

Prince William County Public Schools

CODE of BEHAVIOR

2006-07



Prince William County

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Providing A World-Class Education

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD AND STAFF

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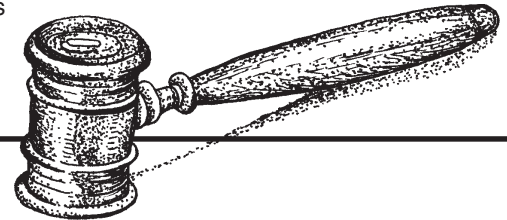


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PREAMBLE

The Virginia Constitution confers upon a local school board the authority to supervise the operation of the public schools under the school board's control. This authority includes the power to supervise and discipline students.

The Prince William County School Board seeks to protect the rights of all its students to an education commensurate with their abilities, interests, values, and goals by providing safeguards for the health, safety, and rights of the individual student and school employee, and for the protection of school property.

However, the task of training and educating youth must be shared by all members of the school community - students, faculty, administrators, and parent(s) - who all bear responsibility to support the rules of the school and the integrity of the educational process.

It is the duty of the parent to train the child to assume responsibility in the school environment - responsibility for learning and exhibiting conduct that does not infringe upon the rights of another. (See pages 4 and 5 for additional information, including legal responsibilities of parents.) The school has the right to expect reasonable and self-disciplined behavior from each student. Since self-discipline cannot be imposed from without, the students must be permitted a degree of freedom of choice and action to develop their individual talents and abilities.

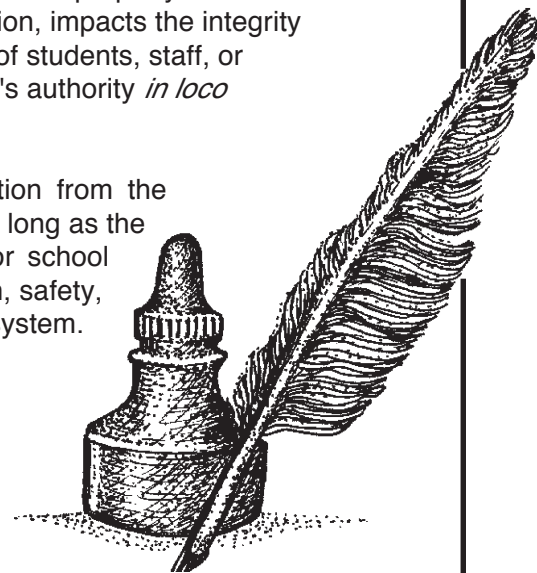
The Code of Virginia, §22.1-78, states: "A school board may adopt bylaws and regulations . . . including but not limited to the proper discipline of students, including their going to and returning from school." The School Board's rules governing student conduct are summarized in the **Code of Behavior** and are also addressed in the Prince William County Public Schools' Policy and Administration Manuals.

The provisions of this **Code of Behavior** apply whenever students are involved, such as:

- At school activities on property owned by the School Board;
- When going to and from school and bus stops;
- On school buses and at bus stops;
- In cases involving off-site, school-sponsored activities such as field trips, sporting events, and club activities; and
- When conduct by a student occurring off school grounds or school property has a material effect on the operation or general welfare of the School Division, impacts the integrity of the educational process, threatens the safety and welfare of students, staff, or school property, occurs when the student is under the school's authority *in loco parentis* or otherwise invades the rights of students or staff.

The Superintendent may, for good cause, approve a deviation from the procedures set forth in the **Code of Behavior** in its present form, so long as the basic rights of students, parent(s), the community at large, and/or school personnel are not violated. Good cause means protecting the health, safety, welfare and educational opportunities of the students in the school system.

- * **"Parent (s)," as used throughout, means biological parent(s), adoptive parent(s) or legal guardian(s).**



RESPONSIBILITIES

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

The **Code of Behavior** has been established for the Prince William County Public Schools. The School Board, acting through the Superintendent, holds all school employees responsible for supervising student behavior while students are legally under the supervision of the schools. The School Board holds all students responsible for appropriate conduct as defined in the Policies and Regulations of the School Board and as summarized in the Prince William County Public Schools **Code of Behavior**. Policies and Regulations governing student behavior and student discipline can be found in the Prince William County Public Schools Policy Manual and Administration Manual which are available at each school, in public libraries, and on-line at www.pwcs.edu.

