



**Walter B. Howard Elementary School**

**Code of Conduct**  
**2022-23 School Year**

**Revised: July 2022**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The district has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity.

The Board recognizes the need to clearly define these expectations for acceptable conduct on school property, identify the possible developmentally appropriate, graduated consequences of unacceptable conduct, and to ensure that discipline when necessary is administered promptly and fairly, keeping in mind the goal is not to penalize, but to teach students there are consequences to actions and choices.. To this end, the Board adopts this code of conduct ("code"), which is based upon education laws, regulations, and board policies.

Unless otherwise indicated, this code applies to all students, school personnel, parents and other visitors when on school property or attending a school function.

## DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this code, the following definitions apply.

"Disruptive student" means an elementary student who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom.

“Gender” means actual or perceived sex and shall include a person’s gender identity or expression.

“Gender expression” is the manner in which a person represents or expresses gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, activities, voice or mannerisms.

“Gender identity” is one’s self-conception as being male or female, as distinguished from actual biological sex or sex assigned at birth.

"Parent" means a parent, guardian or person in parental relation to a student.

"School property" means in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot or land contained within the real property boundary line of Walter B. Howard Elementary School, or in or on a school bus, as defined in Vehicle and Traffic Law §142.

"School function" means any school-sponsored extracurricular event or activity.

"Sexual orientation" means actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality.

"Violent student" means a student who:

1. Commits an act of violence upon a school employee, or attempts to do so.
2. Commits, while on school property or at a school function, an act of violence upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or at a school function.
3. Possesses, while on school property or at a school function, a weapon.
4. Displays, while on school property or at a school function, what appears to be a weapon.
5. Threatens, while on school property or at a school function, to use a weapon.
6. Knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys the personal property of any school employee or any person lawfully on school property or at a school function.
7. Knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys school district property.

"Weapon" means 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 cutters, cane sword, electronic dart gun, Kung Fu star, electronic stun guns, pepper spray or other noxious spray, explosive or incendiary bomb, or other device, instrument, material or substance that can cause physical injury or death when used to cause physical injury or death.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. Student Rights**

The district is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under federal and state law and district policy. In addition, to promote a safe, healthy, orderly and supportive school environment, all district students have the right to:

1. Take part in all district activities on an equal basis regardless of actual or perceived race, weight, color, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, gender (including gender identity and expression) or sexual orientation or disability.
2. To be respected as an individual and treated fairly and with dignity by other students and school staff.
3. To express one's opinions, either verbally or in writing, as long as it is done so in a respectful manner.
4. Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary consequence in connection with the imposition of the consequence.
5. Access school policies, regulations, rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.

### **B. Student Responsibilities**

All district students have the responsibility to:

1. Contribute to maintaining a safe, supportive and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.
2. Help make school a community free of violence, intimidation, bullying, harassment, and discrimination.
3. Be familiar with and abide by district policies, rules and regulations dealing with student conduct.
4. Be in class on time and prepared to learn.
5. Work to the best of their ability, complete assignments on time, and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
6. React to direction given by teachers, administrators and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
7. Work to develop strategies to manage anger.
8. Ask questions when they do not understand.
9. Seek help in solving problems.
10. Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
11. Accept responsibility for their actions.
12. Conduct themselves as representatives of the district when participating in or attending school-sponsored extracurricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.
13. Use a polite tone of voice and appropriate body language, listening when others are speaking to you.
14. To be truthful when speaking with school officials regarding Code of Conduct violations.

## **ESSENTIAL PARTNERS**

### **A. Parents**

All parents are expected to:

1. Recognize that the education of their child(ren) is a joint responsibility of the parents and the school community and collaborate with the district to optimize their child's educational opportunities.
2. Send their children to school ready to participate and learn.
3. Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
4. Ensure absences are excused.
5. Ensure their children are dressed and groomed in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
6. Help their children understand that in a democratic society appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.
7. Know school rules and help their children understand them so that their children can help create a safe, supportive school environment.
8. Convey to their children a supportive attitude toward education and the district.
9. Build positive, constructive relationships with teachers, other parents and their children's friends.
10. Help their children deal effectively with peer pressure.
11. Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
12. Provide a place for study and ensure homework assignments are completed on time.
13. Tell officials about any concerns or complaints in a respectful and timely manner.
14. Be respectful and courteous to staff, other parents/guardians, and students while on school premises.

### **B. Teachers**

All district teachers are expected to:

1. Maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race,

color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex, which will strengthen students' self-concept and promote confidence to learn.

2. Be prepared to teach.
3. Demonstrate interest in teaching and concern for student achievement.
4. Know school policies and rules, and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
5. Maintain confidentiality in conformity with federal and state law.
6. Communicate to students and parents:
  - a. Course objectives and requirements
  - b. Marking/grading procedures
  - c. Assignment deadlines
  - d. Expectations for students
  - e. Classroom behavior and consequence plan.
7. Communicate regularly with students, parents and other teachers concerning behavior, growth and achievement.
8. Participate in school-wide efforts to provide adequate supervision in all school spaces, in conformity with the Taylor Law.
9. Address issues of harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, school employee or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.
10. Contribute to a positive, collegial professional environment.
11. Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students in the school or classroom setting.

#### C. Other School Personnel

1. Maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
2. Maintain confidentiality in accordance with federal and state law.
3. Be familiar with the code of conduct.
4. Help children understand the district's expectations for maintaining a safe, orderly environment.
5. Participate in school-wide efforts to provide adequate supervision in all school spaces.
6. Address issues of harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, school employee, or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.
7. Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students.

#### D. Principals/Administrators

1. Promote a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
2. Ensure that students and staff have the opportunity to communicate regularly with the principal/administrators and have access to the principal/administrators for redress of grievances.
3. Maintain confidentiality in accordance with federal and state law.
4. Evaluate on a regular basis all instructional programs to ensure inclusion of character education in the curriculum.

5. Support the development of and student participation in appropriate extracurricular activities.
6. Provide support in the development of the code of conduct, when called upon. Disseminate the code of conduct and anti-harassment policies.
7. Be responsible for enforcing the code of conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.
8. Participate in school-wide efforts to provide adequate supervision in all school spaces.
9. Address issues of harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, school employee, or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.
10. Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students and staff.
11. Foster a positive, collegial professional environment.

E. The Dignity Act Coordinator(s)

**The Dignity Act Coordinator is:**  
**Joshua Noble - Principal**

**Contact Info:**

**(518)794- 7600** [jnoble@newlebanoncsd.org](mailto:jnoble@newlebanoncsd.org)

1. Promote a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
2. Identify curricular resources that support character education in classroom instruction and classroom management; and inform staff of available resources.
3. Be responsible for monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of the district's bullying prevention policy.
4. Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students and staff.
5. Address and investigates issues of harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, school employee, or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.

F. Superintendent

1. Promote a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
2. Inform the Board about educational trends relating to student discipline
3. Review with district administrators the policies of the Board of education and state and federal laws relating to school operations and management.
4. Maintain confidentiality in accordance with federal and state law.
5. Work to create instructional programs that minimize incidence of misbehavior and are sensitive to student and teacher needs.
6. Work with district administrators in enforcing the code of conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.
7. Participate in school-wide efforts to provide adequate supervision in all school spaces.
8. Address issues of harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, school employee, or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school

function.

9. Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students and staff.
10. Foster a positive, collegial professional environment.

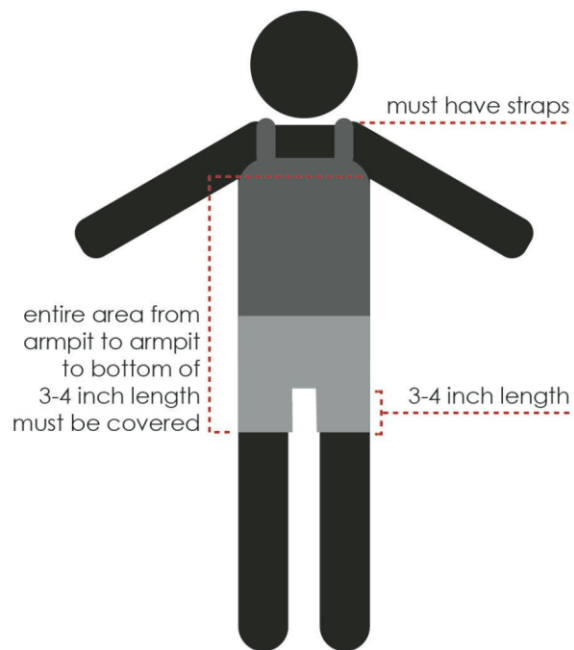
**G. Board of Education**

1. Promote a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
2. Maintain confidentiality in accordance with federal and state law.
3. Develop and recommend a budget that provides programs and activities that support achievement of the goals of the code of conduct.
4. Collaborate with student, teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel to develop a code of conduct that clearly defines expectations for the conduct of students, district personnel and visitors on school property and at school functions.
5. Adopt and review at least annually the district's code of conduct to evaluate the code's effectiveness and the fairness and consistency of its implementation.
6. Lead by example by conducting Board meetings in a professional, respectful, courteous manner.
7. Address issues of harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, school employee, or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.
8. Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students and staff.

**STUDENT DRESS CODE**

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.





A Student's Dress, Grooming and Appearance Shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
2. Cover areas from one armpit across to the other armpit, down to approximately 3 to 4 inches in length on the upper thighs (see image above). Tops must have shoulder straps. Rips or tears in clothing should be lower than the 3 to 4 inches in length.
3. Not include see-through or mesh garments without appropriate coverage underneath that meet the minimum requirements of the dress code.
4. Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
5. Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
6. Not include the wearing of head coverings or clothing that obstructs a student's identity, including but not limited to hats, hoods from sweatshirts, jackets, and sweaters in the classroom or hallways except for a medical, cultural or religious purpose.
7. Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or that which implies hatred or prejudice of others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability or any other protected classification. (Examples: any item that denotes Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nation, White Supremacy, Black Power, Confederate Flags, Neo-Nazi or any other "hate" group).
8. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other

illegal, inappropriate or violent activities.

Each Building Principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for informing all students and their parents of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year and any revisions to the dress code made during the school year.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item, and if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline, up to and including in-school suspension for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension.

### **PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

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

The Board recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct while on school property or engaged in a school function specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the consequences for their conduct.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

- A. Engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples of disorderly conduct include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Running or otherwise unsafe behavior in hallways.
  - 2. Making unreasonable noise.
  - 3. Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
  - 4. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
  - 5. Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
  - 6. Trespassing. Students are not permitted in any school building, other than the one they regularly attend, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
  - 7. Computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the district's acceptable use policy.
  
- B. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate. Examples of insubordinate conduct include, but are not limited to:

1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
  2. Missing or leaving school without permission.
- C. Engage in conduct that is disruptive. Examples of disruptive conduct include, but are not limited to:
1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school personnel in charge of students.
  2. Inappropriate public sexual contact.
  3. Display or use of personal electronic devices, such as, but not limited to, cell phones, I-pods, digital cameras, unless given specific permission from the supervising staff member.
- D. Engage in conduct that is violent. Examples of violent conduct include, but are not limited to:
1. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, spitting, punching, and scratching) upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee or attempting to do so.
  2. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, and scratching) upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so.
  3. Possessing a weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.
  4. Displaying what appears to be a weapon.
  5. Threatening to use any weapon.
  6. Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
  7. Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property.
- E. Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, physical or mental health or welfare of others. Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to:
1. Subjecting other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function to danger by recklessly engaging in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury.
  2. Stealing or attempting to steal the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.
  3. Defamation, which includes making false statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them.
  4. Discrimination, which includes using race, color, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sex, gender (identity and expression), sexual orientation, weight or disability to deny rights, equitable treatment or access to facilities available to others.
  5. Harassment (or Bullying), is the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or threats, intimidation or abuse. (See policy, 0115, Student Harassment and Bullying Prevention and Intervention for a more complete definition.)
  6. Intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm.
  7. Hazing, which includes an induction, initiation or membership process involving harassment (see policy

0115 for a more complete definition).

8. Selling, using, distributing or possessing obscene material.
  9. Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing or swearing.
  10. Possessing or smoking a cigarette, cigar, pipe or using chewing, smokeless tobacco or electronic/vapor cigarette product.
  11. Possessing, consuming, selling, offering, manufacturing, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances, or being under the influence of either. "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, and any synthetic version thereof, whether specifically illegal or not, commonly referred to as "designer drugs" which are substances designed and synthesized to mimic the intended effects and usages of, which are chemically substantially similar to, illegal drugs, which may or may not be labeled for human consumption.
  12. Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
  13. Gambling.
  14. Indecent exposure, that is, exposure to sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.
  15. Initiating a report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.
  16. Attempting to engage in or perform an act of violence noted in section D.
- F. Engage in misbehavior otherwise prohibited by sections A-E of this section while on a school bus and to remain seated, keep objects and body parts inside the bus, obey the directions from the bus driver or monitor. It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding on district buses, to ensure their safety and that of other passengers and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving and fighting will not be tolerated.
- G. Engage in any form of academic misbehavior. Examples of academic misbehavior include, but are not limited to:
- Cheating.
  - Copying.
  - Altering records.
  - Assisting another student in any of the above actions.
- H. Engage in off-campus misbehavior that interferes with, or can reasonably be expected to substantially disrupt the educational process in the school or a school function. Such misbehavior includes, but isn't limited to, threatening or harassing students or school personnel through any means off-campus, including cyberbullying (for a complete definition of harassment, bullying and cyberbullying refer to policy 0115, Student Harassment and Bullying Prevention and Intervention).

