

PASSPORT



Peddie

*Advice from the
Class of 2017*

No matter how difficult the workload may become, just know that you are totally capable of managing it. Even though your classwork may grow in both difficulty and amount, don't sacrifice time with your friends just to get things done, because in the end it is those memories that will stick with you. The bottom line is, don't give in to whatever stress culture may arise in your fellow classmates, because the more level-headed you can be, the better off you will be in the years ahead.

— David Alvarez

Adjusting to Peddie can be hard. It was for me, but my biggest regret is not making the most of POCO and the first week of school where everyone is just as new as you. My advice is to talk to everyone, because you never know how many friendships and good memories you might miss out on. For all you know, that stranger that lives next door to you now could become your best friend. It happened to me.

— Christine Ayoh

Take advantage of every opportunity at Peddie. There are boundless opportunities, clubs and events to be a part of, so don't hold back! Contribute to the community as much as possible. Strive for the highest quality of citizenship. But most importantly, don't do drugs or alcohol at Peddie!

— Anonymous

Make sure you take every opportunity you receive.

— Anonymous

You will make mistakes, probably more in the first year of high school than you have made throughout all of middle school. And these mistakes will not only be on tests, but will be in your social, athletic and romantic life as well. Yet these mistakes you are going to make will be what end up shaping your high school career for the better, because the mishaps you have freshman year are bound to happen. What is important is that instead of dwelling on them, learn from them and use them to become a better sophomore, junior and senior you.

— Caitlin Barrett

Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone. There are many people around you who will help you. Just ask.

— Anonymous

The best part about Peddie is really connecting with your class, and making amazing memories with your friends in the dorm, classes, doing sports, theatre, and whatever else you really enjoy. Don't pass up any new experiences, and always try to get out of your own bubble to try new things. You have an amazing four years ahead of you, so really try to enjoy it as much as you can!

— Russell Beckham

As a post graduate (pretty much a freshman just 18 years old), learning the "in's and out's" of Peddie as a whole was not a very easy task. What I believe is the most important thing I learned about Peddie is to use everything around you to become a better student, athlete, and overall person compared to when you first got here. I believe this school has all of the tools that if used correctly and consistently, you can accomplish anything. The teachers are the best of the best, student body that just doesn't compare to any other high school, and facilities to make everyday better.

— Anonymous

Don't Panic
Face Adversity
Do YOUR best to adjust
Stay out the mix
Love Yourself
Look For Help If Needed
Show Effort

— Jadan Blue

This school offers a huge variety of classes, sports and programs. Learn what's out there and commit to the things you want to do.

— John Bokman

Make sure to complete your assignments on time so you do not find yourself overwhelmed with work.

— Anonymous

Enjoy your time here, but at the same time don't slack off. You'll regret it senior year.

— Anonymous

I can tell you right now that there are five days, one hour, 22 minutes, and 34 seconds until I graduate. I have had this ridiculous countdown clock since sophomore year. Since middle school I have been given the advice to not rush high school and to enjoy every second, and I wish I had listened to it. That's my biggest Peddie regret: rushing it. I was sitting on Center Campus this afternoon with my friend, and we were just looking out at the Chapel and talking about how much we are going to miss Peddie. Especially in the Spring time, Peddie is pretty spectacular. Playing Frisbee with teachers, making up funny harmonies to Taylor Swift songs with your friends—does it get any better than that?

Peddie gives us a world-class education, but Peddie also gives us the perfect environment to figure out who we are and prepare us for what lies beyond Hightstown, and for that I am eternally thankful.

— Natalie Cappuzzo

Take advantage of every little moment you have here. Every conversation, every sports competition, every play, every late night spent eating ice cream and watching movies with your roommate. Don't get so caught up in all of the big things - all the tests, all the papers - that you miss the little things. In four years, you'll be staring Graduation Day in the face, realizing that it was all the little things that made your time here unforgettable.

— Anonymous

Choose your classes wisely. Know your strengths and weaknesses, and plan out your life at Peddie accordingly. There are many opportunities at Peddie and life here would be much more exciting and amazing if you can take hold of these opportunities. Lastly, get to know the teachers here well. They are the best teachers a high school student can have.

— Jason Chau

It's so easy to get locked into what you're expected to be or do, but don't be afraid to break free from this! You can be whoever you want in high school, so don't be afraid to do what you want, hang out with who you want, and be who you want!

— Anonymous

Spend time talking to your teachers, and get to know how awesome and smart they are. They are much more than your teachers and coaches, they are human beings too with incredible lives and stories to share if you take the time to get to know them.

— Michael Coiro

Make every effort to make friends with people who are different from you. I regret being friends with people who were just like me in my first few years. By making new friends from different backgrounds, personalities, and cultures I was better able to expand my horizons and think differently. It's invaluable to hear the opinions of those who may not agree with you. It may change what you believe, or help you to better articulate your opinions. Also, don't kill yourself with APs and honors classes just because you think you will get into a better college! Balance and managed stress are key.

— Anonymous

Never forget to say thank you.

— Grant Conaghan

My biggest piece of advice is to learn to laugh at yourself and figure out what the most important things are to you - in five or ten years, what will matter the most and what will you remember? And remember that sometimes being the bigger person and doing the 'right' thing might be the hardest but in the end it will be the most rewarding. High school is an important part of your life but in the end it is just a part of your life. And be kind.

— Anonymous

Your friends that you make in the first few weeks will change drastically in the next months, but you will most likely keep that one friend you make on POCO around for a long time, so get to know everyone because you don't know if you will be missing out on a future best friend if you don't get to know them. Take lots and lots of pictures because freshman year pictures are the most fun to look back on. Don't date someone the first week of school. You barely know them.

— Anonymous

Get off to a good start. Freshman year sets up the rest of your high school career. If you excel from the start, and focus on making good friends, as well as getting good grades, your time here will be worth while.

— Sean Dailey

It's better to have a few real friends than a lot of fake ones.

— Anonymous

Don't be afraid to try new things. Coming into freshmen year, all I did was play tennis after school. Now I'll be graduating, having participated in tennis, basketball, track, newspaper, yearbook, the prefect program and theater. High school is the time to explore what you like, and Peddie gives you plenty of opportunity to explore your interests-- take the opportunities!

— Tanvi Dange

Even though it doesn't feel like it most of the time, your Peddie years will pass so quickly. Before you know it you'll be a senior wishing you could just slow down time. So appreciate every moment. Know that the rough times do have an end, and cherish the little things that bring you happiness at Peddie, not just the big eventful moments. Take time to put aside the books when you need to, your teachers will understand if that is necessary. However, stay focused on the ultimate goal of it all.

— Anonymous

Branch out quickly. There is no judgement at Peddie, and it is astounding how inviting the community is here. No one will turn you away if you are the one to step up and put yourself in an uncomfortable situation socially or academically. That is what's great about Peddie. You are able to meet people from such diverse backgrounds. Don't waste the opportunity to experience their lives through their anecdotes. Use the people around you to get a more informed view of the world, and to shape your opinions on the world. I guarantee that their experiences will shed new light on the way you see things.

— Francesco D'lorio

Make every day a step towards being the best citizen, friend, classmate you can possibly be.

— Bruce Edwards

You might not enjoy it but try and push through. It might be worth it.

— Anonymous

Use your time wisely. Time flies. Freshman and sophomore year are equally as important as junior and senior year. NO REGRETS

— Anonymous

If you are a boarder, this is probably the first time you are away from home. This means that there is no mom or dad looking after you 24/7. This might seem very appealing to you, but it will be harder than you think, because you have to do things you have not done before on your own, such as laundry. Just take things one step at a time because you will be okay. Trust me. Do your homework as early as possible so you can go to bed early because it is important to get some good rest when in a new environment. Keep in mind that there will be time for everything as long as you have set a good timeline and that you are organized. Freshman year is not hard so just enjoy it and use it to your advantage to try new things.

— Alexander Encinar

For all of you freshmen, your experience at Peddie will be special, no doubt. You will have ups and downs along the way, but there will always be people who will do anything to be there for you. Take advantage of every opportunity that Peddie offers you. Have no regrets by the end of your senior year, do everything you can to contribute to this community. Getting good grades is important, however, always remember to prioritize your friends and family equally. At the end of the day, you will look back on all of those special moments you had with your friends rather than the grade you got on that Calc test. Value your four years, because it will certainly go by fast.

— Justin Eng

Try out for a new sport, apply for a signature program, go on an international trip, take a hard class, stay until midnight talking to the faculty on duty in your dorm.. The experience is only what you make of it.

— Daisy Fang

Freshmen, be adventurous. Do not be afraid to go out of your comfort zones and meet new people. I promise you that every single member of your class is unique and interesting in his and her own way. Don't stick to your own comfortable friend groups which you have chosen by convenience. Go out and meet every single amazing person you can on this campus, because you never know which ones you will form life lasting friendships with.

— Anonymous

Learn how to manage your time and get your priorities straight as early on as you can in your Peddie career.

— Anonymous

My main thing that I cannot stress enough is to enjoy it. Peddie goes by very quickly at a rapid rate. Do not take it for granted. Go outside your comfort zone and make friends. Also, try to do as well as you possibly can academically your freshman year because that is the starting point of your GPA. Another piece of advice is to try to show improvement in everything you do, whether it be athletics or academics. You may come into Freshman year bad at sports and/or not sound academically. Take advantage of the athletic facilities and all the teachers who are always available for extra help. Improvement is key, and colleges love to see improvement. Please ponder this advice, and I hope it helps! Enjoy the ride! Ala Viva!

— Drew Feldman

Be true to yourself. This is a place where you will never regret being as honest with yourself as possible. Regardless if you are a day student or a boarder, this will be a place you work towards finding who you are in the process of accomplishing the academic or athletic goals you've set for yourself. You need to find the real friends no matter how long it takes. Life is a challenge. Peddie is no different. Be honest with yourself and your beliefs and you will find yourself with a network of friends you will never want to leave. I can tell you honestly I both hated and loved Peddie but what made me hate Peddie came down to a negligence of immersing myself in the welcoming nature of Peddie. I didn't feel as if I had a concrete group of kids that I could feel myself with until mid-sophomore year, and even afterwards I was scared to expose my true self to them and really invite them into my life. This is that classic irritating case of hindsight that has the off chance of influencing one of you but I hope it does and I hope you can make the most of all that is here at Peddie. It is a truly wonderful place.

— Anonymous

Do Mrs. Tennyson's homework. Trust me.

— Jared Fitzgerald

Trust me, long hair doesn't look nearly as good as you think--I know, because I had it.

— Chris Fu

Don't be scared of reaching out for help when you need it. Everyone only wants to help you grow as a person. It might seem hard at times, but it's all going to work out: all the essays and tests and overwhelming amount of homework.

— Mariam G

Hard work can help overcome many challenges, so put in time and effort to that which you are passionate about and that which will help you get the places you want to go. However, don't forget to enjoy yourself responsibly because your high school years will go by quick and you should create good memories that will last a lifetime. Do not make decisions that may impact your future negatively; many students would love to go to Peddie and it is not fair to them if you waste your opportunities. Use your talents to help others be successful and take reasonable risks such as trying a new sport. Don't ever give up on anything because it will be worth it if you stick with it. Lastly, try as many extracurriculars as you can (such as a Summer Signature Experience); you never know when one will inspire your future career.

— Megan Gabruk

Take advantage of every opportunity that's given to you. Make the most of the time you have here.

