

# Code of Conduct

## Plain Language Summary: Secondary

Assistance in reviewing this document is available upon request





# STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

## I. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the **Dignity for All Students Act**, School District policy and practice must ensure that no student is subject to discrimination, harassment, bullying and cyberbullying based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity or sex by school employees or students on school property, on a school bus, or at a school function.

The Board of Education of the Union Free School District of the Tarrytowns ("Board") is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students will receive and staff will deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The district has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions, whether such function is held on or off school grounds. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, appreciation of differences, honesty and integrity, and are essential to develop a strong character.

The Board recognizes the expectation and responsibility to educate students for appropriate conduct. Our goal is to clearly define these expectations for acceptable conduct on school property or at a school function, identify the possible consequences of unacceptable conduct, and to ensure that discipline, when necessary, is administered promptly and fairly.

To this end, the Board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct, which is available in its complete form at the following locations:

- ✓ The Public Schools of the Tarrytowns Web Site [www.tufsd.org](http://www.tufsd.org)
- ✓ Your school's principal's office
- ✓ The Superintendent of School's office

## II. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### A. Student Rights

The District is committed to protecting the rights given to all students under state and federal law. In addition to those rights, all students have the right to:

1. To expect that school will be a safe, orderly and purposeful place for all students to gain an education and to be treated fairly.
2. To be respected as an individual.
3. To express one's opinions verbally or in writing.
4. To be afforded equal and appropriate educational opportunities.
5. To take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, religion, religious practice, sex, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, ethnic group political affiliation, age, marital status, or disability.
6. To be protected from discrimination, harassment, bullying and cyberbullying based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, or religious practice, sex, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability, by employees or students on school property or at a school-sponsored event, function or activity.
7. Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary consequence.
8. Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.
9. Be guided by a disciplinary policy which is fairly and consistently implemented.

### B. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All students have the responsibility to:

1. To attend school daily, regularly and on time, perform assignments, and strive to do the highest quality work possible and be granted the opportunity to receive a good education.
2. To be aware of all rules and expectations regulating student's behavior and conduct oneself in accordance with these guidelines and to contribute to the maintenance of a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning.
3. To respect one another and to treat others in the manner that one would want to be treated.
4. To express opinions and ideas in a respectful manner so as not to offend, slander, or restrict, the rights and privileges of others.
5. To dress appropriately in accordance with the dress code, so as not to endanger physical health, safety, limit participation in school activities or be unduly distracting.
6. To work to the best of one's ability in all academic and extracurricular activities, as well as being fair and supportive of others.
7. To respect one another and treat others fairly in accordance with the District Code of Conduct and the provisions of the Dignity for All Students Act. To conduct themselves in a manner that fosters an environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and cyberbullying. To report and encourage others, to report any incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying and cyberbullying.
8. Acknowledge and accept responsibility for their actions.
9. Conduct themselves as representatives of the district when participating in or attending school functions and/or extracurricular events, and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.
10. Comply with the district's Internet usage and Website policies.
11. Work to the best of their ability in all educational and extracurricular pursuits and to strive toward their highest level of achievement.
12. Respond to direction given by teachers, administrators and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
13. Develop skills to control any inappropriate behavior and to report incidents to Administration.
14. Ask questions when they do not understand.
15. Seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline.
16. Contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and promotes mutual respect and dignity for all.

### **III. ESSENTIAL PARTNERS**

#### **A. Parents**

All parents are expected to:

1. Recognize that the education of their children is a joint responsibility of the parents, school, and community.
2. Send their children to school ready to participate and learn.
3. Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
4. Ensure absences are legitimate and accompanied with a note upon student's return to school.
5. Insist their children be dressed and groomed in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
6. Help their children understand that appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.
7. Know and support the school rules.
8. Convey to their children a supportive attitude toward education.
9. Build positive relationships through communication with school personnel.
10. Help their children deal positively with peer pressure.
11. Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
12. Provide a place for learning and ensure homework assignments are completed.
13. Notify school personnel of changes in phone number, address, or emergency contacts.

