

PLAIN LANGUAGE CODE OF CONDUCT

2012

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SUBJECT: SCHOOL CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

I. CODE OF CONDUCT

It is the School District's belief that each student should be treated as a person who can reasonably be expected to be responsible for his/her own behavior. Students who cannot accept the responsibility and violate school rules will be required to accept the penalties and may require additional supervision.

Unless otherwise indicated, this code applies to all students, school personnel, parents, and other visitors when on school property or attending a school function.

II. DIGNITY ACT COORDINATORS

At least one employee in every school shall be designated as a Dignity Act Coordinator and instructed in the provisions of this subdivision and trained in methods to respond to human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex. Dignity Act Coordinators will serve as a resource and be responsible for the oversight of investigatory procedures of all allegations of bullying.

DIGNITY ACT COORDINATORS	
Name	Building
Heather Fitzgerald	High School
Daniel Kosick	Middle School
Anita Barry	Brookside Elementary
Anita Barry	Donnelly Elementary

III. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Pursuant to Section 100.2 (1) (i) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, a bill of student rights and responsibilities is established.

A. Student Bill of Rights

The district is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law and to provide students with a safe school climate focuses on positive behavior. In addition, to promote a safe, health, orderly and civil school environment, all district students have the right to:

1. Take part in all district activities on an equal basis, regardless of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex.
2. Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.
3. Access school rules and receive an explanation of those rules in an age appropriate manner on at least an annual basis from school personnel.

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4. Be suspended from instruction only after their rights pursuant to Education Law 4312 have been observed.
5. To take part in student activities unless properly suspended from participation pursuant.
6. To address the Board of Education on the same terms as any citizen.

B. Student Responsibilities. All students have the responsibility to:

1. Contribute to maintain a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.
2. Be familiar with and abide by all district policies, rules and regulations dealing with student conduct.
3. Attend school every day unless they are legally excused and be in class on time and prepared to learn.
4. Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extra-curricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
5. React to direction given by teachers, administrators, and other school personnel in a respectful positive manner.
6. Control their anger.
7. Ask questions when they do not understand.
8. Seek help in solving problems that might lead to disciplinary consequences.
9. Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
10. Accept responsibility for their actions.
11. Report infractions of the Code of Conduct, including, but not limited to, instances of discrimination or harassment.
12. Conduct themselves as representatives of the district when participating in or attending school-sponsored extra-curricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.
13. To make constructive contributions to his/her school and to report honestly the circumstances of school-related issues.

IV. ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

A. Parents

1. Recognize that the education of their child(ren) is a joint responsibility of the parents and the school community.
2. Send their children to school ready to participate and learn.
3. Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
4. Ensure absences are excused.

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5. Insist their children be dressed and groomed in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
6. Help their children understand that in a democratic society appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.
7. Know school rules and help their children understand them.
8. Convey to their children a supportive attitude toward education and the district.
9. Build good relationships with teachers, other parents and their children's friends.
10. Help their children deal effectively with peer pressures.
11. Report infractions of the Code of Conduct, including, but not limited to, instances of discrimination or harassment.
12. Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
13. Provide a place for study and ensure homework assignments are completed.

V. STUDENT DRESS CODE

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility to acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up and nails shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
2. Recognize that extremely brief garments, such as but not limited to, tank tops, tube tops, net tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, plunging necklines (front and/or back) and see through garments are not appropriate.
3. Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
4. Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
5. Not include the wearing of hats/headcovers in the classroom except for a medical or religious purpose.
6. Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex.
7. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

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Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline, up to and including in-school suspension for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension.

VI. PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT

The rules of conduct listed below focus on safety respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct.

- A. Engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples of disorderly conduct could include but not limited to:
1. running in hallways
 2. making unreasonable noise
 3. using language or gestures that are profane
 4. lewd, vulgar or abusive language
 5. obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic
 6. trespassing on school ground
 7. computer electronic communications misuse including any authorized use of computer software or internet account
 8. accessing inappropriate web sites or any violation of the District Acceptable Use Policy
 9. harassment, bullying, or intimidating students or school personnel
- B. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate. Insubordination could include but not limited to:
1. failing to comply with reasonable directions of a teacher, school administrator, or other school employee
 2. lateness for, or missing, or leaving school without permission
 3. skipping detention
- C. Engage in conduct that is disruptive. Examples of disruptive conduct include, but is not limited to:
1. failing to comply with reasonable directions of a teacher, school administrator, or other school employee in charge of students
- D. Engage in conduct that is violent. Examples of violent conduct include but not limited to:
1. committing an act of violence such as hitting, kicking, punching, scratching upon a teacher, administrator, or other school employee, or threatening or attempting to do so
 2. possessing a weapon

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3. displaying what appears to be a weapon
 4. threatening to use any weapon
 5. intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, or employee
- E. Engage in conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others. Some examples of such conduct would include, but not be limited to:
1. harassment or illegal discrimination, which includes the use of race, color, weight, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sex, gender, sexual orientation or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner.
 2. bullying
 3. cyber-bullying
 4. sexting
 5. lying to school personnel
 6. stealing the property of other students
 7. defamation which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual
 8. discrimination which includes the use of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or a disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner
 9. harassment
 10. intimidation
 11. hazing
 12. selling, using or possessing obscene material
 13. using vulgar or abusive language, cursing or swearing
 14. smoking a cigarette, cigar, pipe or using chewing tobacco or smokeless tobacco
 15. possessing, consuming, selling, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances or being under the influence, or synthetic cannabinoid products including but not limited to incense herbal mixture potpourri
 16. gambling
 17. indecent exposure to the sight or private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner
 18. initiating or report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause
 19. misuse of 911
 20. discharging a fire extinguisher
- F. Vandalism, willfully defacing, damaging or destroying school property or vehicles used by entities under contract with the district to provide services for the district. Willfully defacing, vandalizing, damaging or destroying the property of others on school premises, at school functions or on school buses under contract to the district.

