

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 283

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TITLE Student Rights and Responsibilities

Foreword

Students, staff, and parents share responsibility for developing a school climate that fosters learning and provides an opportunity for the free expression of ideas. Students have certain rights and privileges. They also have certain responsibilities.

This publication explains student responsibilities, behavior expectations, and the consequences of misbehavior. **We urge each parent or guardian and each student to review the material carefully and refer any questions to school staff members.**

The information in this policy is not all-inclusive. Individual school and classroom procedures, based on the unique needs of each school, supplement these policies, regulations, and guidelines. The staff of St. Louis Park Public Schools is committed to teaching and rewarding appropriate behavior and helping students use alternative approaches to inappropriate behavior.

Responsibilities

All students are entitled to learn and develop in a setting which promotes respect of self, others and property. Proper positive discipline can only result from an environment which provides options and stresses student self-direction, decision-making and responsibility. Thus, schools can function effectively only with internal discipline based on mutual understanding of rights and responsibilities.

Discipline in the schools should be viewed as a life-long teaching and learning process for handling conflict and growth and should have a positive emphasis while helping students to function properly in the educational setting.

It is the position of the school district that a fair and equitable districtwide school discipline policy will contribute to the quality of a student's educational experience. It is the responsibility of the school board, administrators, and teachers to safeguard the health and safety of each student. The school board and district administrators will support district personnel who, in dealing with students on disciplinary matters, act in accordance with state statute, State Board of Education regulations, and this policy.

Students are responsible for:

The consequences of their own behavior;

Knowing and complying with the appropriate rules and regulations of the district, and the appropriate instructions of district personnel;

Accepting the authority of teachers, principals, bus drivers and other district personnel on school property, at school events and in district vehicles;

Following rules concerning vehicles on school premises;

Complying with district and school attendance policies and rules;

Completing class assignments on time and in accordance with the instructions given by their teachers, and

Respecting the property of others, including students, staff and the district, and for taking reasonable precautions for the protection of their personal property.

Parents are responsible for:

Working with their child(ren) and the school for the benefit of both; and

Helping their child(ren) understand that school rules are necessary for the establishment of a healthy learning environment.

The district is responsible for:

Safeguarding the health and safety of each student;

Making reasonable rules and regulations governing student behavior and conduct, and

Maintaining proper control and discipline.

To carry out this responsibility, district employees are expected to deal with students fairly and honestly, and to treat all students with courtesy and respect.

In establishing the proper learning environment, with proper control and discipline, the general maturation of the students involved must be considered. Within this context, district officials must protect the health and well-being of all students while safeguarding rights.

Good order and a protection of one's right to a safe learning environment are prime ingredients to quality education. Recognizing this, it will be the goal of the school system to give appropriate attention and consequences to all types of behavior, positive and negative. Positive student behavior shall be defined as behavior which encourages a learning atmosphere, provides for individual safety, and allows for the individual rights and differences of other students and staff members. The school board shall encourage the staff to recognize positive behavior and provide appropriate recognition.

Behavior which is disruptive of good order or violates the rights of others should also be recognized and provided with appropriate consequences.

Responsible student behavior...

...Helps the student to grow intellectually and emotionally.

...Helps the student achieve academic success.

...Enhances the student's self-confidence, self-worth and self-image.

...Is best taught by appropriate modeling.

...Provides for a safe learning environment.

Teaching a student appropriate behavior is the responsibility of a school-home-community partnership.

School district policies are implemented in accordance with applicable Federal Law (IDEA, P.L. 101-476; CFR 300.552) and Minnesota Statutes (M.S. 120.17; M.R. 3523.2470) for students with disabilities.

Behavior – Students are expected to behave in accordance with federal, state and local laws and rules; and district and school policies and regulations in a way that respects the rights and safety of others. Corrective action to discipline a student and/or to modify a student's behavior will be taken by staff when a student's behavior does not fall within these parameters.

Actions which may be used by district staff to discipline students and/or encourage them to modify their behavior include but are not limited to: student conference, parent or guardian notification, parent or guardian conference, fine, restitution, detention, removal from class, in-school suspension, dismissal from school, out-of-school suspension, exclusion, expulsion, referral to law enforcement authorities and recommendation of alternative community services.

