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STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Discipline is a means of fostering the growth of students toward maturity and responsibility. The educational environment of the District shall be such that the administration and teachers shall demonstrate fair, just and flexible attitudes and disciplinary efforts toward all District students.

Discipline additionally is the set of policies, procedures, and guidelines by which order is maintained. Rules and regulations provide a safe orderly school atmosphere so that teachers can teach and students can learn. The most important factors in discipline are communication and respect among students, teachers, parents, school administrators and the community.

The goal of discipline in the school is to help the student understand acceptable social behavior, encourage each student's growth in self-discipline, and protect the rights and well being of the school community. Students with disabilities generally shall be held to the same standards of behavior and consequences as general education students unless the student's IEP or 504 plan articulates different expectations.

At all times, student discipline shall be based upon the behavior and attitude of the student. Disciplinary action shall not be taken in whole or in part based upon a parent's medical decision(s) for a student, including the decision to refuse psycho tropic or psycho stimulant medication for his or her child. All certificated staff, additionally, shall attend in-service training(s), at least once every two (2) years, addressing best practices in the identification and treatment of attention deficit disorders (ADD and ADHD), non-aversive behavioral interventions in schools, and the use of psycho tropic or psycho stimulant medication for school aged children.

Policy Development

Under the direction of the Superintendent, a parent-teacher advisory committee shall be established to review and propose revisions to the District's discipline policies and procedures, as necessary. School administrators also may plan initiatives, whereby students, parents, teachers, board members and community persons work together in recognizing and developing alternative programs for dealing with student misconduct or disobedience. Such programs may include but need not be limited to:

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1. The involvement of students in defining acceptable school behavioral standards;
2. The involvement of parent(s)/guardian(s) in instances where the student has repeatedly exhibited unacceptable conduct;
3. The involvement of the social agencies when the services may benefit a student's behavioral pattern;
4. Individual student counseling by classroom teachers and trained counselors; and
5. Psychological testing and services for students.

Prohibited Student Conduct

Disciplinary action may be taken against any student guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco materials, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or controlled substances or look-alike drugs. Students who are under the influence are not permitted to attend school or school functions;
2. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, creating, or selling drug paraphernalia including but not limited to: rolling papers, pipes or other devices designed or used for smoking or inhaling drugs;
3. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling explosives, firearms, knives, or any other object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or look-alike weapon;
4. Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a weapon in violation of the "weapons" section of this policy;
5. Being insubordinate or disobeying directives from staff members or school officials and/or rules and regulations governing student conduct or academic policies or otherwise disrupting the school environment ;
6. Cheating or other forms of academic dishonesty;
7. Littering;

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8. Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, bullying or other comparable conduct toward anyone or urging other students to engage in such conduct;
9. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, or stealing or attempting to steal, or having possession of stolen school property (including, but not limited to, equipment, books, supplies, buildings, vehicles and school grounds) or another person's personal property;
10. Unexcused absenteeism or truancy;
11. Membership in any public school fraternity, sorority or secret society. Joining, promising to join, or pledging or soliciting any other person to join, promise to join or pledge these organizations is also prohibited;
12. Involvement in gangs or gang-related activities, including the display of gang symbols or paraphernalia;
13. Engaging in any activity that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function or is disruptive whether in school buildings, on school grounds, or at school sponsored events;
14. Using a cellular telephone, video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA), or other electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat, or otherwise violate student conduct rules. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, creating, sending, sharing, viewing, receiving, or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person through the use of a computer, electronic communication device, or cellular phone;
15. Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member's supervision and in the context of instruction;
16. Engaging in any activity off school grounds and outside of a school sponsored activity or event that significantly disrupts the school setting or damages the School's reputation; and

Additional prohibited conduct may emanate from violation of the District's Academic Policies or other Student Procedures and Policies, and/or as notified in advance by District personnel.

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Scope of Misconduct

Grounds for disciplinary action apply whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including, but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
2. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function or event; or
4. Off-campus activity if the conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member or student, or if the misconduct reasonably interferes with school related instruction, school purposes or an education function, or harms the reputation of the school.

Disciplinary Measures

Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will be dealt with by using procedures which vary in format based upon the age of the student and the nature of the offense. Teachers, related service professionals or school administrators may institute one or more of the consequences listed below in response to student misconduct or gross disobedience. Only school administrators may suspend a student (in or out of school). Only a school board can expel a student. Before determining appropriate disciplinary action, the student shall be given an opportunity to deny or explain his/her conduct. The student's disciplinary history, level of involvement in the misconduct, and other relevant factors also will be taken into consideration. Generally, repeat offenses warrant more significant consequences, although some offenses are serious enough that they warrant a significant consequence in the first instance.

