

Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy

Parent & Family Engagement Policy 2019-2020 School Year

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At the Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy we recognize that a great school has great parental support. We need the help of parents and families who are active partners in creating a learning environment that is focused on excellence, including those parents and family members who have limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities and parents and family members of migratory children. It is our goal to create a school/family partnership to foster the success of each and every SciTech student.

Parent and Family Meetings & Conferences

Parent School Community Council Meetings

The purpose of the Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy PSCC is to provide ongoing communication between the school and parents, guardians and community groups regarding issues that are important to the success of our students. The council meets month and meetings are open to all those who are interested in attending. PSCC Meetings will alternate between the 2nd Thursday of the month in the evening and the 1st Tuesday of the month in the morning. At evening meetings childcare and dinner are provided. Title I funds may be used to pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent engagement activities and meetings, including transportation, childcare, or home visit expenses to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.

At the beginning and end of each year, time will be devoted during the PSCC meetings or other meetings for parents and families to be involved with planning, reviewing and improving the Parent and Family Engagement Policy and Compact of Understanding. In addition, parents and family members will be involved in the planning, reviewing and improving of SciTech’s Title 1 program each year. In addition, at the May PSCC Meeting attendees provide feedback for the development of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy, Compact of Understanding and the Schoolwide Program Plan.

Throughout the school year there are various PSCC meetings about the curriculum at SciTech, tips and resources for families, the different STEM concentrations students can choose from, social networking safety, as well as assessment data and results. SciTech staff members assist in the planning and facilitation of these meetings. All families are invited to attend these meetings and have a right to be involved in these meetings.

2019-2020 PSCC Meeting Schedule & Topics:

DATE & TIME	TOPICS & DETAILS
Thursday, September 12th <i>Dinner 5:00pm</i> <i>Meeting 5:30-6:30pm</i>	Getting Involved at SciTech and Beyond: Sharing of clubs and organizations at SciTech as well as various community organizations. School Safety: Measures in place to keep students and staff safe. Review any plans for the school year. Re-visit any guidelines for acceptable items in school and procedures. Get to Know Your School Counselor: Come meet Ms. Shelton and learn about important things you can do to help your student at their current grade level.
Tuesday, October 1st <i>Meeting 9-10:00am</i>	Technology at SciTech: Schoology, laptop usage, monitoring students. Sharing of technology resources (how to login, Office.com, troubleshooting issues, etc.) How to Support Struggling Students: Activity Period Support, Khan Academy, Study Island, etc.
Thursday, November 14th <i>6-7:30pm</i> <i>Dinner is served</i>	Annual SciTech STEM Festival All students and families are invited to this event! This interactive and hands-on event will have fun for all ages. Hold reptiles, learn about the newest technology, perform experiments and much more! More details TBA.

Tuesday, December 3rd <i>Meeting 9-10:00am</i>	Student Services at SciTech: Speak with members of the student services team about the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Student Assistance Program (SAP), mentoring groups, etc.
Thursday, January 9th <i>Dinner 5:00pm</i> <i>Meeting 5:30-6:30pm</i>	PBIS at SciTech: Share out of the goals and accomplishments of PBIS at SciTech. AP Offerings & College in High School: Learn about the different offerings at SciTech from staff so that you can help your student plan for the upcoming school year.
Tuesday, February 4th <i>Meeting 9-10:00am</i>	Testing at SciTech: Learn about the upcoming tests (SAT, PSSA, Keystone) that SciTech students will be taking across all grade levels. Resources will be shared on how you can help them prepare. Comprehensive School Plan: Discuss SciTech's Comprehensive School Plan.
Thursday, March 12th <i>6-7:00pm</i>	Annual Spring and Summer Opportunities Fair Families and students can come to this information fair to learn about opportunities with local organizations and programs that they can participate in. In 2019, we had 35 local organizations attend!
Tuesday, April 14th <i>Meeting 9-10:00am</i>	Family Feedback Circle: Come share your perspectives with some of our staff members and administration.
Thursday, May 14th <i>6-7:00pm</i>	Student Showcase/End of Year Celebration: Students and staff will share all of the amazing things they did throughout the year. More details TBA.

Mandatory Meeting for New Students and Families

When students are accepted to SciTech there is a mandatory meeting all new students and families must attend. During this meeting a great deal of information is shared with students and families about what they need to know as a new member of the SciTech family. Information is given in presentation form and hard copy that detail:

- Helpful School Contacts
- College and Career Preparation
- Dress Code
- Five P's
- Gifted Education
- Grade Level Labels
- Grading at SciTech
- Student Handbooks
- Laptops
- Parent/School/Community Council (PSCC) Meetings
- Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)
- Special Education
- Technology Use
- Activity Period 4
- Three and Five-Year graduation information
- Transportation
- Compact of Understanding (see on next page)

Compact of Understanding

This document was developed jointly by staff and parents and is reviewed at the beginning and end of each year during the PSSC meetings.

We, the undersigned, endorse and agree to the following principles which represent the core values of the Academy and establish the expectations for student and stakeholder conduct. Success in the Pittsburgh Public Schools and at the Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy depends upon students, teachers, parents and staff adhering closely to the agreement below.

As a STUDENT at The Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy, I agree to follow "The Five P's" at all times.	As a PARENT/GUARDIAN with a student at The Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy, I agree to follow "The Five Ps" previously outlined and also to:	The STAFF at The Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy agrees to follow "The Five P's" previously outlined and also to:
Be Prompt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am ready to work when the bell rings. • I turn in my work on time. • I follow directions immediately 	Be Insistent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insist upon timely regular attendance. • Insist that my student take pride in their work. • Insist that my student strives for good grades. • Insist that my student plans for their future. • Insist that my student follows "The Five Ps". 	Be Fair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish two-way communication regularly with families in a language they can understand. • Equitably enforce the Student Code of Conduct • Welcome and encourage family involvement. • Update grades in the Home Access Center (HAC) regularly.
Be Prepared <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I come to class ready to work. • I do my homework assignments. • I study for exams. • I dress appropriately. 	Be Involved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold my student accountable for excellent work. • Support and collaborate with staff. • Listen to the feedback of teachers and staff. • Act on the recommendations of staff members. 	Be Firm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain professional attendance. • Maintain professional conduct. • Provide rigorous and relevant instruction. • Maintain a safe and structured environment. • Expect respect, and show respect for others. • Consistently reinforce The Five Ps.
Be Polite <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I listen and speak respectfully. • I allow others to express themselves. • I respect others' personal space. • I give compliments. • I criticize constructively. 	Be Interested <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about school with my student every day. • Maintain open dialogue with my student's school. • Volunteer and participate in school activities. • Develop relationships with school and staff. 	Be Flexible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that every student can succeed. • Recognize that different students need different amounts of support. • Constantly improve lessons and instruction. • Develop positive relationships with students and families.
Be Productive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I participate actively in class. • I work to the best of my ability. • I work from bell to bell. • I work with team members. • I complete my class assignment. • I produce excellent work. 	Be Informed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign-up for SciTech Weekly email • Consistently review my student's grades using HAC. • Know and support my student's adherence to the Student Code of Conduct. • Attend Parent/Teacher Conferences and events. • Listen to the feedback of teachers and staff. • Trust the intentions of teachers and staff. • Keep contact information on file current. 	Be Fun <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities to Dream. Discover. Design. • Bring passion and creativity to your job.
Be Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe in my ability. • I encourage my classmates. • I take pride in myself, my work and my school. 		
Student Signature _____ Student Name (Printed) _____ Date: _____	Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Parent/Guardian Name (Printed) _____ Date: _____	Staff Signature _____ Staff Name (Printed) _____ Date: _____

Welcome Back Night

At the beginning of the school year SciTech hosts a “Welcome Back Night” for parents, family members and students. The Welcome Back Night for the 2019-2020 school year is on Thursday, August 22nd, 2019. This event gives parents, family members and students an idea of what the school year will entail and it also gave parents and family members the opportunity to meet each one of their student’s teachers. All staff are present for this event to speak with families.

Title 1 Meeting

Our annual Title 1 parent meeting is held on Thursday, August 22, 2019 at 5:30 pm. All information from this meeting can be found on the school’s website at www.pittsburghscitech.com under the Families section. This meeting is publicized via a hard copy invitation mailed to families in July. Below are topics covered at the August 22, 2019 meeting:

- Curriculum at SciTech
- Title 1 Report
- Review of School Progress on State Academic Assessments
- Achievement Levels of State Academic Standards
- SciTech Changes for the 2019-2020 School Year
- Parent and Family Engagement
- Important Upcoming Dates

Comprehensive School Plan Parent Input Meeting

Families are invited to SciTech Tuesday, October 22nd, at 9:00 a.m. to meet with the administration to review the Comprehensive School Plan for Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy. During this meeting, there will be a discussion regarding the strategies and action steps being implemented to meet the established school goals.

Parent Teacher Conference Day

Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled for Monday, October 14th from 11am-2pm and 3-7pm. These conferences provide and inform parents and family members of their student’s academic progress. Students are encouraged to attend and lead this conference. The Compact of Understanding may be discussed at this time as it relates to student achievement. Conference tip sheets are sent home to parents and family members prior to the conference date in the weekly newsletter. Parents and family members can sign up by contacting the teacher directly. Contact information for staff is included in the staff directory in the weekly email.

Individual Conferences

Any parent that wishes to have an individual conference throughout the school year may do so by notifying one of the student’s teachers, advisor or by contacting the main office at 412-529-7620. These conferences may occur at different times during the day, morning or evening. The school will provide opportunities for regular meetings, if requested, for parents to formulate suggestions and to participate in decision-making, as appropriate, regarding the education of their children. Staff contact information is distributed to all parents and family members via a monthly mailing and is available on the SciTech website at www.pittsburghscitech.com.

Transition Plan

9th Grade Nation

At the beginning of the school year, all 9th grade students attend school one day early. During this day the 9th grade staff and upperclassmen from SciTech facilitate activities with students to get acclimated to the school, prepare for academics at the high school level and begin to build relationships with their peers.

6th Grade Introduction Day

At the beginning of the school year, all 6th grade students attend school one day early. During this day students learn about technology at SciTech, the classes they will be taking and they meet their teachers. In addition, they begin to build relationships with their peers who will be in their cohort for the next three years.

6th Grade Bootcamp

During the first quarter of the school year all 6th grade students participate in a mandatory two day per week activity called "6th Grade Bootcamp." This activity consistently reinforces proper use of the laptop, how to use the student planner, online course management systems, organization for schoolwork and much more.

Advisory

Beginning in the 6th grade year through the 8th grade year students have the same advisor. At the high school level students have the same advisor in grades 9th through 12th. The role of advisors is to have a consistent adult year after year that is there to support the student in monitoring their grades, academic progress, organization, building relationships, etc. Advisory is also where families can get assistance in understanding academic standards, state and local assessments and how to monitor their students progress.

Laptop Orientation

All students entering 9th grade are required to participate in, with a parent or guardian, the 9th Grade Laptop Orientation. This orientation shares details of the technology program at SciTech, usage guidelines and the student responsibility associated with the laptops.

6th Grade Technology Night

SciTech students in grade six and their families can attend a 6th Grade Technology Night at the beginning of the school year. During this event families learn how to login to the online gradebook, monitor their students progress in the online course management system, support their student at home and meet SciTech staff.

New Student Orientation

All students that are accepted at SciTech and their families attend a mandatory new student orientation in the early spring for the following school year. This orientation provides families with information for the grade level of which the student is entering, specific information about SciTech and what the student and family can expect for the following school year.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Parent Teacher Organization meets bi-monthly on the same days as the PSCC from 6:30-7:30pm and the meeting is open to parents and family members, teachers, administrators and community members. There are discussions about upcoming events, volunteerism, parent questions and concerns, utilization of PTO fundraised funds, etc.

For the 2019-2020 school year the following fundraisers and events are tentatively planned:

- Fundraisers: Box Tops for Education, SciTech Gear, Hoagie Sale, Sarris Candy
- Family Events: Fall Science and Technology Festival, Spring Cultural Dinner, Teacher Luncheon
- Student Events: Student Incentive Events Planned (for example, attendance celebrations)

Parent Volunteers

Parents and family members are encouraged to become school volunteers. Volunteers are needed in the lunch room, during activity period, in the classroom as well as for field trips. The PTO will be responsible for contacting parents and family members for other events they will be holding. SciTech staff members will contact parents and family members for specific classroom needs. The FACE Coordinator will contact parents and family members for general school volunteers. Instructions on how to obtain clearances are given at the first PSCC meeting of the year. Mrs. Theuret will inform you once you have been cleared to volunteer. Information can also be found on our website at www.pittsburghscitech.com/parents/volunteer or you can contact Mrs. Theuret at stheuret1@pghschools.org.

Family Engagement Professional Development

Each year professional development around family engagement is provided to the SciTech Staff. Topics of the professional development are things such as: communicating and engaging families from the family perspective, parent teacher conferences, classroom resources for families, etc. Staff are educated in the value and utility of contributions of parents and family members, and in how to reach out to, communicate with and work with parents and family members as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and family members and the school.

Staff Professional Development

Families are welcome to come to an annual meeting to learn about the professional development opportunities that staff participate in and share feedback on the opportunities. The meeting for the 2019-2020 school year will be held in April 2020, exact dates will be communicated with families via the weekly email and school calendar.

Parent and Family Communication

Below is information regarding parent and family communication. This details how the school will ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to SciTech parents and family members of SciTech students.

Weekly Email

On Monday of each week during the school year a "SciTech Weekly Email" email is sent to all parents and family members that have asked to be on the email list. This email details all activities, events and important reminders for that current week. Any parent that would like to be added to that email list can go to <http://tinyurl.com/scitechemailist>. At different times throughout the year this email also acts as a resource for parents and families where different content is added to help parents and families based on the anticipated needs of the students, such as: "Khan Academy Tutorials", "3 Tips to Teach Study Habits to Teens", "English and Literacy Strategies from SciTech Teachers", and "Pittsburgh Promise Information," etc.

Newsletters

Important information is mailed via hard at the start of the school year.

Monthly Calendar- Hard Copy

A monthly calendar is sent home with students through advisory notifying parents and families of all events and important dates happening at SciTech. This is also included in the weekly emails and hard copies are available in the main office.

Online Calendar

The online calendar that is housed on the PPS website is linked into the weekly email and can be found directly at: <https://discoverpps.org/scitech/calendar>.

Monthly PTO Newsletter

A PTO newsletter is sent out via the SciTech email list to inform parents and families about what the PTO is doing and to encourage them to get involved. The newsletter details the specific focus of the PTO at that time. The newsletter also includes contact information of officers for those that want to become involved.

Staff Directory

A staff directory is provided on the SciTech website at www.pittsburghscitech.com, is available in the SciTech main office and is sent via the weekly email in order for families to have direct access to contact information for staff.

Advisory

Weekly students receive their academic grades during their advisory period. Parents and families are either informed via hard copy or email by their student on a weekly basis about their students' academic progress.

Home Access Center (HAC)

Parents and families can access grades via the Home Access Center through PPS. Login information can be requested by contacting Mrs. Theuret at stheuret1@pghschools.org or 412-529-7652. Students can also use their district-issued login information to access the HAC at this link: <https://www.pghschools.org/Page/4929>.

Website

Information is updated and added regularly to the SciTech website which can be found at www.pittsburghscitech.com.

Facebook

Important updates and information are included on the SciTech Facebook page. In addition, there are various school highlights and photos shared regularly. Families can follow the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pittsburghscitech.

Twitter

Important updates and information is available on Twitter. Families can follow SciTech on Twitter by using @SciTechParent.

Blackboard Connect Robocalls

In addition to the electronic distribution of information, SciTech uses Robocalls to advertise events and happenings at SciTech. It is important that if any family phone numbers change that the main office is notified immediately at 412-529-7620.

School Events

The SciTech PTO is planning to host a variety of events throughout the school year to increase parent engagement throughout the school. The PTO is also assisting student clubs and organizations when they need volunteers and chaperones. Various school events are also coordinated by class councils and other SciTech student organizations. These events will be advertised via the SciTech website, robocalls, weekly emails, Facebook and Twitter. When volunteers are needed student organization supervisors will reach out to eligible parent or guardians.

Family Resources

Various resources are provided via the school email list to families. On our website www.pittsburghscitech.com under the "Families" section there are a variety of resources posted throughout the year.

Family Resource Area

When entering the building there is a Family-Student Resource Area. This resource area houses many hard copy resources for our families throughout the year.