

SCHENECTADY CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



CODE OF
CONDUCT



2020-2021

THE 2020-2021 Code of Conduct

The Schenectady City School District Code of Conduct is designed to promote equity and strongly supports our principles and efforts to be trauma-sensitive, culturally responsive and presents a strong focus on restorative practices.

In addition to outlining guiding principles, rights, responsibilities and various types of discipline, this document serves to provide a preventative approach and therapeutic response as we aim to keep students in the classroom and out of the juvenile justice system.

In the Schenectady City School District, we approach student behaviors as teachable moments and opportunities for learning instead of punishment. While it is important that we hold students accountable for their actions, consequences without re-teaching and reflection do little to change behavior in the long run. In order to improve educational outcomes for our students, we must provide interventions and behavior support that is directed at addressing academic gaps and the causes of misbehavior.

We know that suspension does not improve school climate or outcomes for students. In this document, we outline and describe practices and alternative pathways that are diagnostic and prescriptive, such as diversion. This alternative pathway provides an opportunity for mental and behavior health treatment, potentially reducing the amount of time a student is out of school.

Our code of conduct also emphasizes the importance of implementing strategies, practices, interventions and plans that address student need before behavior issues rise to a most serious level. Students are most likely to make positive decisions when they understand the expectations, know that adults care about them and when they feel respected.

Please read the code of conduct in its entirety. It should be used as a guide and reference throughout the upcoming school year.

Our top priorities are to ensure that our schools are safe, that all students have what they need to be academically successful and that race, economics and disability are never predictors of student achievement.

We are partners in the education of our students. Together we can ensure that every student is academically successful and on the path to graduation.

If you have any questions, concerns or comments, please contact us through Let's Talk. Visit our website at www.schenectady.k12.ny.us and click on the tab on the left hand side and select code of conduct.

2020-2021

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INTRODUCTION

WHY DO WE HAVE A CODE OF CONDUCT?

The goal of the Schenectady City School District Code of Conduct is to ensure that the right of all students to receive an education in a safe, civil, engaging and caring environment, is met. For our schools to be safe and supportive environments, everyone within the school community must demonstrate and offer respect.

The code of conduct serves as a guide to good citizenship, promoting positive behavior and helping students understand expectations which are based on the principles of mutual respect, citizenship, character, acceptance, honesty and integrity. Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school personnel and other members of the school community as well as for the care of school facilities and equipment.

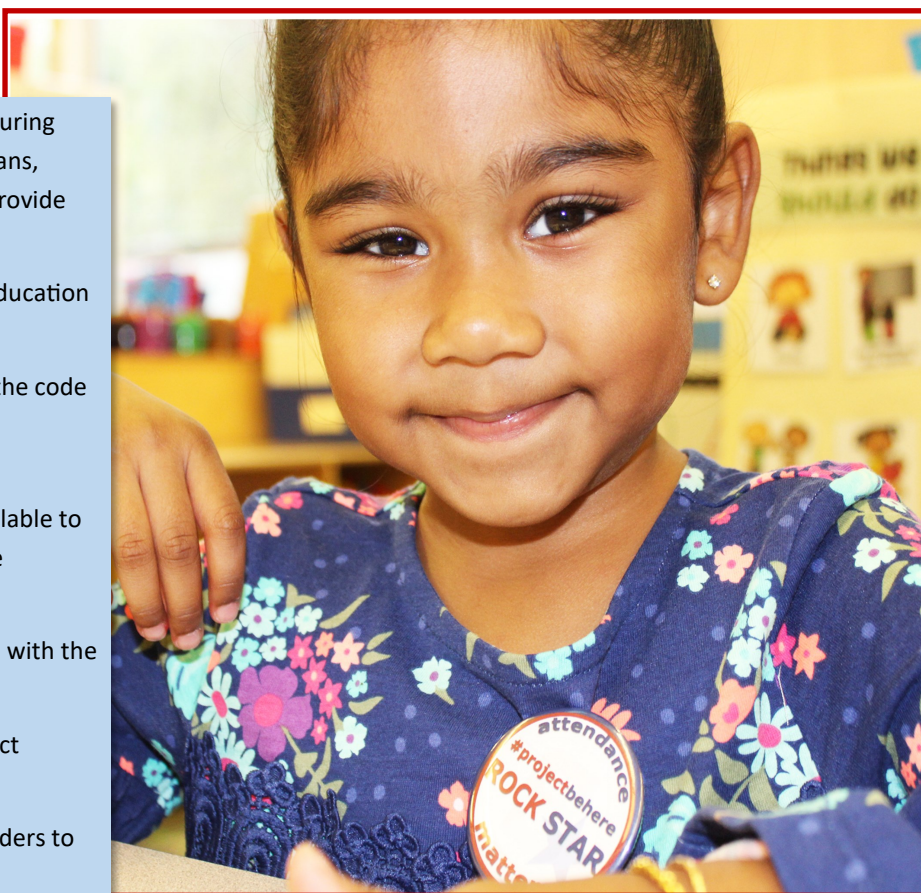
The board of education recognizes the need to clearly define expectations for acceptable conduct and identify the possible responses to unacceptable conduct. Levels of behavior concerns, violations and responses, interventions and consequences are outlined in the code of conduct.

The code of conduct applies to all students while in Schenectady City School District school buildings and on school grounds, in school vehicles and at all schools, school-related and district-sponsored activities including those held at locations off school property. It also applies at non-school events when behavior can negatively affect the educational process or endangers the health, safety, morals or welfare of the school community.

The Schenectady City School District Code of Conduct ensures that students have equitable access to behavioral supports and interventions and that race, economics and disability do not serve as predictors of student achievement.

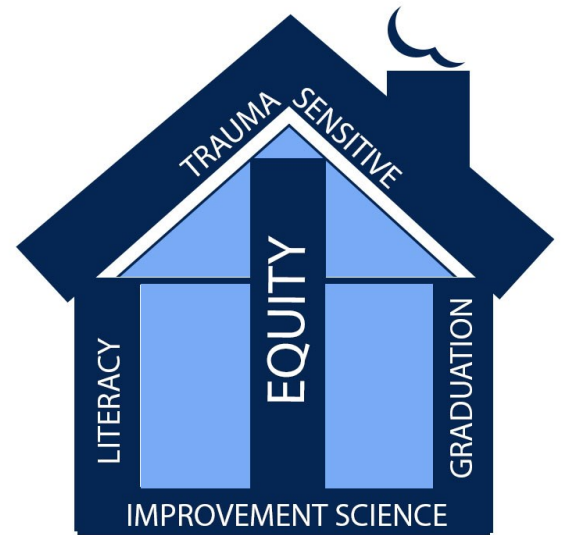
ACCESS AND FEEDBACK

1. There is a 30-day public comment period during which time staff, students, parents, guardians, caregivers and community members can provide comment.
2. A public hearing is held prior to board of education approval.
3. Copies of an age-appropriate summary of the code of conduct will be provided to all students, parents, guardians and caregivers.
4. Copies of the code of conduct is made available to all parents, guardians and caregivers at the beginning of the school year.
5. All school faculty and staff will be provided with the code of conduct.
6. The code of conduct is posted on the district website.
7. Opportunities are provided for all stakeholders to review and discuss the code of conduct.



BELIEFS ABOUT CHILDREN, LEARNING, OUR WORK

All of our students must be assured that they will be treated in a fair, consistent and non-discriminatory manner. The framework of the home, as outlined in the graphic to the right, guides our work, including the development and implementation of policies and practices. We must ensure that all students have what they need in order to be academically successful.



1. Equity is the main pillar of our work.
2. All children are capable of achieving their personal best and can improve behavior with guidance, instruction, support and coaching.
3. Children should not be asked, “what is wrong with you?’ They should instead be asked, “what has happened to you?”
4. Students need varying kinds and amounts of time, attention, and supports to succeed academically and achieve at high levels.
5. Out-of-school suspension does **not** improve school climate or outcomes for students. Students are more likely to make positive decisions when:
 - ◆ They understand the positive behaviors that are expected of them
 - ◆ They feel that staff members care about them and will help them learn and grow
 - ◆ They feel respected
 - ◆ All staff consistently uses the same language and practices
 - ◆ All staff provides positive feedback for appropriate behavior and best effort



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Schenectady City School District Code of Conduct is based on key principles for ensuring that our schools are safe, healthy and supportive environments.

All adults have an obligation to help students learn to be good citizens by:

- ◆ Helping kids learn right from wrong
- ◆ Fostering in them a desire to make good decisions
- ◆ Encouraging them to take responsibility for their actions and words
- ◆ Modeling behaviors that we want to cultivate

Policies and practices must be implemented in ways that are considered to be respectful. Adults are expected to protect the dignity of every student and ensure a tone of decency, compassion and respect.

Improving educational outcomes for all students requires that schools provide support and that behavior support is directed at addressing academic learning gaps and the **causes** of misbehavior. Prevention and intervention strategies may include more personalized instruction, support, service and programming to address personal and family circumstances and social-emotional learning. Examples of strategies include conflict resolution, peer mediation, anger management, behavior replacement strategies, circles and other restorative interventions.

School personnel is responsible for developing and using strategies that promote learning and positive behavior in school, and for addressing behaviors which disrupt learning.

Administrators, teachers, counselors, social workers, psychologists, other school staff and parents are expected to engage students in the intervention and prevention strategies that address behavioral issues. These should be discussed with the student and parents, guardian or caregiver through the **School-Based Support Team (SBST)**.

The School-Based Support Team (SBST) is a problem-solving team that supports student social, emotional and academic need.

A referral can be made to the SBST by a parent, staff member or administrator by contacting the school psychologist.

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

School psychologists are valuable resources to solve problems and provide knowledge/recommendations through the committees on special education, section 504 and the SBST. Each school in our district has at least one school psychologist who collaborates with colleagues, administration and families to support student growth. School psychologists are responsible for psycho-educational evaluations as a tool to make instructional and behavioral recommendations on a case-by-case basis. They work closely with administration in order to guide and support best practice in our schools for school climate, suspensions, tiered behavioral and instructional support.

THE ROLE OF THE BEHAVIOR SPECIALIST

Behavior specialists are clinically trained professionals who support school staff in exploring best practice solutions for overcoming barriers in the classroom. They are skilled at working to help promote academic engagement, positive behaviors and social-emotional skills. Using a preventative approach, they empower, collaborate and problem-solve with teachers and school teams with a focus on trauma-sensitivity, cultural responsiveness and equity.

OTHER SERVICE-PROVIDERS

Other related service-providers, who are able to provide resources for the SBST, include school counselors, social workers and a psychiatric nurse practitioner.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES: RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Student discipline, policies and practices must be implemented in ways that are accountable and restorative. Students and families need to know that the school will provide interventions inside and outside the classroom that support a restorative, rather than punitive, response. Students have the option to accept assigned consequences and fully participate in the interventions designed to address specific behaviors. **These interventions require students to own the problem, reflect on the impact of their behavior on themselves and others and understand why the behavior was unacceptable or inappropriate.** It does not mean there are no other consequences to the behavior, but we know that administering consequences without re-teaching and reflection does little to change behavior in the long run.

We need to be aware that the person whose actions we are attempting to correct, must be in a place where they admit they were wrong, and they want to make amends or alter their behavior.

As an administrative team we are trying to use the common language developed by Dr. Tom Cavanaugh when discussing discipline referrals with students:

- What is the problem?
- Who is being impacted by the problem?
- Use of “I” statements
- What is it like when the problem does not exist?
- How do we get there?



Restorative practices and the use of affective statements are practices on the continuum that can lead to restorative justice for larger offenses usually involving long-term suspension or involvement with law enforcement.

Examples of Restorative Practices:

Affective Statements refer to the tone in which we speak to students to help us build relationships and show that we care about the student. For example, “I liked the way you worked the whole class period today,” is more effective than, “good job.”

Classroom Circles can be used as a response to wrongdoing and as a vehicle for discussion when creating respect and classroom norms. This should be used from the beginning of the school year so that students understand how they work before significant issues need to be discussed.

Restorative Conference is a formal response to wrongdoing where the facilitator helps both parties explore what happened and who was affected. This can be done with a facilitator, teacher and a student after a disruption to the learning environment has occurred.

Restorative Reflections is an exercise in which students complete a writing assignment and go through the restorative questions and steps as they try to reflect on their actions and make a better plan for the future.

Restorative Justice Circles are full-scale circles involving parents, advocates and those affected. This is appropriate with students who acknowledge they have done harm and want to repair the relationship.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND CAREGIVERS AS PARTNERS

Students, parents, guardians, caregivers and school personnel all have a role in making school safe and must cooperate with one another to achieve this goal. School staff should ensure that parents are informed of their child's behavior and enlist parents as partners in reinforcing positive behavior and addressing areas in need of growth.

Parents, guardians and caregivers are encouraged to discuss, with their child's teacher and other school staff, issues that may affect student behavior and strategies that might be effective in working with the student. Open communication is essential.

EQUITY

Student discipline, policies and practices must be implemented in ways that are fair, equitable, differentiated and ensure that race, economics and disability are never predictors of student achievement. All students must be treated fairly without favor toward or prejudice against any one group of students according to ability, age, gender, disability, race, ethnic group, socioeconomic status, religious or spiritual orientation or indigenous heritage.

TRAUMA SENSITIVITY

Awareness and intervention is essential when behaviors may be symptomatic of more serious problems that students are experiencing. It is important that school personnel be sensitive to issues that may influence the behavior of students and respond in a manner that is most supportive of their needs. Appropriate disciplinary responses should emphasize prevention and effective intervention, prevent disruption to learning and promote a positive school culture.

A **sensory space** is a special room or space, therapeutic in nature, that is designated to engage a person's senses usually through special or soft lighting, music, objects and manipulatives. It is designed as a safe place for students to retreat to avoid anticipated behavior escalation. Sensory spaces promote self-organization and positive change.

A **turnaround space** is a designated place where a student goes, in response to a behavior or multiple behaviors, where he or she can discuss what happened, take responsibility for it and work to better understand why it happened. Highly skilled staff work with the student to problem-solve, so it won't happen again, and practice pro-social behaviors.

PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Each SCSD school is expected to promote a positive school climate and culture that provides students with support so that they can grow both academically and socially. Schools are expected to take a proactive role in nurturing students' pro-social behavior by providing a range of positive behavioral supports as well as meaningful opportunities for social-emotional learning. Effective social-emotional learning helps students develop fundamental life skills.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Engagement is integral to creating a positive school climate and culture that effectively fosters academic achievement and social-emotional growth. Providing students with multiple opportunities to participate in a wide range of pro-social activities and develop a bond with caring, supportive adults, positively influences behavior. A few examples include providing students with opportunities to share ideas and concerns and participating in school-wide initiatives.

EXPECTATIONS, RESPECT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

It takes the commitment and responsibility of all staff for the healthy development of students including modeling the skills, behaviors and mindsets that they seek to cultivate in students. All staff is urged to set high expectations for student success, build positive relationships with students and model how to behave successfully in school settings.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the school community must assume a responsible role in promoting behavior that enhances academic and social success. Courteous, respectful and responsible behavior fosters a positive climate and one that promotes learning.

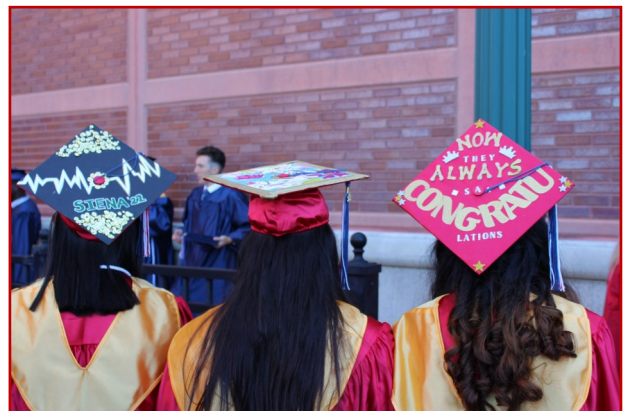
STUDENTS

- ◆ Students learn best when adults serve as active positive role models.
- ◆ Students learn best when there is unconditional acceptance of differences.
- ◆ Students learn best when respect and civility are modeled by all.
- ◆ Students learn best when behavioral expectations are clearly defined and consistently enforced.

All students are guaranteed the right to express opinions, support causes, organize and assemble to discuss issues and demonstrate peacefully and responsibly in support of and in accordance with policies and procedures established by the Schenectady City School District Board of Education.

Students have the right to:

- ◆ Be afforded a sound, quality education in a school environment that is safe, orderly and promotes learning.
- ◆ Be respected as an individual, treated fairly and with dignity by other students and school staff.
- ◆ Organize, promote and participate in student activities and clubs as part of the formal education process or as authorized by the school principal.
- ◆ Dress in such a way to express one's personality as long as it does not distract or disrupt the learning environment.
- ◆ Provide representation of appropriate school-wide committees that influence the educational process as designated by school personnel.
- ◆ Participate and express opinions through the publication of school newspapers and newsletters with oversight from faculty advisors.
- ◆ Exercise freedom of inquiry and expression, written and oral, within appropriate limits under the law and provided that the rights of others are not diminished.
- ◆ Be protected from intimidation, harassment or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national, origin, ethnic group, religion or religious practice, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability, by employees and students on school property or at any school-sponsored event, function or activity.



RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have the responsibility of:

- ◆ Owning and being active participants in their learning.
- ◆ Attending school daily, arriving on time and being prepared to learn.
- ◆ Being truthful about and accountable for words and actions.
- ◆ Respecting themselves and others in class, on school grounds, on buses and any school-related activity.
- ◆ Respecting the rights and feelings of fellow students, parents, school staff, visitors and guests.
- ◆ Knowing and complying with school district rules and policies.
- ◆ Making an effort to correct and improve behavior through restorative interventions.
- ◆ Expressing thoughts and opinions in ways that are polite, respectful and courteous.
- ◆ Respecting others' personal space.
- ◆ Participating in learning communities, including helping to formulate rules and procedures in the school, engaging in school-related activities and fostering a culture of respect for learning and for others.
- ◆ Seeking help and assistance when needed.
- ◆ Taking care of property that belongs to others or the school.
- ◆ Helping to make school a community that is free from violence, intimidation, bullying, harassment and discrimination.

PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND CAREGIVERS

Parents, guardians and caregivers have the right to be active participants in the learning process, to express views and to provide input into decisions that affect their children. They are vital to the success of students in school. Parents, guardians and caregivers should have high expectations for their children. They are always welcome into our schools.

Parents, guardians and caregivers have the right to:

- ◆ Be actively involved in their children's education.
- ◆ Be treated courteously, fairly and respectfully by all school staff.
- ◆ Receive timely information about policies and procedures that relates to their children.
- ◆ Receive regular reports from school staff regarding academic progress and behavior.
- ◆ Receive notification and information of inappropriate or disruptive behaviors by their children and any disciplinary actions taken.
- ◆ Receive information about due process procedures for disciplinary matters concerning their children.
- ◆ Receive information about ways to improve their children's progress including counseling, tutoring, after-school programs, academic programs and mental health services.
- ◆ Receive information about services for students with disabilities and English language learners.
- ◆ Be contacted when their child is believed to have committed a crime or when police are called.
- ◆ Receive communication through provided translators.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents, guardians and caregivers have the responsibility of:

- ◆ Providing updated contact information to the Schenectady City School District Student Registration Office and their child's school.
- ◆ Making sure that their children attend school regularly and on time.
- ◆ Letting school know when and why children are absent.
- ◆ Telling school officials about any concerns or complaints.
- ◆ Supporting their children by providing an environment suitable for learning and developing good study habits.
- ◆ Working with school staff to address any academic or behavioral problems their children may be facing.
- ◆ Talking with their children about expectations and behavior.
- ◆ Teaching and modeling respect.
- ◆ Advocating for their children and taking an active role in the school community.
- ◆ Attending parent/teacher conferences and monitoring their children's grades and progress.
- ◆ Being respectful and courteous to staff, other parents, guardians, caregivers and students while on school premises.
- ◆ Teaching children that all children have the right to attend school and be treated with respect and dignity regardless of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity or sex.

Schools will ensure that parents, guardians and caregivers have a right to participate in decision-making that affects school policies and procedures including:

- ◆ Informing them in a timely and clear manner as to when and how they can participate and to ensure that all parents, guardians and caregivers have equal access to information and opportunities for participation.
- ◆ Ensuring they have opportunities to make recommendations to schools about effective methods for participation.
- ◆ Giving them opportunities to provide input, receive information and help guide decision-making.

Schools will ensure that parents, guardians and caregivers have a right to participate in decisions that affect their child's education including:

- ◆ The identification of academic or behavioral challenges as soon as possible and working with parents, guardians and caregivers to identify solutions.
- ◆ Participation in restorative discipline solutions.
- ◆ Protection of due process rights as related to school discipline.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

EDUCATORS

Principals, educators and all school staff have the right to:

- ◆ Work in a safe and orderly environment.
- ◆ Be treated courteously, fairly and respectfully by students, parents or guardians and other school staff.
- ◆ Communicate concerns, suggestions and complaints.
- ◆ Receive supportive professional development and training.
- ◆ Receive necessary resources.

Educators have the responsibility of:

- ◆ Fostering and nurturing so that students develop as learners both academically and socially.
- ◆ Recognizing that children should be subject to behavior management, support and discipline policies **appropriate with their ages and levels of understanding**.
- ◆ Being respectful and courteous to students, parents, guardians and caregivers.
- ◆ Serving as role models for students.
- ◆ Cooperating and scheduling conferences with students, parents and others in an effort to understand and resolve academic and behavioral concerns.
- ◆ Making every effort to accommodate families whose work schedules, access to transportation or distance from school, limits their ability to meet or participate.
- ◆ Keeping parents informed of their student's progress, challenges, effort and achievements.
- ◆ Encouraging students to participate in classroom, extracurricular and other school-related activities.
- ◆ Knowing and enforcing rules, policies and procedures consistently, fairly and equitably.
- ◆ Confronting issues of discrimination and harassment in any situation that threatens the emotional, physical health or safety of any student, employee or person who is on school property or at a school function and reporting incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to the attention of the teacher, counselor, administrator, staff member or to the dignity act coordinator.
- ◆ Striving to ensure that race, economics and disability are never predictors of student achievement.



RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PRINCIPALS

Principals have the responsibility of:

- ◆ Promoting a safe, supportive and orderly school environment for all school community members, regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
- ◆ Reviewing the code of conduct and procedures for reporting incidents with all staff at the beginning of the school year.
- ◆ Ensuring all staff participate in mandated yearly training such as The Dignity for All Students Act (DASA), school violence prevention and mental health first aid.
- ◆ Maintaining confidentiality and respecting student and parent rights to privacy.
- ◆ Developing the capacity of staff, students and families to intervene regarding behavioral concerns.
- ◆ Ensuring equity and that all students are treated fairly.
- ◆ Partnering with parents and caregivers through the facilitation of the SBST process.

SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent has the responsibility of:

- ◆ Promoting a safe, supportive and orderly school environment for all school community members, regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
- ◆ Reviewing the policies of the board of education and state and federal laws, relating to school operations and management, with all district administrators.
- ◆ Working with district administrators to enforce the code of conduct and ensuring that all incidents are resolved promptly and that students are treated fairly and equitably.
- ◆ Addressing issues of discrimination, harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, employee or person on school property or at a school function.
- ◆ Ensuring that race, economics and disability do not predict student achievement.



RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Members of the Board of Education have the responsibility of:

- ◆ Promoting a safe, supportive and orderly school environment for all school community members regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
- ◆ Approving the Schenectady City School District Code of Conduct annually.
- ◆ Addressing issues of discrimination, harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, school employee or person who is lawfully on school property.
- ◆ Ensuring that policies promote and ensure equity.

SHIFTS FOR REROUTING THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

The school-to-prison pipeline is the disproportionate tendency of minors to become incarcerated because of increasingly harsh school (such as zero-tolerance) and municipal policies.

Adopting a responsive approach to discipline will help keep students in the classroom and out of the juvenile justice system. This requires a shift in mindset. The Schenectady City School District Code of Conduct is designed to help guide where disciplinary practices can become more responsive.

- ◆ Adopt a social emotional lens.
- ◆ Know your students and develop cultural competency.
- ◆ Plan and deliver (or support) effective student-centered instruction.
- ◆ Move the paradigm from punishment to development.
- ◆ Resist the criminalization of school behavior.

District-wide responsive discipline policies are critical to stopping the school-to-prison pipeline. When **SCHOOL DISTRICT PERSONNEL** become agents for change, they support teachers, counselors and building-level administrators to make these shifts.

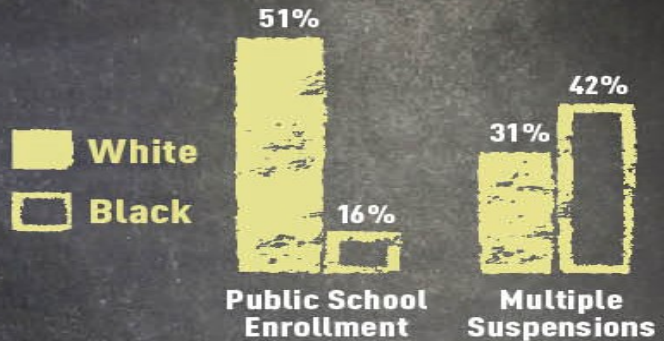
TEACHERS have the most face-to-face contact with students and a front-line opportunity to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline. Instructional practice and discipline structure can keep kids in class or push them out.

From locating wrap-around services to understanding and uncovering issues that adversely affect students in the classroom, **COUNSELORS** are equipped to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline through their work with both teachers and students.

SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

School disciplinary policies disproportionately affect Black students.

Zero-tolerance discipline has resulted in Black students facing disproportionately harsher punishment than white students in public schools.¹



Black students represent



31%

of school-related arrests²

Black students are suspended and expelled



more than white students.³



Students suspended or expelled for a discretionary violation are nearly three times more likely to be in contact with the juvenile justice system the following year.⁴



GUIDE TO REROUTING THE PIPELINE

VERBAL DISRESPECT

Student is defiant and uses inappropriate language when verbally redirected.

ADULT RESPONSES TO AVOID

- Communication that we are personally offended
- Emotional replies that focus on re-asserting adult authority over the student
- Responses that conflate the student's disrespectful behavior with their personal identity and character traits Ex) "You're disrespectful" or "That's another example of you making a bad choice."
- Referral for disciplinary action by another adult

RECOMMENDED ADULT RESPONSES

- Nonverbal communication that we won't let anything the student says in anger, cause us to be emotionally reactive toward them Ex) mindful breathing to model self-awareness and non-judgment
- Offering even-tempered and predictable expressions of patience and respect Ex) using empathic listening and offering choice—"You're telling me that was really upsetting." You can use X or Y as an in-class break to help yourself cool down.
- Making a mental note about the situation that was so triggering for the student and committing to invest in relationship-building Ex) using topics of interest, humor, affection with the student at times when they are more emotionally regulated.
- Taking actions that demonstrate sensitivity to and plans for addressing those issues in the future Ex) adjusting seating arrangements to prevent conflict with same peer in the future; pre-setting students about expectations for discussion around emotionally provocative topic; planning 1:1 conference time to collaboratively problem-solve with the student and demonstrate that we may have somehow been part of the problem in the situation and hope we can be part of the solution through our respect for and interest in the student's point of view.

TRUANCY

Student is frequently absent from or tardy to his first-period class and is failing.

ADULT RESPONSES TO AVOID

- Verbal and nonverbal communication (privately or publicly) of our judgement that the student's tardiness represents a character flaw
- Actions that demonstrate zero tolerance or bring undue attention to a student's falling short of our expectations Ex) when we refuse to admit a late student into class
- Giving up on action planning to support the student Ex) failing to offer opportunities to make up missed work

RECOMMENDED ADULT RESPONSES

- Verbal and/or nonverbal communication (privately and/or publicly) of our belief that we all do well when we can, and that there are lots of reasons people might have a problem with lateness
- Actions that demonstrate a restorative "doing with" approach that involves limit-setting and discipline.

Insistence on check-ins or conferences with the student to collaboratively problem-solve and focus on why their attendance matters paired with high encouragement and nurture

Ex) consistent expressions of empathy for the student and faith that together we can work toward personal growth with both attendance and academic improvements

- Committing to ongoing work on the home-school partnership and school-wide efforts at reducing barriers to school attendance and achievement, with recognition that these problems often represent manifestations of social injustice and everyday hassles that SCSD students and families have disproportionately been faced with navigating over multiple generations.

Source: Adapted from Teaching Tolerance, Code of Conduct, A Guide to Responsive Discipline
www.tolerance.org

DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT

New York State's Dignity for All Students Act took effect on July 1, 2012. The law seeks to provide the state's public school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying on school property, school buses and/or at school functions.

No student shall be subjected to harassment by employees or students on school property or at any school function; nor shall any student be subject to discrimination based on a person's actual or perceived:

- Race
- Color
- Weight
- National Origin
- Ethnic Group
- Religion
- Religious Practice
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender (defined to include gender identity or expression)



Each school has a dignity act coordinator who is trained to address issues in areas protected by the law and is accessible to the school community. Please call the Schenectady City School District Pupil Personnel Office at 518-881-3412.

Parents who feel that their child has been bullied should contact their child's principal who will coordinate with the school's DASA coordinator to conduct an investigation. More information about DASA, including the DASA complaint form can be found on the district website at www.schenectady.k12.ny.us. Click on the student dropdown link to locate the DASA information page.

- The district will act to promptly investigate all complaints and will take appropriate action to protect individuals from further discrimination, harassment, bullying and retaliation.
- Any student who believes that he/she has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, bullying or retaliatory conduct, as well as any individuals who are aware of or have knowledge of this behavior, should immediately report it to any staff member or administrator.
 - The staff member/administrator to whom the report is made shall document and take appropriate action to address the situation immediately and promptly report it verbally and in writing within 24 hours. The school principal is charged with receiving all reports of harassment, bullying, discrimination or retaliation. Students and parents, however, may make an oral or written complaint to any teacher, administrator or school employee.
 - All complaints shall be promptly investigated, forwarded to the school dignity act coordinator for monitoring and treated as confidential and private to the extent possible within legal constraints.

BULLYING, CYBERBULLYING, HARASSMENT

Bullying and cyberbullying, harassment and intimidation, hazing and bias behaviors are unsafe and do not reflect respect for others as defined by the Schenectady City School District Code of Conduct. The district has adopted a Bullying/Cyberbullying Policy (#7552) which states: Bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn, an educator's ability to teach, and threatens classroom and school safety. Cyberbullying is defined as harassment or bullying that occurs through any form of electronic communication. The district is committed to providing a school environment that values and teaches respect for all.

In recognition of the dangers of cyberbullying and related conduct that can occur "off campus," the 2012 amendments to the Dignity Act broadened the definition of harassment and bullying to include conduct that occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property (Education Law 11[7]).

If you or someone you know is a target of bullying, harassment or intimidation, you can report it on the DASA complaint form, available on the district website or in the main office and counseling office of every school. You can also report it through "Let's Talk" on the district website or by telling a staff member, who will respond quickly.

If you are being bullied:

- ◆ Tell someone—a parent, teacher, counselor
- ◆ Calmly tell the student to stop ... or say nothing and walk away

If you know someone who is being bullied:

- ◆ If you feel safe, be an "upstander" and
 - Tell the bully to stop by saying, "It's not right to treat someone like that."
 - Offer support to the student being bullied. Be a friend.
 - Don't encourage the bully by laughing or joining in.
 - Tell other bystanders how to help stop bullying.
- ◆ If you don't feel safe
 - Tell an adult.
 - Encourage the bullied student to talk to someone.

What do I do if my child is bullying others?

- ◆ Develop clear and consistent rules within your family for your child's behavior.
- ◆ Praise and reinforce your child for following rules and use non-physical consequences for rule violation.
- ◆ Carefully supervise and monitor your child's activities.
- ◆ Know who your child's friends are and how and where they spend free time.
- ◆ Encourage your child to get involved in pro-social activities, such as clubs, music or sports.
- ◆ Share your concerns with your child's teacher, counselor and/or principal.
- ◆ Work together to send clear messages to your child that bullying must stop.
- ◆ If you need additional help, talk with a school counselor or mental health professional.
- ◆ Educate yourself on social media platforms.

What Digital Citizenship Mean?

Good digital citizenship engages young students and shows them how to connect, empathize and create lasting relationships with each other. Bad digital citizenship, on the other hand, includes cyberbullying, irresponsible social media usage and a general lack of knowledge about how to safely use the Internet. At SCSD, we are committed to working with our students and families to learn about and practice good digital citizenship.

SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

School Name	Phone Number
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	
Hamilton Elementary School 1091 Webster St., Schenectady, NY 12303	Ph: 518-881-3720 Fax: 518-881-3722
Howe Elementary School 1065 Baker Ave., Schenectady, NY 12309	Ph: 518-370-8295 Fax: 518-881-3542
Keane Elementary School 1252 Albany St., Schenectady, NY 12304	Ph: 518-881-3960 Fax: 518-881-3962
Lincoln Elementary School 2 Robinson St., Schenectady, NY 12304	Ph: 518-370-8355 Fax: 518-395-3576
Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School 918 Stanley St., Schenectady, NY 12307	Ph: 518-370-8360 Fax: 518-370-8363
Paige Elementary School 104 Elliott Ave., Schenectady, NY 12304	Ph: 518-370-8300 Fax: 518-370-8300
Pleasant Valley Elementary School 1097 Forest Rd., Schenectady, NY 12303	Ph: 518-881-3640 Fax: 518-881-3642
Van Corlaer Elementary School 2300 Guilderland Ave., Schenectady, NY 12306	Ph: 518-370-8270 Fax: 518-881-3742
Woodlawn Elementary School 3311 Wells Ave., Schenectady, NY 12304	Ph: 518-370-8280 Fax: 518-370-8283
Yates Elementary School 725 Salina St., Schenectady, NY 12308	Ph: 518-370-8320 Fax: 518-881-3862
Zoller Elementary School 1880 Lancaster, St., Schenectady, NY 12308	Ph: 518-370-8290 Fax: 518-881-3882
MIDDLE SCHOOLS	
Central Park Middle School 421 Elm St., Schenectady, NY 12304	Ph: 518-370-8250 Fax: 518-881-3662
Mont Pleasant Middle School 1121 Forest Rd., Schenectady, NY 12303	Ph: 518-370-8160 Fax: 518-881-3562
Oneida Middle School 1529 Oneida St., Schenectady, NY 12308	Ph: 518-370-8260 Fax: 518-370-8267
HIGH SCHOOL	
Schenectady High School 1445 The Plaza, Schenectady, NY 12308	Ph: 518-881-2044 X-44801 Fax: 518-881-3802
Steinmetz Career & Leadership Academy 880 Oakwood Ave., Schenectady, NY 12303	Ph: 518-881-2030 X-30100 Fax: 518-881-3602
WASHINGTON IRVING EDUCATION CENTER & READY TO LEARN	
422 Mumford St., Schenectady, NY 12307	Ph: 518-370-8220 Fax: 518-370-8225

VISITORS TO OUR SCHOOLS

The board of education encourages parents and community members to visit the district schools and classrooms to observe the work of students, teachers and other staff. The school principal, or his or her designee, is responsible for anyone in the school and on school grounds. Since schools are a place of work and learning, the following rules must be followed:

- ◆ Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school is considered a visitor.
- ◆ All visitors are required to enter through the designated entry and report to the reception area.
- ◆ All visitors to any school are required to show identification. If a person does not have an ID, the school principal will work with the parent, guardian or caregiver to find a solution.
- ◆ Visitors will be issued a visitor's badge, which must be worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds.
- ◆ Visitors must return the visitor's badge and sign out at the reception area before leaving the school.
- ◆ All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property.



Anyone on school property or attending a school function is expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. When the school principal or designee observes disruptive or disorderly conduct, he or she will tell the individual that the conduct is prohibited and ask that the behavior stop.

If the visitor's conduct poses an immediate threat of injury to anyone or the property, the school principal will request that the individual be immediately removed from school property or the school event. If necessary, local law enforcement will be contacted to assist.



LEVELS OF BEHAVIOR CONCERNS, INTERVENTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

School officials must refer to this code of conduct when determining which disciplinary intervention and consequence to impose. Practices that allow educators to address behavior concerns as opportunities for learning instead of punishment are far more successful in changing a student's behavior than imposing punitive measures. In determining how to best address inappropriate, unacceptable and unskillful behaviors, it is necessary to evaluate all of the circumstances surrounding the behavior.

There are many factors that must be considered before determining consequences and interventions, including:

- ◆ The student's age and health
- ◆ The students' disciplinary record
- ◆ Appropriateness of student's academic placement
- ◆ Disciplinary consequences and interventions applied in response to prior behavior violations
- ◆ Nature, severity and scope of the behavior
- ◆ The circumstances in which the conduct occurred
- ◆ Student's understanding of the impact of his or her behavior
- ◆ Seriousness of the behavior and the degree of harm caused
- ◆ Impact on overall school community
- ◆ The student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) and 504 Accommodation Plan, when applicable
- ◆ The student's response to intervention



SCSD understands the importance of restorative practices when student behavioral issues affect the safety of the classroom and school and interfere with the learning of all students.

Restorative Practices are interventions designed to hold students accountable for harm while addressing the needs of students, staff and the school community. Restorative practice may be defined as a way of thinking and responding to conflict and problems and one which includes all participants. Collectively, they determine a logical and balanced resolution. Examples of restorative practices include family group counseling, classroom circles, reparation of harm, therapeutic/resource strategies (mental health treatment, anger management and/or behavior coaching).

When choosing interventions and consequences for student behavior, teachers, administrators and all staff must balance SCSD's goals of ensuring equity, minimizing disruptions and maximizing student instructional time. Consequences paired with meaningful instruction and guidance (corrective feedback and re-teaching) offer students an opportunity to learn from their mistakes.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 2

Aggressive behavior in young children is often a result of a child’s unskillful attempt to communicate what they want, need and/or don’t like. When a child engages in a violent act that threatens or harms other children or makes the learning environment feel unsafe, special procedures need to be in place to ensure that any children involved receive immediate attention.



The Schenectady City School District is committed to reducing and significantly limiting expulsion and suspension practices, with the goal of eliminating these practices in all early childhood settings.

If a student in grades prek-2 engages in pervasive or serious aggressive acts that cause injury or threaten children’s safety in the classroom, the principal can determine the most appropriate interventions and request an out of school suspension.

Any suspension of a student in grades prek-2 requires the permission of the superintendent, assistant to the superintendent or district director of pupil personnel services. The principal must immediately provide written notification to the superintendent’s designee upon suspension. In addition, **an intervention plan should be developed and parents invited to be directly involved in its development.**

LEVELS OF BEHAVIORS AND RESPONSES

The Schenectady City School District Code of Conduct includes five levels of possible response to inappropriate behavior. Each inappropriate behavior (violation of the code of conduct) is assigned to one or more levels of intervention/response.

If the behavior is assigned to, or falls under two or more levels, the lowest level of intervention and disciplinary response should be imposed first. For example, if a student refuses to follow directions, intervention strategies and responses in Level 1 should be issued before moving to any response in Level 2.



In all cases, the school personnel authorized to impose the consequence or response must inform the student of the alleged misconduct and must investigate the facts surrounding it. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary penalty. If students are given penalties other than a verbal warning, parents should be notified before penalty is imposed.

The following pages present an overview of each of the resolutions to behaviors, a chart that outlines grade-appropriate responses based upon the level of offense. You will notice that as behaviors increase in severity (1 being least and 5 being most severe), the response becomes more intense (A being least and D being most intense). Please note that grade level is considered for all behaviors and responses. This chart is on page 26.

A listing of behaviors and the range of resolutions at each level (1 being least and 5 being most severe) is located on pages 27—31.

PROGRESSIVE CONSEQUENCE (RESOLUTION)

Understanding consequences as “teachable moments” is fundamental to a positive approach to discipline. Instead of seeking punishment, progressive consequences seek to ensure accountability and behavior change.

With progressive consequences, a student’s first violation will usually merit a lower level consequence than subsequent violations. A variety of factors are, however, taken into account and considered before determining consequence. In instances where a student’s conduct is dangerous or threatens the safety of others, more severe disciplinary action may be warranted, even if it is the student’s first violation.



With progressive consequences, we aim to help students:

- ◆ Understand why the behavior is unacceptable.
- ◆ Understand the harm the behavior caused and the impact that it has.
- ◆ Take responsibility for their action.
- ◆ Be given the opportunity to repair the harm caused by their behavior.
- ◆ Be given the opportunity to learn pro-social strategies and skills to use in the future.



Every reasonable effort should be made to correct student misbehavior through interventions and other school-based resources. **Interventions are essential because inappropriate behavior or violations of the code of conduct may be symptomatic of more serious problems that students are experiencing such as homelessness, poverty, trauma and loss. It is imperative that school personnel be sensitive to any issues that may influence the behavior of students and respond in a manner that is most supportive of their needs.** SCSD supports a trauma sensitive schools model which provides all staff with professional development in responsive and supportive intervention strategies.

When student conduct becomes a disruption to the educational process, school staff and principals respond logically, appropriately and consistently.

THE IMPACT OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Suspension from school does not benefit the suspended student or peers. Not only is a student who is suspended from school less likely to graduate, but being suspended also increases a student’s risk for dropping out of school. A single 9th grade suspension doubles the risk that a student will drop out of high school.

Research also shows that within 12 months of being suspended from school, a student is 50% more likely to engage in anti-social behavior and 70% more likely to engage in violent behavior.

Out-of-school suspension should be avoided whenever possible. If a suspension is necessary, it should always be coupled with intense intervention and support.

LEVELS OF BEHAVIOR CONCERNS AND RESOLUTIONS

1

LEVEL 1 responses aim to teach, correct behavior and promote the practice of pro-social behaviors, self-discipline and healthy well-being. Teachers are encouraged to try a variety of teaching and classroom management strategies.

Classroom interventions and responses include, but are not limited to, attendance intervention plan, turn around or sensory room, verbal reprimand, special seating, parent conference, social consequences, strict supervised study, detention, behavior contract, routing slip, peer mediation, withdrawal of computer privileges, restorative practices and/or referral to SBST. The responses are designed to prevent minor behavior issues from becoming major incidents.

2

LEVEL 2 interventions involve school administration and aim to correct behavior by stressing the seriousness of the behavior while keeping the student in school. Responses might be similar to those in Level 1 but are often times more focused and stretch beyond the immediate situation.

Student support team interventions and responses include but are not limited to attendance intervention plan, turn around or sensory room, verbal reprimand, special seating, parent conference, social consequences, strict supervised study, detention, behavior contract, routing slip, peer mediation, withdrawal of computer privileges, restorative practices and/or referral to SBST.

More intense responses include half day or less in-school suspension, exclusion from extra-curricular activities for 1-4 days, in-school suspension, teacher/schedule change, referral to outside agency, out-of-school suspension for 1, 2 or 3 days.

3

LEVEL 3 violations are more serious in nature and jeopardize order, safety and/or property damage. Level 3 interventions may involve short-term removal of a student from the environment depending on the severity of the behavior. The duration of a short-term suspension is to be limited as much as possible, while still addressing the behavior.

Suspension and referral responses depend on the behavior. More intensive responses in Level 3 could include out-of-school suspension for 4 or 5 days, temporary removal from class, restitution of property or repair of damage, informal hearing, campus or community service, referral to attendance officer and/or a family home visit.

LEVELS OF BEHAVIOR CONCERNS AND RESOLUTIONS

LEVEL 4 behaviors threaten the safety and well-being of others. Response to Level 4 behaviors may include removing the student from the classroom or school environment because of the seriousness of the behavior. The duration of removal should be limited, as much as possible, while still addressing the behavior.

4

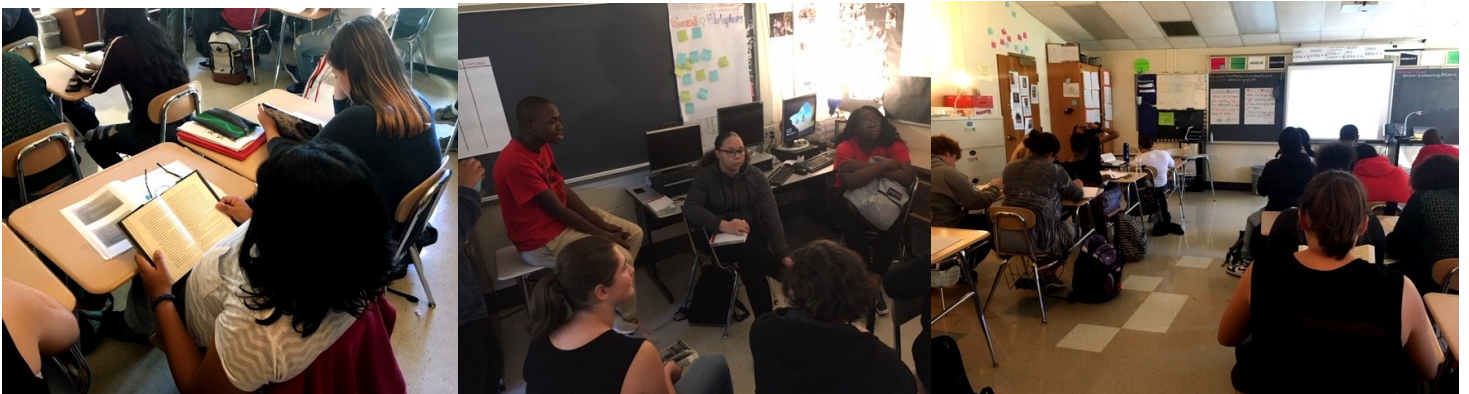
Responses to Level 4 include all responses in Level 3 and/or more intensive responses such as 5-day suspension with formal hearing, referral to appropriate law enforcement agency, counseling or drug treatment program and/or diversion.

LEVEL 5 behaviors are the most extreme often using force, causing harm or injury, involving violence, possession or use of a weapon, causing substantial risk or a pattern of persistent Level 4 behavior.

5

Responses to Level 5 encompass all responses in Level 4 including 5-day suspension with formal hearing, referral to appropriate law enforcement agency, counseling or drug treatment program and/or diversion.

Interventions and consequences should be implemented in a culturally responsive and consistent manner across all schools and grade levels.



RESOLUTIONS TO CODE OF CONDUCT INFRACTIONS

The chart below **indicates grade-appropriate** responses based upon level of offense. The letter (A, B, C, D) corresponds with possible responses as outlined by level on the following pages. For example, for level 2 offenses, responses with letter B should only be considered for high school students. You will find the letter on the next pages under the “Range of Responses” heading.

As you move down the chart (1-5) behaviors increase in severity (1 being least and 5 being most severe) - and— across the chart (A-D), the response becomes more intense (with D being most intense response). Lower level responses are often used in combination with the aligned level of response.

LEVEL OFFENSE	PREK-2	3-5	6-8	9-12	MAXIMUM LEVEL CONSEQUENCE
1	A	A	A	A	A
2	A	A	A	B	B
3	A	B	B	C	C
4	B	B	C	D	D
5	B	C	D	D	D



RESOLUTIONS TO CODE OF CONDUCT INFRACTIONS

LEVEL 1 BEHAVIOR



These responses and interventions aim to teach and correct behavior and promote the practice of pro-social behaviors, self-discipline and healthy well-being. Teachers are encouraged to try a variety of teaching and classroom management strategies.

BEHAVIOR	CODE
Cutting class/school (first instance)	102
Attire which endangers/disrupts education process	103
Cheating or lying	106
1-10 tardies to school/class during the year	109
11-15 tardies to school/class during the year	118
16-26 tardies to school/class during	119
Inappropriate use of electronic devices	126
Violation of electronics policy	128
Caught in hall sweep	129

RANGE OF RESOLUTIONS FOR LEVEL 1		
A	Attendance Intervention Plan	111
A	Turn Around/Sensory Room	100
A	Verbal Reprimand by Admin/Warning	101
A	Special Seating	102
A	Parent Conference (In Person/Phone)	103
A	Counseling in School	104
A	Social Consequences/Withdrawal of Privileges	105
A	Strict Supervised Study (1/2 day or less with certified staff)	107
A	Detention	108
A	Behavior Contract/Plan	109
A	Use of Routing Slip	112
A	Conference with Student	113
A	Peer Mediation	316
A	Withdrawal of Computer Privileges	317
A	Restorative Practices	327
A	Referral to SBST	321

RESOLUTIONS TO CODE OF CONDUCT INFRACTIONS

LEVEL 2: A & B RESPONSES

LEVEL 2 BEHAVIOR

These responses and interventions aim to correct behavior by stressing the seriousness of the behavior while keeping the student in school. Responses might be similar to those in Level 1, or used in combination, but are often more focused and stretch beyond the immediate situation.

2

BEHAVIOR	CODE
Using profane, obscene, vulgar, lewd, or abusive language or gestures	200
Making excessive or distracting movements or noises	201
Repeatedly talking out in class our out of turn	202
Throwing objects (without physical injury to others)	203
Cutting class/school (repeated)	204
Smoking/possession of smoking materials	207
Using forged notes, excuses or passes	208
Gambling	209
Failure to serve detention	210
More than 26 tardies to school/class during the year	216
Violation of closed campus policy	217
Failure to follow sign-in procedure	221
Multiple lunching	222
Truant from Vo-Tech	226
Lying or intentionally misleading school personnel	227
Misusing property belonging to school or others	228
Refusal to follow staff directives	230
Failure to comply with school rules or procedures	231
Taking or attempting to take property belonging to others	229

RANGE OF RESOLUTIONS FOR LEVEL 2		
A	Attendance Intervention Plan	111
A	Turn Around/Sensory Room	100
A	Verbal Reprimand by Admin/Warning	101
A	Special Seating	102
A	Parent Conference (In Person/Phone)	103
A	Counseling in School	104
A	Social Consequences/Withdrawal of Privileges	105
A	Strict Supervised Study (1/2 day or less with certified staff)	107
A	Detention	108
A	Behavior Contract/Plan	109
A	Use of Routing Slip	112
A	Conference with Student	113
A	Peer Mediation	316
A	Withdrawal of Computer Privileges	317
A	Restorative Practices	327
A	Referral to SBST	321
A	Parent, Teacher & Admin Conference	202
B	Half Day or Less in School Suspension	203
B	Exclusion from Extra-Curricular Activities 1-4 Days	204
B	In-School Suspension	205
B	Teacher/Schedule Change	206
B	Referral to Outside Agency	208
B	Suspension Less Than a Day	230
B	Out of School Suspension—1 Day	231
B	Teacher Disciplinary Removal —3 Days (Pages 33-34)	024

RESOLUTIONS TO CODE OF CONDUCT INFRACTIONS

LEVEL 3 BEHAVIOR

LEVEL 3: A, B & C RESPONSES

3

These responses and interventions may involve short-term removal of a student from the environment depending on the severity of the behavior. The duration of a short-term suspension is to be limited as much as possible, while still addressing the behavior.

BEHAVIOR	CODE
Verbal confrontation	300
Leaving class/school without permission	302
Unsafe driving on school property	307
Plagiarism	317
Failure to identify yourself to an adult	318
Trespassing at or in another In-district school	319
Refusal to serve in-school suspension	326
Unauthorized presence in classroom or on school grounds	327
Physically pushing or shoving another person	330
Physically pushing through staff	331
Play fighting that escalated to physical conflict	332
Failure to follow emergency procedures	340
Posting or distributing derogatory, threatening or lewd material	342

RANGE OF RESOLUTIONS FOR LEVEL 3					
A	Attendance Intervention Plan	111	A	Parent, Teacher & Admin Conference	202
A	Turn Around/Sensory Room	100	B	Half Day or Less in School Suspension	203
A	Verbal Reprimand by Admin/Warning	101	B	Exclusion from Extra-Curricular Activities 1-4 Days	204
A	Special Seating	102	B	In-School Suspension	205
A	Parent Conference (In Person/Phone)	103	B	Teacher/Schedule Change	206
A	Counseling in School	104	B	Referral to Outside Agency	208
A	Social Consequences/Withdrawal of Privileges	105	B	Suspension Less Than a Day	230
A	Strict Supervised Study (1/2 day or less with certified staff)	107	B	Out of School Suspension 1 Day	231
A	Detention	108	B	Out of School Suspension 2 Days	232
A	Behavior Contract/Plan	109	B	Out of School Suspension 3 Days	233
A	Use of Routing Slip	112	B	Teacher Disciplinary Removal —3 Days (Pages 33-34)	024
A	Conference with Student	113	C	Out of School Suspension 4 Days	234
A	Peer Mediation	316	C	Out of School Suspension 5 Days	235
A	Withdrawal of Computer Privileges	317	C	Temporary Removal from Class	302
A	Restorative Practices	327	C	Restitution of Property or Repair of Damage	306
A	Referral to SBST	321	C	Informal Hearing	318
			C	Campus or Community Service	319
			C	Referral to Attendance Officer	322
			C	Family Home Visit	325

RESOLUTIONS TO CODE OF CONDUCT INFRACTIONS

LEVEL 4 BEHAVIOR

LEVEL 4: A , B, C & D RESPONSES

4

Responses and interventions may include removing the student from the classroom or school environment because of the seriousness of the behavior. The duration of removal should be limited as much as possible.

BEHAVIOR	CODE
Enabling access to school for unauthorized visitor	400
Threats to school	414
Sending, receiving or displaying offensive material via electronic devices	416
Possession of offensive or discriminatory material	425
Misbehavior on a school bus	428
Taking or attempting to take property belonging to others (over \$1,000 including credit and bank cards)	429
Intimidation, menacing, harassment and threats that do not rise to DASA (Unfounded DASA)	430
Knowingly possessing property that belongs to others	432
Attempting to or throwing liquids or spitting on another person	431

RANGE OF RESOLUTIONS FOR LEVEL 4				
A	Attendance Intervention Plan	111	B In-School Suspension	205
A	Turn Around/Sensory Room	100	B Teacher/Schedule Change	206
A	Verbal Reprimand by Admin/Warning	101	B Referral to Outside Agency	208
A	Special Seating	102	B Suspension Less Than a Day	230
A	Parent Conference (In Person/Phone)	103	B Out of School Suspension 1 Day	231
A	Counseling in School	104	B Out of School Suspension 2 Days	232
A	Social Consequences/ Withdrawal of Privileges	105	B Out of School Suspension 3 Days	233
A	Strict Supervised Study (1/2 day or less with certified staff)	107	B Teacher Disciplinary Removal —3 Days (Pages 33-34)	024
A	Detention	108	C Out of School Suspension 4 Days	234
A	Behavior Contract/Plan	109	C Out of School Suspension 5 Days	235
A	Use of Routing Slip	112	C Temporary Removal from Class	302
A	Conference with Student	113	C Restitution of Property or Repair of Damage	306
A	Peer Mediation	316	C Informal Hearing	318
A	Withdrawal of Computer Privileges	317	C Campus or Community Service	319
A	Restorative Practices	327	C Referral to Attendance Officer	322
A	Referral to SBST	321	C Family Home Visit	325
A	Parent, Teacher & Admin Conference	202	C 5-Day Suspension With Formal Hearing	401
B	Half Day or Less in School Suspension	203	D Referral to Appropriate Law Enforcement Agency	402
B	Exclusion from Extra-Curricular Activities 1-4 Days	204	D Counseling or Drug Treatment Program	403
			D Diversion Program	406

RESOLUTIONS TO CODE OF CONDUCT INFRACTIONS

LEVEL 5 BEHAVIOR

LEVEL 5: A, B, C & D RESPONSES

5

Responses and interventions include, but are not limited to, suspension for five days or more, short term suspension up to five days, counseling or drug treatment and/or school-based diversion.

BEHAVIOR	CODE
Physical attack on another student	540
Physical attack on a staff member	541
Arson	507
Physical altercation between two or more students	510
Forced entry into classroom, desk or locker	530
Inciting or participating in an incident or group violence	521
Vandalism, graffiti or damage to school property	531
Engaging in sexual acts at school	545
Homicide	R501
Forcible sex offenses	R502
Other sexual offenses	R503
Assault with serious physical injury	R505
Bomb Threat	R514
False Alarm	R515
Use, possession or sale of drugs	R518
Use, possession or sale of alcohol	R519
Weapons possession—routine security check	R517S
Weapons possession—other	R517O
Material incident of discrimination, harassment, bullying (Cyber) (Founded DASA)	R530C
Material incident of discrimination, harassment, bullying (Not Cyber) (Founded DASA)	R530

RANGE OF RESOLUTIONS FOR LEVEL 5					
A	Attendance Intervention Plan	111	B	In-School Suspension	205
A	Turn Around/Sensory Room	100	B	Teacher/Schedule Change	206
A	Verbal Reprimand by Admin/Warning	101	B	Referral to Outside Agency	208
A	Special Seating	102	B	Suspension Less Than a Day	230
A	Parent Conference (In Person/Phone)	103	B	Out of School Suspension 1 Day	231
A	Counseling in School	104	B	Out of School Suspension 2 Days	232
A	Social Consequences/Withdrawal of Privileges	105	B	Out of School Suspension 3 Days	233
A	Strict Supervised Study (1/2 day or less with certified staff)	107	B	Teacher Disciplinary Removal—3 Days (Pages 33-34)	024
A	Detention	108	C	Out of School Suspension 4 Days	234
A	Behavior Contract/Plan	109	C	Out of School Suspension 5 Days	235
A	Use of Routing Slip	112	C	Temporary Removal from Class	302
A	Conference with Student	113	C	Restitution of Property or Repair of Damage	306
A	Peer Mediation	316	C	Informal Hearing	318
A	Withdrawal of Computer Privileges	317	C	Campus or Community Service	319
A	Restorative Practices	327	C	Referral to Attendance Officer	322
A	Referral to SBST	321	C	Family Home Visit	325
A	Parent, Teacher & Admin Conference	202	C	5-Day Suspension With Formal Hearing	401
B	Half Day or Less in School Suspension	203	D	Referral to Appropriate Law Enforcement Agency	402
B	Exclusion from Extra-Curricular Activities 1-4 Days	204	D	Counseling or Drug Treatment Program	403
			D	Diversion Program	406

UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

The amount of due process a student is entitled to receive before a penalty is imposed depends on the penalty. In all cases, the school personnel who is authorized to impose the penalty, must inform the student of the alleged misconduct and must investigate the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty. Students who are to be given penalties other than an oral warning or written notification to their parents are entitled to additional rights before the penalty is imposed.

DETENTION

Teachers, principals, other school administrators, designees and the superintendent may use lunch, before-school and after-school detention as a penalty for student misconduct in situations where removal from the classroom or suspension would be inappropriate.

Detention is imposed only after the student's parents have been notified and arrangements for appropriate post-detention transportation home have been made.

In elementary or middle school, the teacher and/or administrator is responsible for notifying the parent of the detention and for ensuring that the parent makes arrangements for appropriate transportation home, following detention.

The school will provide a late bus to ensure appropriate transportation home following the detention.

SUSPENSION FROM TRANSPORTATION

If a student does not conduct him or herself properly on a bus, the bus driver is expected to bring the misconduct to the school principal's attention.

Students who exhibit dangerous or chronically problematic behavior on the bus may have their riding privileges suspended by the school principal, superintendent or their designees. In such cases, the student's parent will become responsible for getting their child to and from school safely. Should the suspension from transportation lead to school absence, the district will make appropriate arrangements to provide for the student's education. The student suspended from transportation is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law 3214. The student and parent, however, will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the school principal or the principal's designee to discuss the conduct and the penalty. An SBST meeting will be conducted to develop an intervention plan.

TEACHER DISCIPLINARY REMOVAL OF DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS

A student's behavior can affect a teacher's ability to teach and make it difficult for other students in the classroom to learn. In most instances, the classroom teacher can control a student's behavior and maintain or restore control over the classroom by using good classroom management techniques such as a brief calming/sensory break in the classroom or an alternative setting. The goal is to give the student an opportunity to regain his or her self-control in order to return and be ready to learn. **These actions do not constitute a disciplinary removal.**

In the event that a student is removed, the teacher should provide the student and parent with an explanation as to why he or she is being removed and an opportunity to explain his or her version of the relevant events.

UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

TEACHER DISCIPLINARY REMOVAL OF DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS—CONTINUED

If the student poses a danger to self or others, the teacher may order the student to be removed immediately. In the case of serious misconduct, the teacher may request that the principal exclude the student from class pursuant to subdivision 3 of Section 3214 of the Education Law—and not be re-admitted until after the principal, parents and teacher have conferred jointly.

The teacher must complete the district’s “Disciplinary Removal” form and meet with the school principal or designee as soon as possible—**but no later than the end of the school day**—to explain the circumstances of the removal and present the removal form. The school principal or designee may overturn the removal of a student from class if:

- The charges against the student are not supported by substantial evidence.
- The student’s removal is otherwise in violation of law, including the code of conduct.

The principal or designee may overturn a removal at any point between receiving the referral form issued by the teacher and the close of business on the day following the 48-hour period for the informal conference, if one is requested.

No student removed from the classroom by the teacher will be permitted to return to the classroom until the principal makes a final determination or the period of removal ends, whichever comes first.

Any student removed from the classroom by the teacher shall be offered continued educational programming and activities until he or she is permitted to return to the classroom.

The principal will keep a record—on the district form—of all student removals and ensure the SBST has the opportunity to evaluate the root cause and intervene.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

School principals and the superintendent are authorized to place students, who would otherwise be suspended from school as a result of a code of conduct violation, in “in-school suspension.” A student subjected to in-school suspension is not entitled to a full hearing, pursuant to Education Law 3214. The student and parent, however, will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the principal imposing the in-school suspension, to discuss the conduct and penalty involved. They will also be provided with academic work, from their classroom teachers, to complete.

STRICT SUPERVISED STUDY

Strict supervised study may be used when a student is sent to an alternative location for half a day or less for a time out period. The location must be staffed with a certified staff member such as a teacher, teaching assistant or social worker.

RE-ENTRY PROCESS

A re-entry meeting should occur for any student suspended from school. This allows an opportunity to engage in a restorative conversation as well as to determine whether additional supports may be needed to support the student’s success.

UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

- Suspension from school shall be imposed in accordance with the requirements of applicable law and this code of conduct.
- Suspension from school is a severe penalty which may be imposed only upon students whose violent actions or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, moral character, physical or mental health or welfare of others. The board of education retains authority to suspend students, but places primary responsibility for the suspension of students with the superintendent and school principals.
- All staff members must immediately report and refer violent incidents to the school principal or the superintendent as a violation of the code of conduct. All recommendations and referrals shall be made in writing unless the conditions underlying the recommendation or referral warrant immediate action.
- The superintendent or principal, upon receiving a recommendation or referral for suspension, shall gather the facts relative to the matter and record them for subsequent presentation, if necessary.

SHORT TERM (5 DAYS OR LESS) SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL

- When the superintendent or principal proposes to suspend a student for misconduct, for 5 days or less, pursuant to Education Law 3214(3), the suspending authority must immediately notify the student orally.
- If the student denies the misconduct, the suspending authority must provide an explanation of the basis for the proposed suspension. The suspending authority must also notify the student's parents, in writing, that the student may be suspended from school. The written notice must be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or some other means that is reasonably calculated to assure receipt of the notice within 24 hours of the decision to propose suspension—at the last known address for the parent. Whenever possible, the notice should also be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a telephone number for the purpose of contacting the parent.
- The notice shall provide a description of the charges against the student and the incident for which the suspension is proposed, and shall inform the parent of the right to request an immediate informal conference with the principal.
- Translation services will be offered at all stages of the process.
- The notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place **before** the student is suspended, unless the student's presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons, property or an on-going threat of disruption to the academic process. If the student's presence does pose such a danger or threat of disruption, the notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon after the suspension as is reasonably practical.

UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

SHORT TERM (5 DAYS OR LESS) SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL—CONTINUED

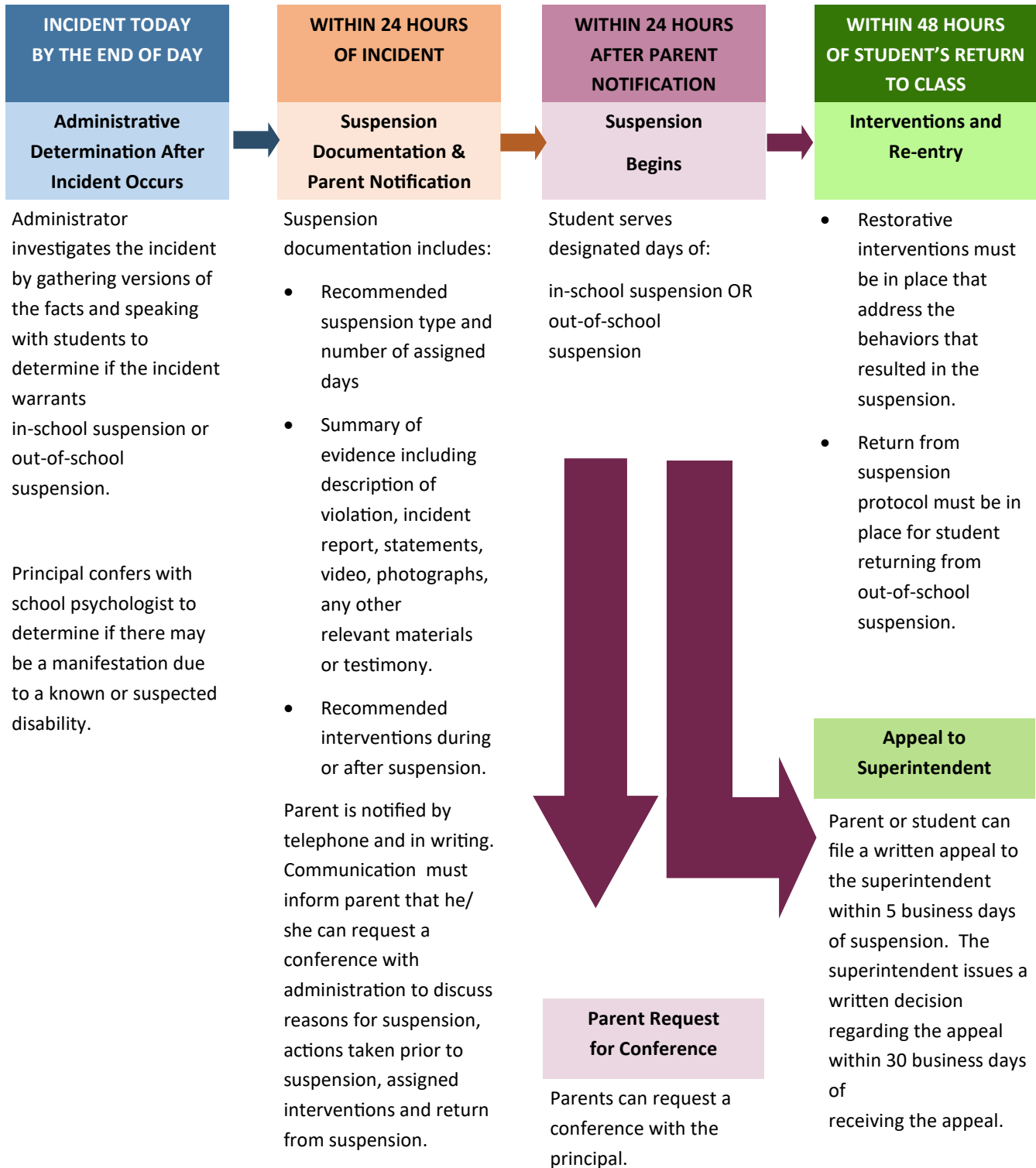
- After the conference, the principal shall promptly advise the parent in writing of the decision.
- The principal shall advise the parent that if they are not satisfied with the decision and wish to pursue the matter, they must file a written appeal to the superintendent within five (5) business days, unless they can show extraordinary circumstances precluding them from doing so.
- The superintendent shall issue a written decision regarding the appeal within thirty (30) business days of receiving the appeal.
- If the parent is not satisfied with the superintendent's decision, the parent must file a written appeal to the board of education with the clerk of the board within ten (10) business days of the date of the superintendent's decision, unless they can show extraordinary circumstances precluding them from doing so. Only final decisions of the board may be appealed to the commissioner within thirty (30) days of the decision. The district may, in its discretion, continue to impose the suspension during the pendency of any appeal.

