITION**

Students will be recognized for “Perfect Attendance” at the end of the school year.

“Perfect Attendance for the Year” is an exclusive achievement with stringent requirements. Students must be in attendance the full day every day of the school year. Additionally, students may accumulate no more than two incidences of tardiness for the entire school year. Students are recognized for “Perfect Attendance for the Year” at the awards ceremony in the spring.

**MAKE UP WORK**

Excused absences require that the student make up any work missed. It is generally allowed that the student will receive a day to make up work missed for each day of absence.

Unexcused absences require that the student do the work missed in a timely manner upon return to school. Usually, the student will spend recess time completing the work.

**HOMEWORK REQUESTS DURING EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Requests for homework will be honored for students who are absent. Requests should be made by contacting the school before 8:25 A.M. Assignments will be sent home with a sibling, relative, or neighbor who attends in the same building, or the parent/guardian may pick up the assignment at 3:45 P.M.

**PUPIL ABSENCE FOR VACATION**

Families who must take students out of school for a vacation other than the school holidays provided in the official school calendar are asked to inform the building principal. Requests for homework in this situation will be honored where feasible.

Homework assignments are based on classroom instruction and student practice. It is usually not helpful to give a student assignments based on instruction and practice when the student is not able to be present for the classroom instruction and to participate in the practice. Students will be given an opportunity to make up missed assignments upon return to school.

If the class is engaged in a unit of study that cannot, for all practical purposes, be duplicated, parents might consider daily activities for the student that will help to maintain basic skills. Some examples would be activities such as keeping a written journal about the vacation, reading a book or books about the places being visited, computing the day’s mileage, maintaining a data collection on the number of license plates observed from a given list of states, and/or plotting a map of the journey.

Since it is often not possible to duplicate the classroom instruction and interaction preparatory to making the homework assignment, parents/guardians are encouraged to avoid long absences when possible.

**EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

To encourage students to attend school and class regularly, our attendance policy restricts students to a maximum of ten absences per semester. The eleventh absence per semester is considered excessive and may result in a loss of credit. All absences, excused and unexcused, will be included in the count.

The procedure outlined below has been developed to inform students and parents about possible attendance problems and to correct any problem before it results in a student losing the opportunity to receive credit.

Step 1: When a student has accumulated five (5) absences, excused or unexcused in one semester, a notice will be sent to the parents upon the occasion of the fifth absence.

Step 2: Upon the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) day of absence in the same semester, a notice will be sent to the parents from the principal's office. The principal will contact the parents and take appropriate steps to resolve the problem. These steps may include a family conference, referral to a truancy officer, or a referral to community supportive services. In addition, students will be required to provide verification of further absences.

Step 3: On the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) absence each semester, a notice will be sent to the parents from the principal's office. The principal will consider the reasons for these absences and appropriate remediation conditions may be assigned. If these remediation conditions are not met, every absence after the 10<sup>th</sup>, that is not deemed excused by the administration, will be considered unexcused and results in loss of credit for that day.

*Out of school suspensions count as unexcused absences toward this ten-day total.*

### **Consideration of absences after the 10<sup>th</sup> absence**

Each absence after the 10-day limit will be recorded as unexcused unless deemed excused by the administration. Students with an unexcused absence will receive no credit for work assigned or completed on those specific days unless parents produce official documentation of an appointment to the principal's office on the day they return to school – doctor, dental appointment, court papers, or other as deemed excused by the administration. **ABSENCES FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME FOR VALID MEDICAL REASONS WILL BE BLOCKED AND COUNTED AS ONE DAY ABSENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS POLICY**

It is within the sole discretion of the elementary school administration to determine whether the student's absence is excused or unexcused. If a student is absent from school without valid cause, then such truancy will result in loss of credit. Parents and guardians must provide reasons for student absences to the administration. The principal is the only person who can excuse absences.

### **BUILDING POLICIES**

1. No one is allowed to leave the building or the school grounds without the permission of the principal or other designated employee.
2. Chewing gum or eating candy during school hours is not allowed, except as a classroom activity, snack or party.
3. Use of vulgarities and obscene language and gestures is not conducive to the best educational atmosphere and will not be tolerated anywhere on school grounds or at any school activities. Violations, as determined by school administration, will result in disciplinary action.
4. All members of the school community must treat each other with respect at all times. Disrespectful, demeaning or discourteous behavior directed at school personnel will not be tolerated. Violations will result in disciplinary action and could be interpreted as gross misconduct. Failure to obey a reasonable request could be considered insubordination.
5. Threats against other students or adults will not be tolerated. Violations, as determined by school administration, will result in disciplinary action.
6. Fighting or encouraging others to fight will not be tolerated.
7. Possession or use of explosives, firearms, or any other object that can reasonably be considered a weapon shall be prohibited on school buses, in school buildings, or on school grounds at all times, or at school-sponsored events. This includes any object that may be classified as a weapon or any part of a weapon such as a used bullet shell or cartridge.
8. When it is believed to be in the best interest of the student for educational or behavioral reasons, recess may be withheld at the discretion of the teacher and/or principal.
9. Personal belongings such as baseball cards or collections of cards, DSs, MP3 Players, or toys, etc., should not be brought to school without permission from the teacher. Such items will be held in the office until the

student or parent picks them up. No betting, trading, or buying/selling of any items is allowed in school, on the playground, or on the buses. Toys, trading cards or other nuisance items confiscated from students will remain with the principal until a parent or guardian picks up the item(s). Parents will be notified that the item(s) will be held for two weeks, after which time the school will not be responsible for the item(s).

10. Students and their parents are encouraged to select responsible styles of dress that are appropriate for a healthy educational environment and that support the achievement of the educational goals of the community. While the responsibility for appropriate attire at school rests with the student and his/her parents, students should maintain an appearance that will not impair or endanger their health or safety. A complete list of attire that is inappropriate for school and which might cause a disruption of the educational process would be impossible, but the following examples will serve as guidelines:
  - a) Clothing students wear should cover them from at least the shoulder to mid thigh. Short shorts, halter or tube tops, transparent clothing, bare midriffs and items with holes in inappropriate places are not allowed.
  - b) Coats, jackets, capes, and hats are not to be worn in the building during the day; additionally sports bags, book bags, etc, may not be carried during the day.
  - c) Clothing that displays or communicates drug or alcohol advertisements/names, profane language, vulgar statements, hate messages, sexual innuendo, tobacco ads, suicide or other violent messages are not allowed.
  - d) Any clothing, symbols and so forth that relate to gang symbols, gang membership, etc., may not be worn.
  - e) Shoes must be worn.

*Students who dress in an inappropriate manner will be allowed to correct the situation and parents will be notified of the school's concern.*

11. School property, including, but not limited to, desks and lockers, is owned and controlled by the District. School authorities are authorized to conduct administrative inspections of school property as a means of protecting the health, safety and welfare of the District, its employees, and students, without notice to or consent from the students or parents and without a search warrant. This policy is in agreement with the Illinois School Code.
12. Smoking, possession of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages and drugs, or being under the influence of same, is prohibited at any time, at any school in the District, on school grounds or school buses. This rule also applies at any school-sponsored activity at home or away.
13. Using or possessing electronic signaling and cellular radio-telecommunication devices, unless authorized and approved by the Building Principal is prohibited. Electronic signaling devices include pocket and all similar electronic paging devices.
14. **The classroom teacher with approval of the principal may distribute invitations to personal parties only when they include every student in the classroom or all of the boys or all of the girls in the classroom. Invitations to personal parties may not be distributed directly by students or parents at school.** The distribution of party invitations during the school day can often cause problems in the classroom for the teacher as well as for the students. We encourage parents to distribute party invitations outside of the school day.
15. School parties and activities are planned for the school's students. While the help and support of parents with these parties is encouraged and greatly appreciated, it is also necessary to restrict attendance at school parties (Halloween, Christmas, Valentines Day) to our students, staff, and parents. Younger siblings, or other children, should not attend school parties held during the school day.

#### **GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT**

The Putnam County community is a member of the CHARACTER COUNTS coalition. The schools use the six

pillars of character as the standard for student conduct and behavior. Students are expected to know and follow the six pillars of character. The pillars of character are:

**Trustworthiness**  
**Respect**

**Responsibility**  
**Fairness**

**Caring**  
**Citizenship**

### **BUS CONDUCT**

Students who do not live within walking distance of their school building are provided with bus transportation contracted with First Student transportation service. Students are required to follow all rules posted in the front of each bus as follows:

1. Follow the driver's instructions.
2. Do not eat, drink, or smoke on the bus.
3. Keep all harmful materials (drugs, tobacco, alcohol, weapons, etc.) off the bus.
4. Keep all parts of your body and all objects to yourself and inside the bus.
5. Keep the noise level down and remain seated facing forward.
6. Keep the aisle clear and do not litter, write on, or damage the bus.

First Student consequences:

- 1) Verbal warning      2) Assigned seat      3) Written referral

Drivers may skip steps depending upon the severity, or repetition, of rules violated.

These rules can be summarized and the safety of the students can be substantially heightened by following the four basic rules that follow:

1. Obey the driver.
2. Stay in your seat when the bus is moving.
3. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
4. Keep noise level down at all times on the bus.

Please be advised that the rules for safe and efficient transportation of the students are fully supported by school district administration and the Board of Education. Guidelines regarding the consequences to be used for notice of misconduct are as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> offense – student is notified of the offense, counseled, and may receive a detention or missed recess(es). Warning is sent home for parent notification with response requested.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – student is notified, counseled, and will receive a detention or missed recess(es). Warning is sent home for parent notification with response requested.

3<sup>rd</sup> offense – student is notified, counseled, and given a 2-9 day bus suspension. Parent is notified of offense and written report is sent home with parent response requested.

4<sup>th</sup> offense – student is notified, counseled, and given a bus suspension up to ten days, and bus expulsion for remainder of semester may be recommended to the Board of Education. Parent is notified, written report sent home, with parent response requested.

5<sup>th</sup> offense – student is notified of the offense, counseled, suspended, and bus expulsion will be recommended to the Board of Education. Parent is notified, written report is sent home, and parent response is requested.

## **GROSS MISCONDUCT**

Any student who commits an act which endangers others or who abuses the rights of others will be dealt with individually. Removal of bus privileges for the year and/or suspension from school attendance may result for such misconduct.

Normal school attendance as outlined by the *Illinois School Code* is required of students; students suspended from riding the bus must attend school or be considered truant.

## **BUS PASSES**

Supervision of students throughout the school day up to the point at which the buses leave the school is clearly the responsibility of school personnel. Buses are provided for transportation to and from school only, and students are assigned to their bus according to where they live in the community. **Only students enrolled in PC schools my ride the buses.** Buses are never knowingly loaded over the stated capacity because it is neither legal nor safe. Walkers are supervised and dismissed from the school grounds when the bus traffic has passed, in order to provide safe passage for those walkers.

When a parent calls the school and asks that a student be permitted to ride a different bus home, or asks that a student who is normally a walker ride a bus, it is necessary to determine whether there is room on the requested bus for that student. If the request is made late in the day it is sometimes very difficult to coordinate the request and be certain that the student or students are safely where they are requested to be.

**All requests for bus passes or any alternative means of leaving school other than the usual, designated routine must be in writing. The student must bring a written note to school that morning. The note must be dated, must indicate specifically the request, and must be signed by the parent/guardian.** In the event of a family emergency situation where the parent/guardian cannot be at home to receive the child in the usual routine, a phone call to the office will be accepted.

## **USE OF VIDEO CAMERAS ON SCHOOL BUSES**

Most buses are equipped with video cameras. Videotapes are viewed to investigate an incident reported by a bus driver, administrator, supervisor, student, or other person. They may also be viewed at random. Viewing of videotapes is limited to individuals having a legitimate educational or administrative purpose and may include both video and audio portions of the tapes. In most instances, individuals with a legitimate educational or administrative purpose will be the Superintendent, administrator (including building principals), transportation director, bus driver, sponsor, coach, or other supervisor. Videotapes will be reused or erased unless it is needed for an educational or administrative purpose.

## **CAFETERIA**

Lunch and breakfast meals can be purchased by the day, week, or month. Students are not permitted to charge breakfast or lunch. Breakfast and lunch money and instructions are sent to the office every morning, along with attendance. All record keeping for the hot lunch program is maintained in the office. Putnam County Elementary School follows established policies and criteria for determining eligibility for free and/or reduced lunch or breakfast.

Students are not permitted to charge meals. However, no child is ever allowed to go without lunch. A notice of the charge is sent home in the event it is necessary to provide a lunch. Students who bring a cold lunch are encouraged to avoid “junk food” and other non-nutritious items. Carbonated beverages are not permitted in the cafeteria.

For safety reasons, glassware should not be used. Trading of lunches and/or lunch items is not permitted. The cafeteria is a public dining room. Students are required to use their “dining in public” behavior, which includes appropriate table manners and noise control in the cafeteria. Students eat at tables in the cafeteria. Noise must be kept at a conversational level so the Cooks can hear the requests of the students they are serving.

### ***Free/Reduced Meal Applications***

Free and reduced lunch and breakfast applications, along with letters containing guidelines are available during registration and throughout the school year in each school's office. A parent/guardian wishing to apply must complete and return the application to their student's school office. Verification of income may be requested and a letter of approval or denial will be sent by the mail to the parent/guardian.

### **DISCIPLINE**

This handbook identifies anticipated standards of acceptable behavior and outlines the general consequences that will occur when those standards are not met. These are guidelines to be interpreted by the staff members in the Putnam County School Buildings. Each incident will be considered according to the individual merits of the case.

School rules published in this handbook are subject to such changes as may be needed to ensure continued compliance with federal, state, and local regulations and are subject to such review and revision as becomes necessary for the routine operation of the schools.

The General Rules of Conduct and Building Policies have been carefully prepared to provide the maximum benefits to the maximum number of students based upon a valid educational philosophy. It is the responsibility of the Principal, by direction of the Board of Education through the Superintendent, to operate the school to the optimum educational benefit of the individual students.

Discipline is a person's ability to control his/her own behavior, sometimes with guidance and/or direct assistance from another person. At Putnam County Elementary School, discipline is used as a tool for learning rather than merely a punishment.

At PCES, students are expected to show consistent ability to control their behavior. When children are ready to begin their formal education, they have reached the point in their growth and development where it is reasonable to expect that the youngster does know the difference between right and wrong behavior, and behaves accordingly.

At Putnam County Elementary School, the general rule is to behave in such a way as to show that all persons are of equal importance and have a right to be treated with common courtesy. When behavior is inappropriate, the teacher or supervisor will intervene and assist the student in understanding why the behavior is unacceptable. While a counseling approach is taken in all cases, it should be clearly understood that repeated incidences of inappropriate behavior (verbal or nonverbal), depending on the level of severity of the misbehavior, may result in a conference with the Principal, noon detention, required parent conference with the appropriate staff, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion as outlined in Board of Education Policies that comply with the *Illinois School Code*. Section 5/24 - 4 of the *Illinois School Code* establishes that a teacher or other employee of a District providing related school services or other school personnel may use reasonable force for the purpose of self defense or defense of property. If the student is currently part of a case study evaluation or receiving Special Education services, an IEP meeting will be called to include the appropriate staff members. This student's schedule will not be changed unless the IEP team makes the recommendation to do so.

In addition to the rules outlined in the handbook, the principal may establish certain rules and regulations not inconsistent with those established by the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools.

**EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

School may be closed unexpectedly due to severe weather, power failure, or other reasons. Parents are advised to listen to local radio stations for information about the closing of school during inclement weather conditions. If there is no radio broadcast, consider that school will be in session. Please do NOT call the school office. School phone lines must remain open for instructions and staff communications.

When weather conditions are such that by delaying the start of school either one or two hours the buses can then safely complete their routes, it will be announced as early as possible on the radio stations. When such an announcement of delayed start is made, school opening will be delayed that amount of time and no students are expected in the building before the delayed opening time.

**All announcements concerning adjustments in the school schedule due to inclement weather will be made on the following stations/channels:**

<u>Radio Dial</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>AM</u>	<u>FM</u>
WLPO/WAJK	LaSalle	1220	99.33
WLRZ	Peru	101	
WIZZ	Streator	1250	98
WKOT	Ottawa	96.5	
WZOE	Princeton	1490	98.3
WGLC	Mendota	100.1	
WRBY	Henry	100.5	
WIRL	Peoria	1290	

Television Channels

WHOI	Peoria	Channel 19
WEEK	E. Peoria	Channel 25
WMBD	Peoria	Channel 31

**EXPLOSIVES, INCENDIARIES, FIREARMS, WEAPONS, AND LOOK ALIKES**

To bring any kind of explosive material or look-alikes to school, whether they are intended to be exploded or not, is prohibited. The same is true for firearms, ammunition, knives, lasers, look-alikes, or any other weapons, whether concealed or not. No student will be in possession of any object that could reasonably be considered as a potential hazard to another person or another person’s safety. Any student who uses, possesses, distributes, purchases, or sells an explosive or firearm or any object that can reasonably be considered as a weapon may be recommended for expulsion for at least one calendar year. Under the terms of the School Code, it is mandated that the recommendation for expulsion be for at least one year when a firearm, weapon, or explosive is involved in the misconduct. The Board of Education can expel a student for up to two years for any conduct that is in violation of the Student Code. On a case-by-case basis, the Board may modify the length of suspension or expulsion. A student who is determined to have brought a weapon to school, any school sponsored activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school, shall be expelled for a period of not less than one full year, except that the expulsion may be modified. For the purpose of this section, the term “weapon” means

possession, use, control, or transfer of any weapons as defined by Section 921 of Title 18, United States Code, firearms as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Act or use of a weapon as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code; other objects if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm include, but are not limited to, knives guns, firearms, rifles, shotguns, brass knuckles, billy clubs or look-alikes thereof. Such items as baseball bats, pipes, bottles, locks, sticks, pencils, and pens may be considered weapons if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm.

