

September 2010

Dear Parents:

On the subsequent pages you will find a copy of the District's Elementary Discipline Policy Handbook which was reviewed and approved by school personnel, parents and students.

Elementary principals believe it is important for all students to be fully aware of what we expect from them and the procedures we will utilize if they choose not to follow school rules.

The cooperation of each family is necessary for the success of this policy. Please spend time with your children to review and discuss the contents of the handbook. Children need to realize that adults both at home and at school care about their behavior.

Sign the tear-off sheet at the bottom of this letter and return it to your child's teacher. Please include any comments you may have regarding our handbook. These comments will be reviewed when we develop the 2010/11 handbook. We all look forward to a healthy, productive and successful school year for all of our children. Thank you for your full cooperation.

(Tear off and return)

I have read the District's Elementary Discipline Policy Handbook and have discussed it with my child.

Parent's Signature

Pupil's Name _____

Teacher _____

Comments:

ELEMENTARY DISCIPLINE POLICY HANDBOOK

The Northport-East Northport Union Free School District sets as district policy the discipline code set forth in the Elementary Discipline Handbook. This policy and handbook are part of the district's response to the new mandates contained in the SAVE legislation. This handbook has been developed with input from school personnel, parents and students; the goal being the promotion of responsible student behavior necessary for learning. To insure a proper learning atmosphere, the Board of Education holds school personnel and students responsible. For additional information, you may consult the newly revised District Policy #5131 entitled A Code of Conduct available through the District Clerk's Office.

NONDISCRIMINATORY NOTICE

The Northport-East Northport Union Free School District, in compliance with federal and state statutes, does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, national origin, special need, marital status, veteran status, age or sexual orientation. Compliance insures that discrimination does not occur in any policies or practices of admission, program, activity, placement, vocational opportunity, or employment. Questions or grievances concerning these matters should be directed to the Section 504 District Compliance Officer, Mr. John Lynch, (631)262-6616, or, the Title IX District Compliance Officer, Dr. Terry Bouton, (631)262-6627. Questions or grievances may also be made in writing to those named above at P.O. Box 210, Northport, New York, 11768.

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ELEMENTARY DISCIPLINE POLICY HANDBOOK

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I. STATEMENT OF DISCIPLINE

A. Purpose

One of the ultimate goals of education is to develop good patterns of student conduct; it is essential for each individual's own success as well as being necessary for a positive learning environment for all students.

Public schools have the moral and legal responsibility to provide an education for all children. Students have the responsibility to benefit from the opportunities provided.

The purpose of this document is to provide a guideline of the rights and responsibilities required for a healthy school environment so that standards of acceptable behavior and consequences for unacceptable student behavior will be clearly defined. Fair and consistent treatment of students will be assured.

B. Philosophy

The school staff and community believe that discipline is learned and, therefore, can and should be taught in the home, school, and community. Children also learn through experience and imitation. Discipline is a developmental process. As children mature, they should be given increased responsibility in keeping with their developmental level and social maturity; and every opportunity to practice self-discipline in order to positively reinforce responsible action. The ultimate goal should be the internalization of discipline, so that little external enforcement is required. The District committee believes that this philosophy will foster the development of happy, self-disciplined, self-reliant personalities capable of behaving appropriately as the situation demands. It is felt that this philosophy will produce individuals with social consciences, who see the good sense in acceptable behavior and who are spared the consequences of misbehavior.

II. FEDERALLY MANDATED POLICIES

Board of Education Policies related to maintaining a drug free school environment were developed as a direct result of federal mandates. Sections of Policy 4002/5002 are reproduced below. The sections of this policy relating to students should be reviewed with your child.

1. Alcohol and Other Substance

- I. DEFINITION: The term "alcohol and other substance use/abuse" shall be construed throughout this policy to refer to the use of all substances including but not limited to alcohol, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, L.S.D., P.C.P., amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alikes, and any other substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs." Additionally, the term "alcohol and other substance use/abuse" shall also include the inappropriate use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
- II. PHILOSOPHY: The Board of Education believes that the use of alcohol and other substances represents a serious threat to the welfare of our students. Students under the influence of alcohol or other substances are incapable of learning effectively, and may in fact interfere with staff efforts to educate the remaining students. The Board of Education further believes that every District staff member has a responsibility to work with other staff members and students in order to keep students free from alcohol and other substance abuse.

