



Petoskey Polaris

Petoskey Alternative High School

Student Handbook Addendum

2025-2026

Petoskey High School
1500 Hill Street
Petoskey, MI 49770

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CODE OF CONDUCT

Petoskey Polaris participants are still considered full-time students of Petoskey High School and are subject to the same policies and procedures found in the PHS Student Handbook. Due to the nature of the Polaris program, certain protocols and procedures must be addressed and modified in order to maintain a safe and productive atmosphere for all students and staff who use this building.

Any items or issues not addressed within this addendum are addressed in the Petoskey High School Student Handbook, which can be found on the school's website at www.petoskeyschools.org

Disciplinary action will be subject to administrator discretion.

CONDITIONAL ENROLLMENT

Upon acceptance into the Polaris program, each student will be placed on conditional enrollment. During this time, it is expected that students will meet program requirements by working toward the individual student goals established upon entry into the program. Students are required to meet their program requirements by working toward the individual student goals established upon entry into the program. Students are required to meet their On Pace Production Rate each week.

If students are not fulfilling their requirements, parents will be contacted, and a plan will be made with additional direct intervention strategies to help the student become successful and attain the goal of graduation. If the student is still unsuccessful, meetings will be held with the parent, student, and administration to determine if this program is appropriate for the student. If this program is not a good fit for the student, they may choose to exit at the end of their 10th or 11th grade year. Juniors and Seniors enrolled in this program must finish through the Petoskey Polaris program, or they will be encouraged to find education outside of Petoskey Public Schools.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

One of the goals of Petoskey Polaris is to provide students with more flexibility in scheduling options while maintaining a structured environment with maximum student support and assisting them in their transition to additional independence. While enrolled in this program, students have an assigned number of work hours, but they are able to choose earned time off based on production, employability, and pace goals. **Polaris is open from 8:15 am to 3:10 pm.**

Please read the following attendance policy carefully:

Absences are counted per semester in ½ day increments. Students must be present for three hours to receive credit for a half day. If a student arrives after 11:25 am, it will be considered a full-day absence.

Absence 1-4:

The teacher positively communicates with the student and parent via phone or email. The teacher logs contact in PowerSchool.

The teacher emails the student's team (teachers, counselor, Polaris admin, coaches) to work together.

Absence 5 & 6:

Students and parents will begin receiving emails or phone calls home each time the student is absent.

The teacher logs contact in PowerSchool.

The teacher can email the student's team (teachers, counselors, Polaris admin, coaches) to work together.

Absence 7:

A meeting between the student, parent, and Polaris admin will occur ON THE 7TH ABSENCE. **The student will not be allowed back into the building until this meeting is scheduled.** This meeting will determine if Polaris is an appropriate placement for the student to find success. A plan may be made to help the student successfully remain in Polaris.

Absence 8:

Eight Day letter emailed to parents and student.

Eight Day letter logged in PowerSchool.

The teacher Communicates with/ Polaris admin if the student misses class repeatedly.

Absence 9:

Students and parents receive email or phone call home.

The teacher logs contact in PowerSchool.

The teacher can email the student's team (teachers, counselors, Polaris admin, coaches) to work together.

Absence 10:

A phone conference call will take place with Polaris admin, parent, and student when the student returns to school.

Ten Day letter emailed to parents and student.

Ten Day letter logged in PowerSchool.

This will be the last reminder of the importance Polaris places on attending school.

Absence 11:

Students and parents receive email or phone call home.

Teacher logs contact in PowerSchool.

Teacher can email the student's team (teachers, counselors, Polaris admin, coaches) to work together.

Absence 12:

Student may be removed from Polaris. Polaris admin will work with the family on a transition plan.

Twelve Day letter emailed to parents and students.

Twelve Day letter logged in PowerSchool.

Truancy may be filed.

IF YOU HAVE AN ELECTIVE COURSE OUTSIDE OF THE POLARIS CLASSROOM:

If a student has an elective course outside of the Polaris classroom, has earned bonus time, and chooses to work from home, they **MUST** still attend their regularly scheduled elective. If the student skips their elective, it will count as a ½ day absence in Polaris. Parents will have access to current attendance records through PowerSchool.

Attendance will be adjusted/prorated during the semester as bonus times are earned. This information can be found at the end of the handbook.

