

# Code of Conduct

## *Core Ethical Values*

### *We Believe:*

- It is better to instill discipline than it is to impose it.
- Treating all members of the North Hunterdon Community with respect has a beneficial effect on school climate and overall civility.
- Integrity is the cornerstone of academic and personal success.
- Respect the differences among us, as these differences offer profound opportunities to learn.
- Clear, open communication is central to ongoing school improvement

### **We Believe:**

- Students are more successful if they attend all classes on time and with the proper materials needed for schoolwork.
- Students are more successful if they demonstrate respect for themselves.
- Students are more successful if they demonstrate respect for school property and the property of others.
- Students are more successful when they behave in a safe, responsible manner.
- Students are more successful if they abide by all school rules and regulations.
- Students are more successful when they do their own school work. Cheating reduces learning.
- Students create a better school environment when they avoid using foul language, obscene gestures, or language that targets a specific group based upon real or perceived attributes.
- Cooperation among parents, teachers, and administrators will result in the best outcomes for the students that we serve.
- Students perform better academically when parents ensure that their child attends school regularly and provides appropriate documentation for absences and tardies.
- Students perform better when parents help their children to stay healthy, neat, and clean, and organized.
- Students perform better when staff members are made aware of the student's conditions, issues or problems that may have an effect on the student's learning.
- Students perform better when parents monitor completion of assignments with their children.
- Technologies such as HomeLogic will allow parents to better monitor their child's academic performance and maintain close communication with their children and with school personnel regarding academic performance and behavior.

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## Attendance Policies

### Student Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be in attendance on all days and hours that school is in session. Absence from school restricts and inhibits the student's ability to complete the prescribed curriculum requirements. It also violates New Jersey State Law, which requires students to attend school regularly. The law states:

Every parent, guardian or other person having custody and control of a child between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) years shall cause such child regularly to attend the public schools for children of similar grades and attainments or to receive instruction elsewhere than at school (18A: 38-25).

Such regular attendance shall be during all the days and hours that the public schools are in session in the school district, unless it is shown to the satisfaction of the Board of Education that the mental condition of the child is such that he cannot benefit from instruction in the school or that the bodily condition of the child is such as to prevent his attendance at school, but nothing herein shall be construed as permitting the temporary or permanent exclusion from school by the Board of Education of any district of any child between the ages of 5 and 20, except as explicitly otherwise provided by law (18A-38:25 -26).

School attendance is the responsibility of the student and the parents. The student who absents himself/herself from school/class impedes and complicates the teaching-learning process.

The Board of Education neither condones nor permits absences from school for any reason not specified in the law, and course credit will not be issued if the student attendance requirement is not met. This may affect eligibility for graduation.

Absences: Absences fall into two categories: Excused and Unexcused

#### EXCUSED ABSENCES

- (1) Professional note (i.e. doctor, dentist, lawyer, etc.);
- (2) Dated letter from a college verifying a visitation;
- (3) Religious holiday, as prescribed by state law and verified by a parental note;

- (4) School approved activity;
- (5) Death in the family verified by a parental note;
- (6) Note from the Motor Vehicle Agency verifying that a driving test was taken;
- (7) In-school suspension;
- (8) Out-of-school suspension.

Written documentation must be presented to verify all excused absences; and must be submitted within five (5) school days after returning.

This is not a permissive policy establishing or "licensing" a limit of days, which may be missed with no harm. Rather, it assumes absences will occur for personal illness, serious personal or family problems, religious holidays, quarantines, and professional appointments that cannot be scheduled in non-school times. Absences for any other reason not listed above must be acceptable to the administration, or the absence will be considered unexcused. Long-term or chronic illness will be considered individually by the administration and documentation of such should be on file in the nurse's office as soon as possible.

**\*Parents are to call the Attendance Office and report their child absent on the day of the absence.**

#### UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Students are not required to bring parental notes to school following an unexcused absence. Parents/guardians, guidance counselors, and the Child Study Team will be notified of a student's absence following the second (2) unexcused absence in a nine-week course, the fourth (4) unexcused absence in a semester course, and the sixth (6) and tenth (10) unexcused absence in a full-year course.