The District believes in the following principles and uses them as guidelines for developing disciplinary measures related to alcohol and other substance abuse:

- ! Alcohol and other substance use/abuse are preventable and treatable.
 - ! Alcohol and other substance use/abuse inhibit the District from achieving its central mission to educate all students.
 - ! The Board of Education, administration, and all school staff should serve as a model for student behavior.
 - ! The District can and must assume a leadership role in alcohol and other substance use/abuse prevention. This goal will be accomplished only through coordinated, collaborative efforts with parents, students, staff, and the community.
- III. POSSESSION, SALE, PURCHASE, OR USE: The possession, purchase, sale, or use of alcohol or other substances in school buildings on school grounds or during school/district sponsored activities shall be treated as a very serious violation of school district rules and regulations. Should such an act be unlawful, the law enforcement agencies shall be involved. In addition, any person who has consumed or used any of the above mentioned substances is prohibited from entering school grounds or school sponsored events.

- IV. EDUCATION: The Board of Education supports a strong Alcohol and other Substances education program which includes the following goals:
- ! Alerting students to the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, drug use and substance abuse.
 - ! Providing students with healthy life style information.
- V. PREVENTION: The Board of Education supports preventative programs which include the following goals:
- ! Identifying students who experience educational or social difficulties.
 - ! Enacting support programs which provide appropriate assistance.
- VI. INTERVENTION: The Board of Education supports intervention programs which include the following goals:
- ! Identifying students with possible drug, alcohol, or other substance dependencies.
 - ! Developing procedures which require staff communication with parents of students involved in alcohol and other substance use/abuse.
 - ! Enacting counseling treatment plans which provide appropriate assistance.
- VII. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES: Disciplinary measures for students using, possessing, selling or distributing alcohol and/or other substances and for students possessing drug paraphernalia are outlined in the District's Student Handbook.

Students who are disciplined for any of these infractions will be mandated to the intervention services established by this policy.

Students with special needs who violate this policy will receive the same disciplinary measures, unless the violation of the policy is due to his/her special needs condition.

The Superintendent of Schools may seek to impose a long term suspension for students who repeatedly violate the Alcohol and other Substances Board of Education Policy. Readmission to school will only be considered after the student has sought and received extensive assistance from appropriate outside agencies, and it is clear that such assistance has proven effective.

Staff members who become aware of a violation of this policy are required to report any information to the building principal, or designee. The principal is required to act on this information in an appropriate manner, and to report the action taken to the Superintendent of Schools.

- VIII. STAFF DEVELOPMENT: The Board of Education supports administrative, instructional, and non-instructional staff training in effective alcohol and other substance prevention programs. Staff training will be an on-going process.

- IX. IMPLEMENTATION, DISSEMINATION, AND MONITORING: The Board of Education charges the Superintendent of Schools to collaborate with the district staff, parents, students, community members, organizations, and agencies, to develop specific programs and strategies ensuring policy implementation.

Upon adoption, copies of this policy will be distributed to and reviewed with all district staff, students and parents and will be disseminated to the community through its organizations.

The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for providing the Board of Education with an annual review of the Alcohol and other Substances Board of Education Policy, and his or her recommendations for revisions.

2. Exclusion of Students Possessing Firearms, Board of Education Policy # 5131.9

In accordance with the provisions of the Gun-Free School Act (Public Law, 103-227, Title X, Part B), the Board of Education hereby adopts this policy pursuant to students possessing firearms.

This policy defines "firearm" as "(A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device."

Any student who is determined to have brought a firearm, or have possessed a firearm, in school, on school property, on school vehicles, or at any school sponsored activity off school property, shall be excluded from school for a period not less than one year, provided that the Superintendent of Schools may modify such exclusion requirement on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, rules and regulations and after affording the student such due process as may be required.

3. **Weapons**

For children to learn, they must feel safe and secure. Because weapons do not allow children to feel safe and secure, schools must take a strong stand against possession of weapons in school. The District asks for support in taking that stand.

Weapons DO NOT belong in a school. Possession of a weapon will NOT BE TOLERATED in our school system. Any student who brings a weapon to school may be subject to the severest penalties, including suspension from school and being reported to police, when appropriate.

While possession of any weapon is strictly prohibited, possession of a firearm on school grounds is covered by federal law, which requires that any student

possessing a gun on school grounds be suspended from school *for at least one, full school year.*

Definitions:

“Weapon” means a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921 for purposes of the Gun-Free Schools Act. “Weapon” also includes, but is not limited to, any other gun, BB gun, pistol, revolver, shotgun, rifle, machine gun, disguised gun, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, gravity knife, brass knuckles, sling shot, metal knuckles, knife, box cutter, can sword, electronic dart gun, Kun Fu star, electronic stun gun, pepper spray or other substance that can cause physical injury or death. “Weapon” also includes any object intended to be used as a weapon which poses a danger to the welfare and safety of others.