ABSENTEE PROCEDURE

If the student is going to be absent, two phone calls **MUST** be made. The **student MUST call the classroom** and communicate with the teacher the reason for their absence. An email is not an appropriate form of communication to report an absence and will not be accepted as an excused absence. If the student does not call the classroom, the student will lose all employability points for that day and the student may receive a "loss of privilege" or lose bonus based on teacher discretion. **The parent must call** the parent attendance line and leave a message stating that their student will be absent and the reason for the absence.

Skipping - It is considered skipping if the student does not communicate with the Polaris staff as to why they are absent. This includes not calling into the room when they are sick, leaving class without notice, not coming back after a break, skipping electives, etc. without proper communication. Skipping will automatically result in loss of bonus and/or privilege and employability points.

At any time you are involved in an elective course outside of the Polaris classroom, you must follow Petoskey High School's attendance policy. If you have enrolled in an elective course offered at PHS, the school's attendance policy will remain in effect. When students take advantage of their "Earned Bonus," it may only be for the hours they are in Polaris.

***if a student is enrolled in an elective outside of Polaris and is not in attendance in that elective, they will receive a ½ day absence in Polaris

Progress Checks will take place once a week with your mentor teacher. These meetings are mandatory, and failure to meet with your teacher will automatically result in the loss of bonus and/or privilege and employability points.

TARDY POLICY

Promptness is a trait valued by a large portion of the working world. It also demonstrates responsibility. Therefore, it is a skill that Petoskey Polaris values as it strives to prepare students for the world of work. If a student comes to class within the first 15 minutes after the start of class for the first hour or 5 minutes after the start for all other hours, they are considered tardy. Arrival after the 15 or 5 minute tardy mark is considered an absence and falls under the absentee policy.

At the 5th tardy, the student will serve a 45-minute detention as the school administration assigns. Failure to attend a detention will result in a day in the ISS room. In addition, restorative practices will be put in place to make up for lost time. Accumulated tardies will reset at the end of each semester.

BATHROOM PASSES

Students have 5 opportunities to use the restroom during the school day: before school, during morning break, at lunch, during afternoon break and after school. Students will be given 5 bathroom passes per semester outside of the times listed above. Once a student uses up their 5 bathroom passes they are considered absent and are counted per semester in ½ day increments. Students can earn bathroom passes by being on bonus.

TRANSPORTATION

Driving and parking regulations and vehicle registration for Petoskey Polaris are identical to those in the PHS handbook. Students who are on bonus, are working from home, or have a reduced day are the responsibility of their parent or guardian. The Public Schools of Petoskey are not liable for students who are not in the building at Petoskey High School.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

For 12th and 11th grade students ONLY:

Students failing to earn at least 3 full credits (or 6 semester credits) during a semester are immediately on Academic Probation status. Students on Academic Probation who do not earn at least 6 full credits (or 12 semester credits) by 2nd semester of the current year are subject to removal from the program.

10th and 9th graders:

Student progress will be closely monitored, appropriate interventions will be made by Polaris staff, and communication with parents will occur. Placement in the Polaris program will be evaluated to determine if this program is successful for the students.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Participation in Petoskey Polaris is considered a privilege earned by those who have been accepted into the program. Petoskey Polaris will follow the discipline procedure outlined in the PHS handbook and policies and procedures outlined in this document, and each student will be held accountable to those guidelines.

Students who exhibit excessive unacceptable behavior will be referred to alternative learning options outside of Petoskey Polaris and Petoskey High School. Repeated failure to follow the rules and regulations of Polaris and/or Petoskey High School may result in truancy and or incorrigibility being filed.

Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated by staff. This includes, but is not limited to, slamming of doors, throwing of objects, and slamming of books or computers, and will result in immediate removal from the room, and discipline by the Polaris Administrator will take place. Students are held responsible for following the behavior expectations in the [PHS Student Handbook](#).

COMPUTER USAGE DISCIPLINE

Students are required to use PSP-issued devices while in Polaris and whenever accessing Polaris content.

Each student and parent/guardian is required to sign the "Acceptable Use Agreement". Appropriate computer use is expected at all times and is taken very seriously.

Consequences will be issued if the contract is not followed. **This could include sending a student home for the day and counting it as an absence.**

POLARIS OFF-SITE POLICY

Off-site is defined as a website that is not Edgenuity or content-related.

Off-site students will lose all employability points for the day and be assigned a journal article to read and summarize. Once they have read the article and written a summary, they will meet face-to-face with a teacher prior to returning to online work.

