



GARNET-PATTERSON STAY

STUDENT *2025/2026* HANDBOOK



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GARNET-PATTERSON STAY



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WELCOME MESSAGE



Welcome to the 2025–2026 school year at Garnet-Patterson S.T.A.Y. Opportunity Academy! I am humbled and honored to serve as your principal as we begin another year of learning, growth, and achievement. This year, our theme is collective responsibility, the idea that each of us plays an important role in shaping the culture of our school. In the spirit of Ubuntu, “I am because we are”—we are committed to supporting one another, celebrating successes, and overcoming challenges together.

This handbook is your guide to the expectations, policies, and resources that will help you thrive at GPS. I encourage you to read it carefully, embrace the opportunities it outlines, and take ownership of your journey. By showing up every day, engaging with purpose, and respecting yourself and others, you are helping to create the positive and empowering community we all deserve. I am proud of each of you, and I look forward to making this year our best yet, together.

In partnership,
Dr. DeWayne Little
Principal





VISION AND MISSION



VISION

Every scholar, no matter their starting point, graduates with purpose, confidence, and the skills to lead in a changing world.

MISSION

To create a vibrant learning community where every student thrives through personalized education, socio-emotional well-being, and access to diverse opportunities fostering equity and excellence.

UBUNTU

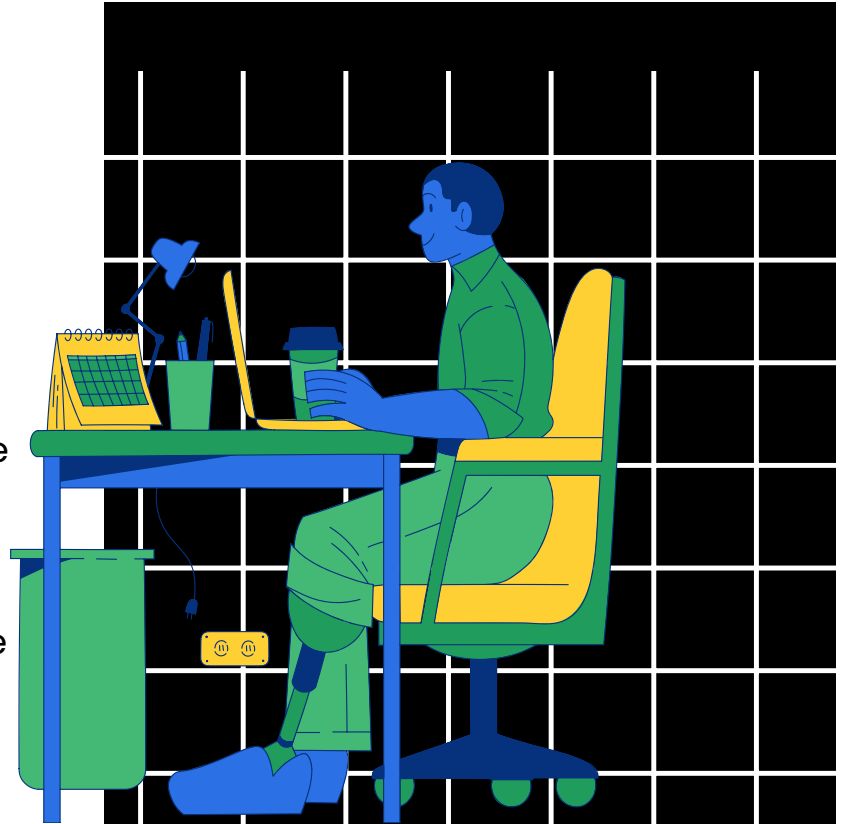
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& OUR CODE OF HONOR

UBUNTU



At GPS, we live by the spirit of Ubuntu — a word from southern Africa that means, **“I am because we are.”** It’s the belief that our lives are connected, and we grow stronger when we care for and respect one another. Ubuntu reminds us that every choice we make affects our community, and every person’s voice and well-being matter. When we support each other, we all succeed.



CODE OF HONOR

Garnet-Patterson S.T.A.Y Opportunity Academy will hold their students accountable regarding conduct and academic integrity; here it is called the Code of Honor. Garnet-Patterson S.T.A.Y encompasses a philosophy of being loved, challenged, and prepared, socially, emotionally, mentally, and academically. The Code of Conduct includes but is not limited to the DCPS philosophy and approaches student behavior and discipline in providing safe and effective learning environments. Overall acknowledging growth at any degree! Respecting everyone, regardless of culture, religion, background, race, ethnicity, economic status, disabilities, or needs. Our community will grow to address concerns with staff and students in a respectful manner that allows space for negotiations, adjustments, and open perspectives for growth and change. Initiating courageous conversations with conviction and humility that promotes coexistence and hopeful understanding to responses and feedback.

BELL SCHEDULES

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MON/TUES/THUR/FRI

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	
Period	Time
Arrival/Breakfast	9:10 am - 9:40 am
1	9:43 am - 10:43 am
2	10:46 am - 11:46 am
3	11:49 am - 12:49 pm
Lunch	12:49 pm - 1:34 pm
4	1:37 pm - 2:37 pm
5	2:40 pm - 3:40 pm
Dismissal	3:40 pm
6	4:15 pm - 5:15 pm
7	5:20 pm - 6:20 pm



BELL SCHEDULES

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WEDNESDAY

Wednesday	
Period	Time
Arrival/Breakfast	09:10 am - 9:40 am
1	09:43 am - 10:23 am
2	10:26 am - 11:06 am
3	11:09 am - 11:49 am
Lunch	11:52 am - 12:37 p
4	12:40 am - 1:20 pm
5	1:23 pm - 2:03 pm
Wired Wednesday Activities	2:08 pm - 3:40 pm
Dismissal	3:40 pm
6	4:15 pm - 5:15 pm
7	5:20 pm - 6:20 pm



INSTRUCTION AT GPS: LEARNING MODELS

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MODERN CLASSROOMS

At GPS, we use the Modern Classrooms model to help every student learn in a way that works for them. Teachers make short, clear video lessons you can watch at your own pace, then give you practice work and chances to show what you've learned before moving on. This lets you review lessons if you need more time, or move ahead when you're ready, so everyone can succeed.

STATIONS

Sometimes your class will be set up in "stations," or small groups, where each station has a different activity. For example, you might practice skills at one station, learn something new at another, and get direct help from a teacher at a third. You'll rotate through these stations during class. This keeps learning active, gives you more teacher support, and helps you practice in different ways.

SELF-PACING

Self-pacing means you can move through your work at the speed that's right for you. Teachers set clear checkpoints and deadlines, but you have flexibility to spend more time on skills that are tough or move forward when you're ready. This gives you more control over your learning and helps you stay on track.



GPS TECH TOOLKIT

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CANVAS

Canvas is an online learning platform that students use to access their coursework. Courses are divided into assignments, discussions, modules, quizzes, and pages. Canvas also fosters collaborative learning through collaborations, conferences, and groups. Students are automatically enrolled in their Canvas courses.

MICROSOFT TEAMS

Microsoft Teams is the platform used for Achievement Coaching. Both group and individual check-ins with your coach take place virtually through Teams. Students can access their coaching sessions directly from the Teams calendar, and links will also be provided by their assigned Achievement Coach. Participation in these check-ins is essential, as they are a core part of building relationships, setting goals, and tracking progress throughout the year.

OUTLOOK

All GPS students are assigned a student Outlook email account, and it is the official way the school communicates with you. Important updates about classes, schedules, events, and supports will always be sent to your school email. Students must check Outlook daily to stay informed. You can log in with your student ID number and password at Outlook.com or through the Office 365 app. Being well-versed in using Outlook ensures you never miss critical information, whether you are learning in-person or virtually.



GPS VIRTUAL INNOVATION PATHWAY



The Virtual Innovation Pathway at GPS gives students the flexibility to learn in an online environment while staying connected to the GPS community. Students take their required courses virtually through Microsoft Teams and Canvas, with full access to GPS teachers, counselors, and support staff. The VIP program is designed for students who need a non-traditional option but still want to earn a high-quality education, build relationships, and graduate with the skills and knowledge to thrive in college, career, and life.



MICROSOFT TEAMS

Students access virtual classes through Microsoft Teams. Classes can be joined directly from the Teams calendar, or by using the Master Course Links document, which contains the links to all GPS virtual course offerings. Students are expected to log in on time and stay for the full period, just as they would in an in-person class.



ATTENDANCE

Students must log into Microsoft Teams at the scheduled time with their camera on to be counted present. Logging in more than 10 minutes late counts as a tardy. If a teacher is absent, instructions will be posted in the Teams chat, and students must type their full name in the chat to be marked present.



VIRTUAL MEALS

Families interested in picking up meals for virtual students must enroll in the meal program using this form: [OAVL Meal Plan Enrollment Form](#)

A member of the Food and Nutrition Services team will contact the family to coordinate.

- Meals boxes are picked up 1-2 times per week and contain 2-3 meals per box. Pick-ups days are Tuesdays & Fridays.
- If your student has any dietary restrictions, please complete the [Dietary Accommodations Form](#) and send to dietary.forms@k12.dc.gov
- If boxes are not picked up, you may lose access to this service and will be required to re-register.



click here
to register

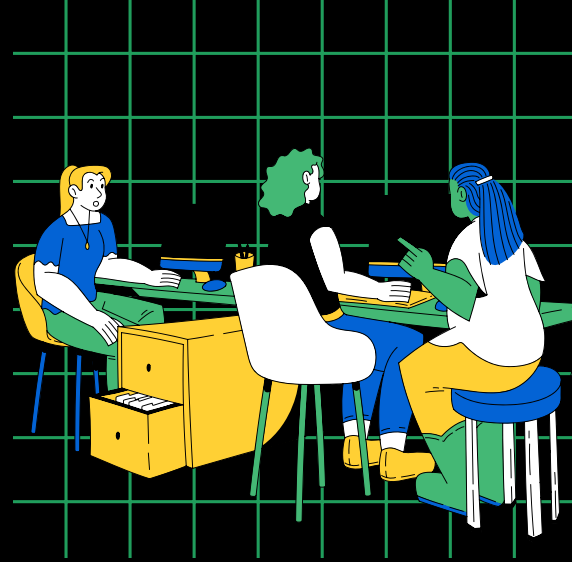
ACHIEVEMENT COACHING

Achievement Coaching (AC) at GPS is designed to give students an additional layer of support and accountability. Coaches help students set goals, track progress, and build strong relationships that support both academic and personal growth. Some students are paired with a coach for the year based on their needs.



STRUCTURE

- **Group Check-In:** Once a week on Wednesdays, students meet with their Achievement Coaching group through Microsoft Teams. These sessions may include community-building, social-emotional learning, or workshop-style activities.
- **Individual Check-In:** Each week, students also meet one-on-one with their coach to discuss goals, attendance, academic progress, and personal well-being.
- **Accessing Sessions:** Coaching sessions are scheduled through the Teams calendar, and links are also provided directly by the assigned coach.



STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- Show up to group and individual sessions on time and ready to participate
- Be open and honest during conversations with your coach
- Use the time to reflect on your progress and set goals for improvement
- Take advantage of the resources and support provided

WIRED WEDNESDAYS



Wired Wednesday gives GPS students the opportunity to participate in a hands-on workshop every Wednesday afternoon from 2:05–3:45 PM. Each student is assigned one workshop per semester, and attendance counts toward graduation. Workshops are designed to help students explore interests, build new skills, and connect with mentors and professionals in creative and academic fields.

WORKSHOPS

IN-PERSON

- **Media Literacy Lab** – Explore media literacy through the Hip Hop Educational Literacy Program (HELP), Words Liive (digital), and the Digital ELA (DELA) series.
- **The Power of Voice**– Combine music production, creative writing, and digital media to produce original works with professional creatives.
- **Visual Art & Entrepreneurship** – Create cultural art projects such as mandalas and symbols while learning entrepreneurial skills.
- **ARTivism: Be Your Own Hero** – Study contemporary arts history and create original works inspired by it.
- **Finding Your Rhythm** – Participate in performance poetry, dance, drumming, financial literacy, and PhotoVoice projects with local creative entrepreneurs.

VIRTUAL

- **Nature Squad: Environmental Literacy** – Develop critical thinking skills, environmental awareness, and stewardship of your community.
- **Concept to Creation: Graphic Design with AI** – Learn how to use AI tools to design and edit images with guidance from a professional graphic designer.





ATTENDANCE

WHAT COUNTS AS PRESENT

- **In-Person:** Students are present when they arrive to their assigned classroom during the scheduled period.
- **Virtual:** Students are present when they log into the scheduled Microsoft Teams class with their camera on at the start of class.
- **Teacher Absence (Virtual):** If a teacher is absent, students must follow instructions in the Teams class chat and type their full name to be marked present.
- Students who arrive more than 10 minutes late to class will be marked tardy.

REPORTING ABSENCES

- Parents/guardians/adult students must submit excuse notes within 5 school days of the absence.
- Excuse notes can be sent by email, text, or in writing to the Attendance Counselor.
- Without proper documentation, absences are considered unexcused.
- Students are responsible for making up all missed work.

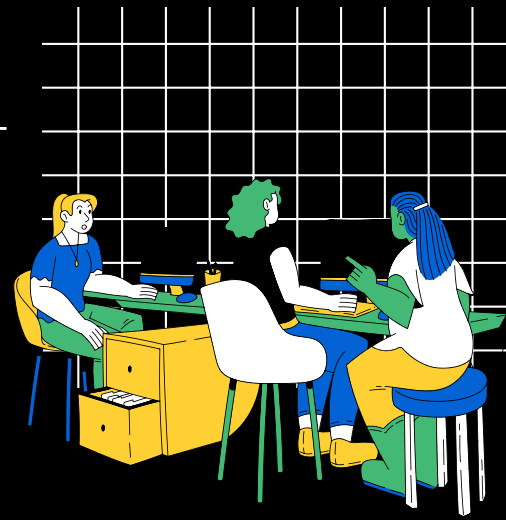
INTERVENTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

- **3 Unexcused Absences:** Automated call home; wellness check for virtual students.
- **5 Unexcused Absences:** Student Attendance Conference (SAC) and Attendance Action Plan.
- **10 Unexcused Absences:** Tier II/III support review with the MTSS team.
- **15 Unexcused Absences:** Referral to Office of the Attorney General (ages 14–17).
- **20 Consecutive Unexcused Absences:** Withdrawal from GPS after all interventions.



SHARED SPACES

At GPS, all areas of our school—classrooms, hallways, café, auditorium, gym, and bathrooms—are shared community spaces. The way we treat these areas reflects the respect we have for each other.



HALLWAYS & TRANSITIONS

- Use transition time wisely: greet friends, then head to class so you don't miss learning .
- Move calmly and stay to the right in hallways and stairwells.
- Avoid lingering in hallways, stairwells, or unassigned classrooms during instructional time .
- Keep conversations at a respectful volume so nearby classes can focus .
- Respect personal space—keep hands to yourself and move safely.

BATHROOMS

- Bathrooms are for quick use only—take care of what you need and return to class ready to learn .
- Use transition times for bathroom breaks when possible.



CAFETERIA

- Enter quietly, use respectful language, and keep a calm tone.
- Clean up after yourself—leave tables and areas ready for others.
- Treat peers and staff respectfully; failure to do so may result in loss of café privileges

EVENTS: AUDITORIUM/GYMNASIUM

- Be on time and remain until the event is over.
- No food, drinks, or devices during performances.
- Show appreciation by listening attentively and applauding at the right times



CLASSROOMS

- Arrive prepared and on time.
- Follow directions the first time.
- Show respect to teachers, classmates, and the learning space.
- Keep phones stored according to the GPS device policy.

DRESS CODE

GPS follows the DCPS dress code, which is gender-neutral and designed to ensure safety and respect in our school community.

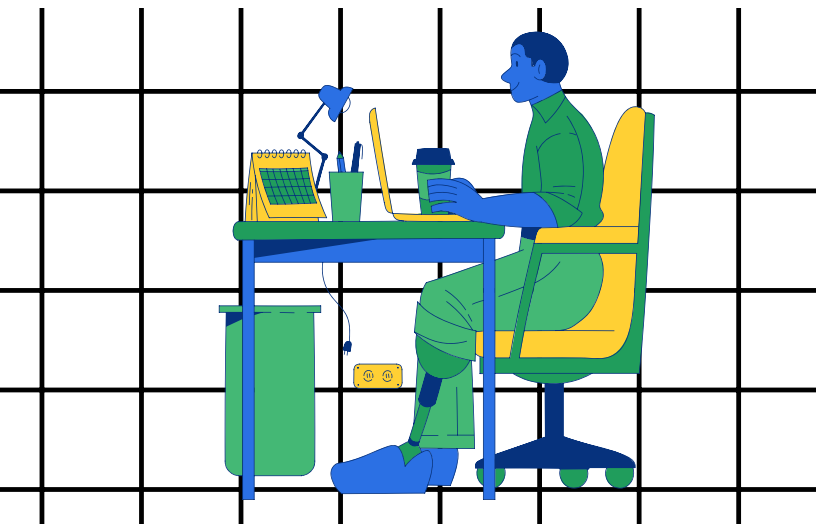
KEY GUIDELINES:

- No ski masks are allowed for health and safety reasons.
- No head coverings unless for religious purposes.
- Clothing must be appropriate for school and cover all personal/private areas.
- Footwear must be secure (no slides, slippers, or backless shoes).

CONSEQUENCES FOR DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS:

- First infraction: Verbal reminder and conversation with a dean.
- Second infraction: Written warning in ASPEN and SBT.
- Third infraction: Written contract signed by student, dean, and administrator.
- Further violations: Parent/guardian meeting required before returning to school.

Support staff may provide additional interventions or clothing from the Student Resource Center if needed.



WHY IT MATTERS:

Our dress code is about safety, professionalism, and respect. It ensures all students are ready to learn in a positive and distraction-free environment.

POLICIES

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At GPS, our policies are designed to create a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment for all students. They outline expectations for behavior, attendance, technology use, and community responsibility, while also reflecting our core values of Ubuntu, equity, and respect.

To learn more about each policy in detail, click on the images below. Each image will take you directly to the full policy page, where you can review the guidelines and expectations that apply to you as a member of the GPS community.



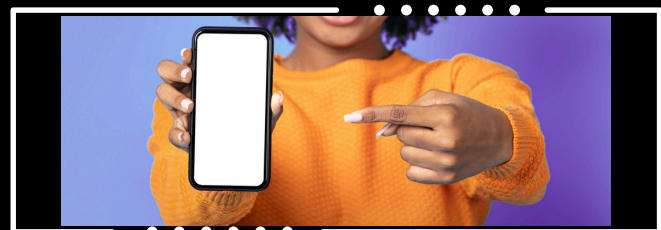
ATTENDANCE POLICY



DRESS CODE POLICY



SUBSTANCE USE POLICY



CELL PHONE POLICY

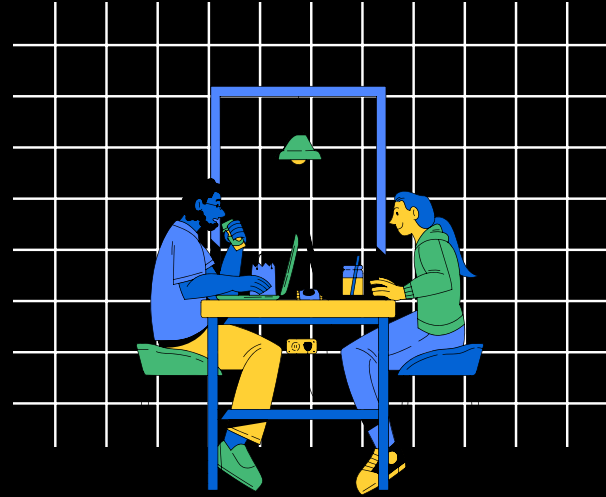


TRESPASSING

Trespassing on school property occurs when a person does not have any legitimate business on our campus or possesses authorization or invitation to enter or remain on the property.

- Trespassing can also occur when a student enters the property while suspended or expelled from the school.
- Students will receive all work and technical devices in a timely manner, to be provided by Culture and Climate Team
- Uninvited guests or persons on school grounds without invitation or notification of admin will be asked to leave campus and documented, if needed, to authorities.