## **REPORTING VIOLATIONS**

All students are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to a teacher, teaching assistant, the

Building Principal or his or her designee. Any student observing a student possessing a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property or at a school function shall report this information immediately to a teacher, the Principal, the Principal's designee or the Superintendent of Schools.

All district staff members that are authorized to impose disciplinary consequences are expected to do so in a prompt, fair and lawful manner. District staff members who are not authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to their supervisor, who shall in turn impose an appropriate disciplinary consequence, if so authorized, or refer the matter to a staff member who is authorized to impose an appropriate consequence.

Any weapon, alcohol or illegal substance found shall be confiscated immediately, if possible, followed by notification to the parent or guardian of the student involved and the appropriate disciplinary consequences.

The Principal or his/her designee must notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency of those code violations that constitute a crime in accordance with District Policy, but in no event later than the close of business the day the Principal or his/her designee learns of the violation. The notification may be made by telephone, followed by a letter mailed on the same day as the telephone call is made. The notification must identify the student and explain the conduct that violated the code of conduct and constituted a crime.

### **DISCIPLINARY PENALTIES, PROCEDURES AND REFERRALS**

Discipline is most effective when it deals directly with the problem at the time and place it occurs, and in a way that students view as fair and impartial. School personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be firm, fair and consistent so as to be most effective in changing student behavior. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, school personnel authorized to impose disciplinary consequences will consider the following:

1. The student's age or developmental level.
2. The nature of the offense and the circumstances which led to the offense.
3. The student's prior disciplinary record.
4. The effectiveness of other forms of discipline.
5. Information from parents, teachers and/or others, as appropriate.
6. Other extenuating circumstances.

As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. This means that a student's first violation will usually merit a lighter consequence than subsequent violations.

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

the discipline is consistent with the student's individualized education plan (IEP).

**A. Penalties**

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

- Oral warning – any member of the district staff
- Written warning – bus drivers, teachers, Principal, supervisors, Director of Special Education, and Superintendent
- Verbal or written notification to parents – teachers, Principal, Superintendent
- Detention – teachers, Principal, Superintendent
- Restitution – teachers, Principal, Superintendent
- Suspension from transportation – Director of Transportation, Principal, Superintendent
- Suspension from social or extracurricular activities – activity director, Principal, Superintendent
- Suspension from recess – teachers, Principal, Superintendent
- Suspension of other privileges – Principal, Superintendent
- In-school suspension – Principal, Superintendent
- Removal from classroom by teacher – teachers, Principal
- Short-term (five days or less) suspension from school – Principal, Superintendent, Board
- Long-term (more than five days) suspension from school Superintendent, Board
- Permanent suspension from school – Superintendent, Board.
- Restorative practices
- Informal counseling

**B. Procedures**

The amount of due process a student is entitled to receive before a consequence is imposed depends on the consequence being imposed. In all cases, regardless of the consequence imposed, the school personnel authorized to impose the consequence must inform the student of the alleged misbehavior and must investigate, to the extent necessary, the facts surrounding the alleged misbehavior. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary consequence in connection with the imposition of the consequence.

Students who are to be given consequences other than an oral warning, written warning or written notification to their parents are entitled to additional rights before the consequence is imposed. These additional rights are explained below.

**1. Detention**

Teachers, Principals and the Superintendent may use detention as a consequence for student misbehavior in situations where removal from the classroom or suspension would be inappropriate.

**2. Suspension from transportation**

If a student does not conduct himself/herself properly on a bus, the bus driver is expected to bring such misbehavior to the transportation supervisor who will bring such actions to the Principal's attention, as

necessary. Students who become a serious disciplinary problem may have their riding privileges suspended by the Principal or the Superintendent or their designees.

In such cases, the student's parent will become responsible for seeing that his or her child gets to and from school safely. Should the suspension from transportation amount to a suspension from attendance, the district will make appropriate arrangements to provide for the student's education.

A student subjected to a suspension from transportation is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the Principal or the Principal's designee to discuss the conduct and the consequences involved.

### **3. Suspension from extra-curricular activities and other privileges**

A student subjected to a suspension from extra-curricular activities or other privileges is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the district officials imposing the suspension to discuss the conduct and the consequences involved.

### **4. In-school Suspension**

The Board recognizes the school must balance the need of students to attend school and the need for order in the classroom to establish an environment conducive to learning. As such, the Board authorizes Principals and the Superintendent to place students who would otherwise be suspended from school as the result of a code of conduct violation in "in-school suspension." Instructional materials will be provided by a certified teacher.

A student subjected to an in-school suspension is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the district official imposing the in-school suspension to discuss the conduct and the consequences involved.

### **5. Teacher Disciplinary Removal of Disruptive Students**

A student's behavior can affect a teacher's ability to teach and can make it difficult for other students in the classroom to learn. In most instances the classroom teacher can control a student's behavior and maintain or restore control over the classroom by using good classroom management techniques. These techniques may include practices that involve the teacher directing a student to briefly leave the classroom to give the student an opportunity to regain his or her composure and self-control in an alternative setting. Such practices may include, but are not limited to: (1) short-term "time out" in an elementary classroom or in an administrator's office; (2) sending a student into the hallway briefly; (3) sending a student to the Principal's office for the remainder of the class time only; or (4) sending a student to another district staff member for counseling. Time-honored classroom management techniques such as these do not constitute disciplinary removals for purposes of this code.

On occasion, a student's behavior may become more disruptive than a teacher can manage. For purposes of this code of conduct, a disruptive student is a student who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom. A substantial disruption of the educational process or substantial interference with a teacher's authority occurs when a student demonstrates a persistent unwillingness to comply with the teacher's instructions or repeatedly violates the teacher's classroom behavior rules.

A classroom teacher may remove a disruptive student from class for up to two days. The removal from class applies to the class of the removing teacher only.

If the disruptive student does not pose a danger or ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, the teacher must provide the student with an explanation for why he or she is being removed and an opportunity to explain his or her version of the relevant events before the student is removed. Only after the informal discussion may a teacher remove a student from class.

If the student poses a danger or ongoing threat of disruption, the teacher may order the student to be removed immediately. The teacher must, however, explain to the student why he or she was removed from the classroom and give the students a chance to present his or her version of the relevant events within 24-hours.

The teacher must complete a narrative report and meet with the Principal or his or her designee as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the school day, to explain the circumstances of the removal. If the Principal or designee is not available by the end of the same school day, the teacher must leave the form with the secretary and meet with the Principal or designee prior to the beginning of classes on the next school day.

Within 24 hours after the student's removal, the Principal or another district administrator designated by the Principal must notify the student's parent, in writing, that the student has been removed from class and why. The notice must also inform the parent that he or she has the right, upon request, to meet informally with the Principal or the Principal's designee to discuss the reasons for the removal.

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 student's removal at the last known address for the parent. Where possible, notice should also be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a telephone number(s) for the purpose of contacting parents.

The Principal may require the teacher who ordered the removal to attend the informal conference.

If at the informal meeting the student denies the charges, the Principal or the Principal's designee must explain why the student was removed and give the student and the student's parents a chance to present the student's version of the relevant events. The informal meeting must be held within 48 hours of the student's removal. The timing of the informal meeting may be extended by mutual agreement of the parent



and Principal.

The Principal or the Principal's designee may overturn the removal of the student from class if the Principal finds any one of the following:

1. The charges against the student are not supported by substantial evidence.
2. The student's removal is otherwise in violation of law, including the district's code of conduct.
3. The conduct warrants suspension from school pursuant to Education Law §3214 and a suspension will be imposed.

The Principal or his/her 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. No student removed from the classroom by the classroom teacher will be permitted to return to the classroom until the Principal makes a final determination, or the period of removal expires, whichever is less.

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

Each teacher must keep a complete log for all cases of removal of students from his/her class. The Principal must keep a log of all removals of students from class.

Removal of a student with a disability, under certain circumstances, may constitute a change in the student's placement. Accordingly, no teacher may remove a student with a disability from his or her class until he or she has verified with the Principal or the chairperson of the Committee on Special Education that the removal will not violate the student's rights under state or federal law or regulation.

## **6. Suspension from School**

Suspension from school is a severe consequence, which may be imposed only upon students who are severely insubordinate, disorderly, violent or severely disruptive, or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others.

The Board retains its authority to suspend students, but places primary responsibility for the suspension of students with the Superintendent and the Principals.

Any staff member may recommend to the Superintendent or the Principal that a student be suspended. All staff members must immediately report and refer a violent student to the Principal or the Superintendent for 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 attention. In such cases a written report is to be prepared as soon as possible by the staff member recommending the suspension. The Superintendent or Principal, upon receiving a recommendation or referral for suspension or when processing a case for suspension, shall gather the facts relevant to the matter and record them for

subsequent presentation, if necessary.

a. Short term (five days or less) Suspension from School

When the Superintendent or Principal (referred to as the "suspending authority") proposes to suspend a student charged with misbehavior for five days or less pursuant to Education Law §3214(3), the suspending authority must immediately notify the student orally. If the student denies the misbehavior, 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 in a manner to assure receipt of the notice within 24 hours of the decision to propose suspension at the last known address for the parents. Where possible, notice should also be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a telephone number(s) for the purpose of contacting the parents.

The notice shall provide a description of the charges against the student and the incident for which suspension is proposed and shall inform the parents of the right to request an immediate informal conference with the Principal. Both the notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parents. At the conference, the parents shall be permitted to ask questions of complaining witnesses under such procedures as the Principal may establish.

The notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place before the student is suspended unless the student's presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process. If the student's presence 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 practicable.

After the conference, the Principal shall promptly advise the parents in writing of his or her decision. The Principal shall advise the parents 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 **ten (10)** business days, unless they can show extraordinary circumstances precluding them from doing so. The Superintendent shall issue a written decision regarding the appeal within 10 business days of receiving the appeal. If the parents are not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision, they must file a written appeal to the Board of education with the District Clerk within 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 of Education within 30 days of the decision.

b. Long term (more than five days) Suspension from School

When the Superintendent determines that a suspension for more than five days may be warranted, he or she shall give reasonable notice to the student and the student's parents of their 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 or her and the right to present witnesses and other evidence on his or her behalf.

The Superintendent shall personally hear and determine the proceedings or may, in his or her discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer shall be authorized to administer oaths and issue subpoenas in conjunction with the proceeding before him or her. A record of the hearing shall be maintained, but no stenographic transcript shall be required. A tape recording shall be deemed a satisfactory record. The 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.

An appeal of the decision of the Superintendent may be made to the Board, which will make its decision based solely upon the record before it. All appeals to the Board must be in writing and submitted to the district clerk within **thirty (30)** days of the date of the Superintendent's decision, unless the parents can show that extraordinary circumstances preclude them from doing so. The Board may adopt in whole or in part the decision of the Superintendent. Final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education within 30 days of the decision.

c. Permanent suspension

Permanent suspension is reserved for extraordinary circumstances such as where a student's conduct poses a life-threatening danger to the safety and well-being of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.

d. Procedure after Suspension

The Board may condition a student's early return from a suspension on the student's voluntary participation in counseling or specialized classes, such as anger management or dispute resolution. The Board retains discretion in offering this opportunity. If and when the student and/or parent/guardian agree to this option, the terms and conditions shall be specified in writing.

**C. Minimum Periods of Suspension**

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

Any student, other than a student with a disability, found guilty of bringing a weapon onto school property will be subject to suspension from school for at least one calendar year. Before being suspended, the student will have an opportunity for a hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. The Superintendent has the authority to modify the one-year suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the consequence, the Superintendent may consider the following:

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

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

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

Any student, other than a student with a disability, who is found to have committed a violent act, other than bringing a weapon onto school property, shall be subject to suspension from school for at least one day. The Superintendent has the authority to modify the minimum one-day suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the consequence, the Superintendent may consider the same factors considered in modifying a one-year suspension for possessing a weapon.

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

Any student, other than a student with a disability, who repeatedly is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom will be suspended from school for at least two days. For purposes of this code of conduct, "repeatedly is substantially disruptive" means engaging in conduct that results in the student being removed from the classroom by the teacher(s) pursuant to Education Law § 3214 (3-a) and this code on four or more occasions during a semester. The Superintendent has the authority to modify the minimum two-day suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the consequence, the Superintendent may consider the same factors considered in modifying a one-year suspension for possessing a weapon.

**D. Referrals**

**1. PINS Petitions**

The district may file a PINS (person in need of supervision) petition in Family Court on any student under the age of 18 who demonstrates that he or she requires supervision and treatment by:

- a. Being habitually truant and not attending school as required by part one of Article 65 of the Education Law.

- b. Engaging in an ongoing or continual course of conduct which makes the student ungovernable, or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of the school.
- c. Knowingly and unlawfully possess marijuana in violation of Penal Law § 221.05. A single violation of § 221.05 will be a sufficient basis for filing a PINS petition.

## **2.) Juvenile Delinquents and Juvenile Offenders**

For students found to have brought either a weapon or firearm, the superintendent is required to make the following referrals:

- a.) To the County Attorney for a juvenile delinquency proceeding before the Family Court:  
All students under age 16, except student age 14 or 15 who qualify for juvenile offender status under the Criminal Procedure Law 1.20(42)
- b.) To the appropriate law enforcement authorities:  
All students age 16 or older, and all students age 14 or 15 who qualify for juvenile offender status under Criminal Procedure Law 1.20(42).

## **ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTION**

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

## **DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Board of Education recognizes that it may be necessary to suspend, remove or otherwise discipline students with disabilities who violate the district's student code of conduct, and/or to temporarily remove a student with disabilities from his or her current placement because maintaining the student in that placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others. The Board also recognizes that students with disabilities deemed eligible for special education services under the IDEA and Article 89 of New York's Education Law enjoy certain procedural protections that school authorities must observe when they decide to suspend or remove them. Under certain conditions those protections extend, as well, to students not currently deemed to be a student with a disability but determined to be a student presumed to have a disability for discipline purposes.

Therefore, the Board is committed to ensuring that the district follows suspension and removal procedures that are consistent with those protections. The code of conduct for students is intended to afford students with disabilities and students presumed to have a disability for discipline purposes the express rights they enjoy under applicable law and regulations.

## **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

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

However, in situations where alternative procedures and methods that do not involve the use of physical force cannot reasonably be used, reasonable physical force may be used to:

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

3. Restrain or remove a student whose behavior interferes with the orderly exercise and performance of school district functions, powers and duties, if that student has refused to refrain from further disruptive acts.

The district will file all complaints about the use of corporal punishment with the Commissioner of Education in accordance with Commissioner's regulations.

### **STUDENT SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS**

The Board of Education is committed to ensuring an atmosphere on school property and at school functions that is safe and orderly. To achieve this kind of environment, any school official authorized to impose a disciplinary consequence on a student may question a student about an alleged violation of law or the district code of conduct. Students are not entitled to any sort of "Miranda"-type warning before being questioned by school officials, nor are school officials required to contact a student's parent before questioning the student. However, school officials will tell all students why they are being questioned.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools and Building Principals to conduct searches of students and their belongings if the authorized school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in evidence that the student violated the law or the district code of conduct.

An authorized school official may conduct a search of a student's belongings that is minimally intrusive, such as touching the outside of a book bag, without reasonable suspicion, so long as the school official has a legitimate reason for the very limited search.

An authorized school official may search a student or the student's belongings based upon information received from a reliable informant.

Before searching a student or the student's belongings, the authorized school official should attempt to get the student to admit that he or she possesses physical evidence that they violated the law or the district code, or get the student to voluntarily consent to the search. Searches will be limited to the extent necessary to locate the evidence sought.

Whenever practicable, searches of the student will be conducted in the privacy of administrative offices. More than one school employee will be present when a student's possessions are being searched.

#### **A. Desks and other School Storage Places**

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

B. Documentation of Searches

The authorized school official conducting the search shall be responsible for promptly recording the following information about each search:

1. Name, age and grade of student searched.
2. Reasons for the search.
3. Name of any informant(s).
4. Purpose of search (that is, what item(s) were being sought).
5. Type and scope of search.
6. Person conducting search and his or her title and position.
7. Witnesses to the search.
8. Time and location of search.
9. Results of search (that is, what items(s) were found).
10. Disposition of items found.
11. Time, manner and results of parental notification.

The Principal or the Principal's designee shall be responsible for the custody, control and disposition of any illegal or dangerous item taken from a student. The Principal or his or her designee shall clearly label each item taken from the student and retain control of the item(s), until the item is turned over to the police. The Principal or his or her designee shall be responsible for personally delivering dangerous or illegal items to police authorities.

C. Police Involvement in Searches and Interrogations of Students

District officials are committed to cooperating with police officials and other law enforcement authorities to maintain a safe school environment. Police officials, however, have limited authority to interview or search students in schools or at school functions, or to use school facilities in connection with police work. Police officials may enter school property or a school function to question or search a student or to conduct a formal investigation involving students only if they have:

1. A search or an arrest warrant; or
2. Probable cause to believe a crime has been committed on school property or at a school function.

Before police officials are permitted to question or search any student, the Principal or his or her designee shall first try to notify the student's parent to give the parent the opportunity to be present during the police questioning or search. If the student's parent cannot be contacted prior to the police questioning or search, the questioning or search shall not be conducted. The Principal or designee will also be present during any police questioning or search of a student on school property or at a school function.

