

THE CODE OF

# Student Conduct

UPDATED FOR 2015–16

Supporting a **Safe** and  
**Welcoming** Environment



Pittsburgh  
Public Schools

EXCELLENCE  
FOR ALL

*The Pathway to the Promise.™*

# CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The School District of Pittsburgh is committed to providing every student with the opportunity to attend school in an environment that is safe, respectful, free of violence and drugs and conducive to learning and community building. This goal is of the highest priority because excellence in education cannot be achieved unless schools and classrooms are welcoming, safe and orderly. The Code of Student Conduct was developed so that all students, staff and parents of the District fully understand the expectations for student behavior and are aware of supports available while in attendance in our schools, while attending school sponsored activities or while riding on transportation systems serving our school district.

We entrust the safety of each of our children to the principals of our schools. We support principals' efforts to maintain safe and caring learning environments, where students and staff can interact free of disruption and unnecessary distractions. The Code of Student Conduct is applicable in all situations where principals and school staffs have jurisdiction over students—while they are in our schools, on the way to or from our schools, on our school buses, on our school premises and at all of our school-sponsored events.

The relationship between academic achievement and the social/emotional growth of our students is tightly connected. It is critical that each of our schools develop a safe, orderly and welcoming school plan that ensures not only the safety of each of our students but promotes a safe and orderly academic classroom environment so that we maximize learning for all students. The district is committed to having each of our schools invest in school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports that all teachers, staff, students and parents embrace. This plan will then encompass the Code of Student Conduct as well as other positive behavior strategies and management techniques that are unique to the individual culture of the school.

The responsibility to create and maintain a safe school environment rests with the principal in collaboration with staff, students, parents, and the school community. Effective schools have established practices and routines that teach and reinforce appropriate school and classroom behavior, while maximizing learning time and minimizing exclusions from the classroom. These practices and routines are part of each school's

safety plan, and we anticipate that they will be fully supported by all members of the school community. The school safety plan represents a proactive approach to safe school development that encourages student self-discipline and in-school interventions, thereby minimizing the use of exclusionary interventions for violations of the Code of Student Conduct.

Like academic growth, growth in social skills is expected of all our students. When a student's alleged behavior falls short of expectations, it must be identified and addressed with evidence-based practices if all students are to obtain maximum benefit from our educational offerings. The School District of Pittsburgh is prepared to assist these students in the student's and parent's preferred language and mode of communication to provide a fair and consistent discipline program designed to address undesired behavior and reinforce positive behavior while ensuring the rights of all. We expect all students, staff and parents to fully comply with the regulations and procedures contained in this Code, so that our schools will be free of any activity that threatens the health, safety or welfare of the school community.

Good attendance is another important behavior that contributes to learning and ultimately success at work. We understand the importance of regular student attendance at school. Therefore, whenever appropriate, we will exercise a variety of in-school disciplinary interventions to correct student misbehavior and resolve conflict, in lieu of exclusion from school.

We understand that some misconduct is of such a serious nature that a student must be removed from the school in order to preserve the safety and order of the school and the well-being of the student and others. When exclusion from school for an extended period of time is necessary, we will afford students and parents other educational and support options outside of the mainstream that work towards a plan for the student to reintegrate back into the school community with appropriate supports.

For copies in languages other than English, please contact the English as a Second Language (ESL) Department at 412-622-3516.

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# Code of Student Conduct PART I

## Section I: Definitions, Rules and Infractions

## Section II: Procedures for Dealing with Student Misconduct

Supporting a Safe and  
Welcoming Environment

# Part One – Section One: Definitions, Rules and Infractions

## DEFINITIONS

1. **PARENT:** When used in these procedures, the term “parent” shall include every parent, guardian or person in parental relation, having control or charge of any child or children in attendance at a school in the School District of Pittsburgh. Parent should also include a court appointed educational decision maker or surrogate parent under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
2. **ADMINISTRATOR:** When used in these procedures, the term “administrator” shall refer to the principal, assistant principal, administrative practitioner, responsible teacher or any other person to whom the principal may legally delegate his/her authority.
3. **DESIGNEE:** When used in these procedures, the term “designee” shall refer to any administrator who has been designated to act on behalf of the Superintendent in matters of student discipline.
4. **STUDENT:** When used in these procedures, the term “student” shall refer to any person enrolled in any of the district’s programs, whether in comprehensive elementary, middle, secondary, magnet or vocational schools, or in the alternative education schools or programs that have been established to serve children of school age.
5. **HEARING OFFICER:** When used in these procedures, the term “hearing officer” shall refer to any board member or contractor authorized by the Board of School Directors to hear cases involving violations of the Code of Student Conduct.
6. **STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES:** One who is “eligible” or “thought to be eligible” as a student with disabilities under the IDEA or Section 504.
7. **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS:** Students who are active learners of the English Language and benefit from various types of language support programs.
8. **ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PLACEMENTS:** Alternative Education Placement: A program where persistently disruptive 6th- through 12th-graders are temporarily removed from their regular school environment and placed in an alternative program that provides a sound educational course of study. Each student in the Alternative Education Placement will have an Educational Support Plan (ESP)

that addresses how the student will make normal academic progress toward graduation in their home school, identify behavioral supports and counseling the student will receive aimed at modifying the disruptive behavior, and define the criteria for determining that the student is ready for a successful return to the regular school program.

## GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. **SEARCH OF SCHOOL PROPERTY:** All school property, such as lockers, desks, etc., assigned to students is the property of the Pittsburgh Public Schools. The student is given a temporary privilege to use the property and this privilege may be revoked at any time. School property should not be used to store materials, objects, etc. that are in violation of this Code, school rules, or any statutes or ordinances. The school administrator may authorize school personnel to search school property temporarily assigned to students. Prior to a search of said property, the students involved shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. However, where school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the property contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare or safety of students in the school, it may be searched without prior warning. Students shall have no expectation of privacy as to lockers, desks, or other school property temporarily assigned for personal use. School personnel may remove from lockers or desks any articles that are prohibited at school or could be used to interfere with or disrupt the educational process.
2. **SEARCH OF STUDENT’S PERSON:** The school shall not conduct unreasonable searches and seizures of students. No student may conceal on his/her person or in a purse, handbag, book bag etc., any weapon, narcotic, dangerous drug, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, pagers or any other substance or object that is in violation of this Code, local statutes, ordinances or school rules. If the building administrator has reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of an item that constitutes a violation of the Criminal Code or the School Code, he or she may authorize a search of the student’s person. The search must be conducted by a District employee of the same gender as the student and in the presence of at least one other District employee. All searches and pat downs that do take place at school should happen (unless emergency situations make it impossible) outside the view of other youth and school staff.
3. **SCHOOL VISITATIONS:** All visitors, whether students or non-students, must register in the school office and state the purpose of the visit. The principal has the prerogative to approve, disapprove or reschedule the visit for a more appropriate time. All visitors or other persons on school premises must identify themselves when requested by school personnel. This includes school-sponsored activities and events. If the person does

not properly identify himself/herself, or his/her purpose, the person is trespassing, and the appropriate legal action will be taken. Any person whose actions or language threatens the health, safety, or welfare of students or staff may be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law and may be barred from visiting a school or attending a school sponsored event.

4. **SCHOOL SMOKING & TOBACCO CONTROL:** The School District prohibits the use of tobacco and smoking by persons in school buildings, school buses, and on school property owned, leased or under the control of a school district. This prohibition includes the use of electronic smoking devices. Students may be referred to the appropriate tobacco cessation services within the community. The use of tobacco products is further prohibited by law and students may be prosecuted for violations.
5. **USE OF REASONABLE FORCE:** Corporal punishment of any sort is absolutely prohibited. Reasonable force may only be used by administrators and staff:
  - to quell a disturbance.
  - to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects.
  - for the purpose of self-defense.
  - for the protection of persons or property.
6. **MANDATED REPORTING:** The School District is required by the Child Protective Services Law to report all cases of suspected child abuse to the Office of Children, Youth and Families (CYF) including all cases of student-on-student child abuse that occur on school grounds, at school sponsored events and during travel to and from school. The mandatory report made to CYF is in addition to any school discipline and/or charges filed with the local magistrate.

## BUS AND BUS STOP RULES

- All school rules, including school discipline procedures and protections, apply when students are on the bus and at the bus stop. See Section One, Part Two for additional information.
- Violations that occur involving the school bus and/or incidents that occur while students are on the way to school (bus stop/neighborhood) or returning from school (bus stop/neighborhood) may result in disciplinary action.
- Students are expected to observe the following rules for safety and courtesy:

### At the Bus Stop

- Arrive at the assigned stop ten (10) minutes before bus pickup.
- Stand on the sidewalk or the edge of the street by the curb.
- Stay off private property.

- Do not stand on the traveled part of the road.
- Be respectful and watchful of traffic.
- Wait in a quiet and orderly manner.

### When the Bus Arrives

- Allow the bus to come to a complete stop.
- Board the bus in a quiet and orderly manner.