DAYS MISSED DUE TO FAMILY VACATIONS DO NOT QUALIFY AS EXCUSED ABSENCES.

#### LOSS OF COURSE CREDIT

Students with the following unexcused absences will be subject to loss of credit in a course:

Students who miss more than three (3) classes in a nine-week course, more than six (6) classes in a semester course, or more than twelve (12) classes in a year course.

Parents/guardians will be sent certified letters notifying them of a student's loss of course credit. Guidance counselors and the Child Study Team will also be notified.

A student who loses credit because of excessive absence will have his/her grades recorded for each of

the four marking periods listed on his/her report cards but in lieu of final grades the designation of N/C (no credit granted) will be listed.

#### REVIEW AND APPEAL PROCESS

A student who has lost credit in a course must make all appeals for reinstatement of credit lost due to excessive absence in writing to the administration within ten (10) days of notification. The School Appeal Committee will consist of the Assistant Principal (Chair) and 5 members of the teaching staff.

#### MAKING UP WORK FOLLOWING ABSENCES

A student may make up work following any absence. Upon returning to school after an absence, the student will have two (2) days for each day of absence to make up work unless the student makes other arrangements with his/her teachers. However, all work should be made up within a maximum of ten (10) school days following the student's return. In the event that illness or recovery limits a student's workload, at the conclusion of the absence parents may petition in writing the administrator in charge of attendance for an extension beyond the ten (10) days.

#### EARNING COURSE CREDIT LOST DUE TO EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Students who lose credit due to excessive absences may earn credit by completing a Summer Credit Restoration Program. Through this option, a student may earn course credit lost, but the grade earned would be decided by the work done during the regular school year. No grade improvement is possible. Students who have missed more than 30 days (or their equivalent) or who have failed the course may not use the Summer Credit Restoration option to earn course credit.

#### SUMMER COMPLETION PROJECT

The Summer Completion Project is designed to allow students to earn back the course credit they lost due to excessive absences. It requires the student to perform a project under the supervision of a certified teacher, and attend a formal class during the time allotted for Summer School. Research topics would be designated for each course by the respective department chairpersons.

#### TARDIES

Students who are tardy without proper authorization from a teacher, attendance personnel, guidance counselor, or administrator will receive an unexcused tardy. Three unexcused lates to class equal one unexcused absence.

Students who are tardy to class for the following reasons will be excused:

- (1) Professional note (i.e. doctor, dentist, lawyer, etc.).
- (2) Dated letter from a college verifying a visitation.
- (3) Religious holiday, as prescribed by state law and verified by a parental note.
- (4) School approved activity.
- (5) Death in the family verified by a parental note.
- (6) Note from the Motor Vehicle Agency verifying that a driving test was taken.

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 et seq.; 18A:38-25 et seq.

N.J.S.A. 34:2-21.1 et seq.

N.J.A.C. 6:20-1.1 et seq.

Adopted: 18 September 2001

# Code of Conduct

## Disciplinary Actions

### Student Attendance Infractions:

#### Cutting Class

**Students are expected to attend school whenever it is in session.**

**In addition to school-imposed discipline, students who are truant are subject to fines and other civil penalties through the municipal court.**

Cutting Class:

- 1<sup>st</sup> cut—one extended detention
- 2<sup>nd</sup> cut—two or three extended detentions
- 3<sup>rd</sup> cut—two/three days In-school Suspension
- 4<sup>th</sup> cut—three/five days In-school Suspension
- 5<sup>th</sup> cut—five/ten days In-school Suspension or Out of school suspension

## Tardy to School or Class

Unexcused tardies/lates to class:

3 lates to class – 1 detention

6 lates to class – 1 extended detention and potential loss of parking privileges.

9 lates to class – 2 extended detentions, parent phone call, driving privileges suspended for 1 month, loss of GAIN time for one semester.\*

12 lates to class – Suspension, parent phone call, driving privileges suspended for 2 months, loss of GAIN time for the year.\*

\*Penalty for driving while privilege is suspended is a loss of the privilege for the year.