— Anonymous

I am writing to you today in order to share a few insights I hope help you adjust to Peddie and life away from home. The most important thing to remember that, the first few days, weeks, or terms are rough for everyone. We all adjust differently and integrate at different rates. So do not worry if you see other freshman who seem comfortable after two days, while you still miss home. One of the biggest firsts about dorm life for some people will be sharing a complete bathroom and a room with other people. Take care of the space as if it was your own room and bathroom. If we all did this, the Peddie dorms would be a lot nicer and more comfortable for everyone.

— Jacob Green

Confidence is and always will be one of the hardest things to achieve. Conveniently enough, it is also one of the most important contributors to being happy with yourself and truly enjoy your time in a new environment. Don't manipulate your personality for the sake of others. Be genuine and trust in the fact that people who love you for your actual personality will always outlast those who befriend you based on a shallow facade. Also, Hightstown Hot Bagels is literally one of the best food places in the world. The two keys to success are confidence and an everything bagel with steak, egg, cheese, and hot sauce during DMX. Just trust me.

— Margaret Hart

Don't become "that kid" during the first week of school.

— Anonymous

Don't stress too much about all of your friendships, the ones that are meant to last will last.

— Katie Hensler

Don't be embarrassed or apologetic about yourself.

— Jack Johnson

I still remember how I felt coming into Peddie. I was a terrified freshman coming from a public school out of state. I was so far away from home. But, as soon as I found a group of friends, my Peddie family, Peddie became my home.

I'd say that my biggest regret from freshman year is not doing enough. I was too nervous to reach out and do the activities that I was interested in. Sophomore year, I began to regret my passivity freshman year. So, I guess the biggest piece of advice that I have for you is to take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way. You don't want to leave Peddie with any regrets.

— Anonymous

My piece of advice is for you to not judge people so harshly. You are different and if you let every disagreement get in the way of relationships then you're going to be very lonely even if you surround yourself with people who are the most identical to you that you can find. Branch out and don't confine yourself to the box that other people want you to fit into.

— Johnnie Kenneybrew

The best bathrooms are in the downstairs library.

— Aditi Kocherlakota

Your time in high school is really short. Live it up to the fullest.

— Anonymous

Enjoy freshman year. At the end of the day, after all the schoolwork, freshman year is the most enjoyable year of all four years, so try to fit in fun as you go through your first year at Peddie!

— Karan Komal

Talk to as many people as you can. This year, I became friends with so many different people who I never thought I would be friends with. This year goes by so fast. I think the relationships people build with teachers are so important and I know that I will keep in touch with so many of them.

— Aisha Kumar

Balance your activities ... try to do something you like, not what your friends like. Don't change your personality to fit in with a larger group. Make the most of your opportunity. You're lucky to be here. Never skip class.

— Anonymous

- Do English reading
- Have some school spirit and go to games
- Branch out and try to meet as many people as you can

— Michael Li

No matter how far or how close you are away from home, your family will always be there for you. Never feel ashamed of your parents or siblings, as they have worked so hard for you to be here. Use Peddie as your second home, forming your own new families with your friends and faculty you become close to. Although Peddie is a transition away from your previous life, always remember your roots.

— Johnathan Lutchman

Work hard, play hard. Take care of yourselves and don't stress over the little things.

— Anonymous

Play sports with your friends over taking it seriously.

— Jason Magid

Be aware that your first few friends you make when you first arrive at Peddie may not be the same friends you'll spend your four years with. You'll eventually find people who have similar interests as you and who will care for you - just give it time.

— Luis Martinez

Be considerate.

— Anonymous

Whatever you do, realize it will last four years. Create an image that you would be proud of at the end of senior year but don't sweat it. It's only four years, so have fun.

— Matt Mena

I have always said that Peddie is what you make it. You can have the most amazing experience at this school as long as you take advantage of all the things that are offered to you. So many times I hear people complain about Peddie being a boring place, but that is only because they refuse to do all of the things Peddie has to offer. Never sit around, always be moving.

— Robin Okunowo

You are freshman. You do not know anything. That is okay.

I don't know at what point in your career you are reading this but it is crucial that you understand that you are a different person now than you will become in four years. Make lots of mistakes, learn from them, ask the thousands of resources you have at this school for advice, everyone is really smart and you won't regret it.

Also understand that nothing will work unless you do. Leave the "too cool for school" mentality at the gates on move-in day, there's no room for that here. I'll be pretty honest with you, if you stick to your niche, if you stay with your immediate friend group, don't participate in activities, and don't give back to this place which will give so much to you, you might not be happy here. But, once you surrender yourself to Peddie, give up the you of old and reinvent yourself, you won't be able to get enough.

I had a rough freshman year; academically, socially, athletically, you name it. I questioned if Peddie was the right fit for me, thought maybe I should explore other options. It was undoubtedly the hardest year of my life, but as is with most difficult things, it was certainly the most rewarding.

So, hang in there, because if you give all you have to this place, it will give all it has to you.

— Aidan O'Neill

You are about to enter four of the most transformative years of your life.

Talk to as many people as possible. The students on this campus are as diverse as you are, both nervous and excited. There is not a single faculty or staff member on campus who doesn't want to have a conversation with you. You can learn so much from simply talking and listening. Whatever expectations you have for yourself will most likely be broken; you will flourish in so many different outlets. You'll learn from both your successes and failures. Explore things you previously knew nothing about. Go to events, be busy. Go to sports games, plays, art exhibits, pep rallies, advisee dinners, music concerts, community service events, SNAs, guest speakers and artists, everything. Go to all Chapels and Community Meetings. Do your homework. Go in for extra help. Try new things: tryout for a new sport or audition for the musical, participate in the speaking contests, run for student council, join clubs. Take breaks, go on walks around campus, and go to Mannino's with friends. If there is a specific PFS meal you love, email Oleg and ask him to make it again. If you're struggling, speak up. There is something you can gain from everyone and everything at Peddie, and it's up to you to do so.

In short, take advantage of EVERYTHING Peddie offers you. Squeeze everything you possibly can out of your next four years. Ala Viva and good luck.

— Andrea Patella

Make your mistakes loud.

— Micah Patt

Get as active in the community as possible the second you step on campus. You should not finish your Peddie career without having tried new things and felt out of your comfort zone on multiple occasions. Try new sports, start a club, play an instrument, attend different school events such as speeches held by Young Entrepreneurs Club, do community service, try the Declamation contest or take an art elective such as acting or photography. Also embrace the people around you and never cut out off friendships because you are in a specific friend group. There are so many great kids around you that you would never notice unless you talked to them. No matter what their passion is, you just need to give them a chance. For athletes (whether you are being recruited or not), this is coming from a kid who played two varsity sports, who was being recruited for college lacrosse and who thought that it would be best to only focus on sports instead of everything else that I was missing out on that would help me develop into a well rounded student.

— Matt Saker

Believe in yourself. You are capable of more than you think you are. Slow down and enjoy the ride it will be over before you think.

— Anonymous

Don't be afraid to try new things and take advantage of what Peddie offers you. Remember how much you are paying for the opportunities and what you decide to do now will determine your future. Don't do anything that will put your Peddie career at risk. For example, weapons, drugs, alcohol, stealing, lying, and plagiarism. It is not worth it.

— Anonymous

Try putting yourself out there at least once. Whether that means playing 3rds soccer, doing the freshman musical, or involving yourself in a club, your decision will expose you to new challenges and new people.

Also, just do your homework. This was very hard for me as a freshman, especially in the fall, but getting into a solid routine makes high school significantly less stressful and allows you to allocate time towards whatever you're passionate about.

— Dan Sawula

Although the conversations and relationships you have with faculty, might seem arbitrary to you now, there is a reason all of the faculty have been here so long and why we are only here for a small portion of time. This is because they can see every student's potential beyond all of their wildest dreams. They truly do have all of our best interests in heart, and work every day pushing us to exceed all expectations and to discover our fiery purposes.