Corporal Punishment – The use of corporal punishment is not permitted. Corporal punishment is defined as inflicting physical hurt

upon a child in order to punish her or him for misconduct.

Victims – When an incident occurs in which one or more students have been physically or emotionally harmed by the misbehavior of other student(s), district staff shall be sensitive to the need to provide support to the victim(s) and to inform their parents about the incident.

Physical Restraint – In certain instances, it becomes necessary for staff members to use physical restraint to provide a safe environment for students. Reasonable force may be used on a student without her or his consent when used by an administrator, teacher or other staff member in the exercise of lawful authority to restrain or correct such a student. Special care will be taken with students with disabilities to follow any guidelines for physical restraint which may be written into their individual education plan (IEP).

Physical restraint may be used by staff members:

- a) To quell a disturbance threatening injury to others;
- b) To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon the person or within the control of a student;
- c) For self-defense;
- d) To protect other persons and/or property;
- e) To direct the movement or actions of a student to avoid undue or deliberate disruption of the classroom or other parts of the school, and
- f) To protect an individual from his or her own actions.

Such acts shall not be construed to constitute corporal punishment within the meaning and intent of this policy.

Special Education Students – The policies above will be adjusted for special education students, as required by federal and state laws and regulations, and by the student’s individual education plan (IEP). For more information,

refer to other district policies and regulations related to special education students.

Behavior Expectations and Consequences

Overview–The consequences for inappropriate student behavior described on the following pages are designed to be fair, firm and consistent for all students. They apply to students in any school or other district building, on district property, in district vehicles, and at school or district events. (District vehicles are defined as school buses and vans owned or leased by the school district, and cars and other vehicles owned by district staff and authorized by the district for transporting students.)

Because it is not possible to list every inappropriate behavior that occurs, behaviors not specified will be responded to as necessary by staff. Policies unique to a building are not listed but are supported by the school board. Minor infractions are dealt with by bus drivers, chaperones, classroom teachers, counselors, administrators and other appropriate district staff.

In the chart on the following pages, terms are defined in accordance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act of 1974.

Consequences–For each inappropriate behavior described, there are specific consequences for first, second, third and fourth violations. Those consequences are shown as “1,” suspension for a specified number of days, exclusion, or expulsion.

“1,” for elementary schools is defined as: Consequences for violation will include student conference and parent notification, and may include but are not limited to parent conference, restitution, confiscation, detention, and up to one day in-school suspension.

“1,” for the middle and high school is defined as: Consequences for violation will include student conference and parent notification, and may include but are not limited to parent conference, restitution, confiscation, detention, sending the student home for the rest of the day, and up to one day in or out-of-school suspension.

Suspension is defined as out-of-school suspension—action taken by the school administration to prohibit a student from attending school for no more than five school days. (A one-day suspension is for a consecutive period of time equivalent to one school day. For example, if a student is suspended at noon, he or she may be suspended until noon on the following school day.)

Expulsion is action taken by the school board to prohibit a student from further school attendance for up to one school year from the date the student is expelled.

Exclusion is an action taken by the school board to prevent a student from enrolling or re-enrolling for a period of time that shall not extend beyond the school year.

Alternative Program is a unique educational program offered by or contracted by the district to meet the unusual needs of some students. In addition to the consequences detailed on the following pages, the school requires parental involvement. The school may also require parent conferences, mediation, restitution, reports to probation services, criminal reports, community service, fines, loss of driving and parking privileges (at the high school level) and chemical evaluation.

After a student has been suspended, a re-entry conference is held with the student, parent/guardian, and appropriate staff to discuss the behavior(s) that led to the suspension, appropriate alternative behaviors the student might have chosen, and a plan to prevent future inappropriate behaviors.

Administrators may involve the police and other law enforcement authorities as necessary. If a student violates a district rule which is also a violation of a law, the student may be referred to the police in addition to being dealt with as described in this regulation.

Principals may use discretion in individual cases. Consequences for a specific offense may be more or less severe than indicated if staff believe it is appropriate. This document is intended to be a guideline.

Except for serious offenses, the accumulation of consequences shall count for one school year only. All students begin each year with no carry-over.