\*\* Please note that students are to attend school every day that it is in session. Excessive absences from school may be reported to the local municipal court.

## Student Infractions:

### Behavioral infractions

The purpose of discipline for all students is to improve their conduct now and in the future as they become ready for the workplace. It is critical for students to learn how to be industrious and honest.

*\*Repeated offenses will result in increased levels of discipline.*

#### **Level 1: Conference and Detention, and loss of GAIN time**

- Profanity/vulgarity of the incidental type
- Failure to follow rules and procedures as established in the Student/Parent Handbook.
- Dress Code violation - 1<sup>st</sup> offense
- Not logging off computer

#### **Level 2: Extended Detention, loss of GAIN time, and loss of Parking Privileges**

- Disruptive Behavior
- Technology violations
- Giving away student password for computer use
- Accessing inappropriate sites
- Food out of the cafeteria
- Being in an unauthorized area
- Driving/parking violation – 1<sup>st</sup> offense
- Profanity, gestures or words directed at another person in a covert or in a hostile way
- Forgery of signatures, notes, or passes, etc.
- Cheating or Plagiarism: penalties noted in addition to academic penalties

**Level 3: One day suspension/Two or three extended detentions, loss of driving/parking privileges, and loss of GAIN time – legal action may result at the discretion of the Administration.**

- Truancy
- Intimidation
- Driving/parking violation – 2<sup>nd</sup> offense
- Possession of a laser pointer
- Dress Code violation - 2<sup>nd</sup> offense

**Level 4: Two or Three days suspension and loss of driving/parking privileges, and loss of GAIN time – legal action may result at the discretion of the Administration.**

- Insubordination
- Possession of tobacco products, matches or a lighter
- Vandalism—willful or malicious defacing or damage of school property
- Petty theft—the unlawful taking of another’s possessions without his or her consent
- Gambling
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Profanity/vulgarity toward staff members
- Profanity or obscenity that is intentional and directed

**Level 5: Three to five days suspension and loss of driving/parking privileges, and loss of GAIN time – legal action may result at the discretion of the Administration.**

- Theft
- Tampering with defibrillator/AED
- Tampering with fire alarm or fire doors
- Tampering with fire extinguishers
- Inciting other students to create a disturbance
- Extortion—to obtain another’s money, property, or compliance by force, threat, or illegal power
- Hazing of other students
- Endangering the welfare of students and/or staff
- Possession of fireworks (student change, gives discretion)
- Possession of pornography

**Level 6: Five days suspension and loss of driving/parking privileges, and loss of GAIN time – legal action may result at the discretion of the Administration.**

- Harassment/bullying
- Fighting— 1<sup>st</sup> offense

**Level 7: Ten days out of school suspension/ loss of parking privileges/ loss of GAIN time /possible recommendation for additional consequences up to and including expulsion – legal action may result at the discretion of the Administration.**

- Pre-meditated/arranged fight
- Fighting – 2<sup>nd</sup> offense

- Gang or group fighting
- Bias/Hate Crime/Acts
- Harassment/bullying—ongoing pattern of mistreatment
- Reprisal against anyone who has reported intimidation, harassment, or bullying
- Possession and/or use of illegal drugs, including alcohol
- Use of fireworks
- Selling or supplying illegal drugs, including alcohol, to another person
- Possession of dangerous weapons, including knives and homemade devices
- Possession of a “look alike” weapon
- Possession or use of explosives
- Bomb threat
- Arson
- Setting a false fire alarm
- Physical assault of a staff member
- Aggravated assault, assault
- Repeated threats upon students or staff

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### Dress Code

**The home and school need to cooperate in the matter of student attire. In order to create a positive school atmosphere, attire and grooming should be reasonably modest and neat. A student’s appearance must not disrupt the teaching or learning process, therefore, the following guidelines must be followed.**