Students who are questioned by police officials on school property or at a school function will be afforded the same rights they have outside the school. This means:

1. They must be informed of their legal rights.
2. They may remain silent if they so desire.

3. They may request the presence of an attorney.

### **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS**

The Board recognizes that the success of the school program depends, in part, on support by the larger community. The Board wishes to foster a positive climate where members of the community have the opportunity to observe the hard work and accomplishments of the students, teachers and other staff. Since schools are a place of work and learning, however, certain limits must be set for such visits. The Principal or his or her designee is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds. For these reasons, the following rules apply to visitors to the schools:

1. Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
2. All visitors to the school must enter through the designated single point of entry and report to the office of the Principal upon arrival at the school. There they may be required to present photo identification, sign the visitor's register and will be issued a visitor's identification badge, which must be worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds. The visitor must return the identification badge to the main office before leaving the building.
3. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public after regular school hours, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings, are not required to sign in. Parents attending Tiger Jam or other assemblies will be expected to sign in and out of school.
4. Parents or citizens who wish to observe a classroom or school activity while school is in session are required to arrange such visits in advance with the classroom teacher(s) and Building Principal, so that class disruption is kept to a minimum.
5. Teachers are not expected to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
6. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the Principal or his or her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
7. All visitors are expected to meet the expectations for public conduct on school property contained in this code of conduct.

### **PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

The district is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of an environment, it is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school functions. For purposes of this section of the code, "public" shall mean all persons when on school property or attending a school function including students, teachers and district personnel.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property.

#### **A. Prohibited Conduct**

No person, either alone or with others, shall:



1. Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so.
2. Intentionally damage or destroy school district property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
3. Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs or other school activities.
4. Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school program.
5. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of actual or perceived race, creed, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender (including gender identity and expression).
6. Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
7. Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies.
8. Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles.
9. Smoking or using any tobacco/electronic cigarette product on school property.
10. Possess, consume, sell, offer, manufacture, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled or illegal substances or any synthetic versions (whether or not specifically illegal or labeled for human consumption), or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function
11. Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers or except as specifically authorized by the school district.
12. Loiter on or about school property.
13. Gamble on school property or at school functions.
14. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
15. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code.
16. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or Board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

**B. Penalties**

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

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

may have.

C. Enforcement

The Principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for enforcing the conduct required by this code. When the Principal or his or her designee sees an individual engaged in prohibited conduct, which in his or her judgment does not pose any immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the Principal or designee shall tell the individual that the conduct is prohibited and attempt to persuade the individual to stop. The Principal or designee shall also warn the individual of the consequences for failing to stop. If the person refuses to stop engaging in the prohibited conduct, or if the person's conduct poses an immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the Principal or designee shall have the individual removed immediately from school property or the school function. If necessary, local law enforcement authorities will be contacted to assist in removing the person.

The district shall initiate disciplinary action against any student or staff member, as appropriate, with the "Penalties" section above. In addition, the district reserves its right to pursue a civil or criminal legal action against any person violating the code.

**DISSEMINATION AND REVIEW**

**A. Dissemination of Code of Conduct**

The Board will work to ensure that the community is aware of this code of conduct by:

1. Providing an age-appropriate presentation to all students at the beginning of each school year.
2. Providing copies of an age-appropriate, written in plain language, summary of the code to students in grades 2-6 at the beginning of the school year.
3. Providing a plain language summary to all parents at the beginning of the school year, and thereafter on request.
3. Posting the complete code of conduct on the district's website.
4. Providing all current teachers and other staff members with a copy of the code and a copy of any amendments to the code as soon as practicable after adoption.
5. Providing all new employees with a copy of the current code of conduct when they are first hired.
6. Making copies of the complete code available for review by students, parents and other community members.

The Board will require that faculty meetings will include agenda items to ensure the effective implementation of the code of conduct. The Superintendent may solicit the recommendations of the district staff, particularly teachers and administrators, regarding in-service programs pertaining to the management and discipline of students. On-going professional development will be included in the district's professional development plan, as needed.

**B. Review of Code of Conduct**

The Board will review this code of conduct every year and update it as necessary. In conducting the review, the Board will consider how effective the code's provisions have been and whether the code has been applied fairly and consistently.

The Board may appoint an advisory committee to assist in reviewing the code and the district's response to code of conduct violations. The committee will be made up of representatives of student, teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel.

Before adopting any revisions to the code, the Board will hold at least one public hearing at which school personnel, parents, students and any other interested party may participate.

The code of conduct and any amendments to it will be filed with the Commissioner of Education, in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner, no later than 30 days after adoption.