

Classroom Code of Student Conduct

Statement of Principle

The District recognizes and accepts its responsibility to create, foster, and maintain an orderly and safe environment, conducive to teaching and to the learning processes. 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 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 from the dangers of violence, weapons, drugs, and other behavior harmful to the educational environment. This duty is enforced through the District's policy on suspension and expulsion, which provides procedures by which students may be removed from the school community either temporarily, or in the case of certain expulsions, permanently.

But equally important, the District owes its students the opportunity to attend school free from unnecessary and unwarranted distraction and disruption. Such behavior warrants that the student be removed temporarily from the class or activity, allowing for a "cooling off" period.

In other circumstances, the student's conduct or the best interests of the student and the other members of the class, may warrant longer term removal from the class. Long-term removal may, but need not always, be for disciplinary purposes.

A teacher employed by the District may temporarily remove a pupil from the teacher's class if the pupil violates the terms of this Classroom Code of Student Conduct. In addition, long term removal of a student will be possible if the building administrator upholds a teacher's recommendation. Removal from class under this Code 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.

1. WHAT ARE THE GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINARY REMOVAL FROM CLASS?

A student may be removed from class for conduct or behavior which (a) interferes with the ability of the teacher to teach effectively; (b) is incompatible with effective teaching and learning in the class; (c) violates the behavioral rules and expectations set forth in the Student Handbook; (d) is disruptive, dangerous or unruly.

Removal is a serious measure, and should not be imposed in an arbitrary, casual or inconsistent manner. Behavioral expectations are always more constructive, and more likely

to be followed, where their terms are communicated as clearly as possible to students and staff. However, it is neither possible nor necessary to specify every type of improper or inappropriate behavior, or every inappropriate circumstance, that would justify removal under this Code. A teacher's primary responsibility is to maintain an appropriate educational environment for the class as a whole. Therefore, notwithstanding the provisions of this Code, in every circumstance the teacher should exercise his or her best judgment in deciding whether it is appropriate to remove a student temporarily from class.

A teacher's decision to remove a student temporarily from class will stand; however, there may be circumstances when the building administrator may overrule the teacher's decision to remove the student and return the student to class.

Students are required to cooperate with the teacher by listening attentively, following instructions promptly and responding appropriately when called upon. A student's non-compliance may distract others by setting a bad example. A student may be removed for behavior that constitutes:

- (a) Open defiance and/or open disrespect of the teacher, manifest in words, gestures, or other overt behavior.
- (b) Behavior that is incompatible with effective teaching and learning in the class.
- (c) Behavior that violates the behavioral rules and expectations in the Student Handbook.

The Student Handbooks contain behavioral expectations for the individual schools in the District. These rules and expectations will be explained and discussed with the students at the beginning of each school year. Such discussions will include an explanation of this Code, and the District's policy regarding student suspension/expulsion.

- (d) Behavior that is disruptive, dangerous or unruly.

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:

1. Inappropriate physical contact or behaviors intended or likely to hurt or distract others, such as hitting, biting, pushing, shoving, poking, pinching or grabbing.
2. Inappropriate verbal or written conduct intended or likely to upset or distract others, such as name calling, teasing or baiting.
3. Behavior that may constitute sexual or other harassment, such as bullying or inappropriate touching.
4. 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.
5. Throwing any object, particularly one likely to cause harm or damage, such as books, pencils, scissors.
6. Purposefully destroying the property of the school or another student.

2. WHO MAY REMOVE A STUDENT FROM CLASS?

Any student may be temporarily removed from class under this Code by a teacher of that class. For the purpose of this Code, “student” means any student enrolled in the District, exchange student, or student visitor to the District’s schools.

A “teacher” is any certified instructor, teacher aide, pupil services personnel, counselor, nurse or administrator in the employ of the District.

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

3. WHAT PROCEDURES MUST BE FOLLOWED IN TEMPORARILY REMOVING A STUDENT FROM CLASS?

Except where the behavior is extreme, a teacher should warn a student that continued misbehavior may lead to temporary 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 principal’s 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 principal’s office.
- (c) seek assistance from the principal’s office or other available staff. When assistance arrives, the teacher or the other adult should accompany the student to the main office.

When the student arrives at the principal’s office, the principal 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 remain in the office and the administrator or designee should speak to the student as soon as possible thereafter. For the purposes of short term removal it is not necessary to obtain witnesses or to otherwise verify the student’s or teacher’s accounts of the situation.