The following procedures are among disciplinary measures which may be enacted by the District's administration or Board:

1. Notification of parent(s)/guardian(s);
2. Removal from the classroom for disruptive behavior;
3. Student/Teacher/Parent conference;
4. Special assignment/community service;
5. No credit for the work in question;
6. Grade reduction;
7. Verbal reprimand;
8. Administrative reprimand;

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9. Withholding of privileges;
10. Seizure of contraband or other items prohibited from use or possession on school grounds;
11. Remuneration for property damage or stolen property;
12. Participation in conflict resolution, anger management or social skill development meetings;
13. Counseling;
14. Detention provided the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) have been notified. If transportation arrangements cannot be agreed upon, an alternative disciplinary measure must be used. For detentions, the student must be supervised by the detaining teacher or the Building Principal or a designee;
15. In-school suspension for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days. The Building Principal or a designee shall ensure that the student is properly supervised;
16. Suspension from school and all school sponsored events for up to ten (10) days;
17. Expulsion from school and all school sponsored events for a definite time period not to exceed two (2) school years; as established by the Board;
18. Notification of juvenile authorities whenever the conduct involves illegal drugs (controlled substances), look-alikes, alcohol, or weapons (including look-a-likes); or involves other activity that may be illegal; and
19. Placement in alternative educational programming.

Weapons

A student who uses, possesses, controls, or transfers a weapon, or any other object that can reasonably be considered, or looks like, a weapon, shall be expelled for at least one (1) calendar year, but no more than two (2) calendar years. The Superintendent may modify the expulsion period and the Board may modify the Superintendent's determination, on a case-by-base basis. A "weapon" means possession, use, control, or transfer of: (1) any gun, rifle, shotgun, a weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18, United States Code, firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Act, or use of a weapon as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code; (2) any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm, including but not limited to, knives, brass knuckles, billy clubs; or (3) "look-alikes" of any weapon as defined above. Any item, such as a baseball bat, pipe, bottle, lock, stick, pencil, and pen, is considered to be a weapon if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm. The Superintendent or designee may grant an exception to this policy, upon the prior request of an adult supervisor, for students in a school play, cooking, and similar programs, whether or not school-sponsored, provided the item is not equipped, nor intended, to do bodily harm.

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Required Notices

A school staff member shall immediately notify the Building Principal in the event that he or she:

1. Observes any person in possession of a firearm on or around school grounds, however, such action may be delayed if immediate notice would endanger students under his or her supervision;
2. Observes or has reason to suspect that any person on school grounds is or was involved in a drug-related incident; or
3. Observes a battery committed against any adult.

Upon receiving such a report, the Building Principal or designee shall immediately notify a local law enforcement agency. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified if their child is reportedly in possession of a firearm. The Superintendent or designee shall notify the Department of State Police of any drug related incident or batter of a staff member.

Students at Risk for Aggressive Behavior

Students identified as being at risk for engaging in aggressive behaviors, including bullying, shall be provided with opportunities to participate in preventive interventions. Bullying is defined as any aggressive, negative physical or verbal conduct by students toward another student who perceives the conduct to be intimidating. Such behavior may include pushing, hitting, threatening, name-calling and other physical or verbal conduct of a belittling nature. The administration will ensure all complaints are investigated and seek prompt corrective action. Investigations will be confidential to the extent possible. Parents will be immediately notified if their son/daughter has been a victim of or accused of bullying or harassment.

Any student who feels s/he has been harassed or bullied is strongly encouraged to report this behavior to a teacher or the administration immediately. Teachers who are aware of such behaviors, through direct observation or report of a student, shall promptly notify the administration.

Early intervention efforts available to assist students identified as being at risk for aggressive behaviors include, but may not be limited to: student conferences; parent, teacher and student conferences; participation in social skills or conflict resolution groups; assessment of eligibility for specialized programming; counseling; referrals to outside professionals. Victims of aggressive behaviors may be offered supportive services as deemed appropriate by the administration.

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Corporal Punishment and Use of Physical Restraint

Corporal punishment shall not be used. Corporal punishment is defined as slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions, or intentional infliction of bodily harm. Corporal punishment does not include, and certificated personnel are permitted to use, reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for other students, school personnel, or persons, or for the purpose of self-defense or the defense of property. Physical restraint or time out may be used by trained staff when necessary to protect the student or other individuals from physical harm, provided there is no medical contraindication to its use. Physical restraint does not mean momentary periods of physical restraint by direct person to person contact, without the aid of material or mechanical devices, and accomplished with limited force. Any use of physical restraint shall be fully documented, in accordance with the District's policy on Use of Physical Restraint and Time Out, and parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified of the use and the causes leading up to the need for use of physical restraint. Students with disabilities for which the need for use of physical restraint or time out can be predicted shall have such use addressed in the student's IEP.

Parent Handbook

The Superintendent shall prepare disciplinary guidelines implementing the District's disciplinary policies. A parent student handbook, including a summary of the District disciplinary policies and rules, shall be distributed to the students' parent(s)/guardian(s) within fifteen (15) days of the beginning of the school year or a student's enrollment.

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