LONG-TERM (MORE THAN 5 DAYS) SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL

- When the superintendent or principal determines that a suspension for more than five (5) days may be warranted, he or she shall give reasonable notice to the student and the student's parent of the right to a fair hearing.
- At the hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, the right to question witnesses against him/her and the right to produce witnesses and other evidence on his/her behalf.
- The superintendent shall personally hear and determine the proceeding, or may, in his/her decision, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer shall be authorized to administer oaths and to issue subpoenas in conjunction with the proceeding before them. A record of the hearing shall be maintained but no stenographic transcript should be required. Tape recording shall be deemed a satisfactory record. The hearing officer shall make findings of fact and recommendations as to the appropriate measure of discipline to the superintendent. The report of the hearing officer shall be advisory only and the superintendent may accept all or any part thereof.
- The superintendent shall render a written decision.
- Appeal of the decision of the superintendent may be made to the board of education. The board will make its decision based solely upon the record before it. All appeals to the board must be in writing and submitted to the clerk of the board within thirty (30) business days of the date of the superintendent's decision, unless the parents can show extraordinary circumstances precluding them from doing so.
- The board may adopt or reject, in whole or in part, the decision of the superintendent.
- Final decision of the board may be appealed to the commissioner within thirty (30) days of the decision. The district may, in its discretion, continue to impose the suspension during the pendency of any appeal.

NOTE: When a student of any age is removed from class by a teacher or when a student of compulsory education age is suspended from school pursuant to Education Law 3214, the district will take immediate steps to provide alternative means of instruction for the student.

SHORT-TERM IN-SCHOOL OR OUT-OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROCEDURES



LONG-TERM (MORE THAN 5 DAYS) SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL

Option of other pathway/diversion at any time during the process



DIVERSION (Grades 6-12)

Practices that allow educators to address disciplinary matters as opportunities for learning instead of punishment are far more successful in changing a student's behavior than a reliance on increasing punitive measures. The diversion process is an alternative pathway that a student and parent can choose when a student has been referred to a superintendent's hearing.

If a parent opts for diversion, they plea "no contest" to the discipline charges and provide written consent for their child to be assessed using the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI) and/or the Youth Adolescent Screening Instrument (YASI).

Students who have, or are suspected of having, a disability must have a manifestation determination meeting held prior to the start of the diversion process. If manifestation is determined, the student is referred back to the committee on special education (CSE) but can still access diversion services.

Once a student has been tested on the MAYSI and/or YASI by a school clinician (social worker or mental health counselor), the parent and student participate in an emergency response team meeting (ERT) along with the school administrator, school counselor and a parent liaison. The director of pupil personnel services (or designee) charts the ERT. The team examines the testing results and attempts to identify root causes for behavior, and matching evidence-based interventions. A case plan is developed along with decisions made regarding whether further suspension is warranted and the abeyance (early return to school) conditions.

Diversion is a diagnostic and prescriptive process, using evidence-based treatments designed to identify and address underlying causes for behavior and to reduce recidivism. Evidence-based interventions include:

- Strengthening Families
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)
- Trauma Focused Cognitive Therapy
- Anger Replacement Training (ART)
- Family Functional Therapy (FFT)
- Restorative Practices/Circles
- T4C Thinking for Change
- Substance Abuse Evaluation & Treatment

ABEYANCE

Abeyance conditions are sometimes assigned to students who receive a long-term suspension but do not opt for the diversion pathway. Completion of abeyance conditions potentially allow for a student to return to school from suspension sooner, however the conditions assigned are not evidence-based. They are the administrator and PPS team's best guess at what might help the student so that they don't have another incident. These include:

- Peer Mediation
- Fire Prevention
- Mentoring
- Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan
- Check and Connect System with Trusted Adult
- Teen Intervene
- Interactive Journaling

DIVERSION

Youth referred to a Superintendent’s Hearing are given the opportunity to enter an **alternative pathway** that provides the opportunity to access mental and behavioral health services and potentially reduce the amount of time that they are removed from school. If after discussion of this process (including a parent and/or guardian) this option is refused, the student may choose to opt-in later in the process.

A social worker will present the youth and his or her guardians with the opportunity to consent to the alternative pathway within **48 hours** of the initial offense.

Students who opt in to the alternative pathway will receive a full MAYSI screen (a screening for mental health tool to identify possible needs).

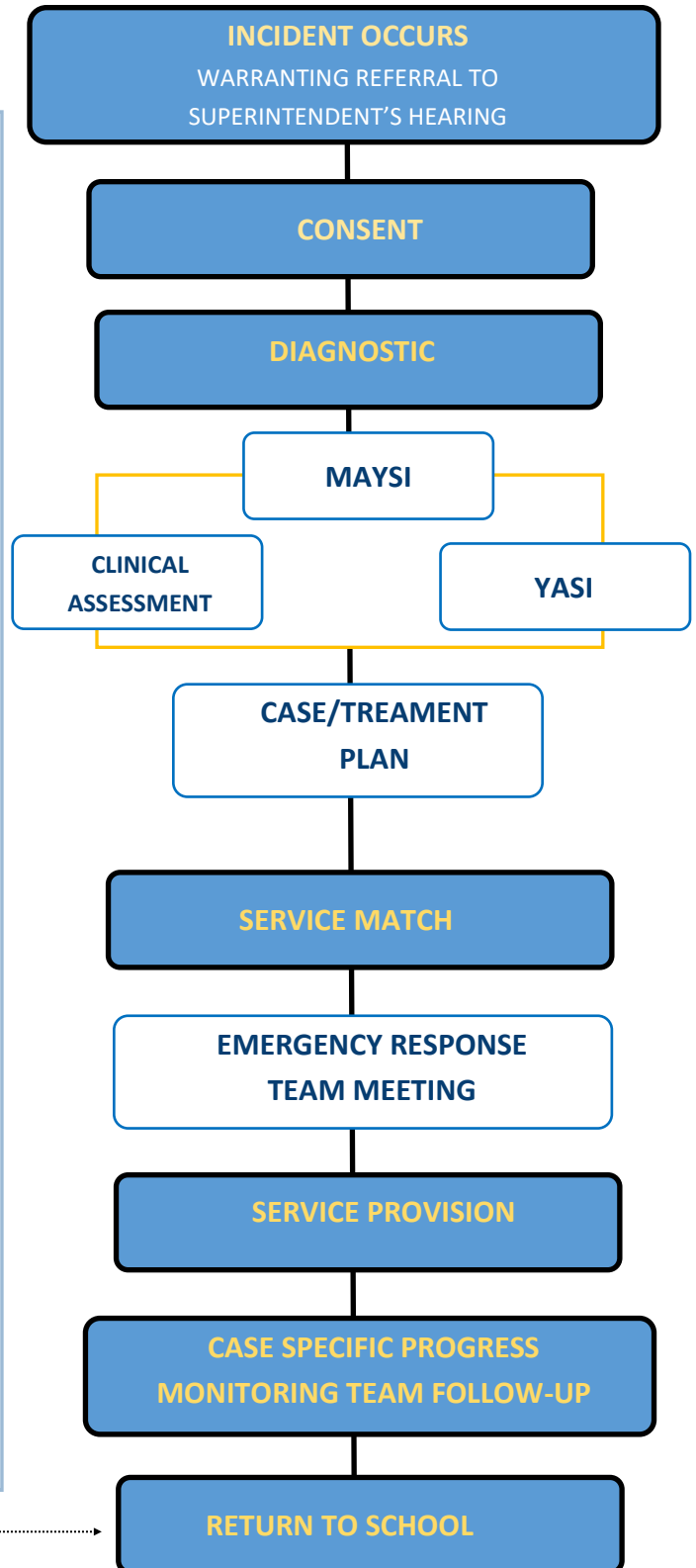
If a youth is identified as having mental health needs by the MAYSI, he or she will be referred to a clinician for a clinical assessment.

If the youth does not display mental health needs on the MAYSI, he or she will receive the YASI (risk, needs and protective factors assessment) to inform case planning.

Students who are referred to a clinical assessment based on the MAYSI will receive diagnostic information and case/treatment plan recommendations from the clinician.

Students who receive the YASI will receive case planning services from a school social worker. Either the clinician or the school social worker will match/refer the student to appropriate community-based service.

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) will create an agreement with the student that links compliance with recommended services to reduced time out-of-school. An extended ERT will continue monitoring progress and determine when the youth is ready to return to school.



RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER SUSPENSION

Plans are created by the home team and Washington Irving Education Center (WIEC) team to ensure that the student has care, intervention and support needed for successful re-entry to school. Every plan will be customized for the student based on what he or she needs to be educationally successful and will be an extension of the treatment the student has been receiving while on suspension.

It is important the student continues to be monitored. Ensuring that the student does not repeat the behavior that put him or her on suspension (recidivism) is a critical component of the planning and support provided.



MINIMUM PERIODS OF SUSPENSION

STUDENTS WHO BRING WEAPONS TO SCHOOL

Any student found guilty of bringing a weapon onto school property will be subject to a suspension from school for one calendar year. Before being suspended, the student will have an opportunity for a hearing pursuant to Education Law 3214. A weapon is a gun, knife, explosive or incendiary bomb or other dangerous instrument capable of causing death or physical injury. For more examples, see glossary on page 54.

STUDENTS WHO COMMIT VIOLENT ACTS; OTHER THAN BRINGING A WEAPON TO SCHOOL

Any student who is found to have committed a violent act, other than bringing a weapon onto school property, will be subject to suspension from school for at least five (5) days. If the proposed penalty is the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for an informal conference given to all students subject to a short-term suspension. If the proposed penalty exceeds the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for a hearing given to all students subject to a long-term suspension.

THE SUPERINTENDENT HAS THE AUTHORITY TO MODIFY THE LENGTH OF SUSPENSION ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS

In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the superintendent may consider the following:

- Student's age
- Student's grade
- Student's prior disciplinary record
- Superintendent's belief that other forms of discipline may be more effective
- Input from parents, teacher, and/or others
- Other extenuating circumstances

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



STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The procedures relating to the discipline of students with (or suspected) disabilities requires that school administrators work closely with their school psychologist and the committee on special education to consider whether or not the behavior is a ‘manifestation’ of the student’s disability. How this question is answered affects how the discipline should be implemented.

The principal has the authority to suspend a student with a disability for a period, not to exceed 5 consecutive school days, and not to exceed the amount of time that a non-disabled student would be subject to suspension for the same behavior.

The superintendent may order the placement of a student with a disability into an interim alternate educational placement (IAES), another setting or suspension for up to 10 consecutive school days for the same behavior, if the superintendent determines that the student warrants a suspension (in accordance with Education Law 3214). The duration of any such suspension or removal shall not exceed the amount of time that non-disabled students would be subject to suspension for the same behavior. The superintendent may order additional suspensions, of not more than 10 consecutive school days, in the same year, for separate incidents of misconduct.