There are nine articles in total that can be assigned. When a student reaches six articles (6th offense), the parent may be called for a parent meeting. If a student reaches nine articles (9th offense), a discussion will be held to see if Polaris is a good fit for the student. If the student is off-site more than nine times, the student will be sent home immediately for each offense and it will count as an absence.

If the student becomes insubordinate at any time during this process, they will be sent home, and it will be counted as an absence.

CHEATING POLICY

Cheating is defined as an act of lying, deception, fraud, trickery, imposture, or imposition. In Polaris, the main forms of cheating are cut, copy, and pasting of information from other websites and using Google to look up answers to questions on quizzes and tests. Sharing notes with another student is considered cheating by both the student who shared the notes and the student who accepted the notes.

- First offense - student will receive a zero on the assignment and parents will be notified. (No makeup will be allowed.)
- Second offense - student will restart the class they are currently enrolled in, and parent will be notified.
- If behavior continues, Parents, Student, Teacher, and Polaris Administration will have a meeting to discuss further placement in the program.

Use of AI: In this course, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, or similar technologies, is not permitted. The goal is to enhance learning while maintaining academic integrity and preventing cheating.

- **Generating Assignments or Projects:** Using AI to write essays, solve math problems, create projects, or complete quizzes is considered cheating. All submitted work must be your own original creation.
- **Automating Critical Thinking Tasks:** AI tools should not be used to perform tasks that require analysis, problem-solving, or critical thinking that is expected of you as a student.
- **Plagiarism via AI:** Copying and pasting content generated by AI without personal contribution, understanding, or proper citation is a violation of academic integrity.

Check with your teacher to ensure that you are not using AI inappropriately in this classroom before using it.

TEST TAKING POLICY

All topic tests and final exams **MUST** be taken in the classroom during school hours. If a test gets bypassed while the student is working from home, it is then the student's responsibility to communicate with the teacher and, during the next class period, to go back and take the test. The class cannot be completed until all tests have been taken and graded. This will be true for classes completed over the summer as well.

During all tests and the exam, the only window that can be open is the testing window.

All final exams must be pre-scheduled and taken with Ms. Whitley or a Polaris Academic Aide or Polaris Teacher. No retakes are allowed for the final exam.

EMPLOYABILITY CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

In simple terms, employability is about being capable of getting and maintaining fulfilling work. More comprehensively, employability is the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labor market to realize potential through sustainable employment. We will work on the following skill sets: Cooperation, Respect, Problem Solving, Responsibility, Time on Task, Punctuality, and Community Service.

For the individual, employability depends on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they possess, how they use those assets and present them to employers, and the context (ex. personal circumstances and labor market environment) within which they seek work.

We will be monitoring student progress by utilizing a specific rubric.

Personal Integrity

Students will complete journals daily. Journals are a way to communicate about current issues, topics, character traits, and other topics that encourage personal growth and goal setting for the students. Students are expected to participate in the journaling process. Journals will be a part of the employability grade. We will seek each student to demonstrate the ability to productively produce a positive solution to difficult situations that may arise in the room with teachers and peers. We look forward to working together to develop effective and comprehensive communication skills that will benefit each student.

Respect

Respect is a feeling or attitude of admiration for someone or something and the act of showing consideration and thoughtfulness. We ask that respect be shown toward staff and peers in and outside of the classroom and that each work area and property of Petoskey Polaris be respected. Respect is an individual characteristic that we will seek to see in each person and seek to give to each person.

Inclusivity

Inclusivity includes the ability to work together to achieve success. This includes having the responsibility of being accountable to someone or something. It includes the authority of the student to make decisions independently as it relates to the expectations set by staff while respecting others. The expectation is that students will actively be an

ally to others while being open to listening to other viewpoints and opinions. This means that students are responsible for their actions. Students are to maintain a professional attitude in the room. (i.e. verbal and non-verbal language, tone of voice, and character.) This includes being alert and working while at their workstation. It also includes each student personally taking care of their work area, completing all assignments in a timely fashion, and maintaining an on-pace production rate. If any equipment is damaged or missing from the student's assigned workstation, the damaged/missing items will be replaced by the school at a cost to the student.

Dedication

Time on task is a set time period in which action must take place. It is also a system for measuring intervals of time. Each student must maintain a rigorous pace in each class to ensure successful measures toward graduation. Students must be at their workstations, heads-up, and working during this time.

Polaris staff will use the following progression of intervention if a student is sleeping: 1st offense loss of break, 2nd offense loss of employability points, 3rd offense assigned homework support, and 4th offense ISS the remainder of the day.

Engagement

Engagement is arriving to the program at the set time that has been established. This also includes the ability to come prepared to class on time, **in your seat**, and ready to work when class begins. It is essential for students to look outside of themselves and learn to be part of a community and to care for others. Polaris's goal is to instill a giving spirit in the students and broaden their perspective of life circumstances and situations. We will be participating in community service projects. The students must participate to earn full employability credit.

Employability Grading:

Daily Points - 35%

Employability Course Content - 35%

Journals - 15%

Community Service - 15%

SILENT SUSTAINED READING (SSR)

Studies have proven that time allotted during the school day to participate in choice reading improves fluency and comprehension. Polaris allows 1 hour a week for choice reading. Students will read during their assigned time and complete a reading log, book talks, and character summary to receive 15% of the Edgenuity English grade.

CELL PHONE/AIRPOD/APPLE WATCH POLICY

The use and visibility of cell phones, airpods, apple watches, and other devices are not allowed inside the classroom.

Cell phones, airpods, apple watches, and other devices must be put away before a student enters Polaris. Students may access their cell phones, airpods, apple watches, and other devices during lunch outside of Polaris only.

The Procedure

Student puts device/s in envelope, fills out envelope, and places in consistent classroom collection area.

Staff picks up device/s in envelope and brings them to main office.

Main office logs.

Progressive Consequences

1. Student picks up device/s at the end of the day.
2. Student picks device/s at the end of the day. ½ day ISS. Parent contacted.
3. Student drops off device/s before school in the office for one week. 1 day ISS. Parent contacted.
4. A meeting between student, parent and Polaris admin will take place after the 4th loss of device. **The student will not be allowed back into the building until this meeting is scheduled.** This meeting will determine if Polaris is an appropriate placement for the student to find success. A plan may be made at this time to help the student successfully remain in Polaris. Suspension up to expulsion for continued insubordination.

COMMUNICATION OF GRADES

Each week students will fill out a Google Form with their weekly progress, total progress and grades for each class they are enrolled in as well as attendance and bonus information. You will have access to this information to check on progress each week. Please refer to Edgenuity's weekly updates for information on actual grades. If you are not receiving a weekly update from Edgenuity, contact a Polaris teacher to make sure you have a valid email address on file.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent teacher conferences are mandatory for all students participating in Petoskey Polaris. Parents and students are expected to attend together, with appointments taking place in 10-minute increments. Parents will receive notice one month prior to conferences so that students and parents can adjust their work time in order to attend conferences.

GRADING POLICY

All students at PHS, including those enrolled in Polaris, are required to complete six classes (equivalent to three credits) each semester. Polaris students will receive their grades and credits at the end of each semester for the courses they finish. If they do not complete the required six classes by semester's end, any unfinished courses will be marked as NC (No Credit) with a 0%. However, they will have the opportunity to continue working on these courses in the following semester and will earn credit upon completion.

BONUS SPACE

The Bonus Room is a designated space for students who have earned bonus time and wish to work on their coursework in a more flexible seating environment. This space is intended solely for academic purposes. It is not to be used for taking bonus hours as free time, using phones, or engaging in non-academic activities.

Students who are using their bonus time for purposes other than schoolwork will be directed to an alternative location.

PETOSKEY HIGH SCHOOL & POLARIS GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

**PETOSKEY HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**
21 MINIMUM TOTAL CREDITS NEEDED TO GRADUATE
EACH SEMESTER YOU CAN EARN A 1/2 CREDIT PER HOUR



4 CREDITS - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
1 ENGLISH CREDIT EACH YEAR

4 CREDITS - MATHEMATICS
ALGEBRA I, GEOMETRY, ALGEBRA II, & ONE MATH OR MATH RELATED
CAREER TECH ED OR DUAL COURSE IN FINAL YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL

3 CREDITS - SCIENCE
BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, AND 1 ADDITIONAL SCIENCE CREDIT OR AN
APPROVED CAREER TECH ED COURSE

3 CREDITS - SOCIAL STUDIES
US HISTORY, CIVICS/ECONOMICS, WORLD HISTORY

2 CREDITS - WORLD LANGUAGE
OR 1 CREDIT WORLD LANGUAGE AND 1 ADDITIONAL VISUAL,
PERFORMING OR CAREER TECH ED COURSE

1 CREDIT - VISUAL, PERFORMING, APPLIED ARTS
CAREER TECH ED, ART, BAND, OR CHOIR

1 CREDIT - PHYSICAL EDUCATION
WAIVER OPTION FOR .5 CREDIT: 4 YEARS MARCHING BAND OR 2
SEASONS OF A SCHOOL SPORT
WAIVER OPTIONS FOR 1 CREDIT: 4 YEARS MARCHING BAND AND 2
SEASONS OF A SCHOOL SPORT

.5 CREDIT - HEALTH

Polaris Daily Schedule:

Daily Schedule	
Time	Activity
8:15-8:35	Journal/SSR
8:35-9:30	Work Time
9:30-9:37	Morning Break 1
9:37-10:40	Work Time
10:40-10:50	Morning Break 2
10:50-11:35	Work Time
11:35-12:30	Movement
12:30-1:00	Lunch (C)
1:05-1:50	Work Time
1:50-1:57	Afternoon Break
1:57-3:10	Employability/Work Time (Outdoor Break)

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW JOB!

We will be running Polaris as a business with a business-like atmosphere.

- In a business, all privileges are earned
- You will be assigned your own workstation
- You may have **covered/capped** drinks at workstation
- You may bring in a snack and **eat it at break time.**
- We will occasionally recognize outstanding performance with a special employability student of the month reward.

Bonuses are based on Pace, Production, Journal Entries, and Employability Grades

A bonus can be earned in one week increments based on:

- **Pace** = must be on target in all classes
- **Production** = level (grade for each class) must be at least 75%
- **Employability** = grade must be at least an 85%, no discipline referrals
- **Journals** = must be thoroughly and thoughtfully completing journal responses and turning them in - in order to receive a bonus.
- If at any time your pace, production, or employability grade declines or if you have any outside infractions, staff will determine the appropriate Loss of Privilege penalty and/or loss of Bonus Steps. Students may lose all bonuses.
- **Bonus time may NOT be used during mandatory scheduled time in Polaris and MUST be arranged ahead of time with the teacher. You are not excused from classes outside of Polaris.**

BONUS STEPS - SENIORS*

- **Bonus #1**
 - Blanket in the classroom. Decorate workstation appropriately.
 - You may bring a pillow to have at your station, and you may sit (not lay) on the couch for the morning **or** afternoon.
 - May leave at 2:10pm. Once you leave for the day, you leave the PHS campus and do not return.
- **Bonus #2**
 - You may schedule 12 hours off per week.
- **Bonus #3**
 - You may schedule 18 hours off per week.
- **Bonus #4**
 - You may schedule 24 hours off per week.

BONUS STEPS - JUNIORS*

- **Bonus #1**
 - Blanket in classroom. Decorate workstation appropriately.
 - You may bring a pillow to have at your station, and you may sit (not lay) on the couch for the morning **or** afternoon.
 - May leave at 2:10 pm. Once you leave for the day, you leave the PHS campus and do not return.
- **Bonus #2**
 - You may schedule 6 hours off per week.
- **Bonus #3**
 - You may schedule 12 hours off per week.
- **Bonus #4**
 - You may schedule 18 hours off per week.

BONUS STEPS - SOPHOMORES*

- **Bonus #1**
 - Blanket in classroom. Decorate workstation appropriately.
 - May leave at 2:10pm. Once you leave for the day, you leave the PHS campus and do not return.
 - You may bring a pillow to have at your station, and you may sit (not lay) on the couch for the morning **or** afternoon.
- **Bonus #2**
 - You may schedule 6 hours off per week.
- **Bonus #3**
 - You may schedule 9 hours off per week.
- **Bonus #4**
 - You may schedule 12 hours off per week.

BONUS STEPS - FRESHMEN*

- **Bonus #1**
 - Blanket in classroom. Decorate workstation appropriately.
 - May leave at 2:10 pm. Once you leave for the day, you leave the PHS campus and do not return.
 - Earn bathroom pass
- **Bonus #2**
 - You may bring a pillow to have at your station, and you may sit (not lay) on the couch for the morning **or** afternoon.
- **Bonus #3**
 - You may schedule 3 hours off per week.
- **Bonus #4**
 - You may schedule 6 hours off per week.
- **Bonus #5**
 - You may schedule 9 hours off per week.

I have read and understand the Petoskey Polaris Handbook and pledge to follow all the expectations and rules set forth in this handbook if I participate in Polaris.

Student Name _____

Student Signature _____

Date:

I, the parent of _____, support my student's participation in Petoskey Polaris, following all the expectations and rules set forth in this handbook.

Parent Name _____

Parent Signature _____

Date: