

**WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

***CODE***  
***of***  
***CONDUCT***

**APPROVED**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**JULY 11, 2018**

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## Preamble

This Code of Conduct (Code) was developed by the White Plains City School District's community and adopted by the Board of Education at its meeting on June 25, 2001 in response to the New York State Safe Schools Against Violence in Education Act (Project SAVE). It was last reviewed and amended at the July 10, 2017 Board of Education meeting.

The Code was developed around the belief that a dynamic educational environment is one that creates opportunities for the development of responsible and productive citizens. It is one where everyone is treated with respect and dignity and where decisions are based solely on what works best for students.

White Plains has had a long history of high expectations for acceptable behavior. This comprehensive document incorporates and expands upon many of the policies and programs that have been in use in the district for some time (e.g., character education, Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies (PBIS), peer mediation, social decision making, conflict resolution, and counseling). Current school building rules, regulations, and procedures will remain in effect unless specifically superseded by the Code. This Code of Conduct provides a legal and procedural framework for disciplinary decisions regarding inappropriate behavior or misconduct on school property, at school-sponsored events/activities, or off of school grounds, if the behavior or misconduct creates, or would foreseeably create, a risk of a substantial disruption within the school environment.

The Code of Conduct was designed around the following five core principles that govern its implementation:

### **Principle 1: A safe and orderly school environment is essential to learning.**

The safety and welfare of our students, staff, and visitors will take priority over an individual's right to self-expression. While the district believes that an individual should have wide latitude for self-expression, limitations must be established in order to maintain a safe and productive learning environment.

### **Principle 2: Students, staff, and visitors will be held responsible for their own actions.**

Making appropriate choices and assuming personal responsibility for those choices is a critical component of the teaching and learning process. Self-discipline is the objective.

### **Principle 3: Home/school partnerships are critical to success.**

Because parents should be active participants in all aspects of their child's education, meaningful communication and cooperation between the home and the school are essential to the successful implementation of any effective student discipline procedure.

### **Principle 4: School rules and their enforcement should be fair, just, and non-discriminatory.**

Consequences for code violations, as well as the disciplinary procedures themselves, should be timely, fair, consistent, and impartial.

**Principle 5: Respect must be given for each person's unique needs.**

While the rules apply to everyone, it is acknowledged that a student's special needs or circumstances must be considered when imposing disciplinary sanctions.

## **I. Glossary of Terms**

### **Students.**

The term, "students," refers to individuals, prekindergarten through 21 years of age, who are residents or non-residents of the district and attend any one of the White Plains City School District's educational facilities or who are residents of the district assigned to an out-of-district placement by the school system. Non-resident pupils include those children who are tuition-paying pupils, the children of staff members who do not reside in White Plains, or children from other school districts assigned here through a special arrangement with the district's Special Education Department.

**Disability.** For the purposes of this document, the term "disability" means (a) a physical, mental or medical impairment resulting from anatomical, physiological, genetic or neurological conditions which prevents the exercise of normal bodily function or is demonstrable by medically accepted clinical or laboratory diagnostic techniques or (b) a record of such an impairment or (c) a condition regarded by others as such an impairment, provided, however, that in the context of employment, the term is limited to disabilities which, upon the provision of reasonable accommodations, do not prevent the individual from performing in a reasonable manner the activities involved in the job or occupation sought or held.

**Student with a disability.** For the purposes of this document, the phrase "student with a disability", means a student who, because of mental, physical or emotional reasons can only receive appropriate educational opportunities from a program of special education. This phrase does not include a student whose educational needs are due primarily to unfamiliarity with the English language, environmental, cultural or economic factors.

**Sexual orientation.** For the purposes of this document, the term "sexual orientation," means actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, or bisexuality.

**Gender.** For the purposes of this document, the term "gender", means actual or perceived sex and includes a person's gender identity or expression. Gender identity is one's self-conception as being male or female, as distinguished from actual biological sex or sex assigned at birth. Gender expression is the manner in which a person represents or expresses gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice or mannerisms.

**Harassment and Bullying.** For the purposes of this document, the terms “harassment” and “bullying” means the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse including cyberbullying that (a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or (b) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety; or (c) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or (d) occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property. Acts of harassment and bullying shall include, but not be limited to, those acts based on a person’s actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. For the purposes of this definition the term “threats, intimidation or abuse” shall include verbal and non-verbal actions.

**Cyberbullying.** Cyberbullying shall mean harassment or bullying as defined above, including paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d), where such harassment or bullying occurs through any form of electronic communication.

**Disruptive student.**

A disruptive student is one who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or who substantially interferes with the teacher’s authority over the classroom. Determination of substantial disruption or interference will be based upon the age of the student, the frequency, intensity, duration, and impact of the behavior. Please see page 10 for an illustrative list of disruptive behaviors.

**Violent student.**

A violent student is one who endangers the safety, health, or welfare of him/her or others as defined on pages 11-13.

**Parents.**

The term, “parents,” includes parents, guardians, or other persons in legal parental relation to a student.

**School personnel.**

For the purposes of this document, the term, “school personnel,” refers to individuals who are receiving compensation from the White Plains City School District, student teachers/interns, and under contract with the White Plains City School District or are employees of an entity under contract with the White Plains City School District to provide educational or related services to the White Plains City School District, its students or personnel (e.g., bus company employees and consultants).

**Visitors.**

Any individuals who are not students or school personnel and are lawfully on school property or attending a school function.

**School property.**

Any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot or land contained within the real property boundary line of a district elementary or secondary school or any other district building. For the purposes of this document, a school bus is also considered school property.

**School bus.**

For purposes of this document, the term “school bus”, means every motor vehicle owned and operated by the White Plains City School District for the transportation of students, children of students, teachers and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity or privately owned and operated for compensation for the transportation of students, children of students, teachers and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity to or from school or school functions.

**School function.**

Any school-sponsored event or activity, whether on or off campus, during or after school hours.

**Weapon.**

Any firearm, device (incendiary or other), instrument, material, or substance that can cause injury or death or is used to threaten such injury or death, as defined on page 12.

## **II. Rights and Responsibilities**

The White Plains City School District is committed to safeguarding the rights given to students, parents, and school personnel under State and Federal law and to promoting a safe, healthy, orderly, and civil school environment that ensures an appropriate education for all. Students, parents, and school personnel have the right to disclosure of all policies, rules, and procedures regarding expectations for behavior. They also have the right of due process.

No student shall be subjected to discrimination, harassment and/or bullying by employees or students on school property or at school functions based upon his/her actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

The following list of rights and responsibilities is by no means exhaustive. It is meant to highlight some of the principal expectations for each group.

### **A. Students**

Students have a responsibility to attend school every day and to be familiar with and to adhere to district policies, rules, and regulations. In addition, they must comply with directions given by school personnel, accept responsibility for their actions, conduct themselves in a civil manner, contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning, and behave appropriately when on school property or at school-sponsored activities/events. All students have the right to be free from discrimination, harassment and/or bullying by employees or students on school property based upon his/her actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. All students have the responsibility not to engage in discrimination, harassment and/or bullying on school property or at school functions based upon another person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

### **B. Parents**

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and on time, and are prepared to participate and learn. They are expected to recognize that their child's education is a joint responsibility of themselves and the school, to cooperate with school personnel, and to convey to their children a positive attitude toward education and the high value they place on it. In addition, parents are expected to give their children an understanding of what good behavior is: respect for adults and peers, courtesy, self-discipline and obedience. They are responsible to ensure that their children are aware of and abide by all district policies, rules, and regulations. They are also expected to immediately inform the school of any danger or potentially dangerous situation they hear from their child or other children. They are further expected to discuss with their child(ren) the importance of mutual respect and dignity for their peers regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. When on school property and/or attending a school function, parents are expected to comply with all directives given by school personnel, abide by school policies and rules, conduct themselves in a civil and an appropriate manner and contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning. In addition, when on school property and/or attending a school function, parents have a responsibility not to engage in discrimination, harassment and/or bullying of any student based upon his/her actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

### **C. School Personnel**

School personnel have a responsibility to actively participate in upholding a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning, to maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex, to conduct themselves in a professional manner, and to be prepared to perform their job. They are expected to know school policies and rules and

to enforce them in a fair and consistent manner. They are also expected to communicate regularly with students and their parents. School personnel have the responsibility to confront issues of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying, address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students, and to report incidents of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying that are witnessed or otherwise brought to an employee's attention.

#### **D. Visitors**

Visitors have a responsibility to participate in upholding a safe and orderly school environment that maintains a climate of respect and dignity while conducting themselves in an appropriate and civil manner. Visitors are expected to abide by school policies and rules, to comply with all directives given by school personnel and to immediately inform the school district of any dangerous or potentially dangerous situation. Visitors to the school have the responsibility not to engage in discrimination, harassment and/or bullying of students on school property or at school functions based upon his/her actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

#### **E. Board of Education**

The Board of Education has a responsibility to collaboratively establish policy so that schools will be safe and orderly learning environments, to approve the district's Code of Conduct, to ensure that the community is aware of the Code, and to review and update it every year for timeliness, fairness, and effectiveness. The Board of Education has the responsibility to maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. The Board of Education has the responsibility not to engage in the discrimination, harassment and/or bullying of students on school property or at school functions based upon his/her actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

### **III. Dress Code**

#### **A. Students**

All students are expected to dress appropriately for school and school-sponsored functions. The district believes that failure to cooperate with the dress code takes away from the learning process. It is the responsibility of both parents and students to ensure that the student's clothing (including jewelry) is safe and appropriate, and does not materially and immediately disrupt or interfere with the educational process. A student should :

- Not wear items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others.
- Not wear items that promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.
- Make sure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
- Not wear low-riding pants that expose underwear and/or the upper part of the buttocks.
- Not hoods except for a medical or religious purpose . except as permitted at White Plains High School main campus and the Rochambeau Alternative High School. Delete green
- Not wear items that cover the face except for a medical or religious purpose
- Not wear revealing garments (ie: clothing that reveals midriff, the lower part of the buttocks and chest) such as, but not limited to, tank tops, tube tops, net tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, plunging necklines (front and/or back), midriff tops, see through garments, nor shorts, skirts, and dresses of inappropriate length.

While some of these garments are inappropriate under this Code for older students, they might be appropriate for children in the prekindergarten or the early primary grades. In administering this Code, principals/directors (or their designee) will use their discretion in enforcing the policy in these early grades.

While these garments are inappropriate for wear during the school day, an exception may be made for school dances and proms by the individual school building.

The decision regarding consequences for inappropriate clothing are under the purview of building administration. Students may be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Students who refuse to modify their dress or who repeatedly fail to comply with the dress code shall be subject to a range of disciplinary actions listed in Section V.

## **B. School Personnel**

A dress code for employees is a mandatory subject of collective bargaining and, as such, may not be imposed upon unionized district personnel without negotiations.

Nevertheless, school personnel are responsible to ensure that their dress is safe and appropriate and does not disrupt or interfere with the educational process. They should not wear items that:

- Are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others.
- Promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

### **C. Visitors and Parents**

When on school property and/or attending a school function, it is the responsibility of all visitors and parents to ensure that their dress is safe and appropriate and does not disrupt or interfere with the educational process. They should not wear items that:

- Are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others.
- Promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

## **IV. Student Conduct**

The White Plains City School District expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel, and other members of the school community, as well as for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The best discipline is self-imposed. Students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. School personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

The district recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct, both while on school property and while engaged in a school function, specific and clear. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate school rules shall be subject to disciplinary action and shall be required to accept the penalties for their misconduct.

The district's three student behavior expectations are followed by a list of specific conduct that is prohibited under each expectation.

**Expectation 1: Students shall abide by school rules, respond to authority, and conduct themselves in a manner that is civil and orderly.**

They must not:

*Engage in any conduct that is disruptive or disorderly.* Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging in insubordinate behavior such as: failing to comply with the lawful directions of school personnel; demonstrating disrespect toward school personnel; and skipping detention or other assignment that serves as a disciplinary consequence.
- Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
- Distracting the bus driver from safely operating the vehicle.
- Making unreasonable or excessive noises.
- Running in hallways.
- Possessing a cell phone and/or other electronic device within school district buildings is discouraged because of concern for theft. Using electronic devices is strictly prohibited in classrooms, in restrooms and changing areas. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, PDA's, digital media players and remote gaming devices. Exceptions may be authorized by administrative approval.
- Cutting class, being late for class, or leaving school without permission.
- Trespassing. During the school day, students are not permitted in any school buildings or grounds, other than the one they regularly attend, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building. (Students who pick up their siblings or who visit teachers must sign-in and get a visitor's pass.)
- Disrupting classes, assemblies or other school functions.
- Inappropriate throwing of any objects in school, inside a bus, or out the window or door.
- Distributing or posting of any written material, pamphlets, or posters without the prior written approval of the Superintendent (or designee). In making these decisions, the Superintendent (or designee) will give due consideration to the student's rights of free speech and expression.

- Using or having Laser Devices is prohibited.

**Expectation 2: Students shall engage in behaviors that promote a safe learning environment and resolve disagreements or disputes in a non-violent manner. They shall demonstrate respect and tolerance towards others.**

They must not:

*Engage in any conduct that is violent [or in behavior that is threatening or that could jeopardize the safety and welfare of the school, school personnel, other students or visitors]. Examples include:*

- Committing an act of violence upon school personnel or attempting to do so. This includes, but is not limited to: using physical force such as hitting, biting, kicking, stabbing, pushing, breaking the skin or otherwise wounding, punching or scratching, except in self-defense.
- Committing, while on school property or at a school function, an act of violence upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or at the school function, or attempting to do so. This includes, but is not limited to: using physical force such as hitting, biting, kicking, stabbing, pushing, breaking the skin or otherwise wounding, punching or scratching, except in self-defense.
- Possessing, while on school property or at a school function, a weapon.\* Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.

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\*Note: A weapon, which includes, but is not limited to, any firearm or other gun, BB gun, pistol, revolver, shotgun, rifle, machine gun, disguised gun, any knife, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, gravity knife, brass knuckles, sling shot, metal knuckle knife, box cutter, cane sword, electronic dart gun, Kung Fu star, electronic stun gun, pepper spray, aerosol cans or sprays or other noxious spray, or explosive or incendiary bomb.

- Displaying, while on school property or at a school function, what appears to be a weapon.
- Threatening, while on school property or at a school function, to use a weapon or other device, instrument, material, or substance that can

cause physical injury or death. This includes, but is not limited to threatening to harm themselves or others (verbally, in writing, e-mail, on social networking sites or by any other means).

- Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of any person lawfully on school property or at a school function, including graffiti or arson.
- Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property including graffiti or arson.

**Expectation 3: Students shall conduct themselves in a manner that promotes a safe and ethical environment by acting truthfully, honestly, and honorably.**

They must not:

*Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of themselves and others. Examples include, but are not limited to:*

- Lying to school personnel.
- Stealing the property of other students, school personnel, or visitors.
- Defaming, which includes making false statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them (verbally, in writing, e-mail, on social networking sites or by any other means).
- Selling, using, distributing or possessing obscene or sexually explicit material (verbally, in writing, e-mail, on social networking sites or by any other means).
- Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing, or swearing (verbally, in writing, e-mail, on social networking sites or by any other means).
- Possessing or smoking a cigarette, cigar, or pipe, or possessing or using chewing tobacco, **or** smokeless tobacco ~~or smokeless~~ “electronic” cigarettes.
- **Possessing, using, selling, or distributing electronic cigarettes, vaping devices, or associated paraphernalia (including, but not limited to, cartridges/capsules/pods).**

- Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances, or being under the influence of either. “Illegal substances” include, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, Ecstasy, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as “designer drugs.”
- Inappropriately using, sharing, or selling of any prescription or over-the-counter drugs.
- Possessing drug paraphernalia including, but not limited to, rolling paper, pipes, blunts, etc.
- Gambling.
- Engaging in gang-related activities and/or displaying gang symbols and paraphernalia.
- Indecent exposure, that is, exposing to sight the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner, such as mooning and flashing.
- Initiating a false report warning of fire, bomb threat, or other catastrophe, including any misuse of 911.
- Discriminating, which includes the use of actual or perceived race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sex, sexual orientation, medical condition, weight, religious practice, ethnic group or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner.
- Intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or making statements that place an individual in fear of bodily harm.
- Engaging in harassment and/or bullying, in all its forms, which includes a sufficiently severe threat, intimidation or abuse or a persistent, pervasive pattern of threats, intimidation or abuse directed at an identifiable individual or group as defined in Article I of this Code of Conduct This includes bullying, cyberbullying and sexual harassment.
- Engaging in hazing behaviors, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with or maintaining membership in any activity, organization, club, or team.
- Engaging in intimate sexual behavior.
- Driving unsafely or violating the NYS traffic laws on school grounds.

- Withholding information from a responsible adult about any individual who may potentially cause harm to themselves, others, or school property.
- Falsely accusing another individual of a possible violent or criminal act.
- Engaging in bullying, which is a form of harassment that consists of inappropriate persistent behavior including threats or intimidation of others, treating others cruelly, terrorizing, coercing, or habitual put-downs and/or badgering others.
- Engaging in cyber-bullying, which includes, but not limited to, using the internet, social networking sites, cellular phones, gaming devices, or other communication devices to intimidate, bully, harass, or embarrass other students or staff members. Students, who engage in such activity on school grounds, or who engage in such activity off campus and create a material disruption of school operations, shall be subject to penalties for bullying and harassment, as well as possible criminal penalties.
- Using electronic communication devices (e.g. cell phones, PDAs) to disrupt the educational process.
- Engaging in any conduct off school property that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of students or staff members within the school and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment and/or where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property.

They must not:

*Engage in any form of academic misconduct.* Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism.
- Cheating.
- Forgery.
- Altering records.
- Misusing computer/electronic communications including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; accessing social networking sites, games, videos or chat rooms, except as authorized by district personnel as part of an instructional program; hacking and other destructive acts that damage the district's network; any other violation of the

district's acceptable use policy; or any other violation of the internet safety policy or regulations.

- Assisting another student in any of the above actions.

## **V. Reporting of Violations**

### **A. By Students**

All students who witness what they know to be a violent or criminal act or who are aware of a potentially violent or criminal act – in school or at a school function – are expected to promptly report the matter to an adult. All students who are witnesses to, or subjected to, incidents of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying by another student, by a District employee and/or by any other visitor on school property or at a school function, are expected to promptly report the matter to an adult. The district will hold the identity of the reporter in confidence to the maximum extent possible.

### **B. By School Personnel**

After receiving a report of a violation of the Code of Conduct or a report of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying against any student all school personnel who are authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to investigate the situation and impose appropriate disciplinary sanction as necessary in a timely, fair, consistent, and impartial manner. All school personnel who are witnesses to incidents of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying against any student by a student, by a District employee and/or by a visitor on school property or at a school function, are expected to investigate the situation and impose appropriate disciplinary sanction as necessary in a timely, fair, consistent and impartial manner. School personnel who are not authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to promptly verbally report violations of the Code of Conduct and/or incidents of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying against any student to their building principal, the principal's designee, or the Dignity Act Coordinator in the school building no later than one school day after such school personnel witnesses or receives a report of such conduct and to file a written report with the principal, the principal's designee, or the Dignity Act Coordinator in the school building not later than two school days after making a verbal report of an incident of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying. The principal, the principal's designee, or the Dignity Act Coordinator shall in turn investigate the situation and impose an appropriate disciplinary sanction as necessary, or refer the matter to a staff member who is authorized to impose an appropriate sanction.

### **C. By Parents and Visitors**

All parents and visitors who witness what they know to be a violent or criminal act or who are aware of a potentially violent or criminal act – in school or at a school function

– are expected to promptly report the matter to school personnel. All parents and/or visitors who are witnesses to incidents of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying by a student, by a District employee and/or by any other visitor on school property or at a school function, are expected to promptly report the matter to school personnel. The district will hold the identity of the reporter in confidence to the maximum extent possible.

**D. By Organizations Using School Property**

Any organization that uses school property for an activity involving students must develop a set of procedures that are consistent with the Code of Conduct and must hold participating students to the same high behavioral expectations as the White Plains City School District. In addition, the organization must act in conformity with district procedures for reporting violations of the Code of Conduct that constitutes a crime to the White Plains Police Department and for reporting incidents of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying by a student, by a District employee and/or by any other visitor on school property or at a school function to school personnel.

**E. To Local Law Enforcement Agency**

The principal/director (or designee) must notify the White Plains Police Department, our local law enforcement agency, by calling either 911 or the Youth Division of those code violations that constitute a crime or are suspected to be a crime (assault, sex offenses, menacing, unlawful assembly, riot, arson, falsely reporting an incident, criminal possession of a weapon, criminal possession of a controlled substance, possession of any illegal drugs, criminal mischief, aggravated harassment, trespass, larceny, and robbery).

**F. Discrimination, Bullying and/or Harassment**

It is essential that all targets and persons with knowledge of incidents of discrimination, bullying and/or harassment report such behavior as soon as possible after the incident so that it may be effectively investigated and resolved. The White Plains City School District will promptly and equitably investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written. In order to assist investigators, individuals should document the incidents of discrimination, bullying and/or harassment as soon as it occurs and with as much detail as possible including: the nature of the incident(s); dates, times, places it has occurred; name of perpetrator(s); witnesses to the incident(s); and the target's response to the incident. If, after appropriate investigation, the White Plains City School District finds that a student, an employee or a third party has violated the Code of Conduct, prompt corrective and possibly disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with this Code of Conduct, applicable collective bargaining agreements, district policy and State law.

## **VI. Student Disciplinary Penalties/Procedures and Referrals**

### **A. Introduction**

It is expected that any violations of the Code of Conduct be dealt with in a timely manner and in a way that is fair, impartial, and consistent. The Code of Conduct is *not* intended to replace customary classroom management/disciplinary rules, regulations, and procedures already in place in the district.

In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, school personnel authorized to impose disciplinary penalties will consider the following:

- The student's age and grade level.
- The nature of the offense and the circumstances which led to the offense.
- The student's prior disciplinary record.
- The effectiveness of the various forms of discipline.
- Information from parents, teachers, and/or others, as appropriate.
- Other extenuating circumstances such as the emotional, physical, or mental state of the student.

### **B. Parental Communication**

In developing the Code of Conduct, the importance of strong communication between the school and the home was emphasized. It is the expectation of the district that school administrators will inform parents in a timely fashion about their children's violations of the Code. It is also expected that the administrators will identify for parents those areas where their assistance is not only expected, but critically important.

### **C. Remedial Measures**

In order to create and maintain a positive learning environment for all students, the White Plains City School District believes that certain remedies and procedures which focus on intervention and education should be utilized. Such remedial measures are designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the behavior, and protect the target of the act(s). School personnel are authorized to provide for: peer support groups, corrective instruction and/or other relevant learning or service experiences; supportive intervention; behavioral assessments(s) and/or evaluation(s); behavioral management plans; and/or student counseling and parent conferences.

### **D. Penalties/Procedures**

Students who are found to have violated the district's Code of Conduct may be subject to the following penalties/procedures, either alone or in combination. In general, discipline will be progressive and will follow the continuum listed below. This means that, where appropriate, a student's first violation will usually merit a lighter penalty

than subsequent violations. However, it must be understood that certain violations may require more severe consequences due to the seriousness of the offenses.

The type of due process a student is entitled to receive depends on the penalty under consideration. In all cases, regardless of the penalty imposed, the school personnel authorized to impose the penalty must inform the student of the alleged misconduct and must investigate, to the extent necessary, the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary penalty before the imposition of the penalty.

The following list of penalties/procedures includes, for the more serious penalties, the due process rights accorded to students:

- **Oral warning.** Any verbal correction or suggestion made to a student by school personnel during the course of the day on how to improve his/her behavior is considered an oral warning and does not require parental notification.
- **Short-term “time out” in classroom or in alternate setting.** When an oral warning results in no appreciable change in a student’s behavior, he/she may be asked to have a short time-out in the classroom or outside the room in a designated place. Parents will be notified if there is a repeated occurrence of time outs.
- **Student sent to the office for a disciplinary conference.** Depending upon the severity of the misconduct, a parent may be notified by either a phone call and/or a letter. When persistent disciplinary actions do not seem to work or are deemed inappropriate, counseling or peer mediation may be called for. A parent should be notified by either a phone call and/or a letter.
- **Detention – during the school day or after** (for example, during X-period). Detention may be used as a penalty for misconduct. Students who receive detention are sent by school personnel to an alternate location within the building. In the case of a detention during the school day, parents are notified in writing. After-school detention should be imposed as a penalty only after the student’s parent has been notified to confirm that there is no parental objection to the penalty and that the student has appropriate transportation home following detention if needed.
- **Principal’s conference.** This is a required meeting between the principal/director (or designee) and parent for a comprehensive review of the child’s behavioral and academic status. It is intended to be both a warning and a “problem solving” procedure by which all involved parties cooperatively develop a behavioral management plan to avoid more serious disciplinary action. It is designed to address, in a non-punitive fashion, the needs of students whose behaviors in school demonstrate a pattern of disruption.

- **Teacher removal of students.** Teachers may remove disruptive students from the classroom (see pages 11-12 of the Code of Conduct for descriptions of disruptive behaviors). This is not to be confused with suspension. Suspension is a disciplinary action that can be carried out only by administrative personnel.

A student's disruptive behavior can affect a teacher's ability to teach and can make it difficult for other students in the classroom to learn. In most instances, the classroom teacher can control a student's behavior and maintain or restore control over the classroom by using customary classroom management techniques that give the student an opportunity to regain composure and self-control in an alternative setting. Such practices may include, but are not limited to: short-term "time-out," sending a student to an administrator's room or to a "special duty" room for the remainder of the class period only, or sending a student to a guidance counselor or other district staff member for counseling. These techniques *do not* constitute "a teacher removal" for the purposes of this Code of Conduct.

When a student's behavior becomes disruptive as defined by this Code of Conduct, a teacher has the right to remove a student from the classroom for a period of time not to exceed two days. The two-day time period does not include the day of removal and applies only to the specific class of the removing teacher.

The teacher removal provision of this Code of Conduct is triggered when a teacher believes that a disruptive student must be removed from the classroom for more than one "instructional period." The length of the instructional period is determined by each building and cannot exceed one hour in a given day. The referring teacher is permitted to remove a disruptive student for no more than two consecutive "instructional periods." Any student removed from the classroom may fully participate in other "instructional periods" for the duration of the removal.

A teacher may not use these provisions more than two times a semester with regard to the same student. If the student is a continuous disruption in class, administrative intervention and parental involvement is required. A teacher may not use these provisions for a student whose actions are defined as violent (see pages 12-13 of the Code of Conduct for descriptions of violent behaviors). A violent student is to be promptly referred for disciplinary action through administrative channels.

Once a teacher has determined that removal is warranted, the following provisions apply:

1. Prior to removal, the teacher must provide the student with an explanation as to why he or she is being removed and give the student an opportunity to explain his/her version of the relevant events.

2. The student is then to be sent to the designated alternate education site as determined by each building for continued educational programming.
3. The teacher must complete a district-established disciplinary removal form and meet with the principal/director (or designee) as soon as possible to explain the circumstances of the removal. If this is not completed by the next day, the student will be re-admitted to class.
4. The administrator must notify the student's parent in writing (by personal delivery or other means that is reasonably calculated to assure receipt of the notice within 24 hours of the removal). This notice must explain the reason(s) for the removal and the parent's right, upon request, to meet informally with the principal/director (or designee) and the removing teacher to discuss the removal. Whenever possible, the parent should be notified by telephone.
5. If at the informal meeting the student denies the disruptive behavior, the administrator must explain why the student was removed and give the student with his/her parent present a chance to present his/her version of the relevant events. This meeting must be held within 48 hours of the student's removal unless extended by mutual consent of the parent and the administrator.

The principal/director (or designee) may overturn the removal of a student from class at any point between receiving the removal form from the teacher and the close of business on the day of the informal conference, if requested, for the following reasons:

- The charges against the student are not supported by substantial evidence.
- The student's removal is otherwise in violation of law, including the district's Code of Conduct.
- The conduct warrants suspension from school pursuant to Education Law and a suspension will be imposed by appropriate administrative personnel.

No student will be permitted to return to the "instructional period" from which he/she was removed until the principal/director (or designee) makes a final determination, or the period of removal expires, whichever occurs first.

Removal of a student with a disability, under certain circumstances, may constitute a change in the student's placement. Accordingly, no teacher may remove a student with a disability from class until that teacher has verified with the principal/director (or designee) or the chairperson of the Committee on Special Education that the removal will not violate the student's rights under State or Federal laws or regulations.

- **Administrative probation.** A student may be placed on probation at the discretion of the principal/director (or designee). During the period of probation, a student must adhere to specific behavioral expectations that are agreed upon and spelled out in a contract signed by the administrator, the student, and the parent. Probation is typically utilized in combination with other administrative disciplinary actions. The probation contract has a duration (e.g., the rest of the school year, the end of the semester) that is clearly spelled out as are the consequences for violating the probation contract. Administrative probation can occur separately from a suspension or as one of the disciplinary consequences as part of a suspension.
- **Suspension from transportation.** If a student does not conduct him/herself properly on the bus, the bus driver is expected to bring such misconduct to the attention of the principal/director (or designee). Students who become a serious disciplinary problem may have their riding privileges suspended. In such cases, the student's parent will become responsible for seeing that the child gets to and from school safely.

A student subjected to a suspension from transportation is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law. The principal or Superintendent will notify the parent of the penalty imposed, and the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the principal/director (or designee) to discuss the conduct and the penalty imposed.

- **Suspension from athletic participation, social or extracurricular activities, or other privileges such as field trips and access to computers, computer network and internet.** A student subjected to a suspension from athletic participation, social or extracurricular activities, or of other privileges, such as the use of computers, the district's computer network, and/or the district's internet service, is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law.

The principal will notify the parent of the penalty imposed, and the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the principal/director (or designee) to discuss the conduct and the penalty imposed.

- **In-school suspension.** A student is placed in an alternate setting within his/her school building for a full day (or part of a day) and provided with instruction. A student subjected to an in-school suspension is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law.

The principal will notify the parent of the penalty imposed, and the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the principal/director (or designee) to discuss the conduct and the penalty imposed.

- **Short-term out-of-school suspension (five days or less).** When the Superintendent or principal proposes to suspend a student, the student must be immediately notified. If the student denies the misconduct, the administrator must provide an explanation of the basis for the proposed suspension. The administrator must also notify the student's parent in writing (by personal delivery or other means that is reasonably calculated to assure receipt of the notice within 24 hours of the decision) that the student is being suspended from school. Whenever possible, the parent should be notified by telephone.

The notice shall provide a description of the charges against the student and the incident for which suspension is proposed. It shall also inform the parent of the right to request an immediate informal conference with the principal). Both the notice and the informal conference shall be in the native language or mode of communication used by the parent. At the conference, the parent has the right to ask questions of complaining witnesses under such procedures as established by the principal.

The notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place before the student is suspended unless the student's presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process. If the student's presence in school does pose such a danger or threat of disruption, the notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon after the suspension as is reasonably practical.

After the conference, the principal may promptly advise the parent of his/her decision. The administrator may advise the parent that if he/she is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to pursue the matter, he/she must file a written appeal to the Superintendent within five business days, unless he/she can show good cause for the delay in doing so.

The Superintendent shall issue a written decision regarding the appeal within 10 business days of receiving the appeal. If the parent is not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision, he/she may file a written appeal to the Board of Education with the district clerk within 30 business days of the date of the Superintendent's decision unless the parent can show good cause for the delay in filing the appeal. The Board of Education will make its decision based upon the written appeal, the Superintendent's decision and any documentation referenced in the Superintendent's decision or relating to the out-of-school suspension at issue (including but not limited to the student's prior discipline record, the Principal's notice of charges). There will be no oral argument before the Board of Education concerning the appeal. The Board of Education may adopt in whole or in part the decision of the Superintendent. Only final decisions of the Board of Education may be appealed to the State Commissioner of Education within 30 days of the decision.

- **Central Office Review.** A Central Office Review is a meeting involving the Superintendent (or designee), the parent, the student and representatives of the

school which may include building administrators, Pupil Services staff and teachers. The Central Office Review is intended to be both a warning and a “problem solving” procedure by which all involved parties strive to develop a plan to avoid more serious disciplinary action. It is designed to address, in a non-punitive fashion, the needs of students whose behaviors in school demonstrate a serious pattern of disruption.

One result of a Central Office Review could be the reassignment of the student to an alternate educational program if the parent is agreeable. If the Central Office Review does not result in a positive outcome, the district reserves the right to refer the matter for a Superintendent’s Hearing.

- **Long-term out-of-school suspension (more than five days).** When the Superintendent or principal determines that a suspension for more than five days may be warranted, he/she shall give reasonable notice to the student and the student’s parent of their right to a fair hearing called a Superintendent’s Hearing. A hearing officer may be designated by the Superintendent to conduct the hearing and to make a recommendation to him/her as to the appropriate measure of discipline.

The student who is the subject of the hearing has the right to be represented by legal counsel, the right to question witnesses and offer evidence on his/her behalf. The hearing officer is authorized to administer oaths and to issue subpoenas in conjunction with the proceeding. A record of the hearing shall be maintained, but no stenographic transcript shall be required. A tape recording shall be deemed a satisfactory record. The report of the hearing officer shall be advisory only, and the Superintendent may accept all or any part thereof.

An appeal of the decision of the Superintendent may be made by the parent to the Board of Education in writing and submitted to the district clerk within 30 business days of the date of the Superintendent’s decision, unless the parent can show good cause for the delay in filing the appeal. The Board of Education will make its decision based solely upon the written appeal, the Superintendent’s decision and the record developed before the Superintendent or his designated hearing officer (which record includes but is not limited to the testimony provided at the hearing and the documents admitted into evidence at the hearing). There will be no oral argument before the Board of Education concerning the appeal. The Board of Education may adopt in whole or in part the decision of the Superintendent. Final decisions of the Board of Education may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education within 30 days of the decision.

**Permanent suspension from school.** This penalty is imposed as a result of a Superintendent’s Hearing. It is reserved for extraordinary circumstances such as those where a student’s conduct poses a life-threatening danger to the safety and

well-being of other students, school personnel, or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.

### **E. Alternate Instruction**

When a student of any age is removed from class by a teacher or a student of compulsory attendance age is suspended from school pursuant to Education Law, the district will take immediate steps to provide alternate means of instruction for the student.

### **F. Minimum Periods of Suspension**

Following are the minimum periods of suspension for violations of the Code of Conduct:

- **Students who are repeatedly substantially disruptive of the educational process or who repeatedly substantially interfere with the teacher’s authority over the classroom shall be subject to suspension from school for a minimum of three days.** For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “repeatedly substantially disruptive” means engaging in conduct that violates Expectation 1 (listed on pages 11-12) on four or more occasions during a semester or three or more occasions during a trimester. The student and the student’s parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for an informal conference given to all students subject to a short-term suspension (described previously on page 23).

The Principal or Superintendent has the authority to modify the minimum three-day suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the Superintendent may consider the student’s age, grade in school, and prior disciplinary record. The Superintendent’s belief that other forms of discipline may be more effective, input from parents, teachers, and/or others, and other extenuating circumstances may also be taken into account.

A student with a disability may be suspended under this provision in accordance with the requirements of State and Federal law.

- **Students who commit violent, criminal, or other serious acts that violate the Code of Conduct shall be subject to suspension from school for a minimum of five days.** For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “violent, criminal, or other serious acts” means engaging in conduct that violates Expectation 2 or Expectation 3 (listed on pages 12-15). The student and the student’s parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for an informal conference given to all students subject to a short-term suspension (described previously on page 23).

The Superintendent has the authority to modify the minimum five-day suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the Superintendent may consider the student’s age, grade in school, and prior disciplinary record. The Superintendent’s belief that other forms of discipline may

be more effective, input from parents, teachers, and/or others, and other extenuating circumstances may also be taken into account.

A student with a disability may be suspended under this provision in accordance with the requirements of State and Federal law.

- **Students who bring a weapon to school as defined under the federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 shall be suspended for a minimum of one calendar year.** Before being suspended for a year the student and the student's parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for a Superintendent's Hearing as given to all students subject to a long-term suspension (described previously on page 24).

The Superintendent has the authority to modify the one-year suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the Superintendent may consider the student's age, grade in school, and prior disciplinary record. The Superintendent's belief that other forms of discipline may be more effective, input from parents, teachers, and/or others, and other extenuating circumstances may also be taken into account.

A student with a disability may be suspended under this provision in accordance with the requirements of State and Federal law.

The White Plains Police Department will be notified as warranted under the circumstances.

## **VII. Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

It is recognized that it may be necessary to suspend, remove, or otherwise discipline students with disabilities to address disruptive, violent, or other inappropriate behavior. Furthermore, it is important to note that students with disabilities are entitled to certain additional procedures whenever school authorities intend to impose discipline upon them. This Code of Conduct affords these students who are subject to disciplinary action no greater or lesser rights than those expressly afforded by applicable Federal and State law and regulations.

### **Interim Alternative Educational Setting.**

School officials have the authority to suspend or remove students with disabilities if they violate the Code of Conduct to interim alternative educational settings (located within or outside of the district) for a period of up to 45 days for offenses relating to illegal drugs, controlled substances, or weapons. The Superintendent may order the placement of a student with a disability in an interim setting if the student carries or possesses a weapon at school or at a school function, or the student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance

while at school or a school function. In instances when school personnel determine that it is dangerous for a student with a disability to remain in his/her current educational placement, school officials can request an expedited impartial due process hearing to remove the student to an interim setting.

**Disciplinary Change of Placement.**

A disciplinary change of placement is a suspension or removal of a student with a disability from his/her educational placement for more than ten consecutive days, or for a period that adds up to more than ten cumulative school days in a given school year considering such factors as the length of each suspension or removal, the total amount of time the student is removed, and the proximity of the suspensions or removals to one another. A determination of whether there is a relationship between the student's disability and the behavior that is subject to the disciplinary action must be made by the Committee on Special Education when school officials seek to impose a suspension or removal that constitutes a disciplinary change of placement. The Committee on Special Education is not required to make this determination for suspensions or removals of ten days or less in the school year.

**Committee on Special Education.**

The procedures relating to the discipline of students with disabilities require school personnel with authority to suspend or remove students to work closely with the Committee on Special Education to ensure clear communication and decision making on disciplinary matters. The district's Committee on Special Education has responsibilities to determine whether there is a relationship between the student's disability and the behavior that is subject to the disciplinary action, to conduct behavioral assessments, as well as to develop or review behavioral intervention plans whenever suspending or removing a student with a disability for more than 10 school days in a given school year.

## **VIII. Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment is any act of physical force upon a student for the purpose of punishing that student. Corporal punishment of any student by any school personnel is strictly forbidden.

In situations in which alternative procedures and methods not involving the use of physical force cannot reasonably be employed, the prohibition against corporal punishment does not bar the use of reasonable physical force to:

- Protect oneself, another student, teacher, or any person from physical injury.
- Protect the property of the school or others.

- Restrain or remove a student whose behavior significantly interferes with or poses a threat to the orderly exercise and performance of school district functions, powers and duties, if that student has refused to refrain from further disruptive acts. When feasible remove the other students from the classroom rather than restraining the disruptive student.

Any complaint about the use of corporal punishment shall be reported to the principal/director. The complaint will be communicated immediately to the Superintendent (or designee) who shall investigate the complaint to determine whether an incident actually took place and, if so, shall determine the appropriate response and advise all affected parties. Results of this investigation will be forwarded to the Superintendent. If the complainant or reporter is dissatisfied with the resolution of the complaint at that stage, an appeal can be made to the Superintendent. If still dissatisfied, further appeal can be made, in writing, to the White Plains Board of Education. The district shall file all complaints about the use of corporal punishment with the Commissioner of Education in accordance with Commissioner's Regulations.

#### **Inappropriate Punishment.**

While several other forms of inappropriate punishment directed toward a student are not defined as corporal punishment (e.g., verbal abuse and public humiliation), they shall not be tolerated. It is understood that any act of punishment toward a given student must be carried out by school personnel in a manner that is respectful and dignified.

## **IX. Student Searches and Interrogations**

Any principal/director (or designee) authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty on a student may question a student about an alleged violation of law, or any provision in the district's Code of Conduct. Students are not entitled to any sort of "Miranda" type warning before being questioned by school officials, nor are school officials required to contact a student's parent before questioning the student.

Before searching a student or the student's belongings, the authorized school official will ask the student whether he/she possesses the suspected items or will voluntarily consent to the search. Searches will be limited to the extent necessary to locate the evidence sought.

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent and building administrators to conduct searches of students and their belongings, when necessary, if the authorized school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in evidence that the student violated the law or the district Code of Conduct. District security officials are authorized to conduct searches of students and their belongings only in cases of imminent danger.

Whenever possible, searches will be conducted in the privacy of administrative offices and students will be present whenever their possessions are being searched. The district will also make every effort to have another school employee present for all searches to serve as a witness. The authorized school official conducting the search is responsible for recording pertinent information about the search.

**A. Student lockers, desks and other school storage places**

The rules in this Code of Conduct regarding searches of students and their belongings do not apply to student lockers, desks, and other school storage places. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to these places, and school officials retain complete control over them. This means that student lockers, desks, and other school storage places may be subject to search at any time by school officials, without prior notice to students and without their consent.

**B. District computers, computer network system, and internet access**

Users of the district's computer network, including but not limited to students and/or school personnel, shall have no reasonable expectation of privacy in electronic mail, documents created or stored on district computers or other technology equipment or in their use of the internet. The district may monitor, access and/or view any emails, files or materials created using, stored in or transmitted through the district's computer network or the district's equipment (such as computers, iPads, PDAs, Chromebooks or the like), or any records or information concerning a user's internet access (such as websites accessed, etc.), without prior notice to users of the district's computer network (including but not limited to students) and without their consent.

**C. Strip searches**

Under this Code of Conduct, school personnel are not allowed to conduct a strip search (defined as a search that requires a student to remove any or all of his/her clothing, other than footwear or an outer garment such as a coat, jacket, or sweater).

**D. Police involvement in searches and interrogations of students**

Police officials have authority to interview or search students in schools or at school functions, or to use school facilities in connection with police work in accordance with New York State and Federal Law. Where possible, police will confer with school officials before exercising such authority. Except in an emergency, police officials will not question or search any student on school grounds without the permission of the parents or guardians.

**E. Child Protective Services Investigations**

The district will cooperate with local Child Protective Services workers who wish to conduct interviews of students on school property relating to allegations of suspected child abuse, and/or neglect, or custody investigations.

All requests by Child Protective Services to interview a student on school property shall be made directly to the principal/director (or designee). The administrator shall set the time and place of the interview and shall decide if it is necessary and appropriate for a school official to be present during the interview, depending on the age of the student being interviewed and the nature of the allegations.

A Child Protective Services worker may not remove a student from school property without a court order, unless the worker reasonably believes that the student would be subject to danger if he or she were not removed from school before a court order can reasonably be obtained. If the worker believes the student would be subject to danger, the worker may remove the student without a court order and without the parent's consent. Notice must be given by the worker to the principal/director (or designee) who in turn would immediately advise central administration of the situation.

## **X. Public Conduct on School Property**

### **A. Visitors/Parents**

The Board of Education welcomes and encourages the community to visit the district's schools and classrooms to observe the work of students, teachers, and other staff. Since schools are places of work and learning, however, certain limits must be set for such visits. The principal/director (or designee) is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds. For these reasons, the following rules apply to visitors in the schools:

- All visitors to a school must report to the main office or visitor's registration desk upon arrival at the school.
- All visitors will be required to sign a 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. If it is not a disposable badge, it must be returned to the office before leaving the building.
- Visitors who attend school functions that are open to the public, such as PTA meetings, athletic events, or special events, are not required to register.
- Parents who wish to observe their child's classroom while school is in session are required to arrange such visits in advance with the classroom teacher so that class disruption is kept to a minimum. (Teachers cannot use class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.)
- Other community members who wish to tour our schools must call the district's Family Information Center to set up an appointment.

### **B. Public conduct**

For purposes of this section of the Code of Conduct, “public” shall mean all persons when on school property or attending school functions, including but not limited to school personnel, parents and visitors.

The restrictions on public conduct on school property and at school functions contained in this Code of Conduct are not intended to limit freedom of speech or peaceful assembly. The district recognizes that free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the objectives of the district. However, the purpose of this Code of Conduct is to maintain public order and prevent abuse of the rights of others. All persons on school property or attending a school function must conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner.

No person alone or with others shall:

- Engage in threatening, potentially dangerous, or criminal behavior (including gambling).
- Intentionally damage or destroy school district or personal property, including graffiti or arson.
- Engage in any behavior that is disruptive to the orderly operation of classes, school programs, or other school activities.
- Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations, or other restrictions on vehicles.
- Intimidate or harass others.
- Discriminate against any person on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, sex, sexual orientation, medical condition, weight, religious practice, ethnic group or disability.
- Refuse to comply with reasonable orders of identifiable safety authorities (including security staff and traffic crossing guards) in the performance of their duties.
- Smoke.
- Possess, consume, or sell alcoholic beverages or illegal substances.

### **C. Penalties**

Persons who violate this Code of Conduct shall be subject to the following penalties:

- *Visitors* will have their authorization, if any, to remain on school grounds or at the school function withdrawn, and they shall be directed to leave the premises. If they refuse to leave, they shall be subject to ejection. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
- *Students* shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with this Code of Conduct and in accordance with State and Federal law.
- *Certified faculty members* shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Education Law and the current collective bargaining agreement.

- *Classified civil service staff members* shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Civil Service Law and the current collective bargaining agreement.
- *Staff members*, other than those described above, shall be subject to a warning, reprimand, suspension, or dismissal as the facts may warrant in accordance with any legal rights they may have.

In addition, the district reserves its right to pursue civil or criminal action against any person violating the Code of Conduct.

## **XI. Dissemination and Review**

The Board of Education will work to ensure that the community is aware of this Code of Conduct by the following actions:

- A summary of the Code of Conduct will be provided to all students, in an age-appropriate version, written in plain-language, at a general assembly held at the beginning of each school year.
- A summary of the Code of Conduct, written in plain language, will be mailed to the parents of all district students before the beginning of the school year.
- The full Code of Conduct is available on the District’s website and will be available upon request. A summary of the Code of Conduct, written in plain language, will also be available upon request. As with all district documents, it will be translated into Spanish.
- All current teachers and other staff members will be provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct and a copy of any amendments to the Code of Conduct as soon as practicable after adoption.
- All new employees will be provided with a copy of the current Code of Conduct when they are first hired.
- Copies of the Code of Conduct will be made available for review by students, parents, and other community members throughout the school year.

The Board of Education will collaboratively sponsor an in-service education program for all district staff members to ensure the effective implementation of Project SAVE legislation, the Dignity for All Students Act and the Code of Conduct. The purpose of this in-service education is to promote a safe and supportive school climate while discouraging, among other things, discrimination and/or harassment against students and/or school employees and to guide school personnel on the inclusion of safe and supportive school climate concepts in the curriculum and classroom management. The Superintendent of Schools may solicit the recommendations of the district staff, particularly teachers and administrators, regarding in-service programs pertaining to the management and discipline of students.

The Board of Education will review this Code of Conduct every year and update it as necessary. In conducting the review, the Board will consider how effective the Code of Conduct's provisions have been and whether the Code of Conduct has been applied fairly and consistently. The Board will consult with the school community and other interested parties about changes and amendments.

Before adopting any revisions to the Code of Conduct, the Board of Education will hold at least one public hearing at which school personnel, parents, students and any other interested party may participate. The Code of Conduct and any amendments to it will be filed with the Commissioner no later than 30 days after adoption.

Revised: June 12, 2017