14. Teach their children respect and dignity for themselves, and other students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, which will strengthen the child's confidence and promote learning in accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act.
15. Cooperate with the school in jointly resolving any school-related problem.
16. Monitor their children's use of personal technology

#### IV. STUDENT DRESS CODE

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal hygiene and to dress appropriately for school and school functions.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with learning.
2. Not include extremely brief garments and see-through garments.
3. Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
4. Include appropriate footwear at all times.
5. NOT include the wearing of winter coats in the school building except when entering or exiting the building.
6. At the high school level, not include the wearing of hats, sweat headbands or head coverings in the classroom, other instructional areas, or offices, except for a medical or religious purpose.  
At the elementary level and at the middle school level, these items are not to be worn anywhere in the buildings, except for a medical or religious purpose.
7. NOT include items that are vulgar, obscene or offensive to others with respect to age, ancestry, color, creed, disability, genetic predisposition or carrier status, marital status, military status, national origin, pregnancy, weight, political affiliation, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other legally protected status.
8. NOT promote the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

Each building principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for informing all students and their parents of the student dress code at the beginning of each school year.

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently using the requirements below.

- Students will only be removed from spaces, hallways, or classrooms as a result of a dress code violation. Students in violation of the dress code will be provided three (3) options to be dressed more to code during the school day:
  - Students will be asked to put on their own alternative clothing, if already available at school, to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
  - Students will be provided with temporary school clothing to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
  - If necessary, student's parents may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day.
- No student should be affected by dress code enforcement because of racial identity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity.
- School staff shall not enforce the school's dress code more strictly against transgender and gender nonconforming students than other students.
- Students should not be shamed or required to display their body in front of others (students, parents, or staff) in school. "Shaming" includes, but is not limited to:
  - kneeling or bending over to check attire fit;
  - measuring straps or skirt length;
  - Asking students to account for their attire in the classroom or in hallways in front of others;
  - Calling out students in spaces, in hallways, or in classrooms about perceived dress code violations in front of others.
  - Accusing students of "distracting" other students with their clothing.

These dress code guidelines shall apply to regular school days and summer school days, as well as any school-related events and activities, such as graduation ceremonies, dances and prom.

Students who feel they have been subject to discriminatory enforcement of the dress code should contact the Assistant Principal or Principal of their school building.

## V. PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT

Students will be subject to progressive disciplinary action, depending upon the severity of the incident. These actions may range from reminders and instruction up to suspension from school, when students are:

1. Violent.
2. Disruptive.
3. Insubordinate.
4. Disorderly.
5. Engaging in any gesture or written, verbal or physical act (harassment, intimidation or bullying).
6. Endangering the safety, morals, health or welfare of others.
  - a. Not being truthful with school personnel.
  - b. Withholding information or obstructing any investigation in process.
7. Misbehaving on school bus.
8. Cheating.
9. Participating in gang activity/wearing gang related identity clothing, apparel or related items.
10. Using alcohol, tobacco, electronic cigarettes, juuls, vaping or illegal substances on school grounds and at school sponsored events.
11. \*Using cellular telephones for purposes of placing or receiving calls, texting or disseminating materials harmful to others, including but not limited to "sexting" or otherwise inappropriate in content.
12. \*Using electronic audio or visual devices inappropriately, including, but not limited to, cyber-bullying or other unsafe or harmful on-line behavior.
13. \*Using digital devices for unauthorized audio or visual recordings of any kind.
14. Engaging in harassing conduct, verbal threats, intimidation, or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical well-being.
15. Acts of sexual harassment as defined in the district's sexual harassment policy. Sexual harassment, which includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taking, sending or receiving sexually explicit videos, pictures or auditory recordings and other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature.
16. Discrimination, based on a person's actual or perceived race, age, sexual orientation, use of a recognized guide dog, hearing dog or service dog, color, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sex, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity, marital or veteran status, or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner on school property or at a school function.
17. Harassment, the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, political affiliation, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, marital or veteran status, use of a recognized guide dog, hearing dog or service dog, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
18. "Internet bullying" (also referred to as "cyber-bullying") including the use of instant messaging, email, websites, chat rooms, text messaging, or by any other electronic means, when such use interferes with the operation of the school; or infringes upon the general health, safety and welfare of students or employees.
19. Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing, attempting to sell or exchanging alcoholic beverages, drugs, "look-alike drugs," illegal or controlled substances, other substances such as dietary supplements, weight loss pills, etc., or possessing or consuming (without authorization). This also includes inappropriately using or sharing prescription and/or over-the-counter drugs.

