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CODE OF CONDUCT

(Plain Language Version)

Further details are found in the full version of the Code of Conduct

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 for 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 while on school property or on school sponsored events, including jewelry (piercings), accessories (wallet chains), 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 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 shoes or sneakers with wheels.
6. Not include the wearing of hats in the classroom except for a medical or religious purpose. Head coverings worn to and from school need to be taken off at the door and stored in the locker during the school day.
7. Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
8. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

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.

PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with regard for the rights and welfare of others, as well as, for the school and equipment. Students must learn to accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. Students who do not accept responsibility for their own behavior and violate school rules will be subject to disciplinary consequences, up to and including suspension from school, for the following conduct:

- A. **Engage in conduct that is disorderly, for example:**
 1. Running in hallways.

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2. Making unreasonable noise.
 3. Using profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive language or gestures.
 4. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
 5. Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
 6. Trespassing. Students are not permitted in any school building without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
 7. Computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/ intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the district's acceptable use policy.
- B. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate or disruptive, for example:**
1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
 2. Lateness for, missing or leaving school without permission, or skipping detention.
 3. Inappropriate public sexual contact or public displays of affection such as kissing, fondling, and behaviors that are offensive to others.
 4. Display or use of personal electronic devices while school is in session, but not limited to, cell phones, I-pods, digital cameras, in a manner that is in violation of district policy. Personal electronic devices, if brought to school, are to be turned off and left in the student's locker during the school day unless used with permission of administration or teaching personnel as part of the curriculum.
- C. Engage or threaten to engage in conduct that is violent, for example:**
1. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon any school personnel, students, or other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so.
 2. Possessing a weapon, displaying what appears to be a weapon, or threatening to use any 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.
 3. Intentionally damaging or destroying school property, the personal property of a district employee, or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
- D. Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, physical or mental health or welfare of others, for example:**
1. Subjecting other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function to danger by recklessly engaging in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury.
 2. Stealing or attempting to steal the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.
 3. Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of such by demeaning them.
 4. Discrimination, which includes using race, color, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sex, gender (identity and expression), sexual orientation, weight or disability to deny rights, equitable treatment or access to facilities available to others.

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5. Harassment, which includes a sufficiently severe action or persistent pervasive pattern of actions or statements directed at an identifiable individual or group which are intended to be, or which a reasonable person would perceive as ridiculing or demeaning. Harassment is also the creation of a hostile environment.
 6. Intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm.
 7. Bullying which may be a hostile activity which harms or induces fear through the threat of further aggression and/or creates terror.
 8. Hazing which includes an induction, initiation or membership process involving harassment
 9. Selling, using, distributing or possessing obscene material.
 10. Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing or swearing.
 11. Smoking and/or possessing a cigarette, cigar, pipe, the use of e-cigarettes or other vaporizing chemicals, chewing or smokeless tobacco or any other tobacco product.
 12. 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, synthetic marijuana, salvia, bath salts, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs."
 13. Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
 14. Gambling.
 15. Indecent exposure, that is, exposure to sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.
 16. Initiating a report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.
- E. **Engage in misconduct while on a school bus.** It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding on district provided transportation to ensure their safety and that of other passengers, and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior.
- F. **Engage in any form of academic misconduct, for example:**
1. Plagiarism, cheating, copying, or altering records.
 2. Assisting another student in any of the above actions.
- G. **Engage in off-campus misconduct that interferes with, or can reasonably be expected to substantially disrupt the educational process in the school or at a school function, for example:**
1. Cyberbullying (i.e., inflicting willful and repeated harm through the use of electronic text).
 2. Threatening or harassing students or school personnel over the phone or other electronic medium.

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If the conduct of a student is related to a disability or suspected disability, the student shall be referred to the Committee on Special Education and discipline, if warranted, shall be administered consistent with the separate requirements of this code of conduct for disciplining students with a disability or presumed to have a disability. A student identified as having a disability shall not be disciplined for behavior related to his/her disability.

PENALTIES

Students who are found to have violated the district's code of conduct may be subject to penalties within the following range of penalties, either alone or in combination. The school personnel identified after each penalty are authorized to impose that penalty, consistent with the student's right to due process.

1. Oral warning – any member of the district staff
2. Written warning – bus drivers, hall and lunch monitors, coaches, guidance counselors, teachers, Principal, Superintendent
3. Written notification to parent – bus driver, aides, monitors, coaches, guidance counselors, teachers, Principal, Superintendent
4. Detention – teachers, Principal, Superintendent
5. Suspension from transportation – Director of Transportation, Principal, Superintendent
6. Suspension from athletic participation – coaches, Principal, Superintendent
7. Suspension from social or extracurricular activities – activity director, Principal, Superintendent
8. Suspension of other privileges – Principal, Superintendent
9. In-school suspension – Principal, Superintendent
10. Removal from classroom by teacher – teachers, Principal
11. Short-term (five days or less) suspension from school – Principal, Superintendent, Board
12. Long-term (more than five days) suspension from school – Superintendent, Board
13. Permanent suspension from school – Superintendent, Board.

MINIMUM PERIODS OF SUSPENSION

1. Students who bring or possess a weapon on school property

Any student, other than a student with a disability, found guilty of bringing a weapon onto school property will be subject to suspension from school for at least one calendar year. Before being suspended, the student will have an opportunity for a hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. 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 following:

1. The student's age.
2. The student's grade in school.
3. The student's prior disciplinary record.
4. The Superintendent's belief that other forms of discipline may be more effective.
5. Input from parents, teachers and/or others.
6. Other extenuating circumstances.

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A student with a disability may be suspended only in accordance with the requirements of state and federal law.

2. *Students who commit violent acts other than bringing or possessing a weapon on school property.*

Any student, other than a student with a disability, who is found to have committed a violent act, other than bringing a weapon onto school property, shall be subject to suspension from school for at least five days unless otherwise determined by the Superintendent.

3. *Students who are repeatedly substantially disruptive of the educational process or repeatedly substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom*

Any student, other than a student with a disability, who repeatedly is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom, will be suspended from school for at least five days. For purposes of this code of conduct, "repeatedly is substantially disruptive" means engaging in conduct that results in the student being removed from the classroom by teacher(s) pursuant to Education Law § 3214 (3-a) and this code on multiple occasions.

REFERRALS TO OUTSIDE AGENCIES

1. The Guidance Office shall handle all referrals of students to counseling.
2. The district may file a PINS (person in need of supervision) petition in Family Court on any student under the age of 18 who demonstrates that he or she requires supervision and treatment by:
 - a. Being habitually truant and not attending school as required by part one of Article 65 of the Education Law.
 - b. Engaging in an ongoing or continual course of conduct which makes the student ungovernable or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of the school.
 - c. Knowingly and unlawfully possesses marijuana in violation of Penal Law § 221.05. A single violation of § 221.05 will be a sufficient basis for filing a PINS petition.
3. The Superintendent is required to refer the following students to the County Attorney for a juvenile delinquency proceeding before the Family Court:
 - a. Any student under the age of 16 who is found to have brought a weapon to school, or
 - b. Any student 14 or 15 years old who qualifies for juvenile offender status under the Criminal Procedure Law § 1.20 (42).
4. The Superintendent is required to refer students age 16 and older or any student 14 or 15 years old who qualifies for juvenile offender status to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

The Board encourages parents and district residents to visit the school and classrooms to observe the work of students, teachers and other staff. Certain limits are set for such visits. The Principal or his or her designee is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds. 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 Front Desk/ Attendance Office upon arrival at the school. There they will be required to sign the visitor's register and present photo identification. A visitor's identification badge will be issued which must be worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds. The visitor must return the identification badge to the Front Desk/ Attendance Office before leaving the building.
3. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as concerts, athletic events, parent-teacher organization meetings, or other designated public gatherings are not required to register as determined by the administration.
4. Parents who wish to observe a classroom while school is in session are required to arrange such visits in advance with the Principal or his or her designee, in consultation with the classroom teacher, 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 as determined by the administration or designee.
7. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in this code of conduct.

PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The district is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner, and are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property. No person 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 program.
5. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of actual or perceived race, creed, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex, Sexual orientation, or gender (including gender identity and expression).

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6. Enter the school premises without authorization or remain in the building or school 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 of 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
11. law enforcement officers or except as specifically authorized by the school district.
12. Loiter on or about school property.
13. Gamble on school property or at school functions.
14. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
15. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code.
16. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or Board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

Persons who violate this code shall be subject to the following penalties:

1. *Visitors.* Their authorization, if any, to remain on school grounds or at the school function shall be withdrawn and they shall be directed to leave the premises. If they refuse to leave, they shall be subject to ejection.
2. *Students.* They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant, in accordance with the due process requirements. Tenured faculty members. They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Education Law § 3020-a or any other legal rights that they may have.
3. *Staff members* in the classified service of the civil service entitled to the protection of Civil Service Law § 75. They shall be subject to immediate ejection and to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Civil Service Law § 75 or any other legal rights that they may have.
4. *Staff members* other than those described in subdivisions 3 and 4. They shall be subject to warning, reprimand, suspension or dismissal as the facts may warrant in accordance with any legal rights they may have.

The Principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for enforcing the conduct required by this code.