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- G. Misuse of school information technology or other school property.
- H. Engage in misconduct while on a school bus. It is crucial for students to behave appropriately when riding on district buses to ensure their safety and that of other passengers to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving, and fighting will not be tolerated.
- I. Engage in a form of academic misconduct. Examples may include, but not be limited to:
1. plagiarism
 2. cheating
 3. copying
 4. altering records
 5. or assisting any student in any of the above actions
- J. Off campus & non-school day misconduct. Students may be disciplined for violations of school district policies and the Code of Conduct when there is a connection to or impact, effect on school students, personnel, activities, functions or property. Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to: cyber-bullying, sexting, threatening or harassing students or school personnel through the use of electronic devices.

Permissible Penalties:

The range of penalties and/or consequences which may be imposed for violations of the student disciplinary code include the following:

1. verbal warning
2. written warning
3. written notification to parents
4. in-house counseling
5. probation
6. reprimand
7. detention
8. suspension from transportation
9. suspension from athletic participation
10. suspension from social or extra-curricular activities
11. exclusion of other privileges
12. exclusion from a particular class
13. in-house suspension
14. short-term – 5 days or less – suspension from school (principals, superintendent, or Board of Education)

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15. long-term – more than 5 days – suspension from school (principals, superintendent, or Board of Education)
16. permanent suspension from school (superintendent or Board of Education)
17. restitution for property damage

VII. REPORTING VIOLATIONS

Any teacher, administrator, board member, parent or other person may report a violation of the student disciplinary code to the building principal or his/her designee.

All students are expected to promptly report instances of bullying (verbal, physical, cyber-bullying), harassment discrimination or hazing on school property or at a school function immediately to proper school personnel. School employees who witness or receive a report (oral or written) of harassment, bullying and/or discrimination must orally notify the building principal, or their designee no later than one (1) school day after witnessing or receiving a report of such incident. The employee must then file a written report within two (2) school days after making the oral report.

A. Remedial Consequences

Remedial responses which may be utilized for, but not limited to, instances of discrimination and harassment of students by students and/or employees may include:

1. Peer support groups; corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience;
2. Supportive intervention;
3. Behavioral assessment or evaluation;
4. Behavioral management plans, with benchmarks that are closely monitored;
5. Student counseling and parent conferences.

B. Minimum Periods of Suspension for Possession of Weapons, Commission of Violent Acts and Students who are Repeatedly Substantially Disruptive

Students who bring a weapon to school.

In accordance with the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994, any student who, after a hearing held pursuant to Education Law Section 3214, is found guilty of bringing a firearm onto the premises of any school owned or controlled by the school district will be subject to a penalty of at least a one year suspension from school. Under the Act, a firearm is defined as any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of such weapon; and a firearm muffler or silencer; or any destructive device. The term does not include antique firearms as also defined under 18 USC Section 921.

School premises is considered to be any school building or school bus or the school grounds.

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VIII. SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS

In recognition of presence of contraband which may be brought into school, the Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee to conduct searches of pupils and their possessions for illegal matter or matter which otherwise constitutes a threat to the health, safety, welfare or morals of pupils attending our schools.

Students have no reasonable expectation or privacy with respect to student lockers, storage spaces, or desks, and school officials retain complete control over them. This means that student lockers, storage spaces and desks may be subject to search at any time by school officials, without prior notice to students and without their consent.

IX. VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

Since schools are a place of work and learning, certain limits must be set for visits. For these reasons, the following rules apply to visitors to the schools:

1. Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
2. All visitors to the school must report to the office of the principal upon arrival at the school. There they will be required to sign the visitor's register and will be issued a visitor's identification badge which must be worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds. The visitor must return the identification badge to the principal's office before leaving the building.
3. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings, are not required to register.
4. Parents or citizens who wish to visit a classroom while school is in session are required to arrange such visits in advance at the discretion of administration with the classroom teacher(s) so that class disruption is kept to a minimum.
5. Teachers are expected not to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
6. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the principal or his or her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
7. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in this code of conduct.

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X. PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property.

A. Prohibited Conduct

No person, either alone or with others, shall:

1. Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so.
2. Intentionally damage or destroy school district property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
3. Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs or other school activities.
4. Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school programs.
5. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
6. Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
7. Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies.
8. Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles.
9. Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or be under the influence or either on school property or at a school function.
10. Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers or except as specifically authorized by the school district.
11. Loiter on or about school property.
12. Gamble on school property or at school functions.
13. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
14. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by the code.
15. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or board policy while on school property or while at a school function.
16. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex