

CODE OF CLASSROOM CONDUCT

A. Statement of Purpose

The district recognizes and accepts its responsibility to create, foster and maintain an orderly and safe class environment, conducive to teaching and to the learning process. Every member of the school community is expected to cooperate in this central mission. Staff, including administrators and teachers, must use their training, experience and authority to create schools and classes where effective learning is possible. Students are expected to come to school, and to every class, ready and willing to learn. Parents/guardians should be aware of their children's activities, performance and behavior in school, and are asked to cooperate and consult with the school to prevent or address problems.

The district has a legal duty to make its schools as free as possible of the dangers of violence, weapons, drugs and other behaviors that are harmful to the educational environment. But equally important, the district owes its students, as a group, the opportunity to attend school as free as reasonably possible from unnecessary and unwarranted distraction and disruption, particularly by those relatively few students who, for whatever reason, are unwilling, unready or unable to avail themselves of the opportunity for an education. A student who engages in conduct or behavior as outlined in this code may be removed from class by a teacher, aide, playground supervisor, or other educational professional and placed in an alternative setting in accordance with established procedures. Such removal serves the multiple purposes of eliminating (or minimizing) the disruption, of reinforcing the district's strong commitment to an appropriate educational environment, and of allowing a "cooling off" period, for disciplinary or other reasons, short of suspension or expulsion.

Removal from class under the code of classroom conduct does not prohibit the district from pursuing or implementing other disciplinary measures, including but not limited to detentions, suspension or expulsion, for the conduct for which the student was removed.

B. Definitions

The following definitions of terms shall apply for purposes of implementing this code:

1. "Student" means any student enrolled in the district.
2. "Class" is any class, meeting or activity that students attend, or in which they participate while in school under the control or direction of the district. This definition of "class" includes, without limitation, regular classes, special classes, resource room sessions, labs, library time, counseling groups, assemblies, study halls, lunch or recess.
3. A "teacher" is any certified instructor, counselor, nurse or administrator in the employ of the district.
4. The "teacher of that class" means the regularly assigned teacher of the class or any teacher assigned to teach, monitor, assist in or oversee the class. This definition includes, without limitation, any assigned substitute teacher, proctor, monitor or group leader. Where there is more than one teacher in a class, any teacher may remove a student from that class, upon informing the other teacher(s) of his/her intent to do so. It is advisable, though not absolutely required, that all teachers of a class agree to the removal of the student.

5. A “building administrator” means a principal of a school, or other individual duly designated by the building administrator or District Administrator.

C. Grounds for Student Removal from Class

Except as otherwise provided in Sections F and G below, a student may be removed from class for any conduct or behavior which:

1. Violates the district’s suspension and expulsion policies or other student conduct policies/procedures requiring a student’s suspension or expulsion from school. (e.g., weapons on school premises policy, student alcohol, controlled substance and tobacco use policy).
2. Violates the behavioral rules and expectations in the student handbook, resulting in a significant disruption of the educational environment.
3. Is disruptive, dangerous or unruly. For the purposes of this code the following behavior, by way of example and without limitation, may be determined to be disruptive, dangerous or unruly so as to warrant removal from class:
 - Inappropriate physical contact intended or likely to hurt, distract or annoy others, such as hitting, biting, pushing, shoving, poking, pinching or grabbing.
 - Inappropriate verbal conduct intended or likely to upset, distract or annoy others, such as name calling, teasing or baiting.
 - Behavior that may constitute sexual or other harassment.
 - Repeated or extreme inappropriate verbal conduct likely to disrupt the educational environment, particularly when others are talking (e.g., lecture by teacher, response by other student, presentation by visitor) or during quiet (study) time.
 - Throwing any object, particularly one likely to cause harm or damage, such as books, pencils, scissors, etc.
 - Inciting other students to act inappropriately or to disobey the teacher or school or class rules, including without limitation, inciting others to walk out.
 - Destroying the property of the school, a staff member or another student.
 - Loud, obnoxious or outrageous behavior.
4. Interferes with the ability of the teacher to teach effectively. Students are required to cooperate with the teacher by listening attentively, obeying all instructions promptly and responding appropriately when called upon. A student’s non-compliance may distract others either by setting a bad example or by diverting the class from the lesson to the student’s inappropriate behavior. By way of example and without limitation, a student may be removed for behavior that constitutes:
 - Open defiance of the teacher, manifested in words, gestures or other overt behavior.
 - Open disrespect of the teacher, manifested in words, gestures or other overt behavior.
 - Other behavior likely or intended to sabotage or undermine the instruction.
5. Is inconsistent with class decorum and the ability of others to learn. There may be removal for behavior that is inconsistent with basic classroom decorum and warrants

removal because of its interference with the ability of others to learn effectively. Such behavior may include, without limitation, sleeping in class, blatant inattention or other overt or passive refusal or inability to engage in class activities.

In some cases, a teacher may believe that a student should be removed from the class for the good of the student and in the best interests of the class as a whole. Such reasons may, but need not, be disciplinary in nature, and include, for purposes of illustration and without limitation, irreconcilable personality differences or issues between the student and other students, or in rare circumstances, between the student and the teacher.

Removal from class is a serious matter and should not be taken lightly either by the teacher or student.

D. Procedures for Removing a Student from Class and Parent/Guardian Notification

1. Unless the behavior is extreme, a teacher should generally warn a student that continued misbehavior may lead to removal from class. When the teacher determines that removal is appropriate, the teacher should take one of the following courses of action:
 - a. Instruct the student to go to the main office for the period of removal. In such case, the teacher should send a note with the student.
 - b. Obtain coverage for the class and escort the student to the main office. The teacher shall immediately inform the building administrator or designee of the reason for the student's removal from class.
 - c. Seek assistance from the main office or other available staff. When assistance arrives, the teacher or the other adult should accompany the student to the main office. The building administrator or designee shall be informed of the reason for the student's removal
2. When the student arrives at the main office, the building administrator or designee should give the student an opportunity to briefly explain the situation. If the building administrator or designee is not available immediately upon the student's arrival, the student should be taken to the designated short-term removal area, and the administrator or designee should speak to the student as soon as practicable thereafter.
3. Within 24 hours, the teacher shall submit to the building administrator or designee a short and concise written explanation of the basis for the student's removal from class. Such information may be submitted on a form provided by the building administrator or designee.
4. As soon as practicable, the building administrator shall inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) that the student was removed from class. Such notice may be by telephone. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student shall be sent written notice of the removal postmarked within two business days of the removal. Such written notice shall specify the class from which the student was removed, the duration of the removal and the basis for the removal as stated by the teacher. The building administrator or designee shall keep written logs or records regarding unsuccessful attempts to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) in accordance with this provision.

If the student removed from class is also subject to disciplinary action for the particular classroom conduct (i.e., suspension and/or expulsion), the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall also be notified of the disciplinary action in accordance with legal and policy requirements.

E. Placement Procedures

1. Short-Term Placement

- a. Each building administrator shall designate a room or other suitable place where students shall remain during any period of removal from the classroom (the “short-term removal area”).
- b. A student who is removed from class by his/her teacher must immediately and directly go or be taken to the main office. For the duration of the removal, the student shall stay in the short-term removal area. In the discretion of the building administrator or designee, the student may be placed in another appropriate class, program or educational setting, provided the student is supervised in such alternative setting. The building administrator should also take steps to ensure that students are supervised while in the short-term removal area.
- c. In general, students should be required to do work of an academic nature while in the short-term removal area. Such work should ordinarily be related to the work in the class from which the student was removed, or may be related to the student’s misconduct (e.g., writing an apology or account of the situation). In no event should students’ time in the removal area be recreational or other free time.
- d. In most cases, a student shall remain in the short-term removal area for the duration of the class or activity from which he/she was removed or for at least 45 minutes, whichever is longer. Prior to allowing the student to resume his/her normal schedule, the building administrator or designee shall speak to the student to determine whether the student is, or appears to be, ready and able to return to class without recurrence of the behavior for which the student was removed. In the event it is not deemed appropriate to return the student to regular classes, the building administrator or designee shall either retain the student in the short-term removal area or may consider a different placement option.

2. Long-Term Placement

- a. Long-term placement in an alternative setting is an extremely serious step that should not be undertaken hastily or for less than compelling reasons. Such a step could have profound consequences for the affected student and his/her class, as well as any new class or teacher to which the student may then be assigned. For these reasons, long-term placement should not ordinarily be considered or implemented except after a thorough consultation, including a thorough consideration of alternatives between the teacher(s) and the building administrator or designee. For the same reasons, long-term placement should not ordinarily be considered on the basis of a single incident. The ultimate decision regarding long-term placement of a student in an alternative setting rests with the building administrator.
- b. Where a teacher believes that the best interests of the student and/or the class require the student’s long-term placement in an alternative setting, the teacher shall notify the building administrator in writing. Such statement should set forth as clearly and completely as possible: (1) the basis for the placement request; (2) the alternatives, approaches and other steps considered or taken to avoid the need for the student’s removal from class; and, (3) the impact, positive and negative, on the rest of the class. Upon receipt of such statement, the building administrator may, at his/her discretion, consult with the teacher and/or other district staff. In most cases, it is appropriate to inform and consult with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student,

and the student, involved in the request for a long-term placement in an alternative setting.

- c. Following consideration of the teacher's statement and any other information, the building administrator shall, in his/her discretion, take one of the following steps:
 - (1) Place the student in an alternative education program as defined by law;
 - (2) Place the student in another class in the school or in another appropriate place in the school;
 - (3) Place the student in another instructional setting; or
 - (4) Return the student to the class from which he/she was removed if the administrator determines that readmission to the class is the best or only alternative.

- d. Long-term placement in an alternative setting is an administrative decision, not subject to a formal right of appeal. However, the student and/or the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may meet with the building administrator and/or the teacher(s) who made the request for the student's long-term placement in an alternative setting. Where possible, this meeting shall take place within five business days of the request for a meeting. At the meeting, the building administrator shall inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or student as fully as possible regarding the basis for the student's removal from class, the alternatives considered and the basis for any placement decision. Nothing in this code shall, however, prevent the building administrator from implementing a student's placement in another class or setting prior to any meeting, and notwithstanding the objection of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or student.

F. Application and Interpretation of Code Provisions by Teachers, Administrators and Schools

The provisions included in this code are intended primarily as tools to assist teachers to maintain an appropriate educational environment in their classes. Therefore, different teachers may have somewhat different views and practices regarding removal of students from their classes.

Similarly, there are many clear differences between the needs and practices of schools serving different grade levels. Just as there are different behavioral expectations for elementary and high school students, the standards for removal may well differ from one school, grade or class to the next.

Teachers and administrators of each school are encouraged to discuss their individual views, philosophies and practices regarding removal of students from class.

G. Removal and Placement of Students with Disabilities

Additional rules and considerations apply to students identified as requiring special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. In particular, the educational program and placement for such students is a decision of the student's individualized education program (IEP) team, subject to stringent procedural safeguards, and cannot be made unilaterally by teachers or the administration. In addition, most students covered by the IDEA should have a behavior plan, which will address: (1) whether and to what extent the student should be expected to conform to the behavioral requirements applicable to non-disabled students; and, (2) alternative consequences or procedures for addressing behavioral issues.

It is highly advisable that all IEP teams address these issues and this code at least annually, setting forth the consensus of the IEP team regarding behavioral expectations and consequences.

However, for the reasons noted above, no change in placement for more than 10 school days may be made for a student with disabilities outside of the IEP process.

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