### **FEE WAIVERS**

The Superintendent will recommend to the Board for adoption what fees, if any, will be charged for the use of textbooks, consumable materials, extracurricular activities, and other school fees. Students will pay for loss of school books or other school-owned materials.

Fees for textbooks, other instructional materials, and driver education are waived for students who meet the eligibility criteria for fee waiver contained in this policy. In order that no student be denied educational services or academic credit due to the inability of parent(s)/guardian(s) to pay fees and charges, the Superintendent will recommend to the Board for adoption what additional fees, if any, the District will waive for students who meet the eligibility criteria for fee waiver. Students receiving a fee waiver are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and equipment.

The Superintendent shall ensure that applications for fee waivers are widely available and distributed according to State law and ISBE rule and that provisions for assisting parents/guardians complete the application are available.

A student shall be eligible for a fee waiver when:

1. The student is currently eligible for free lunches or breakfasts pursuant to 105 ILCS 125/1 et seq.; or
2. The student or student's family is currently receiving aid under Article IV of The Illinois Public Aid Code (Aid to Families with Dependent Children).

The Building Principal will give additional consideration where one or more of the following factors are present:

1. Illness in the family;
2. Unusual expenses such as fire, flood, storm damage, etc.;
3. Seasonal unemployment;
4. Emergency situations;
5. When one or more of the parent(s)/guardian(s) are involved in a work stoppage.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) shall submit written evidence of eligibility for waiver of the student's fee. The Building Principal will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) promptly as to whether the fee waiver request has been granted or denied.

A Building Principal's denial of a fee waiver request may be appealed to the Superintendent by submitting the appeal in writing to the Superintendent within 14 days of the denial. The Superintendent or designee shall respond within 14 days of receipt of the appeal. The Superintendent's decision may be appealed to the School Board. The decision of the Board is final and binding.

Questions regarding the fee waiver request process should be addressed to the Building Principal's office.

## **HARASSMENT/SEXUAL HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION**

“Harassment of, or threats to students, employees of the District, or the Board of Education on or off school grounds is not allowed. Any conduct, including teasing, bullying, and harassment directed against students which causes them to be fearful of attending school is not allowed. Any student who teases, bullies, or harasses another student will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include, but not be limited to, suspension or expulsion.” Putnam County Elementary School and the Putnam County School District will neither condone nor tolerate harassment or sexual harassment (BP 7.20) of students by anyone. The District espouses the belief that a student has the right to be free from the harm perpetuated by anti-social acts while the student is attending school. All students are to be free to attend school without concern of threats or demands. Harassment of, or threats to, students, employees of the District or the Board of Education, on or off the school grounds is not allowed. Any conduct directed against students, which causes them to be fearful of attending school, is not allowed. Students who believe they are being harassed by another student(s) should contact a teacher or the administration. Equal educational opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to race, sex, religion, color, national origin, or physical or mental handicap.

### **Sexual Harassment:**

It is Board Policy to not discriminate on the basis of sex, marital status or pregnancy in District-operated or District-supported programs or activities. In addition, Board Policy prohibits sexual harassment or sexual intimidation of students by other students and District employees. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- A. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's education or school-related activities;
- B. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or other decisions affecting that individual; or
- C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or school-related performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Individuals engaging in such prohibited activity shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from this institution as determined by such administrative or Board action as is required by Illinois Law or by Board Policy.

This policy applies to acts of sexual harassment by any member of one sex against a member of the opposite or the same sex at all levels of the school community (i.e., supervisor-subordinate, faculty-student, employee-peer, student-student). If you feel that you have been discriminated against, harassed or intimidated on the basis of sex, please contact the Principal or Superintendent.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Health Examinations and Immunizations**

Students entering preschool and kindergarten must have a physical examination before entering that grade. Lead screening is a required part of the health examination for children age six years or younger. Kindergarten students are also required to have an eye examination.

All children in kindergarten and the second grade shall have a dental examination. Each of these children shall present proof of having been examined by a dentist by May 15<sup>th</sup> of the school year.

A complete record of required dental exams, vision exams, physical exams, and immunizations will be kept on file for each student. Students are excluded from school beginning October 16<sup>th</sup> if requirements for health examinations, immunizations, and vision examinations have not been met.

Immunizations must be obtained as required by the Illinois Department of Public Health Rules and Regulation (Title 77, Part 665, Section 665.240). The student's immunization record must be maintained in the office of the school in order to prove compliance with the law. Students must be in compliance with all health exam and immunization requirements in order to attend school. Children who are not in compliance may register for school but may not attend beginning the first day of classes until such time as they are in compliance. Please check with the secretary or principal of the school if you have questions regarding immunization and health requirements.

Current Illinois Department of Public Health Rules and Regulations require the following immunizations:

1. DPT
2. Oral Polio
3. MMR/Measles
4. Hepatitis B series (for Pre-school and entering 5<sup>th</sup> graders)
5. Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine
6. Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)

### Safety

Safety is a top priority for students at Putnam County Elementary School. Students are under close supervision throughout the school day. We are equipped to provide only minor first aid when accidents do happen, and are prohibited by law from doing more than this.