\*Note: In the case of digital, cellular or electronic devices, such devices may be used for authorized instructional purposes.

## VI. REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Any student observing a student possessing a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property or at a school function shall report this information immediately to a teacher, counselor, principal, or any district administrator. Staff shall confiscate any weapons, alcohol or illegal substance. The parent of the student will be notified and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken by administration.

Serious or repeated violations of the Code of Conduct are documented through a discipline referral system which may include a Violent and Disruptive Incident Report (VADIR), which is reported to the New York State Education Department.

## **VII. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND PENALTIES**

Discipline is most effective when it deals directly with the problem at the time and place it occurs, and in a way that students view as fair and reasonable. As the district utilizes cameras to maintain a safe and secure learning environment, the video footage may be used when incidents require disciplinary action.

### **A. Consequences**

Students who are found to have violated the Student Code of Conduct may be subject to the following, either alone or in combination with one another:

1. Verbal warning
2. Written warning
3. Written notification to a parent
4. Lunch detention
5. Detention
6. Alternative setting for instruction
7. Suspension from transportation
8. Suspension from extracurricular activities
9. Suspension of other privileges
10. In-school suspension
11. Removal from class
12. Short-term (five days or less) suspension from school
13. Long-term (more than five days) suspension from school
14. Permanent suspension from program by the home district
15. Referral to law enforcement or judicial authorities

### **B. DISTRICT DUE PROCESS PROCEDURE**

The objective of the district is to resolve problems of misbehavior at the earliest possible opportunity. The Due Process Procedure provides an avenue of appeal in the discipline procedure. It should only be utilized when all efforts to resolve the problem have been exhausted.

## **VIII. DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Student Code of Conduct affords students with disabilities the rights expressly provided by applicable federal and state laws and regulations (refer to the complete Student Code of Conduct for additional details).

## **IX. STUDENT SEARCHES AND INTERVIEWS**

Any school official authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty on a student may question a student about an alleged violation of the law or the Student Code of Conduct. Students are not entitled to any sort of “Miranda” type warning before being questioned by school officials, nor are school officials required to contact the student’s parents before questioning the student. However, school officials will tell all students why they are being questioned.

If the authorized school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in evidence that violated the law or Student Code of Conduct, he/she may conduct a search of a student’s belongings that is minimally intrusive.

### **A. Student Lockers, Desks, and other School Storage Places**

Students should not expect privacy with respect to lockers, desks and other school storage places. School officials retain complete control over them and may search these areas at any time without prior notice or their consent.

**B. Police Involvement in Searches and Interview of Students**

District officials are committed to cooperating with police officials and other law enforcement authorities to maintain a safe school environment.

**C. Child Protective Services Investigations**

Any staff member having reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or maltreatment is required to report their concerns to the State Central Register (SCR) and then immediately notify the building administrator. This communication begins a report to Child Protective Services who will investigate the concern.

**X. VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

- A. All visitors to the school must report to the main office of the school. There they will be required to sign the visitor's register and will be issued a visitor's identification badge, which must be worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds.
- B. Visitors should be encouraged to make appointments with staff to discuss individual matters.
- C. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in this Student Code of Conduct (for details refer to the complete Code of Conduct).

**The Public Schools of the Tarrytowns**

**Student Code of Conduct**

**Acknowledgement Page**

**I acknowledge having read this document. I agree to abide by the Public Schools of the Tarrytowns Code of Conduct.**

**\*Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**Parent/Guardian Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\*For students unable to independently read and sign Student Code of Conduct signature page, only Parent/Guardian signature necessary.

If Parent/Guardian signing for student, please check here.

**The Dignity Coordinator for my school is:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