1. Footwear must be worn at all times. (**NO BARE FEET or SLIPPERS**).
2. Hats, hoods, bandanas, and sweatbands are not to be worn in the building.
3. Do not wear cleats in the building.
4. Skate boards and roller shoes are not allowed on school property.
5. No underwear can be exposed, including bra straps.
6. No open-backs or strapless tops and dresses such as halter tops
7. Skirts, shorts and dresses must be an acceptable length (just below fist level when arms are straight)
8. Clothing such as shorts, pants or skirts are not permitted to be worn lower than the hip-line.
9. Excessively tight shorts, pants, and skirts are unacceptable.
10. No midriff exposure, no exposed cleavage, no tube tops
11. Sundresses and tops with spaghetti straps are acceptable as long as cleavage and the back are covered.
12. No tank tops/sleeveless shirts of any kind are permitted to be worn by boys.
13. Leggings may be worn if the top is an acceptable length, (just below fist level when arms are straight) and conforms to the other elements of the dress code.
14. No low riding pants, shorts, or shirts that expose undergarments or anatomy.
15. Revealing, see through clothing, that excessively exposes anatomy is not permitted.

16. Clothing with inappropriate pictures, liquor advertisements, sexually suggestive messages, tobacco or gang affiliations, slogans that contain offensive or obscene words, symbols, signs, or slogans depicting violence or degrading any race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, social or economic status, sexual orientation or drug related messages are not allowed.
17. Trousers, slacks, or other clothing with studs or gaudy accessories or chains are not permitted.
18. Wrist, ankle, and/or neckbands with spikes can be dangerous. They are not permitted.
19. Any other articles that could cause damage to other students or to property are not permitted.
20. Outdoor jackets or coats except when entering or leaving the building, and when there is a defect in the heating system.
21. Sunglasses – non-prescription sunglasses, glazed and tinted glasses, except as prescribed by the pupil's doctor.

**Please see the examples below of clothing that is not appropriate for school.**

***What Not To Wear:***



***Any articles that are deemed by the Administration as distracting or disruptive to the educational will not be permitted.***

Students who violate the policy will receive one after school detention, with increasing penalties for subsequent offences. Students will be sent to the Athletic Office and asked to change into more appropriate dress, Parents should understand that they might be asked to bring a change of clothing to school for students who are in violation of this school policy. The school administration reserves the right to make a final decision regarding appropriate dress in school and at school-sponsored events. If parents cannot be reached to bring appropriate clothing to the school, the student will be placed in the In-school Suspension Room until such time as appropriate attire can be provided.

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## Electronic Devices

- Cell phones and all other electronic devices such as iPods, media players, etc., are prohibited during the instructional day (7:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m.).
- Laptop/notebook computers are only permitted with prior approval from a teacher and can only be used during that specifically approved class.
- All electronic devices should remain in the students' backpack/locker until dismissal. Students should use wall clocks and wristwatches, not cell phones, to look up the time.
- Cell phones and other devices will be confiscated from students using them during the school day. Parents must come in to pick up the phones after the confiscation period is over.
- Electronic Devices:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> offense: device is confiscated for one week/1 extended detention
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: device is confiscated for 2 weeks/3 extended detentions
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: device is confiscated for one month/5 extended detentions
  - 4<sup>th</sup> offense: device is confiscated until the end of the school year/5 extended detentions

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## Student Responsibilities and Academic Achievement

**The following academic supports are available for our students:**

- **Tutoring is available in our resource rooms throughout the school day.**
- **Students can make up tests; get help with difficult material, etc.**
- **The following academic disciplines have a resource room:**
  - Science
  - Reading Writing Lab (Language Arts)
  - Math
  - History
  - Transition Center (Special Education)
  - World Languages
- Tutoring is also available after school in the various resource rooms.
- The 3:10 late bus is available on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, so students can access extra help after school, even if parents are not available to pick them up.

- The Media Center is a rich source of media and information. The resources here are too numerous to name, but from wikis to blogs and beyond, students have opportunities to engage with multiple technologies, world views, and disparate viewpoints.

**It is the role of students to:**

- Be aware of your grades in each class. HomeLogic makes this easier as both students and parents have access.
- Do the best work that you can every day in every class.
- Honestly look at your effort in classes and take responsibility when effort has not been forthcoming.
- Access the academic supports that are available.
- Speak with your teacher if you are having academic difficulties in a class. She or he will be able to figure out why you are struggling and help you with remediation.
- Tell your parents the truth when you are struggling academically. Your honesty will shorten the time that it takes to get you back on track. Lying only delays the inevitable.
- Do your assignments yourself. No student can properly learn required material if they are cheating on assignments and tests. Cheating prevents learning.

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## Social and Emotional Well Being

**The following social and emotional supports are available for our students:**

- Freshman Discovery, a three day opportunity for students from five sending districts to comfortably integrate into the North Hunterdon Community.
- Over 40 activities, including two freshman dances at the beginning of the year to further integrate the freshmen
- Major dances such as Homecoming dance, Junior-Senior Prom
- Student Assistance Counselor
- Over 60 Clubs based on student interests
- The Gay/Straight Alliance offers a safe refuge for students who are interested in supporting people who are straight, gay, bisexual, and transgender.
- Very competent guidance counselors who are the “first line of defense” for our students.
- Teachers who have been well-trained to recognize and report the signs of drug and alcohol use.
- Peer Mediation
- Drug and alcohol presentations
- School Counts Presentation

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## Comprehensive Behavioral Supports

Every student has a guidance counselor. Guidance counselors are wonderful resources in assisting students with direct help or referrals to other professionals in the building and in the community.

- The Core Team assists students with issues related to drugs and alcohol.
- The Intervention and Referral Services team assists teachers and students to improve student achievement and prevent students from dropping out of school.
- Individual teachers can be strong advocates for our students.
- Two counselors dedicated to assist students in crisis are available.
- The Dean of Students assists students in crisis through referrals for drug and alcohol
- Counseling, monitoring student referrals, setting up parent conferences to intervene with students in turmoil, and working with police and other agencies.
- We have a Student Assistant Counselor, Jeff Hunt, who is available to assist students in crisis.
- Most teachers have strong bonds with their students, so they are often the first line of defense for students in crisis.

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# Code of Conduct

## Discipline

### 4150 DISCIPLINE

The Board of Education directs all support staff members to observe statutes, rules of the State Board of Education, policies of this Board, and duly promulgated administrative rules and regulations governing staff conduct. Violations of those statutes, rules, policies, and regulations will be subject to discipline.

The Superintendent or designee shall deal with disciplinary matters on a case by case basis. Discipline will include, as appropriate, verbal and written warnings, transfer, suspension, freezing wages, and dismissal; discipline will provide, wherever possible, for progressive penalties for repeated violations.

In the event disciplinary action is contemplated, notice will be given to the employee in ordinary and concise language of the specific acts and omissions upon which the disciplinary action is based; the text of the statute, policy, rule, or regulation that the employee is alleged to have violated; a date when the employee may be heard and the administrator who will hear the matter; and the penalty that will be imposed.

N.J.S.A. 18A:25-7; 18A:27-4; N.J.S.A. 34-13A-1 et seq.; 34:19-1

# Code of Conduct

## Bullying and Harassment

The Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment; and since pupils learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying.

## Definition

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, written, verbal or physical act that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus and that:

1. Is motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability; or
2. By any other distinguishing characteristic; and
3. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
4. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

"Electronic communication" means communication for acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying that occur off school grounds, such as cyber-bullying e.g. the use of electronic or wireless devices to harass, intimidate, or bully, to the extent this Policy complies with the provisions of N.J.A.C.6A:10-7.6, Conduct Away From School Grounds, and the district's pupil code of conduct, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1. In all instances of harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior occurring off school grounds, the emotional safety and well-being or for reasons relating to the safety and well-being of other pupils, staff or school grounds, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:25-2 and 18A:37-2, and when the conduct which is the subject of a proposed consequence materially and substantially interferes with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school. All acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying that include the use of school property (e.g., school computers, other electronic or wireless communication devices) apply to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15 and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.9, harassment, intimidation, and bullying, whether the subject or recipient of the bullying is on or off school property.

## Expected Behavior

The Board expects pupils to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other pupils and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment. The Board believes that standards for pupil behavior must be

set cooperatively through interaction among the pupils, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), staff and community members, producing an atmosphere that encourages pupils to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school district and community property on the part of pupils, staff and community members.

The Board believes the best discipline is self-imposed, and it is the responsibility of school district staff to use disciplinary situations as opportunities to help pupils learn to assume and accept responsibility for their behavior and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with pupils shall apply the best practices designed to prevent discipline problems and encourage pupils' abilities to grow in self-discipline.

General guidelines for pupil conduct will be developed by the Superintendent in conjunction with school staff, and approved by the Board. These guidelines will be developed based on accepted core ethical values from broad community involvement with input from a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and other community representatives, school employees, volunteers, pupils and administrators. These guidelines for pupil conduct will be suited to the age level of the pupils and the mission and physical facilities of the individual school(s) in the district. This Policy requires all pupils in the district to adhere to these rules and guideline and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for infraction of these rules and guidelines.

The district prohibits active and passive support for harassment, intimidation or bullying. Pupils are encouraged to support other pupils who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, and report these acts to the Building Principal or his/her designee.

Pupils are required to conform to reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior; respect the person, property and right of others; obey constituted authority; and respond to school district teaching, support and administrative staff. Each school Principal will develop and provide a school-based program for appropriate recognition for positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, good citizenship and academic success.

The Superintendent will provide annually to pupils and their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) the rules of the district regarding pupil conduct, pupil's due process and other rights. This Policy will appear in all publications of the school district's comprehensive rules, procedure and standards of conduct for school(s) within the district, including pupil handbooks. Provisions will be made for informing parent(s) or legal guardian(s) whose primary language is other than English.

### Consequences and Appropriate Remedial Actions

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for pupils who commit acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as set forth in the Board adopted Pupil Discipline/Code of Conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the problem, and protect the victim of the act. The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below:

### *Examples of Consequences*

- Admonishment
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Deprivation of privileges
- Classroom or administrative detention
- Referral to the Dean of Students
- In-school Suspension
- After-school programs
- Out-of-school suspension
- Legal action
- Expulsion

### *Examples of Remedial Measures-Personal*

- Restitution or restoration
- Mediation
- Peer support group
- Recommendations of a pupil behavior or ethics council
- Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience
- Supportive pupil interventions, including participation of the Intervention and Referral Services Team, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8
- Behavioral assessment or evaluation, including, but not limited to, a referral to the Child Study Team, as appropriate
- Behavioral management plan, with benchmarks that are closely monitored
- Assignment of leadership responsibilities (e.g., hallway or bus monitor)
- Pupil counseling
- Parent conferences
- Pupil treatment
- Pupil therapy

### *Examples of Remedial Measures-Environmental (Classroom, School Building or School District)*

- School and community surveys or other strategies for determining the conditions contributing to harassment, intimidation, or bullying.
- School culture change
- School climate change
- School climate improvement
- Adoption of research-based, systematic bullying prevention programs
- School policy and procedures revisions
- Modifications of schedules
- Adjustments in hallway traffic
- Modifications in pupil routes or patterns traveling to and from school
- Targeted use of monitors (e.g., hallway, cafeteria, bus)

- Small or large group presentations for fully addressing the behaviors and the responses to the behaviors
- General professional development programs for certified and non-certified staff
- Professional development plans for involved staff
- Disciplinary action for school staff who contributed to the problem
- Supportive institutional interventions, including participation of the Intervention and Referral Services Team, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8
- Parent conferences
- Family counseling
- Involvement of parent-teacher organizations
- Involvement of community-based organizations
- Development of a general bullying response plan
- Recommendations of a pupil behavior or ethics council
- Peer support groups
- Law enforcement (e.g., school resource officer, juvenile officer) involvement

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.9(a) 2.vi requires appropriate consequences and remedial actions for any staff member who commits an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The consequences may include, but not be limited to verbal or written reprimand, increment withholding, legal action, disciplinary action, and/or termination. Remedial measures may include, but not limited to, in or out-of-school counseling, professional development programs, and work environment modifications.