Parents of students who are injured or who become ill at school will be contacted to come for the student. The Registration Form contains a section which provides the office with EMERGENCY INFORMATION, part of which must be the phone number of a person who lives in Putnam County and could come to school for your child in an emergency. Current information is imperative; **PLEASE KEEP THE OFFICE INFORMED OF ANY CHANGES**. In the event of an emergency, the schools will always try to contact the parent/guardian FIRST. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the EMERGENCY INFORMATION section on the registration form will be followed.

If a student is injured at school, it is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian to request an insurance claim form from the office. Claim forms must be filed with the insurance company within thirty (30) days from the date of the accident.

### HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Parents are encouraged to visit their child's school and classroom. The development of a positive and mutually supportive relationship with a child's teacher can be of great benefit to the child, the parent, the teacher, and the school. Formal parent/teacher conferences are held District-wide twice each school year. In addition, elementary school teachers hold conferences on an "as needed" basis, either in person or by telephone. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher regarding academic progress, behavior, or other concerns. In the interest of maintaining open, two-way, communication, parents are encouraged to contact the teacher first whenever there is a concern. To maintain a strong academic focus, parents should avoid classroom visits during any testing times.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

The Elementary School's "Homework Policy" is intended to (1) foster informative and supportive communication between school and home, (2) continue the development of individual responsibility, and (3) increase academic performance.

When an assignment is incomplete or not turned in on time the steps listed below will be followed:

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Incident | The student uses his or her Homework Voucher. (See below.) The assignment is turned on the following school day and no credit is lost.  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Incident | A note is sent home informing parents of the incomplete or missing assignment. Parents sign the "Homework Note" and return the note to school. The assignment is turned in the following school day and partial credit is lost. The student is assigned a recess detention. |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Incident | The classroom teacher contacts parents to work together to improve the shared concern and a recess detention is assigned.   |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Incident | Partial credit is lost on the assignment and the student is assigned a recess detention. Student also loses a special activity. (Technology, media, school assembly)  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Incident | The principal contacts parents to assist in improving homework completion by the student and a second recess detention is assigned.   |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> Incident | A conference including the student, parent, teacher, and principal is arranged to determine a plan to help the student improve their homework completion.   |

The procedure outlined above begins from step one at the start of each nine-week grading period.

Generally, students will not be assigned more than two recess detentions (Stay in for recess) for late or incomplete homework during any single grading period. This time will be reserved for students, who for various reasons, would benefit from additional help from the classroom teacher.

### **Homework Voucher**

Students are awarded a "Homework Voucher" at the beginning of each month. Vouchers extend the due date of an assignment by one day but are not intended to allow a student to skip an assignment.

Students may use only one voucher each month and may not accumulate more than one.

### **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Putnam County CUSD #535 is committed to providing students a safe environment. It seeks to prevent children from being exposed to pests and pesticides. Therefore, an Integrated Pest Management Plan has been adopted.

Even though pest control practices may involve a variety of chemical and nonchemical methods, insecticide baits and rodenticide baits are most commonly used at each school rather than chemical applications. However, there may be situations where chemical control of pesticides may be used. If such a control is used, parents and staff members can be informed of such prior to an application. A parent or staff member may contact the school building principal if they want to be added to a registry for notification prior to chemical application. Only those that request such will receive advance notice.

The school district is committed to use the least hazardous chemical control methods after non-chemical control methods have been applied. However, written prior notice shall not be required if there is an imminent threat to health or property. If such a situation arises, written notice will be sent to those listed on the registry as soon as practical.

If there are any questions pertaining to the Integrated Pest Management Plan, contact the school office.

## MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

**Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21** states, “It shall be the policy of the State of Illinois that the administration of medication to students during regular school hours and during school-related activities should be discouraged unless absolutely necessary for the critical health and well-being of the student.”

It is the policy of the school district that District personnel shall not assume responsibility for administering medication to students. If it is required that a student receive medication during the school day, the parent/guardian may visit school and administer the medication; if that is not possible, the principal or his/her designee may administer the medication provided the school is given written instructions signed by the parent and the physician which contain the following information:

1. Student’s name
2. Name of medication, purpose, and duration
3. Time to be administered and dosage
4. Possible side effects of medication
5. Statement from the parent that the school will not be held responsible for any results of the medication
6. How the parent/guardian wishes to retrieve the container(s) and/or any remaining medication at the end of the time during which it is to be administered.

**All medication must be brought to and from school by the parent/guardian.** When it is brought to the school, it must be in the original container, which should be clearly labeled. The name of the student and names and phone numbers of the physician and pharmacy shall be indicated on the container(s). All medications must be kept in the office for the student. A written record is maintained in the office as to dispensing of medication. These instructions also apply to all over the counter medications, including but not limited to Tylenol, aspirin, cough drops, herbal supplements and vitamins. **Due to the threat of Reye’s Syndrome, school personnel will NOT administer aspirin unless accompanied by a doctor’s prescription. Due to the unpredictability of possible side effects, school personnel will NOT administer eye drops, eardrops, or antibiotics.**

Forms to complete the above requirements are available in the office of each school.

### Asthma Medication and EpiPen

A student may possess an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen®) and/or medication prescribed for asthma for immediate use at the student’s discretion, provided the student’s parent/guardian has completed and signed a “School Medication Authorization Form.”

The School District shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student’s self administration of medication or epinephrine auto-injector or the storage of any medication by school personnel. A student’s parent/guardian must indemnify and hold harmless the School District and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student’s self-administration of an epinephrine auto-injector and/or medication, or the storage of any medication by school personnel.

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students, including administering medication.

## **NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT AND RTI**

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, signed into law on January 8, 2002, is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. This update vastly increases the federal government's role in the operation of public schools and imposes many new and complex obligations on local school districts. Of particular interest to parents is the assurance that all our teachers are duly certified and highly qualified and that you have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s). You will also be notified if your child is being taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not considered "highly qualified" under the NCLBA guidelines. As well as its comprehensive provisions on school improvement, teacher quality and instructional programs, NCLBA also has numerous other requirements, such as regulations concerning student privacy, military access to student directory information, community access to school facilities and guidelines for the exercise of religious freedom in the schools. As required by NCLBA, Putnam County Community Unit School District No. 535 certifies that no policy of the district prevents, or otherwise denies participation in, constitutionally protected prayer in public elementary and secondary schools.

## **RtI/RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION**

Putnam County schools make it their mission to provide the best care and educational programs for all students. We strive to take into account current research and ever changing laws. New State and Federal Legislation mandate a new process called Response to Intervention (RtI) that goes hand in hand with No Child Left Behind. These new laws emphasize the importance of providing high quality, scientifically-based instruction and interventions, and hold schools accountable for the adequate yearly progress of all students. Through RtI, we provide early interventions to students who are at risk for academic or behavioral problems. The process is designed to help schools focus on high quality interventions that are matched to student needs and are monitored on a frequent basis. School personnel and parents use research and data to adapt instruction and to make educational program decisions for students. The greatest benefit of an RtI approach is that it eliminates a "wait to fail" situation because students receive additional help immediately within the general education setting. When screening data indicate a concern for a student or group of students, interventions are put into place to address these concerns.

## **PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Each building has a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). This committee of parents meets on a regular basis with the building principal for the purpose of direct two-way communication between the school and the parents. The goal is to have parent representatives of each village in Putnam County and each grade level in the school. Parents who are interested in serving on the PAC are encouraged to contact the building principal.

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Formal Parent/Teacher conferences are held District-wide at two times during the school year, as noted in the District calendar. In addition to the District-wide scheduled times, teachers in grades PreK-4 hold conferences on an "as needed" basis, either on the phone or in person. PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT THEIR CHILD'S TEACHER AT ANY TIME OF THE YEAR IF THEY HAVE A QUESTION OR CONCERN.

## **PEDICULOSIS**

Pediculosis (Head Lice) is an expensive and frustrating problem that everyone would rather avoid. It has nothing to do with the kind of parents or home a child has.

In fact, head lice prefer a clean, healthy head to a dirty one. Head lice are passed from person to person by direct contact or on shared objects such as hats, combs, towels, barrettes, headphones, etc.

If head lice are found on a student, all parents are notified that a case of head lice has been found. The infected child must be picked up by the parent and taken home for treatment. By Administrative Procedure 7:100-R, as determined by the Board of Education, a student must be determined to be nit free before reentering school.

### **PLACEMENT, PROMOTION, RETENTION**

In compliance with School Board Policy 7.30, the building principal shall assign students to classes. Placement, promotion or retention shall be made in the best interest of the student after a careful evaluation of all factors relating to the advantages and disadvantages of alternatives. The building principal will direct and assist teachers in their evaluation of students and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards. No student shall be promoted to the next grade level based solely upon age or any other social reasons not related to the student's academic performance.

In accordance with the Illinois Education Reform Act and in compliance with School Board Policy 6.280, both quantitative measures and qualitative assessment will be used to determine placement/promotion/retention. Such decisions will be reached with the support and involvement of the parents within the prescribed time frame. If a student is currently part of a case study evaluation or receiving Special Education services, placement decision shall be determined by the student's educational team

### **POLICE ASSISTANCE**

In situations where a student refuses to cooperate with school staff in the proper execution of their duties, or participates in conduct which is disorderly, or which also may be a violation of criminal laws, the local police department may be called upon to assist staff members.

No employee of the school district shall participate in or arrange for the interrogation of a student of the District, without the express prior approval of the principal or his/her designee. All such interviews at school by officers of the law will be conducted in a private office with the principal or designee present. Prior notice shall be given to the parent(s) of any student to be interviewed and parent(s) may be present at such interviews if he/she so desires.

### **PUBLICATION OF STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

Student directory information is considered to be the student's name and address, grade level, birth date and place, parents'/guardians' name and addresses, information about participation in school sponsored activities, and period of attendance in the school. From time to time, a student's picture or work may be used as part of the school or District's homepage. Throughout the school year there are also times when a child's picture, with or without name, or their work may appear in a local newspaper or the school news letter. Parents/guardians may request that their child's picture, with or without name, or their work not appear in any such publications. *A parent or guardian must notify the office in writing, at the beginning of each year, if they DO NOT want their child's picture, name, other directory information or work published.*

### **RECESS**

Weather permitting, students have recess outside daily. When the weather is inclement, including a wind chill factor of 20 degrees or lower, recess is held in the school gym. While it is clearly not the desire or intention of school staff to usurp the parent in determining if a coat, hat/scarf, boots, and mittens/gloves are necessary on any given day, it is also a fact that children often come to school without adequate clothing for an extended play period outdoors. It is always better to have

the option of leaving a coat in a locker or coat closet than to be outdoors inadequately clad and run the risk of becoming ill and, as a result, not being able to participate in class for the rest of that day and/or missing school for several days.

## **RECORDS ACCESS - FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access.

A parent/guardian or eligible student should submit to the Records Custodian, Principal, or other appropriate official, written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The District official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the District official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the parent/guardian or eligible student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

A parent/guardian or eligible student may ask the District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the District official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the District will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise the parent/guardian or eligible student of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the parent/guardian or eligible student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District in an administrative supervisory, academic, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the District has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); or a person serving on the Board of Education. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities.

Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

## **Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for

marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

• Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) –

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents;
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
9. Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of :
  - a. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
  - b. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
  - c. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

• Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

The Putnam County School District has developed procedures, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The Putnam County School District will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The Putnam County School District will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. The Putnam County School District will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

## **RESIDENCE**

### *Education of Homeless Children*

Each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, as provided to other children and youths, including a public pre-school education. A "homeless child" is defined as provided in the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and State law. The Superintendent shall act as or appoint a Liaison for Homeless Children to coordinate this policy's implementation.

A homeless child may attend the District school that the child attended when permanently housed or in which the child was last enrolled. A homeless child living in any District school's attendance area may attend that school.

The Superintendent or designee shall review and revise rules or procedures that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youths. In reviewing and revising such procedures, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship. Transportation shall be provided in accordance with the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and State law.

The Superintendent or designee shall give special attention to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths who are not currently attending school. If a child is denied enrollment or transportation under this policy, the Liaison for Homeless Children shall immediately refer the child or his or her parent/guardian to the ombudsperson appointed by the Regional Superintendent and provide the child or his or her parent/guardian with a written explanation for the denial.

Whenever a child and his or her parent/guardian who initially share the housing of another person due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar hardship continue to share the housing, the Liaison for Homeless Children shall, after the passage of 18 months and annually thereafter, conduct a review as to whether such hardship continues to exist in accordance with State law.

### *Change of Residence Due To Military Service*

If a pupil's change of residence is due to the military service obligation of a person who has legal custody of the pupil, then, upon the written request of the person having legal custody of the pupil, the residence of the pupil is deemed for all purposes relating to enrollment (including tuition, fees, and costs), for the duration of the custodian's military service obligation, to be the same as the residence of the pupil immediately before the change of residence caused by the military service obligation. A school district is not responsible for providing transportation to or from school for a pupil whose residence is determined under this condition.

## **ROUTINE DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

**PLEASE NOTE- We remind you that it is illegal to pass a school bus, from either direction, if the stop arm is extended and/or the lights are flashing.** Students will enter and exit school using the New North Door (North/Flagpole). Parents may drop off students in the morning at the New North Door ONLY. Parents may park in the front parking (North/Flagpole) lot only when buses are not present. Sufficient parking is available on the west side of school, also. A crossing guard will be on duty at the corner both in the morning and the afternoons.

Bus riders will be supervised by staff members and dismissed at the appropriate times through the New North Door. Walkers will be dismissed from the New North Door at approximately 3:15. Students who routinely ride a bus home, but who are being picked up by the parent/guardian that day, will be dismissed with walkers.

Any changes to a student's regular dismissal procedure should be noted in a signed and dated note or in an emergency situation, by telephone, before 2:30 PM. Again, due to space constraints, students cannot be routinely dismissed from the classrooms or office. Your understanding and cooperation is much appreciated. All parents must stop by the office for a *Pick Up Pass* if picking up a child directly from the classroom.

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

The office is open from 7:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Teachers are in the building from 7:45 A.M. to 3:45 P.M. daily. **Lunches are scheduled for 11:00 (third grade), 11:30 (fourth grade), 12:00 (fifth grade). Recess is scheduled after lunchtimes whenever possible, or later in the afternoon as necessary.**

Students who are transported to school by bus arrive at various times, with the last bus arriving at approximately 8:05 A.M. Students who are walkers should not leave home until 7:50 A.M. so that they arrive by 8:00 A.M. This provides ample time for these youngsters to arrive in time for class to begin at 8:10 A.M. Students will be considered tardy as of 8:25 A.M.

### **SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Putnam County Elementary School offers a fully certified teaching staff, a well-trained support staff and a fully certified building administrator. Careful planning, preparation and instructional practices are focused toward providing the best possible elementary education for all our students. PCES offers physical education and music, as well as time for using the media center and computer lab. A wide range of special education services are also available, including Speech/Language, Hearing, Title I reading, and a wide variety of academic support programs.

### **SCHOOL SAFETY**

In order to provide as secure an environment as possible, PCES is part of the Putnam County District #535 Safe Schools Plan. This plan includes not only school staff but was developed in conjunction with local law enforcement and emergency personnel. Plans have been developed to cover a variety of emergency situations. Drills are conducted at various intervals throughout the school year to establish routine and minimize panic in the event of a fire, inclement weather, or other emergency situations requiring that students be moved to positions of optimum safety. Evacuation plans are posted in each room of the elementary building which clearly designate the route(s) to be taken to a position of safety. Teachers are required to escort the students and to take attendance upon reaching their designated position of safety in order to be certain that all students are accounted for. Teachers will walk their class through the evacuation plan in a practice drill at least once before unannounced drills are made.

The signal for a fire drill is the fire alarm system. If needed, classes may also be notified by either the intercom system or word of mouth. Classes are signaled to return to the building with a whistle blast or hand signal. The signal for an inclement weather drill is 2 short blasts of an air horn. The signal for an ACTUAL ALERT is a continual blast for 15 seconds. If needed, classes may also be notified by either the intercom system or word of mouth. Classes are signaled to return to normal location/activity with an announcement on the intercom system.

Anyone with information about possible school violence is urged to call the Illinois **School Violence Tip Line** at **1-800-477-0024**, as well as local school authorities. This line is operated by the Illinois State Police. When tips come into this line, local law enforcement agencies and the school are immediately notified. Law enforcement authorities or the state police then follow-up on the report.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

School authorities may search a student and/or a student's personal effects when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will produce evidence that the student is violating either the law or a school policy.

School property, including, but not limited to, desks and lockers are owned and controlled by the District and the District may make reasonable rules regarding its use. School authorities are authorized to conduct administrative inspections of school property as a means of protecting health, safety, or welfare of the District, its employees and students, without notice to or consent of the student and without a search warrant.

If a search conducted in accordance with this policy produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or District policy such evidence may be seized and disciplinary action taken. When appropriate, this evidence may be transferred to legal authorities. This policy is in agreement with the Illinois School Code.

## **SECURITY CAMERAS**

All Putnam County Schools are equipped with security cameras. Putnam County Schools maintain 24-hour video security with cameras placed at entrances and in hallways. Each school office has a monitor located so that school personnel can easily observe school areas during the school day. Videotapes are reviewed when a safety or security issue is reported. They may also be reviewed at random. Viewing of videotapes is limited to individuals having a legitimate educational or administrative purpose. Those individuals with a legitimate educational or administrative purpose are the Superintendent, building administrators, or educational personnel. Videotapes will be reused or erased unless needed for an educational or administrative purpose.