Chapter 25 will be fully implemented for any individual trespassing, which may include calling MPD.



DUE PROCESS

GPS follows DCPS protocols outlined in Chapter 25 Title 5, using trauma-informed responses and restorative justice practices to address behavior. Consequences are assigned through tiered infractions, with due process and documentation in the DCPS Student Behavior Tracker (SBT). Deans and administrators manage cases, ensuring student needs and contexts are considered.

We use restorative approaches—including circles and courageous conversations—to repair harm, promote respect, and strengthen our community.

Limits on Discipline (Grades 9–12):

Students cannot receive out-of-school suspension or be unenrolled for:

- Dress code or uniform violations
- Willful defiance
- Behavior that occurs off school grounds and is not school-sponsored, unless it causes or threatens harm to others

*Students over 18 may be voluntarily unenrolled if they cannot agree to GPS norms and community expectations.

DRILL EXPECTATIONS



Fire drills along with all alternate drills are mandatory as part of DCPS guidelines. Two drills are to be conducted every month. All students and staff in attendance are required to participate in all drills, this is non-negotiable. Drills provide training and discipline on how to respond in escalated situations. This training outlines procedures on responses, next steps, and points of contact in the event of an escalation.

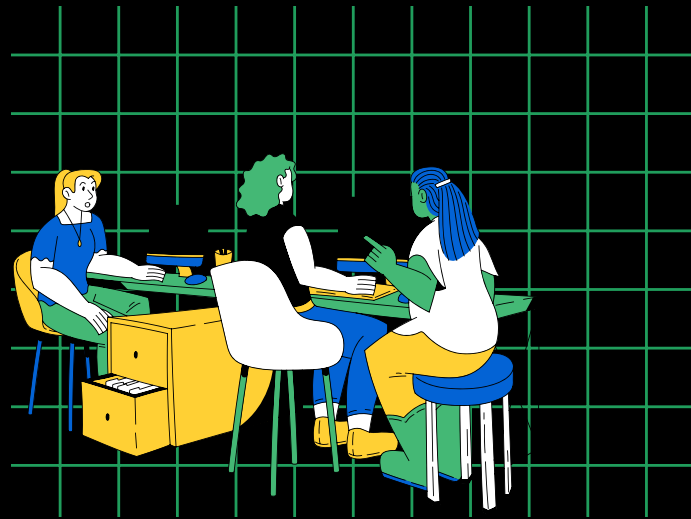
Students who do not participate in drills will receive a verbal reprimand on initial infraction. Follow up interventions will proceed on case-by-case basis.



FIELD TRIPS

EXPECTATIONS

- Arrive on time at the designated meeting location.
- Provide any required medical items to the school nurse or trip chaperone before departure.
- Stay with assigned chaperones and follow all trip guidelines; failure to do so may result in dismissal from the trip.
- Take responsibility for personal belongings.
- Use respectful language and behavior at all times; physical altercations, profanity, or derogatory remarks are prohibited under the GPS Code of Conduct.
- Follow safety procedures during transitions, including traffic and pedestrian laws.
- Respond promptly to attendance checks or regrouping procedures.



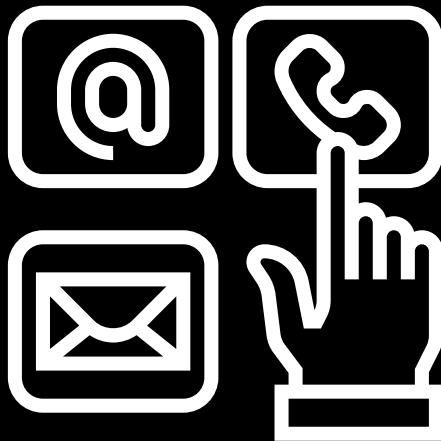
DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

- Chaperones and staff may report incidents for documentation and follow-up.
- Students with repeated tier infractions or unsafe behavior may be removed from the trip.
- Theft, trespassing, or property damage will result in referral to the proper authorities (MPD or site security). Parents/guardians will be contacted for students under 18.
- Violations may also result in restricted access to future trips or events.

THANK YOU



CONTACT:



click here for full
staff contact list