### Reporting P

Complaints alleging violations of this Policy shall be reported to the Principal or designee. All school employees as well as all other members of the school community including pupils, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), volunteers, and visitors are required to report alleged violations of this Policy to the Principal or designee. While submission of an Incident Report Form to the Principal or designee is not required, the reporting party is encouraged to use the Incident Report Form available from the Building Principal or available at the school district's administrative offices. Oral, written, or electronic reports will also be considered official reports. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

A school employee who promptly reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying in accordance with this Policy, and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set forth in this Policy, is immune from a cause of action for damages arising from any failure to remedy the reported incident, as set forth in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-16.c.

### Investigation

The Principal or designee is responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this Policy. The Principal or designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough and

complete investigation of the alleged incident. The Principal or designee will maintain a record of each investigation regarding allegations of harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

### Response to an Incident of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

An appropriate response will be provided to the individual who commits any incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Some acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may be isolated incidents requiring the school respond appropriately to the individual(s) committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious or part of a larger pattern of harassment, intimidation, or bullying that require a response either at the classroom, school building or school district level or by law enforcement officials.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for pupils who commit an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1, Discipline of Pupils and as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2, Short-term Suspensions, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.3, Long-term Suspensions and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.5, Expulsions.

In considering whether a response beyond the individual level is appropriate, the administrator shall consider the nature and circumstances of the act, the degree of harm, the nature and severity of the behavior, past incidences or continuing patterns of behavior, and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred. The school district's responses can range from school and community surveys, to mailings, to focus groups, to adoption of research-based bullying prevention program models, to training for certificated and non-certificated staff. The district's responses may also include participation of parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and other community members and organizations, small or large group presentations for fully addressing the actions and the school district's response to the actions, in the context of acceptable pupil behavior and the consequences of such actions, and the involvement of law enforcement officers, including school resource officers. The district will also make resources available to individual victims of harassment, intimidation, and bullying, including but not limited to school counseling services and environmental modifications.

### Reprisal or Retaliation Prohibited

The Board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any pupil, employee, or volunteer who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a pupil, employee, or volunteer who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the Principal or designee after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act, in accordance with case law, Federal and State statutes and regulations and district policies and procedures.

### Consequences for False Accusation

The Board prohibits any pupil, employee, or volunteer, or visitor from falsely accusing another

as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a pupil found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq., Discipline of Pupils and as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2, Short-term Suspensions, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7, Long-term Suspensions and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.5, Expulsions.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be disciplined in accordance with district policies, procedures, and agreements.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer, found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be determined by the Principal or designee, after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

#### Policy Publication

This Policy will be disseminated annually to all school staff, pupils, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), along with a statement explaining the Policy applies to all applicable acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions or on a school bus. A range of options may be implemented by the school district for publicizing this Policy. This policy shall be posted on the school district's website and distributed annually to parent(s) or legal guardians who have children enrolled in a school in the district

#### Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Prevent

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-17.c and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.9(d) 1.i, information regarding the district's Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy shall be incorporated into a school's employee training program.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.9(d)3, the district is required to annually review the extent and characteristics of harassment, intimidation, and bullying behavior in the schools of the district and implement locally determined programmatic or other responses, if determined appropriate by the district Board of Education.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.9(d)1, the school district is required to annually review the training needs of district staff for the effective implementation of the harassment, intimidation, and bullying policy, procedures, programs, and initiatives of the district Board of Education and implement locally determined staff training programs consistent with the annual review of training needs and the findings of the annual review and update of the code of pupil conduct, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1(a)3, as determined appropriate by the district Board of Education.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.9(d)2, the school district is required to develop a process for annually discussing the school district's harassment, intimidation, and bullying policy with pupils.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-19, the school district may apply to the Commissioner of Education for additional costs due to the implementation of the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 through N.J.S.A. 18A:37-18.

N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 through 18A:37-19

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.9 et seq.

Adopted: December 9, 2008

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## **5512.02 CYBER-BULLYING**

### Policy Statement

A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Cyber- bullying by a pupil in the district directed toward another school district pupil or school staff member is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment.

The Board of Education prohibits acts of cyber- bullying by school district pupils through the use of any school district owned, operated, and supervised technologies. The Building Principal or designee may report allegations of cyber- bullying to law enforcement authorities.

### Definitions

"Cyber- Bullying is the use of electronic information and communication devices, to include but not be limited to, e-mail messages, instant messaging, text messaging, cellular telephone communications, internet blogs, internet chat rooms, internet postings, and defamatory websites, that:

1. Deliberately threatens, harasses, intimidates an individual or group of individuals; or
2. Places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual or damage to the individual's property; or
3. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

"School district owned, operated, or supervised technologies" is a computer, networking system, electronic equipment, or any other device that may be used by a person to communicate to another which is owned, leased, operated, or under the control or supervision of the school district and/or school district staff.

### Reporting Procedure and Investigation

Any pupil or school staff member who believes he/she has or is being subjected to cyber- bullying, as well as any person who has reason to believe a pupil or school staff member has knowledge or reason to believe another pupil or school staff member is being subjected to or has been subjected to cyber- bullying shall immediately make a report to the Building Principal or designee.

The Building Principal or designee shall investigate all reports of such conduct. If the investigation results indicate cyber- bullying was not committed, the Building Principal or designee will inform the

affected parties of the investigation results. In the event the investigation results indicate cyber-bullying was committed by a school district pupil on school grounds and/or using school district technologies, the pupil will be subjected to appropriate discipline.

In the event the investigation results indicate cyber-bullying was committed by a school district pupil using non-school district technologies away from school grounds, the Building Principal or designee may report the investigation results to local law enforcement. In addition, school authorities have the right to impose a consequence on a pupil for conduct away from school grounds, including on a school bus or at a school-sponsored function pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6. This authority shall be exercised only when it is reasonably necessary for the pupil's physical or emotional safety, security, and well-being or for reasons relating to the safety, security, and well-being of other pupils, staff, or school grounds, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:25-2 and 18A:37-2. This authority shall be exercised only when the conduct, which is the subject of the proposed consequence, materially and substantially interferes with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school. Consequences shall be handled in accordance with Policy and Regulation 5600, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1, and as appropriate, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:17-7.2, 6A:16-7.3, or 6A:16-7.5.

Any investigation regarding an allegation of cyber-bullying will provide all parties the appropriate due process rights, including the right to appeal the determination of the Building Principal or designee as outlined in Regulation 5512.

### Discipline and Consequences

Some acts of cyber-bullying may be isolated incidents requiring the school district to respond appropriately to the individual committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious or part of a larger pattern of cyber-bullying that require a response either at the classroom, school building, or school district level or by law enforcement officials.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for pupils who commit an act of cyber-bullying range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1, Discipline of Pupils. In addition, cyber-bullying using district technology violates Policy 2361-Acceptable Use of Computer Network/Computer and Resources and subjects the pupil to discipline and sanctions of Policy and Regulation 2361.

Prevention and intervention techniques to prevent cyber-bullying and to support and protect victims shall include appropriate strategies and activities as determined by the Building Principal or designee.

### Reprisal or Retaliation Prohibited

The school district prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of cyber-bullying. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the Building Principal or designee after consideration of the nature

and circumstances of the act, in accordance with case law, Federal and State statutes and regulations, and district policies and procedures.

#### Consequences for False Accusation

Consequence and appropriate remedial action for a pupil found to have falsely accused another of an act of cyber- bullying range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1, Discipline of Pupils.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have falsely accused another of an act of cyber-bullying shall be disciplined in accordance with district policies and procedures.

Adopted: December 9, 2008

## **North Hunterdon-Voorhees Regional High School District**