

**WE DESERVE TO BE SERVED
JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN FOR STUDENT RIGHTS**

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PITTSBURGH STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS

Vote to Ratify by November 4, 2013!

WORKS CITED

- ✓ A Model Code on Education and Dignity. Rep. N.p.: Dignity in Schools Campaign, 2012. Print
- ✓ "National Student Bill of Rights for All Youth." National Student Bill of Rights for All Youth. The Twenty Twelve Theme Blog at WordPress.com, n.d. Web. 29 July 2013. <<http://nationalstudentbillofrights.wordpress.com/the-rights-we-should-have/>>.
- ✓ Student Discipline Rights and Procedures: A Guide for Advocates. Rep. Second ed., Newark, NJ: Education Law Center, 2012. Print.
- ✓ "Transcript of the Constitution of the United States - Official Text." Transcript of the Constitution of the United States - Official Text. N.p., n.d. Web. 29 July 2013. <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html>.
- ✓ American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania. (2010). Know Your Rights. Pennsylvania

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TEENBLOC

STUDENTS ENGAGED IN LEADERSHIP

Pittsburgh Student Bill of Rights

WE DESERVE TO BE SERVED!



TeenBloc is a coalition of student leaders and organizers in Pittsburgh's high schools whose purpose is to raise the student voice and create positive change. TeenBloc is a program of A+ Schools and is supported by MGR: Youth Empowerment.

For more information, please contact us at teenbloc@aplusschools.org or (412) 697-1298.



We the students of Pittsburgh Public Schools, in order to form a more perfect district, do ordain and establish this Student Bill of Rights. The more perfect district will establish justice, ensure coexistence in the school community, promote general understanding, and secure all of the following rights entitled to all Pittsburgh Public School students:

1. Right to free expression

We want to be able to exercise our First Amendment rights under the United States Constitution to the maximum extent possible. We understand that any content shall not contain anything obscene, libelous, or slanderous as defined by the Pittsburgh Public Schools' Student Code of Conduct. We want to be able to express ourselves in an official school newspaper, to circulate petitions, to conduct polls, to set-up information tables, to organize clubs, to sponsor speakers and activities, and to post notices on school bulletin boards.

2. Right to participate in decisions that affect our education

We want opportunities to regularly discuss issues that impact our education with school board members, district administration, and school administration. Schools shall inform students of these opportunities through a variety of means. In addition, we want the right to appeal any disciplinary action if it violates the right to a public education or other rights that are guaranteed under state or federal laws.

3. Right to equitable academic resources

We want the right to equitable access to academic resources. Schools are to provide every student with the appropriate tools and the necessary supports needed to graduate, go to college or pursue a career. The district shall ensure that there is an equitable distribution of effective teachers throughout Pittsburgh Public Schools.

4. Right to a socially, emotionally, and physically safe and positive school climate

We want to be in a positive learning environment that does not resemble a prison and where the fundamental dignity of all is protected. All disciplinarians (including contracted service providers like bus drivers or security staff) are to be trained in youth development, positive behavior interventions, de-escalation techniques, and restorative justice practices.

5. Right to inclusive teaching and learning environments in our classrooms

We want positive classrooms that feel safe, respectful and welcoming where everyone can learn. We want our teachers not only to care about our progress in the classroom but also to care about us as human beings. We want to be engaged in challenging and relevant learning and to the extent in which it can, we want it to be fun.

6. Right to be treated with respect and dignity by the school community

We want to go to schools free from bullying by students and adults. No student shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, language, national origin, religion, disability, or economic status. We want an independent administrator to evaluate student treatment, to provide appropriate training and counseling to students and school staff, and to help school leaders create cultures of respect for all students.

7. Right to effective teachers

We want to be educated by teachers who are knowledgeable about their discipline, who use various teaching strategies that contribute to a greater understanding of the subject matter, who are responsive to student input, and who are caring, supportive and culturally competent.

8. Right to positive school disciplinary policies and practices

We want to be disciplined on an individual basis. Group punishment for individual misdeeds shall not be permitted. Schools shall adopt positive forms of discipline to teach students appropriate social and behavioral skills. If any disciplinary action is taken, it is to be evidence-based, aimed at addressing the cause of the behavior, resolving the situation, restoring all relationships that were involved, refraining from criminalizing students, and bringing the students back into the school community in a positive manner. We want to be able to participate in school disciplinary committee meetings to provide input on how disciplinary policies are working in practice.

9. Right to equitable access to accelerated classes and academic counseling

We want to be able to participate in accelerated academic classes and have access to our school's college counselor when we reach 9th grade. A full range of Advanced Placement classes shall be accessible to all students regardless of the school in which they attend. We want to receive early college and career focused interventions including but not limited to vocational apprenticeships, guidance on course selection, college selection, and entrance exam test preparation.

10. Right to efficient transportation

We want efficient and safe transportation to school and school events. Students with disabilities and students who are identified as homeless, in foster care, or listed as living outside of the home are not to be denied transportation.