“On School Grounds,” “In a school,” or any similar reference means on any grounds or property owned by the school district, including school buses, or at any school-sponsored activity held off of school district property, including but not limited to, field trips and school trips, or any other activity sponsored by or operated under the aegis of the District.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

The Board of Education is committed to safeguarding the right of all students within the school district to learn in an environment that is free from all forms of sexual harassment. Conduct is deemed to be sexual harassment when the recipient perceives the behavior as unwelcome. It is irrelevant that the harasser had no intention to sexually harass the person.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) definition of sexual harassment will be applied, by the Board, to the educational environment as follows:

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. submission to such conduct is made whether explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's right to a fair and equal educational opportunity,
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for educational decisions affecting such student, or
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment.

The Board recognizes that sexual harassment of students can originate from a person of either sex against a person of the opposite or same sex, and from peers as well as employees, board members or any individual who might come in contact with students on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. When it is alleged that a sexual harassment incident has occurred, an investigation shall be undertaken of that incident. If the investigation determines that the incident was sexual harassment, appropriate corrective action shall be taken.

The Board condemns all unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature which may impose a requirement of sexual cooperation, or which may have the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. The Board also condemns any retaliatory behavior against complaints or any witnesses. The Board also condemns false accusations.

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment is encouraged to report the alleged misconduct, so that appropriate action may be taken. In the absence of a complaint, the Board, its designee, or staff member, upon learning of, or having reason to suspect, the occurrence of sexual harassment, will report the incident to a compliance officer who will ensure that an investigation is promptly commenced.

The Superintendent of Schools shall implement specific procedures on reporting, investigating and remedying allegations of sexual harassment consistent with federal and state laws. Activities will be established for students and employees to raise awareness of the issues surrounding sexual harassment to help reduce incidents of sexual harassment.

A copy of this policy and its accompanying regulation will be included in student handbooks and/or provided to parents.

Policy 4116.13/4216.13/5145.5 adopted 3/20/92
Renumbered to 5145.5 and Revised: 6/19/95, 8/31/09

This policy will automatically become null and void in the event that State or Federal legislation is passed which makes this policy inoperative.

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COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

All Students:

have the right to use the Internet with parental permission.

should be aware that the school can access any school user=s e-mail, and therefore, privacy cannot be guaranteed.

who use the Internet will do so with respect for others in mind.

who use the Internet will do so for school purposes only.

When I use the Internet:

I will always be respectful and polite while communicating with others.

I will always use acceptable and appropriate language.

I will not abuse the network or affect the usage of others.

I will never give out any personal information (name, photographs, phone #, etc.).

All cell phones must be turned off and placed in children=s backpack or book bag for the duration of the school day.

III. STUDENT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rights

I have a right to be happy and to be treated with respect in this school: This means that no one should laugh at me or hurt my feelings.

I have a right to a safe, caring secure school environment.

I have a right to be myself in this school: This means that no one should treat me unfairly because of my race, gender, religion or physical appearance or abilities.

I have the right to hear and be heard in this school: This means that no one should yell, make loud noises, scream, shout or otherwise disturb me.

Responsibilities

I have the responsibility to treat others with respect: This means that I will not laugh at others, tease others, or try to hurt the feelings of others.

I have the responsibility to respect the personal rights of others, to be aware of what is happening in my school and to report any problems that might interfere with a safe, caring, secure school environment.

I have the responsibility to respect others as individuals and not to treat others unfairly because of their race, gender, religion or physical appearance or abilities.

I have the responsibility to help maintain a calm and quiet school: This means I will not yell, make loud noises, scream, shout or otherwise disturb others.

III. STUDENT'S RIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITIES (cont=d.)

Rights

I have the right to learn about myself and others in this school: This means that I should be free to express my feelings and opinions in a constructive way, when appropriate, without being interrupted or punished.

I have the right to expect that all these rights will be mine so long as I am exercising my full responsibilities.

I have the right to have this handbook presented and explained to me at the beginning of each school year to remind me of my rights and responsibilities.

I have the right to the materials needed for learning on my level.

Responsibilities

I have the responsibility to learn about myself and others in this school.

I have the responsibility to listen to others express their views.

I have the responsibility to protect my rights and the rights of others by exercising my full responsibilities in all circumstances.

I have the responsibility to be aware of and follow the rules described in this book.

I have the responsibility to care for all such materials and to share them with others.

IV. RULES AND REGULATIONS

Rights

Absence

I have the right to attend classes in a healthy environment.

Responsibilities

I have the responsibility to maintain my health and to be considerate of others by not attending school as my illness might affect others.

Attendance

I have the right to a full and complete public education.

I have the responsibility to be present for instruction on all days when school is in session when I am physically able.

Assembly

I have the right to attend an assembly free from annoying and disturbing behaviors.

I have the responsibility to conduct myself in an appropriate manner as a member of the audience.

Alcohol/Drugs

I have the right to attend school in an alcohol-free and drug-free environment.

I have the responsibility to maintain a healthy body and mind by refraining from the use of alcohol and drugs.

Self-Control

I have the right to be helped to learn self-control in this school. This means that no one will silently stand by while I abuse the rights of others or when others abuse my rights.

I have the responsibility to learn self-control in this school. This means I will strive to exercise my rights without denying the same rights to others and I will expect the rights of others as they shall be corrected if my rights are abused.

IV. RULES AND REGULATIONS (cont=d.)

Rights

Fighting

I have the right to attend school without being abused by my classmates. This means that no one should be permitted to hit me, pinch me, kick me, threaten me, push me, hurt me, or verbally abuse me.

Firearms

I have the right to attend school in a safe environment.

Vandalism and Destruction of Property

I have the right to expect my property to be safe in this school.

Dress - (Health)

I have the right to expect children to attend school in a clean and neat manner.

Responsibilities

I have the responsibility to make the school safe by not hitting anyone, pinching anyone, kicking anyone, threatening anyone, pushing anyone, hurting anyone, or verbally abusing anyone.

I have the responsibility to report verbal and/or physical abuse to myself and to others.

I have the responsibility to maintain a safe environment for myself and others by not possessing or bringing a firearm to school.

I have the responsibility not to steal, destroy, or damage the property of others.

I have the responsibility to come to school in clean and neat attire.

IV. RULES AND REGULATIONS (cont=d.)

Rights

Bus

I have the right to expect that I will be transported to and from school in a safe manner.

Playground

I have the right to expect the playground to have a safe and pleasant atmosphere.

Cafeteria

I have the right to choose and enjoy my lunch in a pleasant, orderly and clean atmosphere.

Homework

I have the right to expect a reasonable amount of homework that I can satisfactorily complete myself.

Responsibilities

I have the responsibility to exhibit self-control on the bus and avoid any action that might contribute to an unsafe environment.

I have the responsibility to report verbal and/or physical abuse to myself and to others to the bus driver and/or an adult.

I have the responsibility to use the playground area and equipment in an appropriate manner and obey safety rules. I have the responsibility to respect the rights of others during my time on the playground.

I have the responsibility to eat my lunch in a clean and orderly manner that will not disturb others.

I have the responsibility to complete and bring in my assignments promptly.

V. SANCTIONS AND PENALTIES

A. Detention Program

The principal or teacher may detain a student for disciplinary reasons during or outside of the school's regular hours. If outside the school's regular hours the parent or guardian must be notified and, in the case of bus students or walkers, arrangements must be made for the student's transportation home. Teachers should use their very best judgment in recommending after-school detention. The Detention Program is for students who have committed frequent infractions of the school rules and regulations. These infractions are not serious enough for out-of-school suspension and the student has had sufficient counseling by his/her teacher, principal, and/or parent regarding his/her actions. Students will be assigned to the lunchtime Detention Program by the principal or teacher and could be under the direction of a teacher aide. A student, who is assigned to the Detention Program for more than three occasions, will be subject to other disciplinary actions and consultation with his/her parent/guardian will be made.

B. Suspension - Board Policy #5114.1

Short-term suspension is the denial of school attendance for five days or less. Long-term suspension is the denial of school attendance for a period in excess of five days but not beyond the current school year. In all cases involving suspension of students, the principal will give the student an oral or written notice of the charges and allow the student to present his/her version of the incident in question. The principal must notify the parent or guardian of the charges against the student and provide an opportunity for a hearing or conference. Any student who is suspended is prohibited from entering the school grounds, attending any day or evening functions, or riding a school bus.

