

PANTHER TRANSITION ACADEMY



STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Mission, Vision, & Goals

Mission:

The mission of the Panther Transition Academy (PTA) is to provide students the **opportunity to succeed** in an environment that meets their needs, reinforces positive behaviors, and reflects restoration!

Vision:

The Panther Transition Academy (PTA) will be a successful means of realigning the **thoughts and actions to a place of positivity and restoration**. Through the use of alternative learning options in a self-contained, non-traditional classroom, PTA students will learn and apply appropriate practices, eventually leading to success and graduation either here with us or back in the traditional school setting.

Goals:

- Be a place of **service** to all students
- Meet **individual needs** through a rigorous program that allows for both failures and successes to be self-analyzed by the student.
- Students will learn the **social and academic skills** necessary for a successful transition to the traditional classroom setting and in life.
- Students will receive all the **necessary counseling** provided by both school and community programs.

Student Assistance Team, Placements, & Procedures

Student Assistance Team (SAT)– A team of stakeholders who will meet on students' behalfs. This team will consist of the principal, assistant principal, guidance counselor, and the PTA director. Other members may be invited based on the needs of the individual student.

Purpose of the SAT – The SAT will meet regularly throughout the year to discuss students struggling in the traditional classroom setting and offer appropriate interventions. Once a student is recommended to the SAT by a teacher or counselor, the SAT will determine the best course of action to help this student. This action may include adding additional members to the SAT, such as a parent or other counselors, who have relationships with the particular student.

Placements – The SAT may determine placement in the Panther Transition Academy is necessary for the student to receive the assistance they need to be successful.

Procedures – The SAT will meet once a month or as needed to discuss any student concerns. Once a student is determined to need interventions, an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) will be created to address the behaviors of concern for that particular student. Once a student is determined to need assistance, the parent/guardian will be notified by phone to have the opportunity to become involved in the ILP process. The ILP will be created to keep the student in the traditional classroom. The SAT will discuss with students the interventions put in place to address the behaviors of concern.

When developing the ILP, teachers and other staff who are involved with the student will be invited to help develop this plan.

Departments of PTA

In-School Suspension (ISS)

The in-school suspension pathway provides behavioral interventions on a short-term basis. Placements in ISS can range from one class period to no more than 10 days. Placements in ISS can be utilized by both Russellville Middle and High Schools.

Panther Transition Academy - Academics (PTA-A)

PTA-A provides behavioral interventions in an academic capacity. The PTA-A allows students the **opportunity for credit recovery in deficient academic areas**. Placements in PTA-A and the stipulations placed upon each student will vary based on each individual's academic need. Placements in PTA-A can be utilized by both Russellville Middle and High Schools.

Panther Transition Academy - Behavior (PTA-B)

PTA-B provides **long-term behavioral interventions** in a non-traditional setting. Students are expected to participate in a program designed to help each student become successful in the alternative school setting and eventually the traditional school setting. Placements in PTA-B can be utilized by both Russellville Middle and High Schools.

Student Expectations

All students are **expected to follow** the **Russellville Independent School Board policies, individual school handbooks, and the guidelines** specific to the Panther Transition Academy at all times. School administration reserves the right to review, alter, modify, and/or adjust these policies to best meet the individual needs of the PTA students who are served.

Dress Code:

- **Khaki pants with a long or short sleeve shirt** (dress shirt or polo shirt; all shirts must have a collar)
- **Shirts must be tucked in. Any underclothing may not be visible at any time.**
- Revealing necklines are not permitted.
- Pants must be worn with a belt and at waist/hip level. Oversized belt buckles are not allowed.
- No backpacks permitted without approval.
- Clothing must not be ripped, torn, or tattered.
- Hats, bandanas, hoods, or any head coverings of any type are not to be worn inside the school buildings.
- Shoes must be closed-toed, laced, and fit properly. House shoes, slides, and flip-flops are not permitted.
- No blankets of any kind are permitted in the building.

Computer Usage:

Computer usage is limited to the **school-provided learning platform and other academic functions only**. No game playing or other internet usage (movies, image searches, music, YouTube, etc.) Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in disciplinary action. Additionally, please note that computers and Chromebook

devices must remain within the PTA classrooms and will not be taken home.

Cell Phones & Personal Electronic Devices:

Cell phones and any other personal electronic devices are **allowed on breaks only**. Any student found using an electronic device outside of breaks would be subject to disciplinary action. For PTA-A students, cell phones and other personal electronic devices are permitted only during breaks. Any student found using an electronic device outside of these designated times will face disciplinary action. For ISS and PTA-B students, the use of cell phones and other personal electronic devices is prohibited throughout the school day. All devices must be turned in at the beginning of the day and will be returned at the end. Any student found using an electronic device without prior permission will be subject to disciplinary action.

Restroom Breaks:

Restroom breaks for ISS and PTA-B students will be scheduled and supervised at all times. No student will be permitted to take an unsupervised break, ensuring that all restroom visits are conducted under supervision for safety and accountability.

Appropriate Language & Respect:

Students **will not use inappropriate language**, which includes, but is not limited to, **cursing**, **threatening**, **hurtful**, **name-calling**, etc. Language must be appropriate in all school settings including transportation and must be used when speaking to faculty, staff,

and students. The use of inappropriate language will result in disciplinary action.

161.190 Abuse of teacher, classified employee, or school administrator prohibited.

Whenever a teacher, classified employee, or school administrator is functioning in his capacity as an employee of a board of education of a public school system, it shall be unlawful for any person to direct speech or conduct toward the teacher, classified employee, or school administrator when such person knows or should know that the speech or conduct will disrupt or interfere with normal school activities or will nullify or undermine the good order and discipline of the school.

Food & Beverage:

No outside food or beverages will be allowed. Students who wish to do so may bring a clear plastic container to fill with water at the school building.

Transportation:

Students may **ride a Russellville Independent Schools bus** from their home and be **dropped off** directly at the Russellville Transition Academy. While riding, all bus rules must be followed. In addition, students may be dropped off at or walk to the RTA. RTA-B students MAY NOT drive to RTA.

Positive Points System

The PTA will use a point system for disciplinary issues. Students will begin each day with no points. As the day progresses, points may be earned for behavioral or academic accomplishments. Students' points and comments will be documented on a weekly form. If a student habitually does not earn points, they may receive counseling, a parent conference, suspension, etc. Students must earn at least 80% to be considered successful for the day. At the end of the week, a copy of the point sheet will be sent home for parents to view and return to school signed on Mondays.

Behavior Documentation Point Sheet

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Orientation

(80% - 86%)

Bronze

(87% - 91%)

Silver

(92% - 97%)

Gold

(98% - 100%)

Student Responsibility	Arrival Breakfast	AM Work 1	Restroom Break	AM Work 2	Lunch	PM Work 1	Restroom Break	PM Work 2	Dismiss
Begins activity promptly & exhibits on-task behavior	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Goes to a seat when prompted by an adult	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Follows directions immediately	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Works to complete quality assignments	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Uses appropriate language	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Interacts with staff and peers appropriately and respectfully	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Teacher Initials									
Total									

0= Not Observed 1= Partially Observed 2= Observed

Total: _____ **out of 108 pts =** _____ **%**

PTA Levels

Orientation

(80% - 86%)

Bronze

(87% - 91%)

Silver

(92% - 97%)

Gold

(98% - 100%)

Orientation Level

Expectations

- Must meet PTA dress code
- Learn and practice classroom and school rules/procedures
- Attends school on a consistent basis
- Working toward accepting teacher cues appropriately
- Raises hand and gains teacher permission before leaving an assigned area
- Working toward completing assignments
- 80-86% behavior points
- 10% completion of all courses enrolled in Edgenuity

Privileges

- Students may participate in one free computer time for a predetermined amount of time after assignments are complete with teacher approval.

**After 15 consecutive days performing at this level, the student may move to Bronze Level*

Bronze Level

Expectations

- Must meet PTA dress code
- Follows classroom and school rules/procedures with some redirection
- Attends school on a consistent basis
- Accepts teacher cues appropriately
- Participates in social skills workshops and guest speaker visits
- Begin to work on personal goals with teacher assistance
- Maintain daily minimum performance percentage between 87-91%
- 15% completion of all courses enrolled in Edgenuity

Privileges

- Student may choose a special activity AM or PM after assignments are complete: free computer time, class games, drawing with teacher approval

**After 10 consecutive days performing at this level, the student may move to Silver Level*

Silver Level

Expectations

- Must meet PTA dress code
- Consistently follows classroom and school rules/procedures with minimal teacher guidance
- Attends school on a consistent basis
- Accepts teacher cues appropriately
- Exhibits independent appropriate behavior when in school buildings
- Has mastered personal goals
- Maintain daily performance percentage between 92-97%
- 20% completion of all courses enrolled in Edgenuity

Privileges

- With administrative approval, students may earn passes for extracurricular activities.
- Students may spend PTA dollars.

