

TERRELL COUNTY BOARD POLICY
Student Behavior and Code of Conduct

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Student Behavior

It is the policy of the Terrell Board of Education that each school within this school district shall develop and implement age-appropriate student codes of conduct designed to improve the student learning environment and which will comply with state law and State Board of Education Rule **160-4-8-.15**. Each code of conduct shall include the following:

1. Standards for student behavior designed to create the expectation that students will behave themselves in such a way so as to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and other students. The standard should be designed also to encourage students to respect each other and school district employees, to motivate students to obey student behavior policies adopted by this board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within school district;
2. Student support processes designed to consider, as appropriate in light of the severity of the behavioral problem, support services available at each school, the school system and other public entities or community organizations which may assist students to address behavioral problems;
3. Progressive discipline processes designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline imposed by each school will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student, the previous discipline history of the student and other relevant factors, while ensuring that each student receives the due process mandated by federal and state law;
4. Parental involvement processes designed to enable parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators to work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance.
The process should enable parents, guardians and school employees to communicate freely their concerns about student behaviors which detract from the learning environment.

Each school shall involve parents in developing and updating student codes of conduct. Each code shall require disciplinary action for each infraction of the code. All student codes of conduct shall be submitted to the board for approval.

The student code of conduct shall be distributed to each student and the student's parents or guardians during the first week of school and upon

enrollment of each new student. The parents shall be requested to sign an acknowledgment of the receipt of the code of conduct and return promptly the acknowledgment to the school. The student code of conduct shall be available in the school office and each classroom.

TEACHER REPORTING REQUIREMENT

A teacher shall have the authority, consistent with board policy, to manage his or her classroom, discipline students, and refer a student to the principal or his designee to maintain discipline in the classroom. Any teacher who has knowledge that a student has exhibited behavior which violates the student code of conduct and repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in his/her class or with the ability of such student's classmates to learn shall file a report of such behavior with the principal or his designee. The principal and teacher shall thereafter follow the procedures set forth in Georgia law, specifically O.C.G.A. 20-2-737-738.

The Superintendent and/or his designee shall develop procedures necessary for implementation of this policy and this state of law.

Student Behavior Code (Code of Conduct)

It is the purpose of the Terrell School District to operate each school in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education and that will provide for the welfare and safety of all students who attend the schools within the district. In accordance with the purpose, the Board of Education has adopted a policy which requires all schools to adopt codes of conduct which requires students to conduct themselves at all times in order to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and other students. These standards for behavior require students to respect each other and school district employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within the district.

The school's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by policies, regulations and rules set forth in this Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct is effective during the following times and in the following places:

- At school or on school property at any time;

- Off school grounds at any school activity, function or event and while traveling to and from such events;
- On vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system.

Also, students may be disciplined for conduct off campus which is felonious or which may pose a threat to the school's learning environment or the safety of students and employees.

Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their children and others in the community.

AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

The principal is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. In cases of disruptive, disorderly or dangerous conduct not covered in this Code, the principal may undertake corrective measures which he or she believes to be in the best interest of the student and the school provided any such action does not violate school board policy or procedures.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program.

The following disciplinary actions may be imposed for any violation of this Code of Conduct:

- Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
- Loss of Privileges
- Isolation or Time Out
- Temporary Removal from Class or Activity
- Notification of Parents
- Parent Conference
- Detention

- Temporary Placement in an Alternative Education Program
- Short-term Suspension
- Referral to a Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
- Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
- Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.

The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion, but those punishments will be determined only by a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the Terrell County Board of Education policies.

Parents or students may elect not to contest whether a student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or students waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Such an agreement and waiver must be approved also by the disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer in accordance with local board policy.

Before a student is suspended for ten days or less, the principal or designee will inform the student of the offense for which the student is charged and allow the student to explain his or her behavior. If the student is suspended, the student's parents will be notified if possible. School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported.

School officials may search a student if there is reasonable suspicion the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. Student vehicles brought on campus, student book bags, school lockers, desks and other school property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time without further notice to students or parents. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, lockers or any vehicle brought on campus. Metal detectors and drug or weapon sniffing dogs may be utilized at any school campus at the discretion of administrators.

BEHAVIOR WHICH WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The degree of discipline imposed will be in accordance with the progressive

discipline process unless otherwise stated. *{In drafting a Code of Conduct, a school system should consider whether it wishes to specify a range (or a minimum or maximum) for some or all of the specific acts of misconduct.}*

Possession, sale, use in any amount, distribution, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturates, marijuana, drug paraphernalia or alcoholic beverage or other intoxicant

Possession, distribution, attempted sale or sale of substances represented as drugs or alcohol

Sale, attempted sale, distribution, or being under the influence of a prescription or over the counter drug

Possession or use of a weapon or dangerous instrument: A student shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object that reasonable can be considered a weapon. Students who possess firearms on campus will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year suspension and will be referred to law enforcement officials.

Assault, including threats of bodily harm and/or sexual assault, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions: Immediate suspension and automatic referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon a teacher or other school personnel; possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.

Battery, including sexual battery, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions: Immediate suspension and automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon a teacher or other school personnel; possible referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.

Disrespectful conduct toward teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions.

Any behavior based on a student's race, national origin, sex, or disability that is unwelcome, unwanted, and/or uninvited by the recipient is prohibited, including verbal or non-verbal taunting, physical contact, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature.

Possession or use of tobacco in any form

Damaging or defacing personal property or school property
(vandalism)

Theft

Extortion or attempted extortion

Possession and/or use of fireworks or any explosive

Activating a fire alarm under false pretenses or making a bomb threat

Insubordination, disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules,
regulations, or directives; disobeying directives given by teachers,
administrators, or other school staff.

Classroom and school disturbances

Violation of school dress code

Use of profane, vulgar, or obscene words or indecent exposure

Possession of pocket pager, cell phone or electronic communication
device, except for health or other unusual reasons approved by the
board of education.

Inappropriate public displays of affection

Gambling or possession of gambling devices

Moving and non-moving driving violations

Giving false information to school officials

Cheating on school assignments

Unexcused absence, chronic tardiness, skipping class, leaving
campus without permission.

Bullying: Georgia law mandates that upon a finding that a student in
grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a
school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

Criminal law violations: A student who has committed a violation of the criminal laws and whose presence on the school campus may endanger the safety of other students or cause substantial disruption to the school operation may be subject to disciplinary action, including in-school suspension, short-term suspension and referral to a disciplinary tribunal.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Assault: Any threat or attempt to physically harm another person or any act which reasonably places another person in fear of physical harm. (Example: threatening language or swinging at someone in an attempt to strike).

Battery: Intentionally making physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive, or provoking manner or in a way that physically harms the other person. (Example: Fighting)

Bullying: In accordance with Georgia law, bullying is defined as (1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so, or (2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm. (Referenced JCDA-1)

Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student: A student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around him or her and which are likely to recur.

Detention: A requirement that the student report to specified school location and to a designated teacher or school official to make up work missed. Detention may require the student's attendance before school or after school. Students are given one day's warning so that arrangements for transportation can be made by the parents or guardians.

Disciplinary Tribunal: School officials appointed by the Board of Education to sit as fact finder and judge with respect to the student disciplinary matters.

Dress Code: The current dress code is explained in the student handbook. **Drug:** The term drug does not include prescriptions issued to the individual, aspirin or similar medications and/or cold medications that are taken according to product use recommendations and board policy. Caffeine pills are considered drugs. (Referenced to JCDAB).

Expulsion: Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current school

quarter or semester. Such action may be taken only by a disciplinary tribunal.

Extortion: Obtaining money or goods from another student by violence, threats, or misuse of authority.

Fireworks: The term "fireworks" means any combustible or explosive composition or any substance of combination or substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, well as articles containing any explosive or flammable compound and tablets and other devices containing an explosive substance.

Gambling: Engaging in a game or contest in which the outcome is dependent upon chance even though accompanied by some skill, and in which a participant stands to win or lose something of value.

In-School Suspension: Removal of a student from class(es) or regular school program and assignment of that student to an alternative program isolated from peers.

Suspension: Removal of a student from the regular school program for a period not to exceed 10 days (short-term) or for a period greater than 10 days (long-term, which may be imposed only by a disciplinary tribunal). During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school-sponsored activities including practices, as well as competitive events, and/or activities sponsored by the school or its employees.

System's Early Intervention Program for Student and Parent: This early intervention program is for youth ages 12-18 and their parents/guardians. First offenders for possession or use of alcohol or other intoxicants may be offered the opportunity to attend the Substance Use Prevention Education Resource (SUPER) Program.

Theft: The offense of taking or misappropriating any property, of another with the intention of depriving that person of the property, regardless of the manner in which the property is taken or appropriated.

Waiver: A waiver is an agreement not to contest whether a student has committed an infraction of the Code of Conduct and the acceptance of consequences in lieu of a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal.

Weapons: The term weapon is defined as any object which is or may be used to inflict bodily injury or to place another in fear for personal safety or well-being. The following things may be defined as dangerous weapons: any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, any stun gun or taser, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife, straight-edge razor or razor blade, spring stick, metal knucks, chains, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a way as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a

nunchaku, or fighting chain, throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind.
(Referenced to JCDAE)

STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESSES

The Terrell County Board of Education provides a variety of resources which are available at every school within the district to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help Student Support Teams such as, school counselors, chronic disciplinary problems student plans, peer mentoring and SUPER programs.

This Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance and will communicate freely their concerns about, and actions in response to, student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two-way communication through personal contacts are extremely valuable; therefore, they provide information to parents and well as on-going opportunities for school personnel to her parents' concerns and comments.

Parents and students should contact the principal of the school if specific questions arise related to the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct specifies within its standards of behavior various violations of the Code which may result in a school staff member's request that a parent or guardian come to the school for a conference. Parents are encouraged to visit the schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support process designed to promote positive choices and behavior.

Georgia law mandates that any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal shall notify by telephone call and/or by mail the student's parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem, invite the parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation, and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

Georgia law also states that before any chronic disciplinary problem student is permitted to return to school from a suspension or expulsion, the school shall request by telephone call and by mail at least one parent or guardian to schedule and attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

The law allows a local board or education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend a conference requested by the principal pursuant to the laws cited above, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such a conference,

order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs as such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior, or both. After notice and opportunity for hearing, the court may impose a fine, not to exceed \$500.00, on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION PLANS