The School Board holds all parents responsible for reading the **Code of Behavior**, and any policies or regulations referenced in the **Code of Behavior** for promoting proper student conduct.

In 2004, the School Board created the Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs (OSMAP) to which the School Board delegated the responsibility of coordinating the School Division's efforts to provide a safe school environment through the management of student conduct. The establishment of this office generated revisions to the **Code of Behavior** and related School Board policies and regulations. Students, parents, and staff are directed to Policies 731, Appeal of Student Matters; 747, Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs; and Regulations 735-1, Prohibited Substances; 744-1, Long and Short-Term Student Suspensions; 745-1, Student Expulsions, Readmissions, and Exclusions; and 775-1, Weapons and Other Prohibited Objects.

The School Board and school staff respect the privacy of students and have developed policies and procedures to protect student privacy rights in accordance with the law. These privacy rights extend to disciplinary matters.

Please be aware that security cameras are located in all buildings and will be used to ensure the safety and security of all PWCPs students, staff and property.

EDUCATIONAL TEAM

While discipline is ultimately the responsibility of the individual, the implementation of an effective discipline program requires a cooperative team effort. Whenever possible, a preventive approach to discipline shall be taken in an effort to clarify standards of conduct, effectively assess a student's individual needs, and identify any significant factors which may be contributing to a student's misconduct.

The school principal is the instructional leader responsible for the development of a local school handbook which is consistent with policies and regulations of the School Board and the **Code of Behavior**. Administrators, teachers, and support personnel all work together to ensure the rights of each student in the school system.

The educational team is responsible for:

- Providing an orderly school environment.
- Providing a favorable psychological environment for learning.
- Encouraging self-discipline.
- Providing an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- Treating each student as an individual in accordance with one's needs.
- Encouraging, monitoring, and evaluating the progress of students.
- Initiating and maintaining open lines of communication with parents.
- Discussing the **Code of Behavior** with students at the beginning of each school year and providing periodic review during the school year.

- Formulating and implementing school rules and regulations in compliance with policies and regulations of the School Board and the **Code of Behavior** throughout the school setting.
- Disseminating the local school handbook and the **Code of Behavior** at the beginning of each school year to all students and interested community groups.
- Providing both instruction and copies of the **Code of Behavior** and the school handbook to all new students upon registration throughout the school year.
- Developing a plan of action, whenever possible, based on the needs of the student and the school environment as a whole.
- Maintaining the educational records of individual students to include a record of disciplinary actions involving the student. Such records may contain information on police arrest or court action if the student is involved in unlawful behavior. Whenever charges are placed with juvenile court authorities, it may be considered an "arrest" even if the student is not physically taken into custody by police. (As required under Virginia law.)

School administrators (principals and assistant principals) are responsible for appropriate follow-up action whenever students report discrimination, harassment, or other acts which violate the **Code of Behavior**. Teachers, counselors, and other educational support staff are responsible for helping students get the assistance they may need from administrators. Staff response to each student complaint should be documented.

PARENT(S)

It is the duty of the parent to:

- Teach the student to assume responsibility for learning and for conduct that does not infringe upon the rights of others.
- Ensure the student's daily attendance in school and notify the school when a student is absent, tardy, or leaving early from school.
- Ensure the student's arrival at school on time.
- Provide encouragement and discipline aimed at motivating the student toward responsible behavior and participation within the school setting.
- Read and understand the **Code of Behavior**. (Copies are available in Spanish upon request. Translated versions of the **Code of Behavior** are provided as a courtesy, but if a translation differs from the English version, then the English version will supercede the translation.)
- Sign the **Code of Behavior** agreement on the back of the emergency information card.
- Ensure that the student is appropriately dressed for school as determined by the dress code which is developed cooperatively at local schools by students, parent(s) and school staff.

(Students who come to school without proper dress or personal cleanliness may be sent home to be prepared properly for school.)

- Provide such books, materials, instruments, uniforms, and equipment as are required for effective participation in the school program.
- Know promotion and graduation requirements as published each year for middle school and high school students in the "Course Catalog."
- Provide emergency information, including a local telephone number, to the school to ensure that the school will have immediate contact with the parent in case of an emergency.
- Provide a certified copy of the student's birth certificate, and/or immigration documentation; physical examination; record of the completed series of immunizations; and social security number, where applicable, as required by the **Code of Virginia**, upon initial entry to school.
- Schedule conferences during normal working hours.
- Understand that drugs and weapons, as described in the **Code of Behavior**, will not be tolerated at school and that violators are subject to expulsion.

PARENT(S) NOTE: Under Virginia law, parents have a duty to assist the school in enforcing the standards of student conduct and compulsory school attendance. Parents have a responsibility to know the **Code of Behavior**, promote proper student conduct, assist the school with the discipline of the student, and meet with school officials if requested to discuss matters related to discipline and school attendance. The law also requires that parents sign a statement showing that they know their responsibilities. Such a statement is printed on the back of the EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARD. Parents must read this statement, sign the card, and return the signed card to school. The EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARD will be sent home to parents during the first week of school or given to them at the time of registration. The School Board may ask the court to act against any parents who fail to return the signed card or fail to fulfill their responsibilities. The court may impose a fine or order parents to participate in efforts to improve students' behavior. A summary of "Parental Responsibility and Involvement Requirements Under Virginia Law" appears on page 27.

STUDENT(S)

Students are responsible for:

- Conducting themselves appropriately in compliance with the **Code of Behavior**.
- Accepting responsibility for learning, developing adequate study habits, and completing class assignments and/or requirements.
- Knowing promotion and graduation requirements as published each year for middle school and high school students in the "Course Catalog."
- Being prepared each day with necessary class materials and supplies.
- Attending school and all classes every school day. Absences, tardies, and/or early dismissals must have documented approval from a parent/guardian and/or school personnel.
- Reporting to school/class on time.
- Contributing to a climate of acceptance and mutual respect within each school so that the hopes and ambitions of all individuals may be realized.
- Maintaining an atmosphere in which learning and extracurricular activities can take place for the growth and pleasure of everyone involved.
- Complying with the dress code of the school.
- Using school supplies, materials, equipment and property carefully and wisely.
- Complying with any rules or regulations of the local school, the County School Board and the state and federal government.
- Knowing and adhering to the **Code of Behavior**.
- Reimbursing the School Board for any actual breakage or destruction of property, or failure to return property owned by or under the control of the School Board.

- Reporting violations of the **Code of Behavior** including but not limited to bullying, violence, weapons and substance abuse violations.

Students, staff and parents share the responsibility for an orderly and safe school environment. Information about drugs, weapons, or other factors which may be harmful to the school environment should be reported.

Students who have knowledge of drugs, weapons, violence, or other behaviors which may be harmful to others or to the school environment, may be subject to disciplinary action for failure to report such information to school authorities.

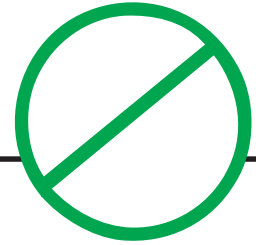
Following are some suggestions for reporting such information:

- Contact the school principal or other administrator.
- Dial the PWCPS **Tipline at (703)791-2821**.
Note: This is a recorded message system and should not be used in cases of emergency or when an immediate response may be required.
- Contact the Police in cases of emergency.

If a student discovers something in his or her possession which is not permitted at school, that student should report to an administrator or other staff member immediately. Follow-up action shall take into consideration that the student voluntarily brought this to the attention of staff.

Students should contact an administrator, teacher, or counselor immediately if they believe that they have been victims of discrimination, harassment, or other acts which violate the **Code of Behavior**.

RULES AND REGULATIONS



A basic element of effective prevention of misconduct is the setting of county-wide school rules which are implemented in a consistent manner. When no specific penalty is cited, the principal has the authority to set the appropriate penalty for infractions, which may range from counseling to expulsion, depending on the severity of the infraction. The student's age and grade level, the circumstances surrounding the infraction and other relevant factors will be considered by the principal when determining the appropriate corrective measure.

Zero Tolerance Policy - the School Board and school staff have a position of "Zero Tolerance" on weapons, drugs, violence and group assaults, and threats and/or assaults and/or battery against staff. Any student accused of violating this policy shall have a conference with the administrator of the school. If the circumstances of the offense support a violation of this policy, a recommendation by the principal and Area Associate Superintendent concerning expulsion or long-term suspension shall be forwarded to the Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs. In determining whether to forward an expulsion recommendation to OSMAP, the Area Associate Superintendent will take into consideration all relevant factors, including any special circumstances under Virginia Code §22.1-1-277.06(c).

The following is a summary of the established standards of conduct for Prince William County Public Schools:

Accumulated Offenses - Students may be expelled or placed on long-term suspension for an accumulation of offenses due to repeated violations of the **Code of Behavior** even though any one of those offenses may not warrant such serious corrective action.

Assault, Assault and Battery - The threat of a verbal or physical attack (assault) and the use of force upon a person (battery) is expressly forbidden.

Assault and/or Battery Of A Teacher - Is prohibited under the Zero Tolerance Policy and shall result in a recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion. In addition, under Virginia law, a conviction for battery of a teacher, principal or guidance counselor shall include a sentence of 15 days incarceration with a mandatory minimum period of two days incarceration. If the offense is committed by use of a firearm or other weapons prohibited on school property, the person shall serve a mandatory minimum sentence of incarceration for six months.

Bullying - Actions which cause the physical, verbal or emotional abuse of others will not be tolerated. Taunts, threats, insults, gossip, humiliation, teasing, pushing, tripping, and hitting are all considered to be bullying behaviors. Violators are subject to corrective action up to and including suspension and expulsion. For additional information about bullying and the duty to report these incidents see pages 25-26, and Regulation 733.03-1, Bullying of Students.

Bystanders - Students who, by their presence and/or actions,

encourage disruption, fights, or other violations of the **Code of Behavior** are subject to corrective action. This includes, but is not limited to, bystanders who refuse to move or to follow other directions of school staff during disruptions, fights, etc.

Cars and Other Vehicles - Cars and other vehicles may be brought onto school grounds only with permission of the administration and must be operated in a safe manner in compliance with school rules and state and local laws. The owner and/or operator of any car or other vehicle which is located on or operated on school property consents, by virtue of such operation and/or location of the car or vehicle on school property, to the search of such vehicle when reasonable suspicion exists that prohibited items as described in Regulation 737-1 may be inside the vehicle. Violators are subject to corrective action at school, including loss of driving privileges on school grounds, and legal penalties.

Cheating and Plagiarism - Students are responsible for neither giving nor receiving assistance (written, orally, or otherwise) on tests, examinations, final evaluations or class assignments that are to be graded as the work of a single individual. Cheating includes the giving or receiving of a computer file, program, part of a program, or other computer-based information without specific teacher direction or approval. Cheating encompasses any violation of rules where the violation involved dishonesty.

The student shall receive a zero for the particular assignment, exam, test, or final exam, etc., a parent will be contacted, and the student may be disciplined up to and including expulsion.

Schools shall incorporate the use of an honor pledge in their efforts to emphasize the importance of honesty. The implementation of this pledge shall be at the discretion of the principal.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Students are responsible for giving due recognition of sources from which material is quoted, summarized or paraphrased, as well as to persons from whom assistance has been received.

Communication Devices (Wireless) - Students may possess wireless communication devices (cell phones, etc.) on school grounds provided that these devices are not visible and are not activated before or during the school day. These devices must be turned off prior to entering the school. For safety reasons, students may utilize these devices after school hours provided the use of the device does not distract from or disrupt activities. The use of wireless communication devices is prohibited on school buses while traveling to and from school; at all other times use is at the discretion of authorized staff. Violators are subject to confiscation of the communication device and/or other corrective action as listed on page 15.

While on school property, at any school-related activities or while traveling to and from school or school-related activities, students shall not take video graphic or still images of a person who is undressed or partially undressed. Violators may be subject to

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RULES & REGULATIONS (CONTINUED)

disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Under Virginia Code, Section 18.2-386.1, this crime is a misdemeanor if the victim is an adult, but a felony if the victim is under 18.

Cult, Occult and Ritualistic Activities - Cult, occult and associated ritualistic activities and recruitment for members of these groups will not be tolerated. Actions, speech, gestures, clothing, symbols or other signs of cult membership or activity are prohibited at school and at school-related activities.

Curfew - NOTICE: As of July 1, 1997, in Prince William County, everyone under the age of 18 who is not accompanied by a responsible adult is subject to a curfew which makes it unlawful to be in public from 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. on Sunday through Thursday and from 11:59 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. Students may be exempted for attendance at official school functions. The law also allows for other exemptions. All young people have an obligation to know and abide by the provisions of this law. Anyone who has questions or needs further information should call (703) 792-4636, extension 584.

Discrimination - All persons and groups within the school are to be treated with dignity and respect. Discrimination on the basis of age, gender, race, color, religion, national origin, disabilities, economic status, personal and physical characteristics, or other characteristics of individuals or groups will not be tolerated. Actions, gestures, statements (spoken or written), dress, or symbols which insult, offend, taunt, or demean others because of their individual or group differences may result in corrective action up to and including expulsion. The use of ethnic and/or cultural references, or other language that is reasonably understood to disparage, incite, humiliate, or degrade an individual, a race, or a group regardless of the intent will not be tolerated in school. This includes language that originated from the lyrics of popular music that may be used in casual conversation.

Dishonesty - Students shall not make false accusations against staff or other students and shall not give false information which may be harmful to others or interfere with duties of staff.

Disobedience/Disrespect - No student shall disregard or disobey any reasonable request made by a school staff member. Any student who directs profanity, threats, or other forms of verbal abuse toward a school staff member shall be subject to out-of-school suspension (OSS) and considered for expulsion.

Disruption - No student while on school property, at a school-sponsored activity, or on school buses, shall behave in a disorderly manner or in any other way interrupt or disturb the orderly operation of the school. Conduct occurring off school grounds which causes disruption to the school, the educational process, or the rights of the students or staff may also result in corrective action at school.

Drug and Substance Abuse - No student shall have or use alcohol, drugs, or anything that resembles alcohol or drugs. (See page 12.)

Electronic Entertainment Devices - Students shall not have electronic entertainment devices on school property without express consent of the school principal/designee. Students may not record (audio or video) classroom activities without permission of the principal/designee. Violators are subject to confiscation of the communication device and/or other corrective action as listed on page 15.

While on school property, at any school-related activities or while traveling to and from school or school-related activities, students

shall not take video graphic or still images of a person who is undressed or partially undressed. Violators may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Under Virginia Code, Section 18.2-386.1, this crime is a misdemeanor if the victim is an adult, but a felony if the victim is under 18.

Endangering Others - Student conduct which may put others in danger will not be permitted. This includes but is not limited to violations of fire regulations; making false fire reports; lighting matches; lighting any flame not an approved part of classroom instruction; use of incendiary or explosive materials; and threats or attempts to bomb, to burn, or to destroy, in any manner, school property or the property of school personnel or students.

Failure to Report Violations - In order to maintain safety and security in our schools, students are responsible for reporting serious violations of the **Code of Behavior** to teachers, administrators, other appropriate staff, or the Tipline (703-791-2821). Serious violations include conduct or behavior which results, or may result, in injury to the person, health, or welfare of students or staff, or damage to property. Failure to report may result in corrective action. (See also "Students," page 5 and "Weapons Violations," page 13.

Fighting - Students are responsible for settling confrontations that may arise in a peaceful manner and without the use of violence. When students feel that they are unable to settle disagreements in a peaceful manner, they should seek assistance from school personnel, such as a teacher, counselor, principal, social worker, etc. Fighting will result in corrective action which may include suspension or expulsion. Students are also subject to corrective action for behavior which they may not consider to be serious or threatening ("horseplay," "playing around," etc.) when that behavior may cause injury, discomfort, or disruption.

Gambling - Gambling on school property is strictly prohibited. Gambling is defined as the betting of money or valuables on the outcome of a game, contest or event.

Gangs - Gang activity, recruitment and expressions of gang membership will not be tolerated. Actions, speech, gestures, clothing, symbols or other signs of gang membership or gang activity are prohibited at school and at school-related activities. Any student involved in a gang-related fight or assault shall be considered for expulsion.

Group Assault - Group assault in school, at school-related activities, or on the way to and from school is strictly prohibited. Any student who participates in a group assault which results in disruption or disturbance at school or school-related activities is subject to corrective action up to and including expulsion. Any student who participates in a group assault on other individuals or groups shall be recommended for expulsion. Any two or more students with the intent of doing harm to persons, property, or the school environment may be considered a group under this rule.

Glass Containers - Students shall not have glass bottles or other such breakable containers on school property or at school-related activities without the express permission of a school staff member.

Harassment - Words, gestures, symbols, or physical contact which offend, intimidate, threaten or persecute others will not be tolerated. This includes such behavior as non-physical intimidation, posturing or "stare downs". Harassment of students or staff for any reason is prohibited. In addition, as stated in Regulation 733-3, sexual harassment will not be tolerated. (See pages 21-24)

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RULES & REGULATIONS

(CONTINUED)

Hazing - Students shall not engage in behavior that recklessly or intentionally endangers the health or safety of others or inflicts bodily injury on a student in connection with initiation, affiliation or admission into a club, group organization or student body. Violators are subject to corrective measures up to and including suspension and expulsion. Virginia law imposes a Class 1 misdemeanor penalty for violations, i.e., either or both confinement in jail for not more than 12 months and a fine of not more than \$2,500.

Indecent Material - No student shall possess, wear/display, produce, or distribute indecent (vulgar, obscene, profane, offensive) materials including clothing, posters, written/printed materials, audio tapes, video tapes, trading cards, and computer-based materials.

Laser Pointers - Students shall not have laser pointers or other laser devices at school, on school buses, or at school-related activities without the permission of a school administrator or faculty member. Violators are subject to corrective measures and may have the pointer/device confiscated.

Littering - Students shall help maintain a clean and healthful school environment by properly disposing of trash while in the cafeteria, classrooms, hallways, and elsewhere in the school and on school grounds, buses, bus stops, and at school-related activities.

Loss of Driving Privilege - Under Virginia law, a judge will take away your license (or, if you do not have a license, prevent you from applying for one) if he or she finds that you committed an offense involving:

- Driving while intoxicated,
- Refusing to take a blood or breath test for alcohol after driving a vehicle,
- Distributing drugs or imitation drugs, including marijuana,
- Possessing drugs or marijuana,
- Unlawful purchase or possession of alcohol, or drinking or possession of alcohol on school grounds,
- Public intoxication,
- Unlawful use or possession of a handgun or "streetsweeper" (semi-automatic shotgun),
- Making a threat to bomb, burn or destroy a building, vehicle, train, etc., or,
- Truancy (See Page 9 for details).

The length of time you will lose your license depends on the seriousness of the offense, but for a first time offense the loss is generally for six months or one year. If you are under sixteen at the time of the offense, you will instead be unable to apply for a license until six months or a year after your sixteenth birthday. A second offense results in an additional loss of license for a period of six months or one year. See Virginia Code §16.1-278.9 for complete details.

In addition to and regardless of any legal consequences, students may also lose their privilege to drive or possess a car on school grounds for any unsafe conduct connected to the use, possession, or operation of a vehicle on school grounds or at school-related activities.

Offenses Off School Grounds - Actions outside of school which have a negative impact on the school building, programs, students, or staff will not be tolerated. The School Board and staff of Prince William County Public Schools are committed to maintaining the schools as safe and healthful places in which to

learn, places which are free from the impact of violence, weapons, gang activity, substance abuse, and other negative influences. Students are subject to corrective measures at school, up to and including expulsion, for offenses which occur in the community or at other locations off school grounds if those offenses result in disruption to the operation of the school, the educational process, or impact the rights, safety, or welfare of students, staff, or school property. Under Virginia law, a student may be suspended or expelled if found guilty in court of manufacture, sale, gift, distribution, or possession of drugs even if the offense is not connected with school. Furthermore, the law provides that a student may be placed in an alternative educational program (alternative school, night school, homebound, etc.) if charged with a violation of law related to weapons, alcohol/drugs, or intentional injury even if the offense is not connected to school.