### On the Bus

- Obey the bus driver and exhibit orderly conduct.
- Be courteous and respectful of people and property.
- Remain seated at all times.
- Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Use of profane language, eating, drinking, smoking, throwing objects, unsafe objects or weapons and vandalism may result in disciplinary action. Criminal conduct may be referred to law enforcement.

### Leaving the Bus

- Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Leave the bus in an orderly manner.
- Leave at your assigned bus stop.
- Cross in front of the bus.
- Leave the bus stop in an orderly manner.

## RULES OF STUDENT CONDUCT

1. **DISRUPTION OF SCHOOL:** A student shall not act or behave in a way that disrupts the orderly conduct of the school or learning environment; or that poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others; or that causes annoyance, alarm, or inconvenience. Disruption of school violations alone will not result in the filing of Disorderly Conduct charges unless the offense also meets the definition of Disorderly Conduct as set forth in this Code.
2. **DAMAGE, DESTRUCTION OR THEFT OF SCHOOL PROPERTY:** A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause damage to school property, or steal or attempt to steal school property.
3. **DAMAGE, DESTRUCTION OR THEFT OF PRIVATE PROPERTY:** A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause substantial damage to private property, or steal or attempt to steal private property. Valuable private property should not be brought to school. The District assumes no responsibility for the loss or theft of such property.
4. **ASSAULT ON A SCHOOL EMPLOYEE:** A student shall not assault a school employee, which may include (1) attempting to cause

or intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causing bodily injury to another; (2) negligently causing bodily injury to another with a deadly weapon; or (3) attempting by physical menace to put another in fear of imminent serious bodily injury. Assault on a school employee may result in a criminal conviction for aggravated assault.

**5. ASSAULT ON A STUDENT OR OTHER PERSON NOT EMPLOYED BY THE SCHOOL:**

A student shall not assault any person, which may include (1) attempting to cause or intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causing bodily injury to another; (2) negligently causing bodily injury to another with a deadly weapon; or (3) attempting by physical menace to put another in fear of imminent serious bodily injury. Other physical conduct that does not meet the definition of assault may fall under the prohibition against fighting, bullying, harassment, and/or disorderly conduct.

**6. WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS:**

A student shall not possess, handle or transmit a weapon while on any school property, while at any school-sponsored or approved activity or while walking or being transported in any manner to or from a school or school-sponsored or approved activity.

- The term “weapon,” as used in this Code of Student Conduct shall include but shall not be limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, explosive, mace, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. An eligible student under the IDEA may only be moved to an interim alternative education placement for possession or use of a knife with a blade that is 2.5 inches or longer in length. A knife blade less than 2.5 inches does not meet the definition of a dangerous weapon under the IDEA.
- The term “firearm” means any weapon (including but not limited to a starter gun) that is designed to or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive. This Rule also includes the frame or receiver of any such weapon, firearm muffler, firearm silencer or any destructive device (as defined in 18 U.S.C. §921 {a}, {4}).
- A student found to be in violation of this rule following a formal hearing shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year.

The Superintendent of the School District or designee may recommend discipline short of expulsion on a case-by-case basis (24 P.S. § 13-1317.2). The Superintendent must consider information provided by the student or parent prior to making a recommendation. In the case of a student with disabilities, the Superintendent shall take all steps necessary to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, (20 U.S.C. §1400).

- 7. DRUGS INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ALCOHOL, AMPHETAMINES, BARBITURATES, ANY FORM OF COCAINE, HALLUCINOGENS, DESIGNER DRUGS, MARIJUANA AND NARCOTICS:** A student shall not possess, use, distribute, or be under the influence of any intoxicant of any kind. This is a drug free School District; any amount of an illegal drug is unacceptable. The possession of drug-related paraphernalia (ex: rolling papers, roach clips, hemostats, pipes or parts of pipes, and other homemade devices) also constitutes a violation of this rule. Use of a drug as authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician for the student for whom it is prescribed shall not be considered a violation of this rule, but may be a violation of the Use of Medications policy. Failure to comply with the Use of Medications policy may also result in school discipline. A student in grades 6-12 found to be in violation of this rule may be placed in an Alternative Education program or may be expelled. See section on Alternative Education Placement.

\*Please note in accordance with IDEA, alcohol is not considered a drug that permits the unilateral removal of an eligible student under the IDEA to an interim alternative education placement.

- 8. Disorderly Conduct:** A student shall not, with intent to cause public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm, or recklessly creating a risk thereof:

- (1) engage in fighting or threatening, or in violent or tumultuous behavior;
- (2) make unreasonable noise;
- (3) use obscene language, or make an obscene gesture; or
- (4) create a hazardous or physically offensive condition by any act which serves no legitimate purpose.

Violation of this rule, including fighting, may result in Disorderly Conduct charges being filed with the local magistrate.

**9. UNAUTHORIZED PRESENCE OF STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

- A. On School Grounds: A student shall not be on any portion of the school grounds where his/her presence is unauthorized, nor remain after having been either ordered or requested to leave by any school employee possessing apparent authority over student conduct. A student should not be:
1. on the school grounds where the student is regularly enrolled, during any period of suspension which includes exclusion from the school of regular enrollment where such order of exclusion has been in fact made known to the student prior to the incident of unauthorized appearance.

2. on the school grounds of any school or site of required school programming other than that student's school of regular enrollment or attendance, at any time other than when a school activity, function, or event is being held and the student's presence is either required or permitted, based on predetermination by the principal of the school at which the activity is being held.
  3. presence on the school grounds while in the company of a parent or guardian for the purpose of meeting with a school employee to discuss the student's status, or presence on the school grounds for the purpose of proceeding directly to the school office with prior permission of the principal shall not be considered a violation of this rule.
- B. On Private Or Public Property: During school hours students must be in school unless they have an approved reason for absence. Students who are illegally absent from school may be charged with truancy.
- 10. SMOKING & TOBACCO USE:** A student shall not use tobacco or any electronic smoking device in school buildings, school buses, or on any property owned by, leased by or under the control of the Board of Public Education. This property includes, but is not limited to, sidewalks contiguous to school property, parking lots, athletic fields, courtyards and other campus grounds.
- 11. POSSESSION OF PAGERS, LASERS, RADIOS, CD'S AND CERTAIN ELECTRONIC OR TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES. STUDENTS MAY POSSESS CELL PHONES, HOWEVER, THEY MAY NOT BE VISIBLE OR TURNED ON.** A student shall not possess any paging device, commonly referred to as a beeper, radio, CD, laser pointer or related electronic equipment or other telecommunication device on school grounds, at school sponsored activities, or on buses or other vehicles provided by the School District. Students shall not have cell phones turned on in school buildings or on school grounds during school hours. Cell phones are not permitted to be visible. Students found to be in violation of this rule may be subject to disciplinary action and confiscation of the device. School authorities may approve the presence of a beeper for a student only under the following circumstances:
- A. The student is a member of a volunteer fire company, ambulance or rescue squad.
  - B. The student has a need for the presence of a beeper due to the medical condition of an immediate family member.
- 12. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** A student shall not engage in, participate in, nor knowingly provide another student with the opportunity to

engage in academic dishonesty related to examinations, as well as laboratory, homework and other projects and assignments, whether done during or outside of school hours. Academic dishonesty shall include, but not be limited to, all forms of cheating, plagiarism, pre-exam access to test forms, representing someone else's work as their own, and the unauthorized use of aids during examinations, projects and assignments. Unauthorized aids include but are not limited to electronic/telecommunication devices.

- 13. HARASSMENT:** No student shall engage in harassment on the basis of known or perceived gender, age, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity expression, national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, or political belief. A student shall not engage in any act that violates the District's Harassment Policy, including but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. For more information or for a copy of the District policy prohibiting harassment, please visit the District's website at [www.pps.k12.pa.us](http://www.pps.k12.pa.us) or contact your building principal. Complaints may be filed with the District's Title IX/Section 504 Compliance Officer, Dr. Dara Ware Allen, Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services at 412-622-3950. For copies of the policy prohibiting harassment in languages other than English, please contact the English as a Second Language (ESL) Department at 412-622-3516.
- 14. MISUSE OF COMPUTERS/COMPUTER NETWORKS:** A student shall not engage in any act that violates the District's Network Usage and Safety Policy, any individual school computer use guidelines or laptop computer program guidelines, including, but not limited to the following:
- Non-school-related work**
- A. Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and offensive and inflammatory communications
  - B. Accessing obscene or pornographic materials
  - C. Loading or use of unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media
  - D. Destruction, modification or abuse of network hardware, software, or information
  - E. Impersonation of another user, anonymity and pseudonyms
  - F. Creation of links to other networks whose content or purpose would tend to violate the District's Internet/Computer Use Policy
  - G. Transmission of sexually suggestive language or images.
- 15. UNDESIRABLE GROUP ACTIVITY:** Disruption and/or intimidation caused by the following:
- A. The wearing of any type of clothing or jewelry associated with undesirable groups

- B. The use of undesirable group language or the writing or gesturing of any sign or symbol identified or associated with undesirable groups
- C. Confrontations identified or associated with undesirable groups or their activities
- D. Hazing

**16. FIGHTING:** A student shall not engage in physical violence, aggressiveness or confrontation to settle disputes or resolve conflicts. Students experiencing disputes or conflict should contact the school counselor or social worker to learn about services available, including peer mediation and school counseling, to help resolve conflict and work through disputes.

**17. BULLYING:** The Board prohibits all forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying by students. Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the intent or effect of:

1. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's education; or
2. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student ; or
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm; or
4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property

Bullying includes cyber-bullying and/or bullying on social networking websites and may include acts that occur outside of school if certain criteria are met. The complete bullying policy, complaint and investigation procedures are posted on the District website at [www.pps.k12.pa.us/Page/481](http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/Page/481), and in every building and classroom. For copies of the bullying policy and procedures in languages other than English, please contact the English as a Second Language (ESL) Department at 412-622-3516.

## INFRACTIONS

Infractions are divided into two categories: Level 1 for minor infractions and Level 2 for more serious infractions.

**1. LEVEL 1 INFRACTIONS** are those of a less serious nature that do not necessarily pose a threat to the health, safety or property of any person. Staff persons must use appropriate forms of discipline intervention to correct misbehavior manifested in less serious infractions. Staff persons shall keep a record of discipline interventions and share this documentation at the request of a student, parent or administrator. In most cases of Level 1 infractions, students may not necessarily be referred to an administrator. If Level

1 behaviors are repetitive after appropriate discipline interventions have been made, the student should then be referred to an administrator. Students will not be excluded from school for a Level 1 infraction unless there are repeated infractions and evidence of prior interventions.

## 2. EXAMPLES OF LEVEL 1 INFRACTIONS

- Tardiness to school and class
- Truancy and class cuts
- Inappropriate personal property (i.e. electronics, food in class, clothing, etc.)
- Pestering, teasing or bothering other students
- Inappropriate language or gestures
- Minor disruption of school/bus
- Refusal to comply with posted and published school norms and regulations

## 3. EXAMPLES OF GUIDANCE INTERVENTIONS / CONTINUUM OF APPROACHES

- Student/Teacher conversation
- Phone or written notification to parent/family
- Parent/Teacher conversation
- Intervention by counseling staff
- Written reflection assignment
- Guidance conference(s)
- Individual/Group counseling
- Referral to Student Assistance Program (SAP) for prevention (e.g. social skills group) or intervention (e.g. behavioral health counseling) services
- Referral to mentoring program
- Referral to District-approved Community-Based Organization (CBO)
- Community service (with parent consent)
- Positive behavioral support contract

## 4. EXAMPLES OF RECOMMENDED DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS IN ADDITION TO GUIDANCE INTERVENTIONS USED

- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Suspension of field trips, assemblies, or other special privileges

**5. LEVEL 2 INFRACTIONS** are those of a serious nature that may pose a threat to the health, safety or property of any person. Level 2 infractions include those listed in Section I of this document and any violation of local, state or federal laws, statutes or ordinances or District policies. Staff persons must notify an administrator when a level 2 infraction occurs. The notification should normally take the

form of a discipline referral or statement describing the incident. The administrator must complete an investigation of the incident and gather written statements from all witnesses. The administrator must notify the student and parent of all charges, consequences and applicable due process rights during the disciplinary process.

#### 6. EXAMPLES OF LEVEL 2 INFRACTIONS

- Academic dishonesty
- Violation of IT network usage and safety
- Repeated disrespect/defiance
- Unauthorized presence in classrooms or on school grounds
- Unauthorized presence on public or private property
- Major or repeated disruption of school/ bus
- Damage, destruction or theft of property
- Terroristic threats or conspiracies to commit violent acts
- Fighting
- Inciting a disturbance or melee
- Bullying
- Racial, ethnic, gender, or ability harassment or intimidation
- Sexual harassment
- Assault on any person
- Sexual assault
- Arson
- Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, electronic smoking devices or drugs
- Possession or use of a weapon

#### 7. EXAMPLES OF GUIDANCE INTERVENTIONS/ CONTINUUM OF APPROACHES

- Student/Teacher conference
- Parent/Teacher conference
- Intervention by counseling staff
- Written reflection assignment
- Guidance conference(s)
- Individual/Group counseling
- Referral to Student Assistance Program (SAP) for prevention (e.g. social skills group) and/or intervention (e.g. behavioral health counseling) services
- Referral to mentoring program
- Referral to District-approved Community-Based Organization (CBO)
- Community service (with parent consent)
- Positive behavioral support contract

#### 8. EXAMPLES OF RECOMMENDED DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS IN ADDITION TO GUIDANCE INTERVENTIONS USED

- Detention
- In-school suspension\*
- Suspension of field trips, assemblies, or other special privileges
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities
- Suspension of transportation privileges
- Exclusion from special events or promotion exercises
- Referral to ChildLine (Mandatory reporting of Child Abuse)
- Referral for criminal prosecution (for serious assaults, drugs, and other serious offenses)
- Short-term out-of-school suspension (1-10 days)
- Alternative education placement
- Long-term out-of-school suspension/ expulsion (11 or more days; Permanent)

### EASY REFERENCE GUIDES FOR BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Level 1 INFRACTIONS are those of a less serious nature that do not necessarily pose a threat to the health, safety or property of any person. Staff persons must use appropriate forms of intervention to correct misbehavior in less serious infractions. It is advisable for staff persons to keep a record of interventions and share this documentation at the request of a student, parent or administrator.

In most cases of Level 1 infractions, students may not necessarily be referred to an administrator. If Level 1 behaviors are repetitive after appropriate interventions have been made, the student should then be referred to an administrator. Please refer to the chart on the next page for a range of interventions and disciplinary actions.

**Note:** *These examples of infractions and disciplinary actions are not all inclusive. The District maintains the right to pursue any necessary disciplinary action to maintain the safety of its staff and students.*

Misconduct	Guidance of Interventions/ Approaches	Recommended Disciplinary Actions
Tardiness to school and class	Student/Teacher conversation	Detention
Truancy and cutting class	Parent/Teacher conversation	In-school suspension
Inappropriate personal property (i.e. electronics, food in class, clothing, etc.)	Phone or written notification to parent/ family  Intervention by counseling staff	Suspension of field trips, assemblies, or other special privileges
Pestering, teasing, or bothering other students	Written reflection assignment	
Inappropriate language or gestures	Guidance conference(s)	
Minor disruption of school/bus	Individual/Group counseling	
Refusal to comply with posted and published school norms and regulations	Referral to Student Assistance Program (SAP) for prevention or intervention services  Referral to mentoring program  Referral to a District-approved community-based organization (CBO)  Community service (with parent consent)  Positive behavioral management support contract	

### EASY REFERENCE GUIDES FOR BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Level 2 INFRACTIONS are those of a serious nature that may pose a threat to the health, safety or property of any person. Level 2 infractions include those listed in Section I of this document and any violation of local, state or federal laws, statutes or ordinances.

Staff persons must notify an administrator when a Level 2 infraction occurs. The notification should normally take the form of a discipline referral or statement describing the incident. The administrator must complete an investigation of the incident and gather written statements from all witnesses. The administrator must notify the student and parent of all applicable charges, consequences and due process rights during the disciplinary process.

Please refer to the chart on the next page to determine to appropriate range of interventions and disciplinary actions.

**Note:** For students returning from suspensions or alternative education placements, schools are expected to provide support services that maximize a student's ability to meet social and academic standards within the school community. Support services may include any of the range guidance interventions or a combination of services as best meets a student's individual needs.

Misconduct	Guidance of Interventions/ Approaches	Recommended Disciplinary Actions
Academic dishonesty	Student/Teacher conference	Detention
Violation of IT network usage and safety	Parent/Teacher conference	In-school suspension*
Repeated show of disrespect and defiance	Intervention by counseling staff	Suspension of field trips, assemblies, or other special privileges
Unauthorized presence in classroom and school grounds	Written reflection assignment	Exclusion from extracurricular activities
Unauthorized presence on public or private property	Guidance conference(s)	Suspension of transportation privileges
Major or repeated disruption of school/ bus	Individual/Group counseling	Exclusion from special events or promotion exercises
Damage, destruction or theft of property	Social skills group	Referral to ChildLine (Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse)
Terroristic threats or conspiracies to commit violent acts	Referral to Student Assistance Program (SAP) for prevention or intervention services	Referral for criminal prosecution
Fighting	Referral to mentoring program	Short-term out-of-school suspension*
Inciting a disturbance or melee	Referral to a District-approved community-based organization (CBO)	Alternative education placement
Bullying	Community service (with parent consent)	Long-term out-of-school suspension/ expulsion
Racial/ethnic/gender/ability harassment	Positive behavioral support contract	
Sexual harassment		
Assault on any person		
Sexual assault		
Arson		
Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, electronic smoking devices or any other drugs		
Possession or use of a weapon		
Repeated Level I or II Infractions		

\*Discipline applied should be progressive. For example, unless an egregious or serious offense, a student shouldn't receive the maximum of suspension days for a first-time offense.

