



Throughout the school year, the Colfax PTO serves as a point-of-contact for the parents and families of our students. Below you will find the most frequently asked questions with answers that have been generated by the PTO using various online resources and experience as Colfax parents. Our goal is to provide families, particularly new-to-Colfax families, with helpful information that makes the transition to our school community easier. For more information and pertinent links and references, go to the Colfax PTO website and look for the "handbook". An update for 2019-2020 is expected to be made available in September 2019.

What is the "6-day" schedule that Colfax follows?

- In order to accommodate scheduling of all students in "specials" (i.e. gym, music, art, library), Colfax operates on a 6-day schedule.
- This means your child will be provided with a schedule that indicates on which days they attend these classes. For example, your child may have gym on Days 2 and 4, with swimming on Day 4.
- It is important to know which days your child is assigned these special classes so that they can be prepared with the things that they need (ex. swim suit and towel).

Is there an after school program?

- The Pittsburgh YMCA operates an in-school before and after care program that utilizes the gym and the cafeteria.
- The Clubhouse at the Jewish Community Center of Squirrel Hill also offers a nearby option (open to children of all religious backgrounds, but participants must be a member).
- The Boys and Girls Club of Western PA and Brightside Academy provide additional options to Colfax families.

My child takes the bus to school. What do I need to know?

- For students who are eligible for busing, the Pittsburgh Public Schools Transportation Department is responsible for notifying parents of bus pick-up and drop-off time and locations.
- Transportation information can be found on the PPS website, under the transportation tab: <https://www.pghschools.org/Domain/39>
- If your child will not be taking the bus home from school for any reason (example: you or a caregiver will be picking them up on a particular day), a letter must be sent to the school indicating that change.
- Bus drivers are only permitted to transport students formally assigned to the specific bus. For example, buses are never used to accommodate playdates that require students riding a bus or getting picked up/dropped off at a location different from those assigned through the Transportation Department.

My child walks to and from school. What do I need to know?

- For the safety of our Colfax students:
- All students must enter the school through the main entrance on Beechwood Boulevard. This is also where walker and car-rider students are dismissed. Parents drop their student off and pick their student up at this entrance. No visitors are permitted in the building during drop-off.
- Crossing guards are provided by the Pittsburgh Public School District. They are located at the corners of Beechwood & Phillips and Phillips & Shady.
- There is no crossing guard at the corner of Beechwood & Douglas. Caregivers are asked to use extreme caution when walking or driving at this intersection.
- Colfax families should never jaywalk, for the safety of our Colfax students.

My child gets a ride to and from school. What do I need to know?

- For the safety of our Colfax students:
- Caregivers can stop briefly, just long enough to drop off or pick up their child, using extreme caution.
- There is NO PARKING permitted on Beechwood Boulevard outside of the school during drop-off or pick-up. Families should NEVER double park during these times.
- Visitors to Colfax are NOT permitted to use the rear parking lot or driveway during school hours. At no time are cars permitted to drive down the bus lane between the two buildings as this creates serious safety issues.

Bell Schedule

7:45 to 8:07	Breakfast
8:07 to 8:15	Homeroom
8:15 to 8:45	Enrichment
8:45 to 9:28	Period 1
9:28 to 10:11	Period 2
10:11 to 10:59	Period 3
10:59 to 11:47	Period 4
11:47 to 12:35	Period 5
12:35 to 1:20	Period 6
1:20 to 2:03	Period 7
2:03 to 2:46	Period 8
2:46 to 2:51	Transition to Dismissal
2:51 to 3:00	Dismissal

Is my child eligible for free breakfast and lunch?

- Free breakfast is provided to all students in the cafeteria. There is also a “grab-and-go” option located in the main lobby. Breakfast is served from 7:45 to 8:10.
- Free lunch is provided to all students in the cafeteria.
- Personal Identification Numbers (PINs) are assigned to each student and are used to receive meals at school, as well as to purchase snacks and second meals.
- Forgotten PINs can be re-obtained from the Main Office.

My child brings their own lunch from home. Is there anything I need to know?

- It is recommended that you provide your child items that they can easily open and manage themselves. Otherwise, they have to wait for an available adult to come around and help them, which may make it difficult for them to finish their lunch in the time allotted.
- Sporks are available to all in the cafeteria. Students should NEVER bring metal forks or knives.

Does my child get a recess period?

- Yes. All grade levels have a recess period either before or after their assigned lunch period.
- Recess takes place even in cold and hot weather, as long as the temperature is greater than 32 F. Please make sure your student is dressed appropriately.
- If the weather is unfavorable, recess takes place in the gym.
- Parent volunteers are always needed to help monitor the students during recess periods. Grade levels are rotated through use of the playground, made possible by parent volunteer. Please consider volunteering your time. Contact our VP Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@colfaxpto.org

What afterschool/sporting activities are available for my child at Colfax?

- All Grades: Chess Club (lunch-time and after-school) and Math Kangaroo (lunchtime)
- Intermediate Level (Grades 3-5): Boys Running Club; Girls on the Run; Chorus (lunchtime and sometimes after school); Strong Women Strong Girls; 4th and 5th grade sports (basketball, swimming, track); 5th grade Dancing Classrooms
- Grades 4-8: Challenge 24 Math Club; Ski Club
- Grades 5-8: Colfax Musical; Instrumental Music (during school)
- Middle Level (Grades 6-8): CMU Science Squad (pulled during school and continues about an hour past regular school hours); overnight trip; Shakespeare Scene and Monologue Competition; and sports (basketball, cross country, flag football, soccer, swimming, track, and wrestling)

What do I need to do if my child is absent from school?

- If you know ahead of time that your child is going to be absent on a certain day, write a note explaining the planned absence and send it to school with your child to give to his/her homeroom teacher.
- If your child has an unplanned absence, you must provide a written letter explaining the absence within 3 days of the absence.
- A child may not have more than 3 unexcused absences or more than 10 total absences throughout the year.

What if my child is late to school?

- If your child is late to school, arriving after the start of homeroom, he/she must report to the main office for a tardy slip to take to the homeroom teacher.

How do I know if school has been delayed or cancelled due to weather?

- District parents and families should pay attention to local media outlets, such as KDKA Radio, KDKA TV, WPXI, and WTAE. The district also announces closings and delays on the districts Facebook page: <https://facebook.com/PittsburghPublicSchools>

What do I need to do if I (or any caregiver) visits the school for any reason at any time of day?

- Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 welcomes all visitors.
- People interested in a tour of the school and/or to visit a classroom should contact a school counselor or administrator to schedule a visit.
- Consistent with all PPS, visitors to the school must check-in with security and report to the main office to sign-in and receive a visitor's badge to wear.

Why am I not receiving Colfax “robo-calls”?

- Sign up is default per student registration.
- Only the primary phone number provided will receive the calls.
- Removing oneself from any of these calls removes the family from receiving these calls.
- To get back on the call list or to change primary contact information, contact “Registration” at Colfax office. Any demographic changes including address, phone number, etc. must also be provided to registration as needed.

How do I know what's going on at Colfax?

- PPS and Colfax “robo-calls”.
- Social Media: Colfax Twitter @ppscolfax; PTO Facebook facebook.com/colfaxpto
- Follow PPS Calendar available at pghschools.org
- Colfax provides 1) “backpack” mail distributed by Homeroom Teachers to students to take home to their families. Encourage children to bring home and share information they receive at school; and 2) Parent School Community Council (PSCC) that meets on the second Wednesday of each month 5:30 to 6:30 PM at Colfax.
- PTO provides information on the PTO website: colfaxpto.org and facilitates 1) an email list: sign up at colfaxpto.org; and 2) a PTO community meeting on the second Wednesday of each month, 6:30 to 7:30 PM at Colfax.