Profanity - No student shall use vulgar, lewd, patently offensive, or indecent language or gestures.

Search & Seizure - Students will be held responsible for items which they have at school or at school-related activities. Student desks and lockers are the property of the school, and school officials reserve the right to search them. Lockers or desks may be searched to repossess school property or to locate materials which are not permitted in school. Students, their belongings, and items under their control (including cars) may be searched under certain circumstances as described in Regulation 737-1. The school system reserves the right to use trained dogs in searches. The student's individual right to privacy and freedom from unreasonable search and seizure is balanced by the school's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all persons within the school community. Should illegal materials be found during a search, law enforcement officials will be notified. If a student refuses to be searched when the administration has reasonable suspicion that the student possesses or has under his or her control prohibited items as defined in the regulation, parents and/or authorities will be contacted and the student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Smoking - All Prince William County Public Schools are smoke-free environments. Smoking is not permitted in any building in Prince William County Public Schools at any time. Students, regardless of age, are not permitted to smoke or be in possession of tobacco products, matches or lighters, on school buses, in school buildings, or on school property. Students involved in the possession or use of tobacco products shall receive penalties ranging from out-of-school suspension to other effective options assigned by the principal as appropriate deterrents for individual students. These options may include OSS, ISS, detention, school/community projects, and charges filed with local authorities. The Focus on Tobacco and IMPACT programs are also options at the middle and high school levels. SUCCEED is an option at elementary schools.

Student Attendance - Under Virginia Law, students are responsible for attending regularly.

A written statement which provides the reason for the absence and is signed by the parent is the preferred verification of absence. This statement should be provided by the second school day after returning to school. Alternate means of notification may include telephone contact with parent, parent conference, or other methods judged to be adequate by the principal. Classwork for excused absences may be made up according to

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RULES & REGULATIONS (CONTINUED)

Regulation 724-1. The student or parent is responsible for obtaining assignments. Elementary and middle school students who miss 10 or more days per year during which little or no make-up work was completed may be considered for retention. High school students who miss 10 or more class periods per year during which little or no make-up work was completed may fail that class for the year. Exception: Certification by a physician.

Types of Excused Absences:

- Personal illness of the student.
- Medical and dental examination and/or treatment of the student when such appointments cannot be scheduled other than during school hours.
- Student participation in school-sponsored activities taking place during school hours.
- With prior approval of the principal, seniors may be excused for college admission visitations or to apply for post graduation jobs.
- Death in the family.
- Required court appearance.
- Observation of a religious holiday.
- Emergency conditions in the student's home which require special help from the student in caring for the sick or injured; however, regular use of this excuse or requests for absences for an extended period of time should be referred to the principal or to the Student Services Department for evaluation.
- When in the judgement of the parents the roads or walkways in their neighborhoods are unsafe to use.
- Approved prearranged absences. The principal uses professional judgment in making a determination based on the reasons stated in the written request for the prearranged absence. Such factors as the educational value of the proposed experience, the personal or family benefit resulting from the experience, and the impact of the absence on the student's academic progress will be given consideration in determining whether a prearranged absence is approved or disapproved.
- Reasons of extenuating circumstances will be judged by the principal. Parents may appeal the principal's judgment along the organizational line of the school system. Final appeal would be addressed to the School Board only after having exhausted all appeals at the various administrative levels.

Types of Unexcused Absences:

- All-day truancy
- Class truancy
- Missing a ride or a bus
- Disapproved prearranged absence
- Failure to produce an appropriate explanation for an absence

Students who receive five or more unexcused absences in a course during a nine-week marking period may fail the course for that marking period.