Any suspension of a student with a disability, for more than 10 school days, over the course of the school year, shall be referred to the committee on special education for placement in an IAES during the time of such suspensions - when the suspensions constitute a disciplinary change in placement. If the CSE finds that the behavior leading to the suspension is related to the student’s disability, no further suspension may be imposed, and the student must return to the placement he or she was in prior to the suspension, unless:

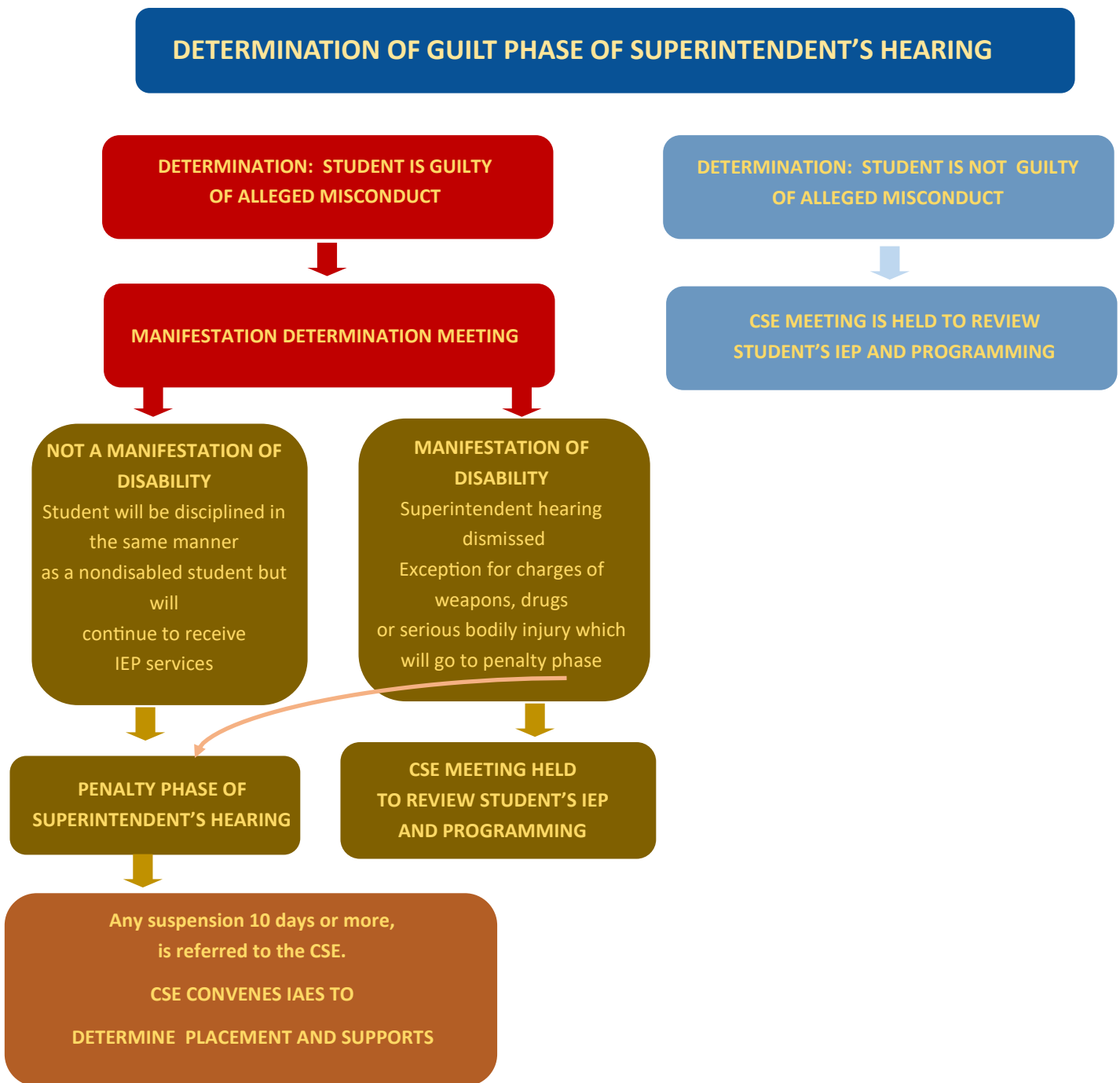
- 1) the CSE decides to recommend a new placement with which the parent agrees; or
- 2) the behavior involved drugs, weapons, or inflicted serious bodily injury.

There is an exception when the student is found guilty of possessing, using, selling or soliciting illegal drugs, using or possessing a weapon or inflicting serious bodily injury. In this case, the superintendent may suspend the student for up to 45 school days even if the manifestation team finds that the behavior leading to the suspension was related to the student’s disability.

During a superintendent’s hearing, if the manifestation team finds that the behavior leading to the student’s suspension is **not** a manifestation of the student’s disability, the student will be referred back to the hearing for the penalty phase. The superintendent may impose the same period of suspension applicable to a non-disabled student.

If the superintendent concludes, based upon the evidence presented at the hearing, that maintaining the student in his or her current educational placement is dangerous, the matter will be referred to the CSE to determine whether additional steps can be reasonably taken to minimize the potential for harm. If the CSE is unable to identify additional supports or services to eliminate the danger, and the CSE is unable to reach a mutually agreeable alternative plan to continue the student's education elsewhere, the district director of pupil personnel services may—after consultation with the superintendent—initiate an expedited hearing or petition a court to seek permission to enforce a unilateral removal of the student.

PROCEDURE FOR FORMAL HEARING OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OR PRESUMED DISABILITIES



A student will not be a student presumed to have a disability for discipline purposes if the district either:

1. conducted an individual evaluation and determined that the student is not a student with a disability, or
2. The parent of the student has refused services, or
3. The parent of the student has not allowed an evaluation of the student pursuant to Section 200.4 of the commissioner's regulations.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

During a superintendent’s hearing, the hearing officer will ask whether the student is “suspected of having a disability.” If the parent or school team answer, “yes,” an administrator from the pupil personnel services department will be called upon to help make this determination, using one or more of the following criteria:

1. The parent of the student has expressed concern to the school district personnel **in writing** that the student is in need of special education;
2. The behavior or performance of the student demonstrates the need for special education, as defined by federal and state law and regulations;
3. The parent of the student has requested an individual evaluation of the student for special education services;
4. A teacher of the student, or other staff, has expressed concern about the behavior or performance of the student to the director of special education or to other school district personnel.

If it is determined that the student may be “suspected of having a disability,” the student will be afforded the same protections as students with disabilities and shall be evaluated. Eligibility will be determined by the committee on special education in an expedited manner.



THREAT ASSESSMENT

A threat assessment is an approach to violence prevention. It is a way to analyze a wide range of situations. It is conducted when a person(s) threatens to commit a violent act or engages in behavior that appears to threaten an act of violence. The process involves evaluating the threat and the circumstances surrounding it in order to uncover any evidence that indicates the threat is likely to be carried out.

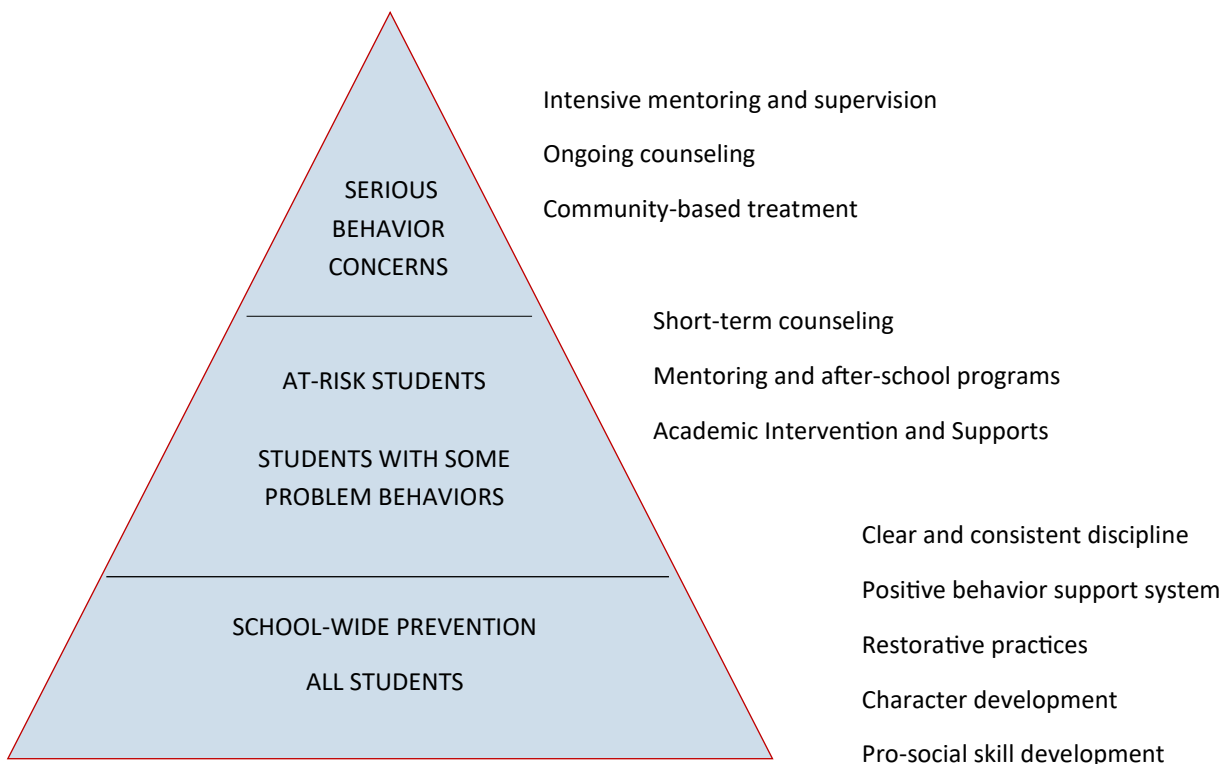
SCSD staff are trained in the Virginia School Threat Assessment Guidelines (VSTAG), an evidence-based model.

What is a threat? A threat is an expression of intent to harm someone. Threats can be spoken, written, posted on social media, made through a phone call or expressed in other ways. They can be direct, indirect or implied. When in doubt about whether a behavior is a threat, we evaluate it as a threat.

There are a number of steps that take place when conducting a threat assessment. It is necessary to form the threat assessment team, consider the context, investigate, determine the facts, gather information from multiple sources and more. Through the assessment, it will be determined whether there is intention to carry out the threat or not.

Why do we need threat assessment? Schools need a safe, rational approach to evaluating students and others who demonstrate potentially dangerous behavior. Media attention to high profile incidents resulted with the public becoming sensitized and misperceptions about the likelihood of violence in schools. The fear of school shootings drew an extreme reaction and resulted in an expansion of zero tolerance policies. Under zero tolerance, students could be automatically suspended even if the violation was accidental or posed no serious threat to others. As such, children would be suspended from school for bringing to school a tiny plastic gun or pointing a finger like a gun.

A threat assessment allows for a more flexible and less punitive response. When a student's threat does not indicate a substantive intent to harm anyone, the incident can be resolved without significant disruption of the student's education. **Threat Assessment is part of a comprehensive approach.**



STUDENT DRESS CODE

(Policy #7312)

The Schenectady City School District is committed to providing a safe, secure, orderly and appropriate environment for learning. This includes the responsibility of ensuring a student's dress, grooming, and overall appearance is safe and does not disrupt or interfere with the educational process. A student's style of dress may reflect individual choice but must be within the constraints of reasonable rules and appropriate standards consistent with an environment that promotes a positive learning atmosphere free of disruptions and distractions. Students and their parents are responsible for adhering to the district dress code.



To equitably enforce the district dress code students must follow these guidelines and expectations:

- a) All students and parents must be notified of the policy at the beginning of each school year.
- b) Clothing, attire or grooming may not depict or advocate violence, criminal activity, use of alcohol or drugs, pornography, or hate speech.

Specifically, the following is prohibited:

- 1) Clothing that depicts, advertises or advocates the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other controlled substances.
 - 2) Clothing that depicts pornography, nudity or sexual acts.
 - 3) Clothing that depicts hate speech or symbols targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation or any other protected classification.
- c) Attire (including jewelry) must not pose a threat to the health or safety of any other student or staff.
- d) Students must wear a top with fabric on the front and sides, including opaque (non- see through) fabric over breasts; a bottom that covers the genitals, buttocks and all portions of underwear except the waist band.
- e) Clothing that masks a student's identity is prohibited.
- f) Appropriate footwear must be worn always; specifically, footwear that allows students to walk comfortably throughout the building and move quickly in the event of an emergency.

To equitably enforce the district dress code, all students, school staff, teachers and administrators are expected to follow these guidelines:

- a) All school staff, students, administrators and parents must be notified of the dress code policy at the beginning of each school year.
- b) If a student's clothing is in violation of the dress code, they will be required to modify their appearance to gain compliance with the policy.
- c) When staff or administrators address a grooming or dress violation, they should present options for obtaining appropriate clothing (e.g. school clothing closet). Where possible, students should not be required to wear school-owned replacement garments as a disciplinary measure.
- d) Chronic dress or grooming violations will be subject to further disciplinary actions.
- e) SCSD reserves the right to revisit and make modifications to the dress code if necessary.
- f) Enforcement must accommodate clothing worn by students as an expression of religious beliefs (head scarves, for example) and worn by students with disabilities (protective helmets, for example).

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

(Policy #7318)

SCSD has created a policy to govern the possession and use of personal electronic devices on school premises, at school-sponsored activities and on school transportation.

Personal electronic device (PED) refers to a privately-owned device that is used for audio, video, text communication or any other type of computer-like instrument. **Personal electronic devices may include but are not limited to:**

- Existing and emerging mobile communication systems and smart technologies (cellular phones, iPhones, Smartphones, internet-enabled phones, etc.)
- Personal Digital Assistants (PDA), palm organizers, pocket PCs etc.
- Handheld entertainment systems (video games, CD players, compact DVD players, MP3 players, iPods, earphones, etc.)
- Portable internet devices (mobile messengers, iPads, etc.)
- Current or emerging wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems that can be used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording, and information transmitting/receiving/storing, etc.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

Personal electronic devices **may not be used** by students for any disruptive purpose including phone calls, text messaging, taking photos and videos or any other functions during the regular school day. Students may possess PEDs on their person but they must be powered off and out of sight in backpacks/purses or lockers. It is not permissible for PEDs to be on “silent” or “vibrate” during this time.

HIGH SCHOOL

Students are permitted to possess and use personal electronic devices only as follows:

- Before and after the regular school day
- At lunch time
- As directed by a teacher for educational purposes

Students may not use PEDs at other times during the school day. They may possess PEDs on their person but they must be powered off and out of sight in backpacks/purses or lockers.

- PEDs shall not be used in any way that threatens, humiliates, harasses or intimidates students, school personnel or visitors or otherwise violates district policies and regulations or local, state or federal laws. Students are prohibited from sending, sharing, viewing or possessing pictures, text messages, emails or other material of a sexually explicit nature on their PEDs while on school premises, at school-sponsored activities or on school transportation. Further, students are prohibited from using the camera, video or recording functions of their personal electronic devices on school premises or at school-sponsored activities where another student or individual has an expectation of privacy, including, but not limited to, locker rooms, counseling sessions, restrooms, dressing areas, etc.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Personal Electronic Devices - Continued

- Students are responsible for the security of the personal electronic devices brought to school. The district is not responsible for lost, stolen, damaged or unauthorized use of personal electronic devices. Further, the district is not liable to any student or his or her parent or guardian for any claims, losses, damages, suits, expenses or costs of any kind arising out of or related to the use or possession of a student's personal electronic device.
- In addition to the potential disciplinary action, a student who violates this policy may have his or her personal electronic device confiscated.
- Any building staff person who confiscates a PED will provide it to the school administrator immediately. The school administrator will hold the PED until the student's parent or guardian makes an appointment to collect the item.

Any violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action as set forth in the code of conduct.

If applicable, violations of this policy may be referred to law enforcement. Additionally, a student may be prohibited from possessing a personal electronic device on school premises, at school-sponsored activities or on school transportation.



ATHLETIC & EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students who participate in athletics and extra-curricular clubs and activities should recognize that they have an obligation to themselves, their team and club members, coaches, teachers, advisors, school and community to strive for excellence.

Respect for one's health and physical development must be an integral part of daily living. Every athlete and participant in extra-curricular activities and clubs must be in good standing as a school community citizen. Any student who serves an in-school or out-of-school suspension will be ineligible to attend clubs, practice and/or compete on that day. A student may be suspended from the team or club for:

- Demonstrating an improper attitude toward the community, school, administration, staff, coaches or fellow students.
- Inappropriate behavior on cyber space (photos, videos). This may result in suspension from the team, activity, or club.
- Hazing in any form. Hazing is strictly forbidden by New York State Law and district policy. Participation in or failure to report any hazing will result in disciplinary review and possible suspension and/or dismissal from the team or club.
- Violation of criminal law. This will result in suspension from practice and competition pending a hearing between the principal and athletic director.
- Possession of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other controlled substances.

The following applies to students, managers, and athletes:

The possession of alcohol, tobacco in any form, marijuana or other controlled substances will result in the following:

- First offense will result in a suspension for 20% of the total sports season. The student must report to all practices and be recommended to attend substance abuse counseling.
- Second offense will result in dismissal for remainder of the sports season and attendance at substance abuse counseling will be recommended.
- Third offense will result in the removal from interscholastic sports for the remainder of the school year.



REPORTING VIOLATIONS

All SCSD personnel who are authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to do so in a prompt, fair and lawful manner. School personnel who are not authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to their supervisor.

Any student observing another student in possession of a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property or at a school function is encouraged to report this information immediately to any staff member or administrator. The school principal or designee will consult with local law enforcement regarding violations that constitute a crime.

Notification to law enforcement may be made by telephone, followed by a letter mailed on the same day as the call is made. The notification must identify the student and explain the conduct that violated the code of conduct and constituted a crime.

APPEALS PROCESS

If, following a superintendent's hearing, a student has been found guilty of violating the district code of conduct, the student's parent or guardian can appeal the decision and penalty. To appeal the superintendent's decision, the parent or guardian must:

- Make the appeal to the board of education in writing within 30 days after receiving the written decision from the superintendent.
- Submit the letter to the Schenectady City School District Clerk of the Board.

If the appeal to the board of education is denied, the parent or guardian may appeal the decision to the New York State Commissioner of Education within 30 days from the time the decision is received. To do so, the parent or guardian must file and serve a notice of petition, a petition, and any supporting affidavit(s). New evidence may not be submitted in support of an appeal.

If the petition is denied, the decision can be reviewed by a New York State court.

A student cannot be punished for filing an appeal.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Students and parents have the right to file a complaint if they believe that there has been a violation of their due process rights have been violated.

PROCESS FOR MAKING A COMPLAINT

- 1) Any student or parent with a concern about a discipline-related decision or response should discuss the concern with the person who made the decision.
- 2) If the student or parent is not satisfied, a verbal or written complaint should be made to the school principal.
- 3) If the student or parent is still not satisfied, they should contact the assistant to the superintendent.
- 4) If the student or parent is still not satisfied after following the above chain of contact, the superintendent should be contacted.

If a complaint is submitted through Let's Talk, it will be directed to the appropriate person for handling.

Complaints can be made through the SCSD's "Let's Talk." You can access "Let's Talk" from the SCSD website at www.schenectady.k12.ny.us



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism, copying another's work, altering records and cheating by providing, receiving or viewing answers to quiz or test items or independent assignments, using text, documents, notes, or notebooks during tests without permission from a staff member.

Arson: Starting a fire or destruction of property as a result of starting a fire.

Physical Attack on Students: A student or students set upon another student in a forceful, hostile or aggressive way with or without provocation.

Behavior Violations: Student behaviors that are inappropriate in school, unacceptable or that warrant response, interventions and consequences.

Bomb Threat: The making of threats or providing false information, in writing, in person, on the phone, including text message or other means, about the presence of explosive materials or devices on school property, without cause.

Bullying: Repeated intentional acts done willfully, knowingly and with deliberation, by an individual(s), that targets and harms another person physically or emotionally. Bullying is characterized by an imbalance of power between two students.

Child Pornography: Sexually explicit images of children younger than 17 years of age.

Consequence: A result or response that follows an action.

Criminal Behavior: Any behavior that is considered a violation against municipal, state or federal laws.

Damage to Property: Damage, destruction or defacement of property belonging to the school or others.

Dignity Act Coordinator: An employee designated by the board who ensures full compliance with the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) and is trained to address issues in areas protected by the law. Dignity Act Coordinators manage documentation, processing, actions and interventions enforcing DASA.

Discrimination: Unjust or prejudicial treatment toward any student by a student(s) and/or employee(s) on school property or at a school function including, but not limited to, discrimination based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, sex, or any other protected class.

Electronic Technology: Devices and equipment such as cell phones, computer, tablets.

Ethnic Group: A group of people who identify with each other through a common heritage including language, culture, and often a shared or common religion and/or ideology that stresses ancestry.

Gender: Actual or perceived sex and includes a person's gender identity or expression.

Gender Expression: The way in which we express gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, activities, voice or mannerisms.

Gender Identity: The way in which people self-identify as being male or female. Gender identity is internal and not necessarily visible to others.

Harassment: The creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would interfere with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits or mental, emotional or physical well-being or threats, intimidation or abuse that cause or would be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety.

Hazing: A specific form of harassment among students defined as any humiliating or dangerous activity expected of a student in order to join a group or be accepted by a formal or informal group, regardless of the student's willingness to participate. Hazing includes, but is not limited to, any activity that intimidates or threatens a student with ostracism or adversely affects the health or safety of the student; or any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task or act that is a violation of state or federal law of district policies/regulations.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Illegal Drug: A controlled substance (does not include a controlled substance legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health care professional)

Inciting or Participating in a Disturbance: Causing a large disruption to the atmosphere of order and discipline in the school that is necessary for learning (such as a riot).

Interventions: Specific programs, strategies, restorative practices, skill-building sessions and individual and group counseling activities, among other things, that enable students to reflect on behavior, attitudes, needs and feeling; learn replacement behaviors and habits, work through personal obstacles, resolve conflict and develop goals and plans to get back on track.

Leveled Consequences and Interventions: There are five levels of behaviors and possible responses. Level one aims at responding with strategies in the classroom to teach and correct behaviors (such as unexcused tardies, caught in hall sweep etc.) The consequences intensify as the levels increase. For example, level five behaviors, ones that are dangerous behaviors and/or create risk of injury, can result in more severe consequences such as suspension.

National Origin: A person's country of birth or ancestor's country of birth.

Parent: Biological, adoptive, foster parent, guardian or person of record in parental relation to a student.

Persistent: Repeated over a period of days after interventions have been implemented and given ample time to be effective.

Physical Aggression: Behavior causing or threatening physical harm toward others including, but not limited to, hitting, kicking, biting and shoving.

Physical Altercation Between Two or More Students: Physical aggression (use of physical force) that may or may not result in injury.

Race: Group of persons related by common descent or heredity.

Racial Harassment: A negative opinion or verbal expression toward an individual or group of persons who possess common physical characteristics (color of skin, eyes, hair and facial features genetically transmitted by descent and heredity) that distinguish them as a distinct division of humankind, based on these physical characteristics.

Reckless Endangerment: Conduct that creates a substantial risk of serious physical injury or death to another person.

Religion: Either religious or spiritual belief or preference.

Religious Practice: Attending worship services, praying, wearing religious garb or symbols, displaying religious objects, adhering to certain dietary rules, proselytizing or other forms of religious expression or refraining from certain activities.

Restorative Practices: An approach to resolving conflict and preventing harm. Restorative approaches enable those who have been harmed to convey the impact of the harm to those responsible, and for those responsible to acknowledge this impact and take steps to make it right.

School Function: Any school-sponsored extracurricular event or activity. This includes any event, occurring on or off school property, sanctioned or approved by the district including, but not limited to, off-site athletic events, school dances, plays, musical productions, field trips or other district-sponsored trips.

School Property: Outside grounds, all structures, and any space within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot or land contained within the real property boundary line of a public elementary or secondary school.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Serious Bodily Injury: Bodily injury which involves a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or mental faculty.

Tardiness: Arriving late to school or class.

Theft: Taking or attempting to take property of another person or institution without permission or knowledge of the owner, with the intent to deprive the owner of its use. Robbery includes obtaining or attempting to obtain money, goods, services or information from another by physical force or violence, coordinated violence or intimidation using a dangerous instrument or weapon. Theft, possession or transfer of stolen goods includes the act of possessing transferring the property of another without the consent of the owner.

Threat Assessment: A process used to evaluate the risk posed by a student or another person, typically as a response to an actual or perceived threat concerning behavior.

Trespassing: Being on school property without permission, including while suspended.

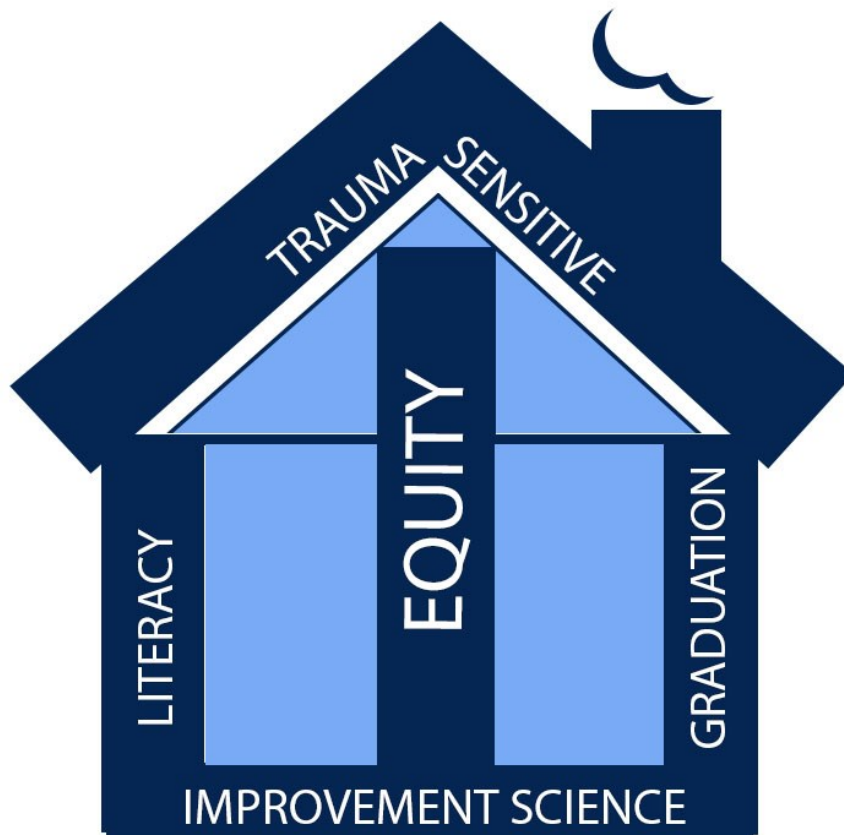
Using or Possessing: Consuming alcohol, drugs or inhalants or in possession of these substances on school property or at school functions.

Weapon: A firearm as defined in 18 USC 921 for purposes of the Gun-Free Schools Act. It also means any other gun, BB gun, pistol, revolver, shotgun, rifle, machine gun disguised gun, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, gravity knife, brass knuckles, slingshot, metal knuckle knife, box cutter, cane sword, electronic dart gun, sandbag or sand club, loaded or blank cartridges, Kung Fu star, electronic stun gun, pepper spray or other noxious spray.



Vision

Schenectady City Schools will be a continually improving school district dedicated to excellence in teaching and learning, equity, engagement and efficiency.



SOURCES

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
Alliance for Excellent Education
Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines, Dewey Cornell
Hemphill S.A. & Hargreaves T., School Suspension: A Resource for Teachers and School Administrators, Centre for Adolescent Youth
Montgomery County Public Schools Code of Conduct, 2017-2018
Restorative Practices Handbook by Costello, Wachtel and Watchel
Syracuse City School District Code of Conduct, 2016-2017
Teaching Tolerance, Code of Conduct, A Guide to Responsive Discipline

