



Pink Panthers Core Objectives, Policies, and Expectations

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Core Objectives

We, the teachers of the Pink Panther Core, will strive to:

1. encourage students to become responsible, productive, and independent citizens of the community,
2. provide an atmosphere where students will develop self-confidence and respect, and
3. promote student excellence in all academic disciplines by developing critical thinking, communication, and literacy skills through the Common Core State Standards and Content Standards.



Core Policies and Expectations

A. Students will bring the following to class every day:

1. Binder Reminder, or comparable student planner
2. Three-ring binder with lined notebook paper and at least 5 labeled dividers
3. At least two blue or black pens, two pencils, an eraser, and five different colored highlighters.
4. A smile and a positive attitude

B. The following behavior is always expected:

1. Follow the Titan Tenets of SUCCESS, RESPECT, CLEANLINESS, PUNCTUALITY, and SERVICE.
2. Treat everyone with respect and courtesy.
3. Observe all school rules (e.g., no gum chewing). All school tardy and attendance policies will be enforced.
4. Use class time appropriately (e.g., no socializing, applying makeup, or using fragrances).
5. Have academic integrity by always doing your own work. (See G. Academic Integrity)
6. Be silent, pay attention, and never raise your hand when others are speaking.
7. Take responsibility for your words and actions while maintaining a positive outlook and attitude.

C. The following academic standards will be followed:

1. Grades will be calculated on a percentage or point basis according to the individual Core teacher.
2. PREP will be assigned regularly to reinforce and enhance the academic program. PREP is 10% of the student's final grade, so it is important to complete it and turn it in on time.
3. Students must write all agendas and homework assignments in their Binder Reminder, and parents must sign the Binder Reminder (BR) daily. Your signature in the BR indicates you have seen your child's completed assignments. A core teacher will check BRs every week.
4. Students with excused absences will be given extra time to make up missed assignments.
5. Assignments are expected to be completed by their due dates. Assignments returned after the due date will incur the following penalties:
 - i. 1 day late: Maximum grade is 85% of the possible points. (1 grade reduction.)
 - ii. 2 days late: Maximum grade is 75% of the possible points. (2 grade reduction.)
 - iii. 3 days late: Maximum grade is 65% of the possible points. (3 grade reduction.)
 - iv. 4 or more days late: Maximum grade is 50% of the possible points. (If not turned in before the end of a grading cycle, the resulting points will be zero.)
6. Extra Credit is assigned by the teacher and given in addition to completed regular assignments. However, it is not given on request, and it does not replace missing assignments.



- ### D. "Homework" Policy:
- "Homework" is a word that carries a negative connotation for students, so in our core, we have decided to call it PREP. PREP stands for "Prepare," "Reflect," "Extend," and "Practice." These words explain what students are expected to do outside of class. They will 'prepare' for the next day, 'reflect' on what they've learned, 'extend' their thinking or learning, and/or 'practice' what they learned. PREP is a vital part of a student's learning experience. It is assigned to reinforce and practice the learning skills taught in the classroom. These assignments should be shared with parents, so they can see their child's progress. PREP is assigned Monday through Friday. In English, students are expected to read for 30 minutes every day. Core teachers work together to balance PREP assignments and due dates, so that students are not inundated with too much schoolwork in one time period.



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- E. Binder Reminder (BR):** All students have a BR, or other comparable student planner, in which they are expected to write the Daily Agenda (A) and PREP (P) for each of their core classes (i.e., History, Science, English) and Math every day. We would greatly appreciate having parents check their children’s BR daily and signing or initialing it in the designated area each day of the week. Every week, all the BRs will be checked by a core teacher (i.e., English, History, Science) to ensure students are writing their agendas and PREP assignments daily. In core classes, students will be getting points for completing their BRs properly.

It is important that parents check the BR daily. Even though children may complain that parents need to give them more space and “trust,” research shows that the exact opposite is true. From our many years of combined teaching experience, we have found that parents need to be especially attentive when their child enters middle school. Students have a tendency to fall behind in 7th grade when parents become more lenient and too trusting.

In case you are not home when your children come home from school, we suggest you have a designated place where your children can leave their BR and PREP for your review.

Furthermore, we recommend that you help your children go through their backpacks at least once a week to make sure that the backpack is not only clean, but also well-organized. Organization is a key to student success in middle school.

- F. Assignments:** All assignments are a reflection of a student’s effort and understanding. Each assignment that is turned in must include the student’s FULL HEADING (i.e., full name, date, period, subject, teacher’s name) on the top right corner of the paper. Assignments with incomplete headings will not receive the top grades. An assignment with no heading will not be graded.

All assignments should be clean and unwrinkled when submitted to the teacher. Assignments submitted on notebook paper should be written on the correct side, have clean edges, and have no ripped holes. Writing should be legible and be written in dark blue or black pen or pencil, depending on the teacher’s directions. All PREP assignments should be kept in a page protector, or if they do not fit in the binder, they should be placed in a special folder in the student’s backpack.

Students must complete all assignments on their own. They must do their own typing or use their own handwriting on assignments. (See G. Academic Integrity)

All assignments should be done thoroughly and completely. Incomplete assignments will not be given full credit. Student work reflects comprehension, reflection, introspection, creativity, and effort on the part of the student. Pink Panther students must always do their best to turn in high quality work.

On occasion, significant assignments (e.g., tests, projects, some assignments) or other school communication may be sent home with a parent signature request. These signed documents are to be returned to the teacher the next day. We encourage parents and children to discuss assignments and other school experiences regularly. Communication is a key part of a middle school student’s success.

- G. Academic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating, forging signatures, sharing answers, copying, or communicating during a test or other required silent periods. It takes at least two people to copy and share answers—one to “lend” their assignment, and one to do the copying. If you are caught in either of these activities, you and your partner will receive a ZERO on that assignment. Anyone who participates in ANY sort of academic dishonesty will receive a “U” in citizenship on the 5-week progress report, or on the semester report card if the incident occurs in the final five-week grading period.



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Parent-Student-Teacher Communication

- H. Student-Teacher Communication:** Students can always ask questions, voice concerns, or speak with their teachers as long as they are courteous and respectful of the teacher's time and space. Students should see their teachers at the end of class, during snack, or after school to set up a time to discuss any school or class issue or problem. Pink Panther Core teachers are happy to answer any student questions or deal with student concerns.
- I. Parent-Teacher Communication:** One of the ways teachers and parents can communicate is through the comments section of the BR. Parents should check the "F/T Comments" section when checking their child's BR in case one of the teachers has sent a note. In addition, students should alert the teacher if parents have written any comments in the "F/T Comments" section of the BR.
- J. Parent Conferences with Core Teachers:** If parents have concerns about their child's progress in school, they should contact their Core teachers. Many questions can be answered more efficiently through a note or email and do not require the scheduling of a parent conference, so parents can opt to email first.

However, if parents would like to schedule a parent conference, Pink Panther Core teachers are available for parent meetings by appointment. Arrangements must be made in advance for parent conferences by sending an email or calling ahead to make an appointment. If you are unable to attend or will be late to a scheduled conference, please call as soon as possible to notify us.

Parent conferences are set for 20-30 minutes and will include as many of the student's teachers as possible to meet with the parent and child. The purpose of a core conference is to help improve the student's academic work and/or classroom behavior. An administrator, counselor, or resource teacher may also participate in the meeting as needed. The student will be expected to attend the conference.

Prior to the conference, a core teacher will send a pre-conference email asking some questions, which will help guide the conference. During the conference, one of the teachers will take notes on the student's needs and performance as well as suggested interventions and strategies for improvement. At the end of the conference, all parties will review the conference notes and sign the conference form. A copy of the form will be given to the parents. (Please note that the scheduling of IEPs are initiated by the Special Education advisers.)

- K. Parental Involvement:** For our students to have the greatest success possible in school, parents, students, and school staff must work together. Together, we make a great team. We want every child to have an opportunity to succeed at Toll. As such, we ask that parents participate in their child's education by doing the following:

- Checking and initialing their child's Binder Reminder daily
- Referring to the Parent Portal/Q-ParentConnection to keep current on their child's grades and assignments
- Checking Progress Reports and Semester Report Cards online through Q-ParentConnection every 5 weeks
- Checking daily that PREP (homework) is being completed thoroughly and accurately
- Checking their child's backpack and 3-ring binder for cleanliness and organization on a regular basis
- Reviewing and discussing all progress report grades and comments with their child
- Discussing school responsibilities with their child on a regular basis
- Monitoring their child's classroom behavior to promote school success
- Making sure that their child has the phone number or email of classmates in case the child is ever absent and needs to find out what schoolwork was missed
- Volunteering to chaperone core events or field trips
- Attending Back-to-School Night and Open House as well as other school events
- Contacting their child's teachers by emailing them as soon as parents have questions or concerns
(Email is the best way to get in touch with teachers.)



Thanks for your support! We look forward to a fantastic year with our Pink Panthers!