— Gena Shifrin

Strive to excel at everything you do. This school is tough but if you work hard and strive to excel you can. Hard work will reward you. Talk to everyone because these will be the best times of your life.

— Anonymous

Keep your friends close, love and enjoy every second of it.

— Anonymous

Enjoy the next four years because it goes by in a blink of an eye.

— Britni Strobeck

Don't take yourself too seriously.

— Nitya Talreja

Be sympathetic to everyone. Each person you meet has something great to offer and judging people by what you've heard about them can cut you off from so many opportunities and friends that could change your life. Get to know people and then decide how you want them in your life. Also, do your work and learn. That is what you are here to do and it will actually help you. Lastly, it's never too late to change. You can reinvent yourself whenever you want or make new friends and always improve. Good luck! Enjoy the best four years of your life!

— Anonymous

Keep your head down and get it done...keep the big picture goal in mind and don't get caught up in trivial things!

— Anonymous

Do the work.

— Colin Taylor

My advice is to take advantage of every opportunity available to you over the next four years. Take nothing for granted. Go support your classmates in sports events, watch plays, joins clubs, be curious in your classes. In order to truly see how amazing the Peddie community is, you have to get involved.

— Gwyneth Tefft

Don't care too much about what people think!

— Anonymous

If you are an international student and you are freaking out about this new year, this piece of advice is for you. Leaving home is already hard for teenagers from New Jersey, so trust me when I tell you it is okay to be scared at the beginning. After all, you have abandoned your family, culture, language... everything that made you feel safe seems gone. But I also want you to trust me when I say that it will all be okay. Life abroad has its hardships, but even more benefits. At Peddie there is a big international community, in which you will find support and understanding whenever you're feeling down. Stay in touch with your families, but don't forget to live the experience too: participate in as many activities as you can, stay busy and you will miss your family less. You don't always have to be happy, and that is okay too. When you feel you miss home, talk about it to a friend. Reach out and tell them specifically what you miss about your home: saying it out loud will help you better deal with it. Needless to say, you also have adults in the Counseling Center who will listen to you for hours if you need it. But most importantly, think of Peddie as a year abroad, where you have to make the most of every opportunity offered to you. Come with the motivation to learn something different, follow a different path and make lifelong and talented friends. Good luck!

— Sofia Urgoiti

Take classes very seriously and keep up with your work as much as possible. Don't be afraid to contribute in classes, the more you collaborate with your classmates the more you will learn. While taking your work seriously also remember to have fun! Your best memories will be the times you spend with your friends and not the times you spend doing work!

— Oliver Watkins

Breathe in, breathe out, move on. Seriously something's aren't worth it. Dream big and do whatever you can to accomplish it.

— Anonymous

These four years fly by. Enjoy every moment and try everything!

— Anonymous

Befriend as many people as you can in your dorm. They are your new family.

— Jack Weber

Make the most of Peddie. There will be a lot of first and lasts here, learn from them. Plans and friends change and that's okay. You are enough and you have everything you need to get through the ups and downs that high school brings. Wishing you the best!

— Julianne Wenc

If you are going to be spending the next four years of your life here, make the most of it, because this experience is going to be what you make of it. And get off to a good start in terms of GPA cause I spent 3 years making up for a poor humanities grade.

— Anonymous

My advice to the incoming freshmen is to put yourself out there, try new things and meet new people. Don't limit yourself to who and what you know as this school has so much more to offer.

— Isaiah Williams

Don't think of study hall as the only time to do homework. Barely anyone gets their homework done during study hall. Take more time for your homework.

— Anonymous

You will have homesickness if you are a boarder when you start but don't try to fight it. Instead share it with all the other freshman/new boarders at school. They feel the same way, even if they deny it. We are social creatures and because of that having a group of people around you is the best way to adapt yourself to Peddie fast.

— Anonymous