C. Indefinite Suspension

An indefinite suspension from school will be initiated by the principal through the following methods:

1. A formal hearing (Superintendent's Hearing) be summoned to review the case. This could include an impartial hearing officer as well as other school personnel associated with the case.
2. If the student is enrolled in the special education program, the case should be referred to the Committee on Special Education for student placement review. The CSE would also attempt to ascertain whether the designated special need had in any way influenced the behavior which resulted in the school suspension. Students who are not in the special education program but have exhibited serious behavioral dysfunctions may also be treated in a similar fashion. The CSE would review the case for a possible special need and recommend placement in an appropriate special education program. In both cases, the student will be placed on home instruction pending the CSE review.
3. A student who is judged as an imminent danger to himself or others may be kept out of school without a hearing. This option should not be employed unless a hearing is impossible to schedule. Such a situation could possibly rise when a parent is uncooperative toward the impartial hearing. Another scenario would be the limitations established as the result of the student's criminal offense which resulted in suspension. Such limitations might be the court system's process which would supersede the suspension hearing. In all cases, the student under the age of sixteen would receive home instruction.

Grounds for Suspension

- Continued willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of proper authority.
- Willful destruction or defacing of school property.
- Behavior which is not conducive to the safety, welfare, or morals of other students.
- Physical or mental special need such that the child cannot reasonably benefit from the programs available.
- Violation of the District's Standards of Conduct - Illicit Drugs and Alcohol on School Premises or Activities.

Children with Special Needs

The Northport-East Northport written policy on conduct and discipline must include procedures to be followed when applying that policy to special needs children in accordance with Board Policy 5313.4. It is recommended these guidelines be established.

1. If a student with special needs is evidencing inappropriate behavior, a learning support team should be convened to evaluate present procedures. Behavior strategies should be discussed and implemented.
2. A referral should be made to the CSE to consider another placement if modification strategies are exhausted and it is established the student's management needs exceed those described on the IEP.

A student with special needs is not immune from disciplinary measures. School authorities must establish, however, that the student's misconduct is not simply a manifestation of the special need. This policy ensures that, when the misconduct is not a result of the special need, the student is held accountable to the same standards as his/her peers.

VI. DUE PROCESS

All school rules and regulations that restrict a student's rights must have a valid goal. To preserve due process, the following rights will be given to the student:

- Right to a hearing by the principal
- Right to be suspended only by the principal
- Right to be told what rules the student has broken and what it is that has caused the exclusion
- Right to tell his/her side of "the story"
- Right to bring witnesses to a hearing
- Right to keep up with his/her classes during suspension periods
- Right to have parents or guardians informed of the suspension and the reasons for it
- Right to appeal

VII. SUGGESTIONS TO PARENTS

In an effort to achieve goals outlined in Section I, the following suggestions are offered to parents:

- To participate in conferences with teachers, counselors, or administrators regarding the academic and behavioral status of their children. (Parents should be notified of problems beforehand prior to conferences dealing with negative issues.)
- To provide parental supportive action by making sure that children have adequate sleep, adequate nutrition, adequate health care, and appropriate clothing before coming to school.
- To maintain consistent and adequate control over their children and to cooperate in enforcing reasonable control measures as applied by school personnel.
- To cooperate with the school in bringing about improvements designed to enhance the educational program offered students.
- To provide the school with current information regarding guardianship, legal address, phone, medical data, emergency contact, and other facts which may help the school to serve their children.
- To become familiar with and support district policies and school rules and regulations.
- To notify school when child is absent.
- To encourage and maintain proper attendance in school when the child is physically able to attend.

VIII. Elementary Bus Code of Conduct

Elementary Bus Code of Conduct

The Northport/East Northport students are expected to behave in a safe and appropriate manner on the bus. Behavioral expectations are as follows:

- X School rules will be followed on the bus.
- X Students will remain in their seats for the whole bus trip.
- X Students will keep their feet and belongings out of the aisle.
- X Students will use a "classroom voice" so the bus driver can drive carefully.
- X Students will use kind words and actions with their peers and with their bus driver
- X Students will report bullying behaviors to an adult
- X Students will be asked to wear seatbelts when so equipped

The safety and comfort of everyone on the bus depends on a standard of behavior and consideration for others that is expected in the classroom. We appreciate the partnership between home and school in maintaining these standards of behavior.

IF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT IS BROKEN, the following consequences may be taken, depending upon the severity of the offense:

- X The student will be referred to the counselor or to the principal for a conference.
- X A parent notification form will be sent home. Parents will sign the referral form.
- X Specific seats may be assigned on the bus.
- X Bus privileges can be revoked.