** After 10 consecutive days performing at this level, the student may move to Gold Level*

Gold Level

Expectations

- Being a positive role model for others and follows all classroom and school rules/procedures without teacher guidance
- Attends school on a daily basis
- Accepts teacher cues appropriately
- Exhibits independent appropriate behavior when in school buildings.
- Has mastered personal goals
- Maintain daily performance percentage between 98-100%
- 25% completion of all courses enrolled in Edgenuity

Privileges

- Student follows regular school dress code
- With administrative approval, students may earn extracurricular activities
- Students may spend PTA dollars

- Students may write a formal letter to each of their current teachers on their behalf to provide a rationale for their transition to traditional classroom settings. Upon teacher and administrative consideration, allowance may be made for students to attend regular classes in a transitional manner.

**After 5 consecutive days performing at this level, the student will transition to the PTA-A Room*

Attendance

Pupils are required to attend regularly and punctually the school in which they are enrolled. Recording of absences and tardies shall be made in compliance with the requirements of [702 KAR 007:125](#).¹

TRUANCY DEFINED

Any student who has attained the age of six (6), but has not reached his/her eighteenth (18th) birthday, who has been absent from school without valid excuse for three (3) days or more, or tardy without valid excuse on three (3) days or more, is a truant.

Any student enrolled in a public school who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years, but has not reached his/her twenty-first (21st) birthday, who has been absent from school without valid excuse for three (3) or more days, or tardy without valid excuse on three (3) or more days, is a truant.

Any student who has been reported as a truant two (2) or more times is an habitual truant.

For the purposes of establishing a student's status as a truant, a student's attendance record is cumulative for an entire school year. When students transfer from one Kentucky district to another, attendance information from the previous district shall become part of their official attendance record for that school year.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

An excused absence or tardiness is one for which work may be made up. Students may be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness, including mental or behavioral health, doctor or dentist appointment;
2. Severe illness in the pupil's immediate family (The family unit shall be composed of mother, father, sister, brother, and grandparents.);
3. Death in family;
4. Head lice - maximum of four (4) days excused. No requirement of being checked by health department, but must be checked on reentry by school nurse or other designated employee;
5. Court summons or citation;
6. Religious holidays and practices;
7. One (1) day for attendance at the Kentucky State Fair;
8. Documented military leave;
9. One (1) day prior to departure of parent/guardian called to active military duty;
10. One (1) day upon the return of parent/guardian from active military duty;
11. Visitation for up to ten (10) days with the student's parent, de facto custodian, or person with legal custody who, while on active military duty stationed outside of the country, is granted rest and recuperation leave;
12. Ten (10) days for students attending basic training required by a branch of the United States Armed Forces;
13. Students participating in any of the page programs of the General Assembly;2 or
14. Other valid reasons as determined by the Principal, including trips qualifying as educational enhancement opportunities (EEO).

Students shall be granted an excused absence for up to ten (10) school days to pursue an educational enhancement opportunity determined by the Principal to be of significant educational value. This opportunity may include, but not be limited to, participation in an educational foreign exchange program or an intensive instructional, experiential, or performance program in one (1) of the core curriculum subjects of English, science, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and the arts.

Unless the Principal determines that extenuating circumstances exist, requests for date(s) falling w- +within State or District testing periods shall not be granted.

The Principal's determination may be appealed to the Superintendent/designee whose decision may then be appealed to the Board under its grievance policy and procedures.

Students receiving an excused absence under this section shall have the opportunity to make up school work missed and shall not have their class grades adversely affected for lack of class attendance or class participation due to the excused absence.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

All other absences shall be considered unexcused.

NOTES REQUIRED

1. A student may present a parent note for up to five (5) excused absences per school year. After a student has used five (5) excused absences/parent notes within the school year, a statement from a licensed physician must be presented stating that it was medically inadvisable for the student to be in attendance during the duration of the absence in order for an absence to be excused.
2. After fifteen (15) absences, the parent/guardian must submit a Medical Excuse Form 09.123.AP.21 completed by the physician or contact the principal or designee to explain the students extenuating circumstances in order for the absences to be excused. Parents/guardians of chronically ill students or students with disabilities should notify the Principal/designee in order for those students to receive special consideration.
3. Once a student has accumulated three (3) unexcused absences and/or tardies, the Principal shall notify the parents of the students. During this time, a home visit may occur by school personnel.
4. When a student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences and/or unexcused tardies, the Principal shall notify/contact the parents again.
5. Upon the sixth unexcused absence/tardy, a referral shall be made to the Director of Pupil Personnel. The referral shall contain documentation of parent/student contacts and attempts to correct the

unexcused absence/tardy violation. Once the Director of Pupil Personnel accepts the referral, final notice to cease truancy violations will be issued to the parents/guardians of habitually truant students.

STUDENT'S/PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR ABSENCES

A student who has been out of class/school upon his/her return to school will present one of the following to the office, within three (3) days of returning to school, to have recorded unexcused absences changed to an excused absence.

No post-date excuses will be accepted.

1. Written notice from the student's custodial person stating a legitimate reason for the absence shall officer of the court stating time of summons and time of release,
2. Written evidence of a death that warranted the student's absence;
3. Any student with consecutive absences of five (5) or more days must either have an EEO on file with Principal approval or a doctor's excuse must be provided for the days to be considered excused; or

Students must complete makeup work within the time specified by the student handbook from each school.

SCHOOL HANDBOOKS

Each school handbook shall include specific attendance requirements.

SUSPENSION

Projects or homework assigned prior to suspension shall be accepted for credit. Students shall be responsible for submitting assignments due during the time of the suspension.

Long term projects assigned during the suspension and due at a later date shall be accepted.

Work assigned and due during suspension shall not be accepted.

REFERENCES:

¹[702 KAR 007:125](#)

²[KRS 159.035](#)

[KRS 36.396](#); [KRS 38.470](#); [KRS 40.366](#)

[KRS 158.070](#); [KRS 158.183](#); [KRS 158.293](#); [KRS 158.294](#)

[KRS 159.140](#); [KRS 159.150](#); [KRS 159.180](#)

[OAG 76-566](#); [OAG 79-68](#); [OAG 79-539](#); [OAG 91-79](#); [OAG 96-28](#)

RELATED POLICIES:

09.111; 09.122; 09.213; 09.4281

09.126 (re requirements/exceptions for students from military families)

Academics

The Panther Transition Academy (PTA) holds **academics as a high priority. Regardless of the placement and time spent, a daily focus on academics will be at the forefront of all we do.** Our goal is to provide an environment where our students can succeed and advance in the area of academics. We will strive to communicate your student's progress on their school assignments, grades, and credits. Aside from regular progress reports, our staff will always be available to answer any questions you may have about academics. The PTA will always attempt to provide coursework in a manner that helps students maintain proximity with traditional classroom offerings. Students are expected to work on all assigned class work, submit their best work, and remain current on lesson pacing in all of their classes. This is accomplished through using class time to be on task. Students should average 5–6 hours of academic engagement per day.

PTA Academic Schedule

School Day Start & End Times: 8:00 am – 3:15 pm

7:30 – 7:55 am Arrival/Attendance/Expectations/Breakfast

8:00 am AM Block 1 – Students logged in Edgenuity/Courseware
(email lunch orders to Food Service staff)

9:15 am Students morning break
(stay seated, stay quiet, appropriate websites)

9:30 am AM Block 2 Students logged in Edgenuity/Courseware

11:00 am Student Lunch Break (11:00am–11:45 am)
PTA staff retrieves lunches at 11:00 am

11:45 am PM Block 1 Students logged in Edgenuity/Courseware

1:15 pm Students' afternoon break
(stay seated, stay quiet, appropriate websites)

1:45 pm PM Block 2 – Students logged in

3:00 pm End of Day Break *(clean up tables and classroom)*

3:15 pm Dismissal

Panther Transition Academy Staff & Contact Information

Mr. Chris Woods

chris.woods@russellville.kyschools.us

Ms. Linda Duncan

linda.duncan@russellville.kyschools.us

Ms. Lisa Meachem

lisa.meachem@russellville.kyschools.us

Student Contract

1. I will be on time.
2. I will avoid absences/tardies at all costs.
3. I will follow attendance policies and guidelines if I am absent.
4. I will be respectful to myself and others.
5. I will avoid altercations with students and staff.
6. I will use appropriate language.
7. I will refrain from tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
8. I will put forth a good faith effort in all academics and testing.
9. I will abide by the dress code.
10. I will be a positive influence and work hard academically and behaviorally in order to earn my way back to my school.
11. I will abide by the policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook and the Russellville Independent Schools' Handbooks.

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parental Consent Form

_____, the parent/guardian of
_____, understands my
student has been assigned to the Panther Transition Academy (PTA)
and will be required to comply with these regulations and
guidelines. I also understand that in order for my student to
transition out of PTA, he/she will be required to earn performance
points utilizing the behavioral level system. I have discussed and
received a copy of the PTA handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Administrator Signature

Date

Additional Staff/Other Parties

Date

Additional Staff/Other Parties

Date