## **STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Putnam County Student Assistance Program exists to assist students with problems related to academics, attendance, behavior, and health. The program consists of a coordinator and several trained staff members working together, including the appropriate use of the Flexible Service Delivery/Problem-Solving Model, to develop an action plan to meet the needs of the individual student. Students may be referred to the program by faculty, staff, parents, or they may refer themselves. This program is not part of the school's disciplinary procedures.

## **SUSPICION-BASED DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING POLICY**

Board Policy 7:241 – The Board of Education recognizes that drug and/or alcohol testing of an individual student may be appropriate when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the student is violating the Board of Education's policy prohibiting the possession or use of drugs or alcohol while on school grounds or at a school-related activity. The Board of Education authorizes drug and alcohol testing of students based upon such reasonable suspicion of drug and alcohol use. The Administration shall establish rules and regulations to implement this policy (Board Policy 7:241 – R) in compliance with applicable laws governing drug and alcohol testing of students.

## **TESTING AND ASSESSMENT**

Regular and on-going classroom assessment is used to monitor student progress and guide instruction. In addition to such local testing, students in grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> take the Illinois Standards Assessment Tests. This testing is required by the State of Illinois and is given in the spring on the dates determined by the State. In addition, PCES students complete the MAP Tests (Measures of Academic Performance), a computer based test.

**TITLE I**

Title I is a federally funded program that provides instructional support for students experiencing difficulties in reading and/or math. Putnam County Elementary School provides a Title I program for students with an identified need in the area of reading. Students are screened to determine eligibility for Title I and must have parent permission to participate in the program. Students remain in the program until meeting established exit level criteria."

**TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION**

Students who demonstrate limited English proficiency are provided support services in the Transitional Program of Instruction. Students are tested to determine eligibility and services are provided until the student demonstrates sufficient skill to exit the program and perform successfully in the school setting.

**VISION AND HEARING SCREENING**

Vision and hearing screening shall be done, as mandated, for the children listed below. Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye exam and vision evaluation by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening IF an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months and that evaluation is on file at the school. This notice is not a permission to test and is not required to be returned. Vision screening is NOT an option. If a vision examination report is not on file at school for your child, your child in the mandated age/grade/group will be screened.

**Required Grades for Hearing and Vision School Screenings**

Preschool/Early Childcare/Daycares	Hearing and Vision
Kindergarten	Hearing and Vision
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Hearing Only
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	Hearing and Vision
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Hearing Only
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Vision Only
4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> , and HS	Hearing and vision for all special ed., new to county and teacher referrals

**VISITORS**

For security reasons, all doors to the Primary Building are kept locked during the day, including the main entrance. All persons entering the building during the school day are required to stop in the office for a visitor pass before proceeding to a classroom or other area of the building.

**WELLNESS PLAN**

The Wellness Plan is on file in the School Office and may be reviewed at any time upon request.

## **WITHDRAWALS AND TRANSFERS**

When a family moves from the District, it is best if the school office is notified at least one day in advance. This allows time to complete transfer information for the student's new school. The district observes the statutory regulations that require the forwarding, within 10 days of the receipt of request, an unofficial record of the student's grades to the school to which the student is transferring. The school shall then forward written information relative to the grade levels, subjects, and record of academic grades achieved, current health records, and a most current set of standardized test reports, if applicable. The district, within 10 days after the student has paid all of his/her outstanding fines and fees, forwards an official transcript of the scholastic records of each student transferring.

The law requires that students take a Student Transfer Form with them. Upon receipt of a Release of Records form from the new school, which must be signed by the parent(s), student records will be sent to the new school.

Please remember that all books must be returned to the teachers and any remaining fees must be paid in the school office.

Putnam County CUSD 535  
School Calendar  
2009-2010

July 29 and 30—Registration

August 13—Teacher Institute Day

August 14—First Day of School—11:25am Dismissal

August 17—August 21—2:05pm Dismissal—Teacher In-Service

September 4—11:25am Dismissal—Teacher In-Service

September 7—No School—Labor Day

September 11—First Quarter Midterm

September 25—11:25am Dismissal—School Improvement Day

October 9—No School—Institute Day

October 12—No School—Columbus Day

October 16—First Quarter Ends

October 30—11:25am Dismissal—School Improvement Day

November 3—Parent/Teacher Conferences 4:00pm-8:00pm

November 6—Parent/Teacher Conferences 8:00am-Noon

November 9—No School—Veterans' Day Observance

November 13—Second Quarter Midterm

November 25-27—No School Thanksgiving Break

December 18—First Semester Ends—2:05pm Dismissal

December 21-January 1—Winter Break

January 4—Return to School

January 15—11:25am Dismissal—School Improvement Day

January 18—No School-Martin Luther King Day

February 4-11—Parent/Teacher Conferences (each building will set the date and time)

February 5—Third Quarter Midterm

February 12—2:05am Dismissal—Comp Time for Parent/Teacher Conferences

February 15—No School—Presidents' Day

March 1—No School Casimir Pulaski Day

March 2-12—ISAT Testing Grades 3-4-5-6-7-8

March 12—Third Quarter Ends

March 19—No School—Institute Day

April 2-9—Spring Break

April 21-22—Prairie State Achievement Tests

May 25—No School—Institute Day

May 26—Report Card Day

May 27-28 and June 1-2-3—Emergency Days

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Please remove this page, sign it, and send it to school by Tuesday, September 22, 2009. This will assist the school office in making sure that a handbook has been issued in a timely manner to each family who has a child in either elementary building.

Please read and review the handbook so that you and your child have needed information in support of a happy and successful year for your child. Please feel free to contact the school if you have any questions or concerns regarding information contained in this handbook.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Michael McCann, Principal  
Putnam County Elementary School

My child, \_\_\_\_\_, and I have received, reviewed and understand the  
*Pint Student's Name First and Last*

2009-2010 Parent-Student Handbook

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Office Use:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Received

/ \_\_\_\_\_  
Initials