Within twenty-four (24) hours or one school day of the removal, the teacher shall submit to the principal or designee a short and concise written explanation of the basis for the removal. Such information may be submitted on a form provided by the building administrator or designee.

As soon as possible, but in any event within twenty-four (24) hours of the removal, the principal shall inform the student’s parents that the student was removed from class. Such notice may be by telephone. The parents of the student shall be sent written notice of the removal postmarked within two school 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 principal or designee shall keep written logs or records regarding unsuccessful attempts to contact the parents in accordance with this provision.

For the duration of the removal the student shall stay in the office. The principal or designee may send the student to another appropriate class, program, or educational setting provided the student is supervised in such alternative setting. The building administrator will ensure that the students are supervised while in the office. In general, students should be required to do work of an academic nature while in the office. 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 office be recreation or other free time.

4. HOW LONG SHALL A SHORT-TERM REMOVAL LAST?

Removal is a serious matter and should not be taken lightly either by the teacher or the student. In most cases a student shall remain in the office for at least the duration of the class or activity from which she or he was removed. Prior to allowing the student to resume his/her normal schedule, the building principal 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 a 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 office, or where necessary, appropriate, and possible, shall take steps to have the student sent home.

5. WHAT ARE THE PROCEDURES FOR LONG-TERM REMOVAL?

Long-term removal is an extremely serious step which should not be undertaken hastily or for less than compelling reasons. Such a step could have profound consequences for the affected student and his or her class, as well as any new class or teacher to which the student may then be assigned. For these reasons long-term removal should not ordinarily be considered or implemented except after a thorough consultation, including a thorough consideration of alternatives, between the teacher(s) and the principal or designee. For the same reasons long-term removal should not ordinarily be considered on the basis of a single incident. Unlike short-term removal, the ultimate decision regarding long-term removal rests with the principal.

Where a teacher believes that the best interests of the student and/or the class require long-term removal, the teacher should so notify the building administrator in writing. Such statement should set forth as clearly and completely as possible (a) the basis for the removal request; (b) the alternatives, approaches and other steps considered or taken to avoid the need for the removal; (c) the impact, positive and negative, on the removed student; and (d) the impact, positive and negative on the rest of the class.

Upon receipt of such statement, the principal will consult with the teacher and/or other District staff. In all cases it is necessary to inform and consult with the parents/guardian of the student.

Following consideration of the teacher's statement and any other information, the principal shall take one of the following steps:

- (a) place the student in an alternative education program as defined by law;
- (b) place the student in another class in the school, or appropriate place in the school;
- (c) place the student in another instructional setting; or
- (d) return the student to, or retain the student in, the class from which he or she was removed or proposed to be removed.

In any event, a student in long-term removal must continue to receive an educational program and services comparable to, though not necessarily identical with, those of the class from which he/she was removed. Such program need not be in the precise academic subject of the student's former class.

Long-term removal is an administrative decision. However, the parents of the student, and/or the student, shall have the right to meet with the principal and/or the teacher(s) who made the request for removal. When possible, such meeting shall take place within three (3) school days of the request for a meeting. At the meeting, the principal shall inform the parents and/or student as fully as possible the basis for the removal, the alternatives considered, and the basis for any decision.

The pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian may, within five (5) school days following the commencement of the removal from class, have a conference with the school principal. If the result of the conference is unsatisfactory to the pupil/parent/guardian, a conference may then be scheduled with the district administrator.

6. WHAT DISCRETION OR FLEXIBILITY IS APPROPRIATE FOR INDIVIDUAL TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND SCHOOLS?

It is expected that administrators and teachers will meet prior to the implementation of this Code to arrive at a consensus regarding how its provisions should be interpreted and applied. However, this Code and the procedures regarding removal 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, either short term or long term.

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.

7. TO WHAT EXTENT IS REMOVAL APPLICABLE TO STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS DISABLED UNDER THE "IDEA"? (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Some different rules and considerations apply for students identified as requiring special education services under the IDEA or Section 504. In particular, placement for such students is a decision of the student's "IEP" (Individual Educational Plan) team, subject to stringent procedural safeguards, and cannot be made unilaterally by teachers or the administration. 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.

For the reasons noted above no change in placement for more than ten (10) school days may be made for a student with disabilities outside of the IEP process. This ten (10) day limit applies to out-of-school suspensions as well as days of removal.

8. HOW WILL THIS CODE BE COMMUNICATED TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS?

A copy of this Code shall be given to each parent of students attending this District upon registration. In addition, this Code shall be provided to and discussed with students of the District early in each school year.

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