## Part One – Section Two: Procedures for Dealing with Student Misconduct

### A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Coverage
  - a. Alleged misconduct shall be dealt with by the principal whenever:
    - a teacher considers a problem of classroom discipline to be so serious as to warrant the principal's attention.
    - the alleged misconduct constitutes a violation of the rules that govern serious misconduct.
    - the principal deems it advisable that he/she deals personally with the misconduct.
2. Principal's Investigation
  - a. In dealing with alleged misconduct, the principal shall investigate the incident and hear all available accounts of it. The student shall be afforded the opportunity to raise any defense he/she thinks is relevant, and shall be permitted, at his/her option, to submit a written statement of the facts relating to the alleged misconduct. If the student requests that other witnesses be questioned, the principal should talk to them if possible. If the student makes a reasonable claim of other defensive matter, that if true, would free him/her from blame but is not immediately available, the principal may postpone disciplinary action for a reasonable time until such evidence may be presented to him/her provided that the orderly functioning of the school is not adversely affected.
  - b. No student shall be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety, or welfare of the school community is threatened.
  - c. Progressive discipline such as in-school interventions ranging from positive behavior supports, peer mediation, behavioral contracts, referrals to the Student Assistance Program, and other interventions shall be exhausted when appropriate before imposing a suspension or expulsion. See Rules of Student Conduct, Behavior Management Interventions.
  - d. School work must be provided to students when discipline results in the student's removal from the classroom. If a student is suspended from school, the student has the

right to access and complete regular academic work during suspension without penalty.

- e. All suspensions must be documented. There is no such thing as an informal suspension (i.e. sending a student home early).
- f. Students with disabilities have all of the substantive and procedural rights discussed in this code. In addition, federal laws including the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, provide these students with additional substantive rights and procedural protections.
- g. All English Language Learners are entitled to notices and communications in his or her preferred language and mode of communication. Principals may contact the English as a Second Language (ESL) Department for assistance and language resources.

### B. PRINCIPAL'S AUTHORITY TO SUSPEND STUDENTS

1. If the principal investigates a student's alleged misconduct and decides to take disciplinary action, he/she must investigate and take action on all alleged misconduct known to him/her at that time.
2. When a principal has sufficient evidence that a student's misconduct warrants a suspension, the following options may be recommended depending on the severity of the infraction:
  - a. In-School Suspension
  - b. Short-Term Suspension
  - c. Alternative Education Placement
  - d. Expulsion

### C. IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS

1. Parents must be notified of all in-school suspensions.
2. The parent of any student who receives an in-school suspension, which exceeds five (5) consecutive school days, shall be offered a conference with the principal. In-school suspensions exceeding 5 days will trigger a team meeting for students with disabilities.
3. In-school suspensions shall not exceed ten (10) consecutive school days or fifteen (15) school days in total for any individual student without the approval of the Superintendent's or his/her designee. This will be subject to the same review as a long-term suspension.

**D. SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS**

1. Out-of-School Suspensions up to three (3) school days:
  - a. For suspensions up to three (3) school days, the principal may act only after investigating the misconduct and only for the following reasons:
    - A violation of the Rules of Student Conduct
    - Misconduct of the same type as that prohibited by the Rules of Student Conduct, but which does not rise to the gravity of the misconduct stated in these rules, or
    - Repeated misconduct of an individually less severe nature that has created a substantial disruption of the educational process within the school
  - b. Parents must be notified regarding the suspension.
  - c. All out of school suspensions must be entered into the student misconduct system.
2. Suspensions shall be served on days when class is in regular session. Suspension shall not be served on school holidays or days that the school is closed for any reason, including, but not limited to inclement weather.

**E. OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS FOR 4 TO 10 DAYS**

1. If upon hearing and reviewing all available accounts of the alleged misconduct and after an informal hearing with the parents, the principal determines that a penalty in excess of a three (3) day suspension is appropriate, he/she shall refer the matter to the Office of Student Services and initiate the procedure for obtaining a review and determination consistent with the provisions of the Code. The Office of Student Services will review the information including the evidence, student grades and attendance, discipline record and behavior management interventions attempted by the school. A determination will then be made of the best discipline option for the student. The principal must provide this information to the Office of Student Services no later than the third day of suspension. A formal case review, including review of the student's full education record, will be scheduled following an informal hearing upon request of the parent/guardian.  
The Office of Student Services will monitor all student suspension information to ensure that a variety of intervention strategies are utilized to facilitate positive student behavior.
2. Students in grades 6 – 12 placed on 4-10 day suspensions will be temporarily assigned to a Transition Center after the informal hearing, but no later than the 4th day of the suspension. Attendance at the Transition Center is mandatory. Students will be provided with academic support while in the Transition Center.

Students will complete academic assignments from their regular teachers while at the Center. Students will be marked absent from school when not in attendance at the Transition Center.

3. Suspensions shall be served on days when class is in regular session. Suspension shall not be served on school holidays or days that the school is closed for any reason, including, but not limited to inclement weather.

**F. ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PLACEMENTS**

When students in grades 6-12 are consistently demonstrating behavior that is disruptive to the learning environment, the principal can notify the Office of Student Services that a transfer to an Alternative Education Placement may be warranted.

The principal will prepare a document file for review by the Office of Student Services after an information hearing. The principal must document what other options for improving behavior have been exhausted before considering Alternative Education Placement. If the principal recommends Alternative Education Placement, there must be a transfer hearing before the student is transferred to the Alternative Education Placement, unless the hearing is waived in writing by the student's parent or guardian.

In order to refer the student in an Alternative Education Placement, the District must demonstrate in the course of the hearing that student is currently disruptive and demonstrating to a marked degree any of the following conditions:

1. disregard of school authority, including persistent violations of school policy and rules;
2. display or use of controlled substances on school property or during school activities;
3. violent or threatening behavior on school property or during school-affiliated activities;
4. possession of a weapon on school property, as defined under 18 Pa.C.S. §912;
5. commission of a criminal act on school property or during school-affiliated activities; and
6. misconduct that would merit suspension or expulsion under school policy.
7. habitual truancy

The following due process requirements shall be provided in regard to the informal hearing:

1. Written notification of the specific reasons for the recommendation of transfer shall be given to the parents or guardians and to the student.
2. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal and formal hearings shall be given.

3. A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
4. A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his or her own behalf.

If the student is found to be currently disruptive and upon hearing all relevant information from the student, parent and school officials, the student may be assigned to the appropriate Alternative Education Program.

An Educational Support Plan (ESP) will be developed for the student. The plan will address how the student will make normal academic progress toward graduation in their home school and identify behavioral supports and counseling the student will receive aimed at modifying the disruptive behavior that led to the placement. Students will be provided with necessary academic, counseling, positive behavior supports, and/or social and mental health services necessary to facilitate a successful return to the regular school program.

Each student temporarily transferred to an Alternative Education Placement will be assigned a review team that, at a minimum, will meet at the end of each semester to evaluate the student's academic and behavioral progress toward the goal of returning to the student's regular school environment.

When a student returns from a delinquency placement, the school district cannot automatically place a child in an Alternative Education Program merely because the child has been adjudicated delinquent. Each student must be examined on an individual basis, and as with any other student, the parent shall have the ability to request an informal hearing prior to being placed in an alternative education program to determine if the student currently meets the definition of a disruptive student.

No student eligible for special education pursuant to the IDEA shall be transferred to an Alternative Education Placement except in accordance to all federal and state law and regulations pertaining to discipline of students who are eligible for special education, including a manifestation determination. All students with disabilities will receive a free and appropriate public education while at the Alternative Education Placement and must be appropriately supported in making process toward the goals in his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Out-of-school suspensions, expulsions and transfers to Alternative Education Placements will not be used for isolated Level 1 infractions such as, class cuts, or dress code violations.

## G. LONG TERM OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS

All long term out-of-school suspensions and expulsions require a Formal Hearing with the procedures and protections outlined in Section H. Students suspended from school in excess of 10 days will attend an Alternative Education Placement for the duration of the suspension or expulsion. The District reserves the right to permanently expel a child in accordance with the law and Board Policy.

## H. PROCEDURES

1. **SUSPENSION PROCEDURES:** When a student is suspended, the principal shall:
  - a. Immediately inform the student of the reason for the suspension and provide the student with an opportunity to respond.
  - b. Attempt to contact the student's parent (s) to inform them of the child's conduct and the school's action. If the parent(s) cannot be immediately notified of the suspension, the principal will require the student to remain in the school, in suspended status, for the remainder of the school day.
  - c. Immediately remove the student to restore order, or to protect persons on the school grounds.
  - d. Provide written notice to his/her parent(s) fully describing the student's misconduct, stating the rule violation and stating the principal's reason for the action.
  - e. Make every effort to hold a parent conference with the parent(s) before or at the time the student returns to school.
  - f. Secure written statements when appropriate and keep on file all documents and relevant information received about the misconduct.
  - g. Schedule an informal hearing within five (5) days for out-of-school suspensions in excess of 3 days.
  - h. A copy of a completed suspension packet should be provided to the parent(s). The principal will document how and when the suspension packet is provided.
2. **LONG TERM OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES**
  - a. If after his/her investigation and informal hearing, the principal decides that a long term out-of-school suspension or an expulsion is warranted, a request for the suspension or expulsion shall be set forth in writing on the approved form and forwarded to the Office of Student Services within three (3) school days of the alleged misconduct.

- b. Prior to suspending or expelling any child who is in regular education for longer than ten (10) school days or transferring the student to an alternative education program, the School District shall perform a Behavior Performance Review to determine whether the student being disciplined should be referred for to an evaluation to determine whether the student is eligible for special education or accommodations pursuant to the IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The student shall remain in their regular school environment pending the results of the evaluation if the student was thought to be eligible under the IDEA or Section 504 prior to the behavior underlying the proposed discipline. Parents will be informed of the review and have access to the results as part of the suspension packet.
- c. Prior to excluding a student with disabilities for longer than ten (10) school days, suspending a student for more than fifteen (15) days throughout the year, or suspending a student with a disability for eleven (11) to fifteen (15) days throughout the year for the same type of misconduct, the School District must conduct a manifestation determination in accordance with law and regulation.
- d. A suspension or expulsion of a student with intellectual disabilities for any length of time is considered a change in placement and requires parental or hearing officer approval.

**3. NOTICE OF SUSPENSION: NOTICE OF SUSPENSION:**

Whenever the principal recommends a suspension for a period from four (4) days to ten (10) days, a long term suspension or an expulsion, written notice of the recommendation in the student's and parent's preferred language shall be sent to the student and his/her parent(s) immediately. The notice shall include:

- a. the rule violated and the alleged acts of the student that are in violation of the rule, including a summary of the evidence against him/her.
- b. a statement that the student has the right to an informal hearing within the first five (5) days of suspension and a tentative time and place for the informal hearing.
- c. notification that written statements about the misconduct, if any, and the student's academic and behavior records are available at the school for examination by the student, his/her parent(s), and his/her representative.
- d. a description of the hearing procedures approved by the School Board.
- e. a statement of action that the principal plans to recommend to the Superintendent's designee, and plans to apply if the

case review is waived.

- f. a statement that the student and his/her parent(s) have the right to present witnesses and be represented by legal counsel or some other adult at the hearing.
- g. a copy of a completed suspension packet should be included with the notice of suspension if available or shall be provided to the parents upon completion.

The Superintendent's designee shall examine the Notice of Suspension submitted by the principal and shall review both the facts set forth thereon and the action recommended by the principal. In those cases wherein the recommendation of the principal does not exceed an exclusion of ten (10) school days, the matter shall be treated as a Short Term Suspension.

In any case, where either (a) the recommendation of the principal includes an exclusion of more than ten (10) school days, or (b) the Superintendent's designee has substantial reason to believe the student should not be readmitted within ten (10) school days, the matter shall be treated as a long term suspension or expulsion and referred to the Discipline Office to be scheduled for a formal hearing consistent with all due process requirements.

- 4. SCHEDULING OF THE HEARING:** The Office of Student Services shall schedule all hearings involving temporary or permanent expulsions, as herein defined, to be held within ten (10) days after the first full day of suspension, provided that a hearing may be held at a later time if a request is made by either a student or his/her representative, the principal concurs therein, and good and sufficient cause is shown for the delay in accordance with the State Board of Education Regulations. Failure of a student and his/her parent(s) or representative to appear at any hearing for which adequate notice has been given will not operate to delay the hearing. The administration shall proceed with the hearing in the absence of the student or his/her representative.

In any case wherein a student has been excluded from school for ten (10) school days pending an expulsion, the student will be temporarily reinstated pending the Board hearing, if they do not pose a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others. In all other cases, they will be assigned to an appropriate Alternative Education program. In all cases of expulsion from school, written notice of the finding that the student constitutes a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others shall be provided to the student's parents within forty eight (48) hours of the informal hearing. The same written notice shall be provided to the student and parents following the formal expulsion hearing. In such cases the hearing examiner will provide such written notice

at the conclusion of the expulsion hearing. If such notice is not received, the student will be temporarily reinstated pending a final decision of the Board for all removals exceeding ten (10) days.

- 5. AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS:** In addition to being provided with a copy of the notice set forth above, the parent(s) or representative of the student involved shall have access to his/her previous behavior record and his/her academic record.

## 6. HEARINGS AND ATTENDANCE

- a. An informal hearing shall be conducted at the school no later than the fifth day of suspension in all cases involving exclusion from school of four (4) through ten (10) days. The student and parents will be afforded full due process rights during the informal hearing. Case reviews will be conducted following the informal hearing including:
- (1) Written notification of the specific reasons for the recommendation of suspension shall be given to the student and his/her parents or guardians.
  - (2) Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
  - (3) A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
  - (4) A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his or her own behalf. A full review of the student's education records will be conducted following the informal hearing when requested by parents.
- b. A formal hearing before one (1) or more School Directors of the Board of Public Education, or an independent hearing officer appointed by the Board, shall be held in all cases involving exclusion from school in excess of ten (10) school days.
- c. Informal and formal hearings may be attended by the appropriate School District personnel, the student, the parents, the student's representative and certain other persons where appropriate.
- d. Notice of decision will be issued in writing following both the informal and formal hearings.

## 7. CONDUCT OF THE HEARING

- a. Closed Hearing:** Witnesses, including teachers involved, should be present only when they are giving information. Conduct of all parties at any hearing shall be under the direct control of the hearing officer, who shall be the School Director, independent hearing office appointed by the Board, or the administrator conducting the hearing.

A minor student may be excluded at the discretion of the hearing officer with the concurrence of the student's parent(s), other representative when he/she acts in the place of the parent(s), at times when deemed appropriate by the parties.

- b. Student May Remain Silent:** The student may speak in his/her own defense and may be questioned on his/her testimony, but he/she may choose not to testify, and in such cases he/she shall not be threatened with punishment or later punished for refusal to testify.
- c. Records of the Hearing:** At the request of the parents or the student's representative, the hearing officer shall provide for making a record of any information orally presented at the hearing.
- d. Use of Witnesses:** The hearing shall consist of the oral examination of all witnesses that the hearing officer determines may provide information on the matters involved, as well as a review of school records when requested by any party.
- e. Adult Representation in Addition to Parent(s):** If the parent(s) cannot attend or if the student or his/her parent(s) think his/her interest can be protected better by the presence at the hearing of another adult in addition to his/her parent(s), the student may bring another adult to the hearing. The non-parent adult may act as a representative in the defense of the student, with the right to present witnesses, question any and all witnesses, make a statement on the nature of evidence and the proper disposition of the case, and otherwise assist the student; provided, however, that in all cases the student's right to confront his/her accusers and right to cross-examine all witnesses shall be preserved and protected (only one person shall be permitted to act as the representative. The representative shall be designated as such at the outset of the hearing).
- f. Evidence and Witnesses:** Determinations of the weight of all evidence, including but not limited to hearsay, and the credibility of witnesses are the responsibility of the hearing officer in all student discipline hearings.

## 8. DISPOSITION OF THE CASE

- a. Actions of the Superintendent:** Upon the recommendation of the Office of Student Services the Superintendent may confirm a suspension not to exceed ten (10) school days, and shall forthwith notify both the student and the parents in writing of the decision reached and the sanction imposed. A list of available positive behavior supports and services available to help mitigate future behavior will accompany a Notice of Suspension.

**b. Actions of the Hearing Officer:**

- (1) in all cases of long term suspension or expulsion, the Hearing Officer may dismiss some or all of the charges against the student at the conclusion of the formal hearing. If all of the charges are dismissed, the student shall immediately return to the school he/she attended prior to the exclusion from school;
- (2) in cases involving a student in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 5, the recommendation of the Hearing Officer will be to grant elementary clemency unless additional exclusion is warranted based on extenuating circumstances. If the recommendation is for elementary clemency, the student will be immediately returned to the school he/she attended prior to the exclusion from school;
- (3) in cases involving possession of mace or pepper spray by a student, which is carried for protection and not used or discharged, the recommendation of the Hearing Officer will be to grant clemency unless additional exclusion is warranted based on extenuating circumstances. If the recommendation is for clemency, the student will be immediately returned to the school he/she attended prior to the exclusion from school;
- (4) if the Hearing Officer does not dismiss all of the charges or grant clemency, s/he shall determine at the end of the formal hearing whether the student's presence in his/her normal classes would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others. The Hearing Officer shall give the student and parent immediate written notice of the threat determination at the conclusion of the formal hearing or within forty-eight (48) hours if the student and parent fail to appear for the formal hearing;
- (5) if the Hearing Officer concludes the student would not be a threat to other students, the student shall immediately return to his/her normal classes pending a final decision by the School Board. A student who has been found to constitute a threat to other students will not be permitted to return and will be provided an appropriate alternative education, pending a final decision of the School Board;
- (6) if the Hearing Officer shall mail its written decision and recommendation to the student and parents no later than the fourth day after the formal hearing.

**c. Actions of the Board of Public Education:** In all cases of long term suspension or expulsion, the action of the Board shall not be final until the report and recommendations of the Hearing Officer have been reviewed and approved by

a majority of the full membership of the Board. Both the student and the parents shall be immediately notified in writing of the final decision of the Board.

- d. Reinstatement Pending a Hearing:** Notwithstanding any other provision contained herein, any student who has been excluded for a period of ten (10) school days without being afforded an opportunity for a hearing will be automatically reinstated pending a hearing and proper disposition thereon, unless there has been a determination that student poses a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the school and the hearing has been delayed for reasons permitted by law. Any determination that a hearing cannot be convened within ten (10) school days of the notification of charges must be made by the Office of Student Services.
- f. Requirement for Due Process: All hearings, informal and formal, shall be held in accordance with 22 Pa. Code § 12.8.

**9. APPEAL:** A decision by the Board of Public Education to expel a student for a period of time in excess of ten (10) school days may be appealed to a court of law within thirty (30) days of the final decision of the Board.

**10. ROLE OF HEARING OFFICER:** Designees of the Board will conduct all expulsion hearings. Expulsion Hearing officers will determine if due process requirements were met and determine if sufficient evidence was presented for each rule violation cited. Their recommendations will be communicated promptly to the board office and considered by the Board at the monthly legislative meetings.

**11. APPLYING FOR EXPUNGEMENT:** A student who has been recommended for expulsion, but where the recommendation was dismissed may apply to the Superintendent or designee to have his or her records of proposed expulsion erased from the student's records, or expunged. Some cases where a student was recommended for expulsion but was granted clemency may also qualify for expungement. In these cases, a student must also apply to the Superintendent or his/her designee. Students who have been expelled after a formal hearing may also apply to have their discipline records expunged prior to transitioning to a new school or new grade configuration. Requests for expungement should be made in writing to the Office of Student Support Services.

**12. SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students eligible under the IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act cannot be suspended for more than

10 consecutive school days, 11-15 cumulative school days if the removals constitute a pattern, or 15 cumulative school days in one school year for conduct that is a manifestation of their disabilities. A student diagnosed with intellectual disabilities may not be suspended from school unless the Administrator has received written approval by the parent/guardian on the appropriate Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) form. If the misconduct includes possession of weapons or drugs, or the student inflicts serious bodily injury on another person, then a student, including a student with ID, may be removed for 45 school days regardless of whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability. Removals of more than 10 consecutive school days, 11-15 days if a pattern exists or more than 15 cumulative school days are subject to special rules and limitations. Any record of proposed discipline for disruptive behavior that is determined to be the manifestation of a student's disability should be removed from the student's discipline record. Specific questions regarding the discipline of students with disabilities should be directed to the Program for Students with Exceptionalities at 412.323.3950.

# **Code of Student Conduct**

# **PART II**

## **Section I: Shared Responsibilities and Student Rights**

## **Section II: Standards and Procedures for Attendance and Dress Code**

**Supporting a Safe and  
Welcoming Environment**

## Part Two – Section One: Shared Responsibilities and Student Rights

### SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

For our students to be successful, we must all work together. To be effective it is important for everyone to be on the same page and share a common vision. That's why we created the Pittsburgh Pledge.

The Pittsburgh Pledge is our commitment to one another. It recognizes that we each have an important role and responsibilities for preparing all children to achieve academic excellence and strength of character, so that they have the opportunity to succeed in all aspects of life.

#### The Pittsburgh Pledge

We know that education is the key to our future. All of us—students, teachers, administrators, families, community, board members and other civic leaders—will take an active role in helping all students.

#### We pledge to:

- Have high expectations,
- Work hard,
- Achieve academic excellence,
- Keep our schools safe and create a positive learning environment,
- Use good judgment to prevent minor incidents from becoming major problems,
- Set a positive example,
- Be respectful and considerate of one another,
- Support student expression.

**Together, we will hold ourselves accountable for achieving  
“Excellence for All.”**

Our specific responsibilities are listed on the following pages.

### STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

In American society, all citizens have certain rights that are closely associated with corresponding responsibilities. All students within the School District of Pittsburgh have the following responsibilities:

- to attend school regularly and to make a conscientious effort in the classroom.

- to help maintain a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.
- to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.
- to express ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.
- to be aware of and comply with all rules and regulations for student behavior. Students should assume that, until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed in writing, it is in effect.
- to volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
- to dress and groom to meet fair standards of safety, health and cleanliness and not to cause substantial disruption to the education processes.
- to assist the school staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled therein.
- to comply with Commonwealth and local laws.
- to exercise proper care when using public facilities and equipment.
- to be on time for all classes and other school functions.
- to make up work when absent from school.
- to pursue and attempt to complete satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by Commonwealth and local school authorities.
- to report information accurately and not use indecent or obscene language in student newspapers or publications.
- “To be committed to and make effort towards the completion of high school with the goal of being *Promise-Ready*”

### PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents should teach their children honesty and respect for the law and the property of others. When parents and schools work together as partners toward these obligations, each individual benefits. Every parent should:

- be familiar with the Code of Student Conduct and discuss its contents with their children.
- be familiar with the student handbook of the school where their children are in attendance and discuss its contents with their children.
- become familiar with the services available to students through the school, its partners and community agencies with whom the school collaborates.
- attend conferences related to their child's academic performance or behavior.
- request conferences with school personnel when questions or concerns arise regarding their child's academic performance, behavior, safety, or well-being.

- commit and make effort toward helping their children complete high school with the goal of being Promise-Ready.

### STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Each member of the school staff must understand and consistently enforce the Code of Student Conduct and all school rules and regulations. In efforts to enforce District and school rules and regulations, staff persons must respect the rights of students and parents. It is the responsibility of each staff member to utilize the various components of progressive discipline and involve students, parents and support staff in the process. Where appropriate each staff person must:

- work to create an inclusive learning environment and provide culturally competent interactions with students and parents.
- develop and implement procedures and routines to maintain school and classroom environments conducive to learning.
- review school and classroom rules and regulations with students regularly.
- notify parents and administrators when student misbehavior is persistent or of a serious nature.
- maintain composure when disciplining students and avoid verbal or physical confrontation.
- respond to disciplinary situations in the school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored events.
- commit and make effort towards helping PPS students complete high school with the goal of being *Promise-Ready*
- work to minimize lost class time and exclusionary discipline and provide opportunities to continue educational progress.
- treat students and parents in a respectful manner.

### ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The principal must develop and implement procedures and routines to ensure that the school maintains a safe and drug free environment. It is the principal's responsibility to make certain that the entire school environment is conducive to learning. The principal must also make sure that all students, staff, and parents are fully aware of school rules, procedures and routines for maintaining student discipline and decorum. Every principal must:

- consistently apply the Code of Conduct guaranteeing, clear standards and consequences for student behavior.
- develop and implement a school safety plan.
- provide a copy of school rules and procedures to all students, staff and parents and make available in student's and parent's preferred language and mode of communication.

- visit classrooms and other areas in and around the school regularly to monitor implementation of the safe school plan.
- respond to all serious cases of student misconduct and student misbehavior that persists after other appropriate measures of progressive discipline utilized by staff have been exhausted.
- establish a Discipline Committee and convene at least once each month to review available discipline data and discuss strengths and weaknesses of the school's disciplinary climate.
- ensure that parents and students are afforded the full rights of due process prior to suspensions or expulsions.
- ensure that various resources and positive behavior supports are available to correct academic and behavioral difficulties and that these resources are used when appropriate, prior to out of school suspensions.
- submit an annual report to the Office of Student Services specifying the various intervention strategies and corrective measures available at the school for students with academic or behavioral difficulties and make this report available to parents, students, and personnel.
- provide free translation and interpretation services.
- commit and make effort toward helping PPS students complete high school with the goal of being *Promise-Ready*.

### STUDENT RIGHTS

All students within the School District of Pittsburgh have the following rights:

- A. All persons between the ages of 6 and 21 years are entitled to a free and full education in the public schools. A student has the right to remain enrolled through the end of the school term in which he or she turns 21. A student under the age of 21 can enroll in school even if he or she already has a Graduation Equivalency Diploma ("GED"). A student's perceived citizenship or immigration status cannot be used to deny access to public education.
- B. Parents or guardians of all children under age 17 who are enrolled in school are required by the compulsory attendance law to insure that their children attend an approved educational institution, unless legally excused. Students that are age 6 within the jurisdiction of Pittsburgh Public Schools are required to enroll in school. Students who have not graduated may not be asked to leave school merely because they have reached 17 years of age if they are fulfilling their responsibilities as students. A student may not be excluded from public schools or from extracurricular activities because of being married, pregnant, or parenting.

- C. Students have the right to a positive and inclusive learning environment that feels safe, respectful and welcoming for all students.
- D. Students have the right to a socially, emotionally, and physically safe and positive school climate, with disciplinary procedures that are evidence-based, informed by youth development, positive behavior interventions, de-escalation techniques and restorative practices.
- E. Students have the right to participate in school disciplinary committee meetings (where available) to provide input on how disciplinary policies are working in practice.
- F. Students have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. No student shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, language, national origin, religion, disability or economic status.
- G. Students have the constitutional right to express themselves unless such expression materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens immediate harm to the welfare of the school or community, encourages unlawful activity, or interferes with another individual's rights. Students have the right to discuss issues that impact their education with school board members, district administration, and school administration.
- H. Students may use publications, such as handbills, announcements and other means of common communication, so long as the use of school facilities is approved by the authority in charge of those facilities, under the following conditions:
- Students have the responsibility to obey laws governing libel and obscenity and to be aware of the full meaning of their expression.
  - Students have the responsibility to be aware of the feelings and opinions of others and to give others a fair opportunity to express their views.
  - Identification of the individual student or at least one responsible person in a student group may be required on any posted or distributed material.
  - The school principal may require students to submit for prior approval a copy of all materials to be displayed, posted or distributed on school property.
- I. Students have the right to use designated bulletin boards; however, such right is subject to the following conditions:
- The school principal may restrict the use of certain bulletin boards.
  - Bulletin board space shall be provided for the use of students and student organizations.
  - The school principal may require that notices or other communications be officially dated before posting, and that such materials be removed after a prescribed reasonable time to assure full access to the bulletin boards.
- J. Students have the right to express themselves in an official school newspaper. School newspapers and publications shall conform to the following:
- Students have a right and are as free as editors of other newspapers to report the news and to editorialize within the provisions below.
  - School officials shall supervise student newspapers published with school equipment, remove obscene or libelous material and edit other material that would cause a substantial disruption or interference with school activities.
  - School officials may not censor or restrict material simply because it is critical of the school or its administration.
  - Prior approval procedures regarding copy for school newspapers shall identify the individual to whom the material is to be submitted and shall establish a limitation on the time required to make a decision. If the prescribed time for approval elapses without a decision, the material shall be considered authorized for distribution.
  - Students who are not members of the newspaper staff shall have access to its pages.
  - Written criteria for submission of material by non-staff members shall be developed and distributed to all students.
  - Students have the right to circulate petitions, conduct polls, set up information tables, organize clubs, and sponsor speakers and activities.
- K. The school principal may set forth the time and place of distribution of materials so that distribution does not materially or substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school.
- L. The constitutional right of freedom of speech guarantees the freedom of public school students to publish materials on their own; however,
- the school has no responsibility to assist students with, or to provide facilities for the publishing of such materials.

- the students themselves have sole responsibility for any statements published.
- approval procedures must be followed prior to distribution or display of materials on school property. Students have the right to equitable academic resources, including equitable access to accelerated classes and academic counseling.
- Students have the right to effective teachers, who are caring, supportive, and culturally competent.

M. It is the responsibility of every citizen to show proper respect to his/her country and its flag. Students may:

- decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and may refrain from saluting the flag on the basis of personal belief or religious convictions.
- choose to refrain from such participation but shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate.

N. Students have the right to decide upon the length or style of their hair, however, this right may be limited by the school principal:

- If the length or style of hair causes a disruption of the educational process or constitutes a health or safety hazard.
- If the length or style of the hair presents a problem, some type of covering may be required.

O. If attire or dress causes the disruption of the educational process or constitutes a health or safety hazard, limitations on dress may be imposed by the school principal. Otherwise, no limitations on dress may be imposed.

P. Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, shops, extracurricular activities, or other situations where special attire may be required to insure the health or safety of the student.

Q. A confidential communication made by a student to certain school personnel will not be revealed in legal proceedings under the law. However, information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parents, the principal or other appropriate authority where the health, welfare or safety of the student or other persons is clearly in jeopardy.

R. The school principal may search a student's locker and seize any illegal materials. Such materials may be used as evidence against the

student in disciplinary proceedings. Prior to a locker search, students shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. However, where the school principal has a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare and/or safety of students in the school, student lockers may be searched without prior warning. Nevertheless, students have the right not to be subjected to unreasonable searches or seizures.

## Part Two – Section Two: Standards and Procedures for Attendance and Dress Code

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This Policy and its associated guidelines are intended to promote regular school attendance and to facilitate the academic, social, emotional and physical development of students in the School District. The compulsory school attendance law of Pennsylvania requires every child of compulsory school age to be in school unless absent for an approved reason. Parents and/or guardians are charged with the responsibility for their child's/ children's school attendance. The School District realizes that it will be necessary for students to be absent on occasion when a student is prevented from attendance for certain reasons such as illness, health care and religious holidays. It has been proven, however, that students who attend school regularly achieve more than those who do not. Class attendance and participation are imperative for ensuring a school environment of engagement, academic achievement and necessary for the accomplishment of curriculum objectives. Therefore, it is the policy of the School District that all students be in attendance unless absent for an approved reason. It will be the responsibility of the School Principal or his/ her designee to implement these guidelines for the attendance policy of the School District and/or to review any exceptions.

### COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Compulsory school age refers to the period of a child's life from the time the child enters school, which may be no later than eight years of age, until the age of seventeen or graduation from high school, whichever occurs first. It is mandatory for all children of compulsory school age to attend and be present at school unless excused from attendance for an approved reason under the Pennsylvania School Code. The School District is responsible for monitoring and maintaining records of attendance of students, and all absences will be treated as unexcused and/or unlawful until the school receives and approves a written excuse explaining the reasons for an absence. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) also demands compulsory attendance. NCLB indicates a ninety percent (90%) attendance rate as the benchmark for academic success. The attendance rates at all schools are used to determine School Performance ratings. The School District is required by law to enforce compulsory school attendance. The School District will utilize all lawful methods set forth in the School Code for enforcing attendance, including but not limited to, filing truancy charges with the local magistrate and/or contacting the county children and youth agency for assessment.

### ATTENDANCE STANDARDS

**Absence** – Absence is defined as non-attendance in school in an individual class, the entire school day or a combination of both. Absence includes tardiness to class and/or school as well as early dismissals. Absences are calculated on a per year basis and are not calculated over multiple academic years.

**Excused Absence** – An “excused absence” includes the absence of a student for any of the following reasons:

**Illness or Other Urgent Reasons:** Upon receipt of satisfactory evidence of mental, physical or other urgent reasons, a parent's written note will excuse a student's absence. A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative absences verified by parental notification may be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days require an excuse from a physician. For parenting students, upon receipt of satisfactory evidence of illness of the student's child, related absences will be excused.

**Health Care** – A student may be excused during school hours to obtain non-school professional health care, including emergency care, hospitalization and/or quarantine. A parenting student may be excused during school hours to obtain non-school professional health care, including emergency care, hospitalization and/or quarantine for the student's child. Documentation from the treating licensed health care professional shall be obtained and provided to the school.

**Bereavement** – A student may be temporarily excused from school for bereavement and/or to attend the funeral of a family member. All such excusals must be reported to and approved by the School Principal or his/her designee.

**Religious Holidays and Religious Instruction** – A student shall be excused from school for absences occasioned by the observance of the student's religion recognized by the Board of Education as a bona fide religious holiday.

**Weather Emergency** – If a decision is made for schools to remain open, parents/guardians have the option to keep their children home for health and safety reasons. Parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for making this decision. If a parent decides to keep his or her child home in any situation, including inclement weather, he or she should call the school to report his or her child's absence. A written explanation of the absence must be provided to the homeroom teacher upon return to the school within three (3) days. Failure to provide a written explanation of the absence within three (3) days will result in an unlawful or unexcused absence. The School Principal or his/her

designee determines whether a student's absence will be excused for these reasons.

**Involuntary Exclusions** – A student who is lawfully absent from school or class due to involuntary exclusion shall be excused. An involuntary exclusion includes out-of-school suspensions, temporary alternative education placements and incarceration or home-detention. Attendance at a required in-school suspension shall not be counted as an absence.

**School-Approved Activities** – A student absent from class or school due to participation in a school, Principal or teacher approved activity, including, but not limited to field trips, service learning, assemblies, support groups, counseling, mentoring, or tutoring shall be lawfully excused.

**Other Principal-Approved Excusals** – A School Principal or his/her designee may excuse a student from attendance for lawful reasons. Administrator – Approved Excusals are: educational vacations, college visitation, counseling or support groups, or social service agency appointments including, but not limited to Children, Youth and Families.

**Unexcused Absence (Unlawful Absence)** – All absences that are not excused pursuant to this policy will be considered Unexcused. If a student is under age 17, then an absence that is not excused pursuant to this policy will be considered Unlawful and Unexcused. Tardiness that results in a student missing class without a written lawful excuse will be considered an Unexcused and/or Unlawful absence. Parents/guardians shall submit written explanations for Excused Absences within three (3) calendar days of the absence. If the school does not receive a written explanation within three (3) calendar days of any absence, the absence will be permanently counted as Unexcused and/or Unlawful.

**Missed Class Work** – A student shall be permitted to make up any assignments, homework or exams missed due to a lawfully Excused Absence or absence due to involuntary exclusion. Students who are absent from class or school shall NOT be permitted to make up any missed assignments, homework or exams so long as the absence remains an Unexcused Absence. All work completed and grades earned by students assigned to in-school suspension, suspension, or another temporary alternative education placement shall be included in calculating the student's report period grade. Students participating in school approved activities shall be permitted to make-up any missed assignments or exams.

**Eligibility for The Pittsburgh Promise®** – The Pittsburgh Promise ® uses attendance as one of several criteria when determining eligibility for scholarships. Out-of-School Suspensions and Unexcused Absences shall count against a student when determining eligibility for the Promise. All other absences are not counted against a student in determining eligibility for the Promise.

## ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

**School Principals and Administrators** shall be responsible for implementing these attendance standards and for developing any additional attendance referral procedures needed to implement compulsory attendance for their school.

**Classroom Teachers** shall be responsible for maintaining accurate daily class attendance for all students and must report all unlawful or unexcused class absences to the School Principal or his/her designee.

**Homeroom Teachers** shall be responsible for maintaining accurate school attendance records and immediately referring all Unexcused and/or Unlawful Absences to the School Principal or his/her designee. Homeroom teachers shall, in addition to the administrative referral required under this section, make every effort to contact a student's parent/guardian via telephone immediately after EACH ABSENCE and inform the parent/guardian that the student has been referred to the administration due to the Unexcused Absence. If contact is not made by telephone, then the Homeroom Teacher shall contact the parent via mail.

Homeroom teachers shall collect and record all written excuses for student absences. Homeroom teachers shall only accept written excuses from a parent, caregiver, or health professional within FOUR (4) days of the student's most recent absence. Any excuse submitted beyond the FOUR (4) days will not be accepted unless approved by the homeroom teacher. All written excuses shall be maintained by the Homeroom Teacher. Excuses for absences exceeding TEN (10) cumulative school days must be from a licensed treating physician or be approved by the School Principal or his/her designee.

**Legal Notices** shall be sent to parents/guardians of all students of compulsory school age (under age seventeen) in substantially the same format provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (available via its website) and in the student's and parent's preferred language and mode of communication. A parent/guardian shall receive legal notice after each instance of Unlawful and Unexcused Absence. The legal notice shall be issued after the First Unlawful Absence and should include the legal penalties established by law for violation of compulsory attendance

laws and the name and contact person for the school contact person. The legal notice issued after the Second Unlawful Absence shall contain the same information. The legal notice issued after the Third Unlawful Absence should contain the same information and additionally shall provide that if the parent/guardian violates the compulsory school law again after three (3) days have expired from the date of the 3rd notice, the parent may be liable without further notice. The school shall schedule a parent/guardian meeting after the 3rd Unlawful Absence to create a Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP).

**Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP):** A Truancy Elimination Plan is a mutually agreed upon plan to identify and address the reasons the student is not attending school. Completion of the TEP is critical to addressing the underlying causes of truancy, including ensuring that students who may need special education services are promptly identified and evaluated. During the meeting, the participants can discuss the appropriateness of the student's educational environment, current academic difficulties, physical or behavioral health issues, and family concerns. If parents and others are unable to participate in the meeting in person, arrangements shall be made for them to participate in the TEP meeting via Skype, FaceTime or by conference call. The plan should include information about accessing academic, social and health supports from the school and community organizations, outline of the parent and student responsibilities, and define levels of performance monitoring including rewards and consequences. At the end of the meeting, the school representative, child, and parent/guardian must sign the comprehensive TEP.

Any subsequent Unlawful Absence will result in official notice being sent via regular and certified mail return receipt requested to the parent/guardian that they are in violation of the TEP or if a TEP has not yet been created, the compulsory school law and that a citation may be filed with the local magistrate, including as appropriate, representatives of Allegheny County Department of Human Services (ACHD) who may connect the family with needed services. The school will attempt to work collaboratively with the parent/guardian and student to address the student's attendance before filing a citation with the local magistrate.

**Notice** shall be sent to parents/guardians of all students who are seventeen years of age and older and no longer of compulsory school age after each Unexcused Absence. All notices sent to parents/guardians of students 17 and older are informational and do not constitute a legal notice. However, students 17 and older are subject to school district action as follows: After the third notice of Unexcused Absence, the school shall develop a Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP). If the student continues to accrue Unexcused Absences in violation of this policy and his/her TEP, and the student and his/her parents wish the student to remain enrolled

in school, then the District may consider transferring the student to the Standard Evening High School or other appropriate education program that will meet the needs of the student. Students who are seventeen years of age and older and are absent for ten (10) consecutive school days, shall thereafter be removed from the active membership roll after the school has investigated the situation unless the District is provided with evidence that the absence is legally excused. All students removed from the membership roll can reenroll until the age of 21.

**Students with Disabilities** and those suspected of having disabilities are subject to compulsory school laws. Prior to filing a citation with the local magistrate, each student's individual circumstances will be reviewed by the appropriate personnel and raised and addressed in the student's IEP or Section 504 Team meeting. A student with disabilities will not be removed from the rolls based on attendance.

## RESPONSES TO VIOLATIONS OF ATTENDANCE STANDARDS

**Parental Notification:** Parents/guardians shall receive written notification after each instance of Unexcused and/or Unlawful Absence. The Official notice of filing of a truancy citation with the local magistrate shall be sent via regular and certified mail return receipt requested in accordance with this policy. (See Legal Notices and Notices above)

**Parent Conference:** Following the third (3rd) Unexcused and/or Unlawful Absence, the school shall schedule a conference with the student's parent/guardian. The School Principal or his/her designee shall develop a Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP) with the parent/guardian and the student.

**Transfer or Disenrollment (Students age 17 or older):** After agreeing to a TEP, or if there is not agreement on a Truancy Elimination Plan and three (3) days have passed since the parent/guardian received the official notice of the student's third Unexcused Absence, if the student is absent again for any Unexcused Absence during the remainder of the school year, the student may be transferred to an alternative placement. If a student has ten (10) consecutive Unexcused Absences, s/he may be permanently removed from the active rolls of attendance.

**Referral to the Local Magistrate (Students under age 17):** After agreeing to a TEP, or if there is not agreement on a Truancy Elimination Plan and three (3) days have passed since the parent/guardian received the official notice of the student's third Unlawful Absence, if a student is unlawfully absent at any point within the school year, an official notice of unlawful absence shall be sent home via certified mail return receipt requested. The purpose of the notice is to inform the student's parent/

guardian that the student has violated the TEP or, if there is no TEP that the child has again violated the compulsory attendance requirements, and to advise the parent/guardian that a citation has been filed with the local magistrate. All future incidents of Unexcused Absences will immediately be referred to the local magistrate. The local magistrate shall be provided with a copy of the student's TEP when referred for a hearing.

**Referral to County Children and Youth Agency (Students under age 13):** Any student who has not attained age 13 who fails to comply with compulsory attendance and is habitually truant, shall be referred to Children, Youth and Families (CYF) for services. The referral may be in addition to filing a citation with the local magistrate. The School Principal may refer a student 13 years of age or older to CYF in lieu of filing a citation with the local magistrate. This is often a preferable way to proceed in order to provide needed services to a student to support continued attendance.

**Penalties for Violations of the Compulsory School Law Possible Sentences for Parents:**

- Fine of up to \$300 for each citation and court costs
- Completion of a parenting education program
- In cases where a party convicted fails to pay the fine or complete the parenting education program, a subsequent sentencing of up to five (5) days in the county jail
- Completing, in lieu of, or in addition to the previous penalties, community service within the school district for a period up to six (6) months

**Possible Sentences for Students:**

- Fine of up to \$300 for each offense
- Assignment to an adjudication alternative program
- Adjudication of Dependency by Juvenile Court
- Referral to CYF for services or disposition as a dependent child
- Suspension of driving privileges or ineligibility to apply for a driver's license for 90 days for the first offense and 6 months for the second offense

**DRESS CODE/UNIFORMS**

The School District of Pittsburgh has an exclusionary dress code. The Board, therefore, resolves that no student shall wear any apparel or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures or any combination thereof appearing on said clothing or jewelry advocates or promotes sexual activity or violence, or the use of alcohol or drugs or demeans or degrades another because of race, sex, religious persuasion, national origin, handicap or disability. Students shall have the right to dress in accordance with their stated gender identity and/or expression within the constraints of this code. Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing at all times while at school. Clothing must not be of any style, length or fit that is of a provocative nature. Revealing attire that permits the exposure of undergarments or private body parts is prohibited. This prohibition shall be in effect during regular school hours and at any school-sponsored event whether on or off school premises.

A prescribed dress code or uniform policy is defined as a policy, either in writing or declared verbally by a given school principal, that requires the student to wear a certain mode of dress during school time, or at any school-sponsored event whether on or off school premises. Individual schools within the District may adopt a prescribed dress code or uniform policy in accordance with the Board's policy. (See school's specific dress code.)



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The Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs, activities or employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. It is the policy of the Pittsburgh School District to make all services, programs and activities available and to provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities. Please make requests for accommodations at least 72 hours before the scheduled event. For more information regarding accommodations, civil rights grievance procedures, please contact: Ms. Susan Dobies Sinicki, Office of Employee Relations, 341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 or 412-529-3691.