Student Dress and Appearance - Students shall be appropriately dressed for school as determined by the dress code which is developed cooperatively at the school by students, parents, and school staff. Student dress and overall appearance must meet basic standards of health, safety, cleanliness, and decency. Students are not permitted to wear or display items which represent drugs, alcohol or tobacco products, gang membership, or which promote violence. Students are not permitted to wear long trench coats or bulky, oversized coats within a school building. Dress/appearance/hygiene which disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school will

not be tolerated. If dress/appearance/hygiene violates school standards, the student may be required to remove the offensive item(s), change into something appropriate, or the principal/designee may send the student home to be properly prepared for school. Extreme or repeated violations may result in more serious corrective measures. The following items are considered improper dress. Principals have the right to include additional items as they deem necessary.

- hats, scarves, skull caps, headbands, visors or any other type of head covering unless related to one's religious beliefs or practices
- sunglasses
- beachwear
- sleeping apparel
- undergarments worn as outer garments
- garments which are excessively short
- sheer "see-through" garments
- clothing with lewd, obscene, patently offensive, or sexually suggestive signs, slogans, pictures or messages
- garments which expose the midriff
- garments which are too revealing, expose undergarments, are excessively tight and form-fitting or which have very low necklines
- jewelry or other items which could be regarded or used as a weapon (i.e., studded belts or collars, large rings, etc.)
- tops with oversized arm openings, strapless tops, tube tops, tops with spaghetti straps, tank tops
- bare feet, bedroom slippers, stockings/socks only
- cleats (except while at athletic activities)
- gloves
- non-jewelry chains attached to clothing
- gang-related clothing, jewelry, or paraphernalia

Technology Misuse - Computers, computer networks, and other electronic technology shall be used only for **valid educational purposes and only with the approval of a school staff member**. When using electronic technology in the school, students are required to abide by the **Code of Behavior** and by "ACCEPTABLE USE GUIDELINES - Telecommunications Technologies (Internet, Telnet, Desktop Video Conference, Electronic Mail, etc.)" available upon request from school staff. Students must also adhere to the standards defined by PWCPS Policy 295.01, Standards for Use of Telecommunications and Internet Technologies, Regulation 295-1, Use of Telecommunication Technologies, and Regulation 295-2, Web Site Development and Implementation. Copies of these policies and regulations are available at all schools, public libraries and on the PWCPS website at www.pwcs.edu. Unacceptable uses of technology include, but are not limited to:

- Violating the privacy rights of others.
- Using, producing, distributing, or receiving profanity, obscenity, or material which offends, threatens, or degrades others.
- Copying commercial software in violation of copyright law.
- Using technology for financial gain or commercial or illegal activity.
- Using technology for product advertisement or political

(continued on page 10)

RULES & REGULATIONS (CONTINUED)

endorsement.

- Re-posting personal communications without the author's prior consent.
- Using technology in violation of other Rules and Regulations of the **Code of Behavior**.
- Use of technology off school property which has a material effect on the operation or general welfare of the School Division, impacts the integrity of the educational process, threatens the safety and welfare of students, staff, or school property, occurs when the student is under the school's authority *in loco parentis*, or otherwise invades the rights of students or staff.

Violation of this policy and the "ACCEPTABLE USE GUIDELINES" may result in corrective action, loss of technology-use privileges, and penalties under law. Willful irresponsibility may be viewed as malicious and may lead to corrective action or criminal penalties. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt technology system performance will be viewed as criminal activity under applicable state and federal law.

Theft - Taking without permission or attempting to take without permission school property or personal property of others is expressly forbidden. All incidents involving theft or attempted theft of student prescription medications shall be reported to the principal or his designee. Violators are subject to corrective action at school and may be referred to appropriate authorities for legal action.

Threat - Any expression of an intent to cause harm, injury or damage to school property or to other persons on school property, at a school-sponsored activity, or on school buses, will not be tolerated, including threats made off school grounds. This includes all oral, written, or electronic forms of threats to bomb, utilize weapons, or cause bodily injury and/or property damage. Violators are subject to severe corrective action, up to and including possible expulsion and referral to the appropriate authorities. Threats involving school buses may result in the loss of transportation for a specific period of time or for the remainder of the school year. Staff will enact threat assessment procedures as set forth in Regulation 777-1. Students may be recommended to participate in a formal threat assessment if the threats are deemed substantive or very serious.

Trespassing - Students may be in approved areas of the school building and grounds during normal school hours or after hours with the approval of a school staff member. Students are considered to be trespassing if they are present at a school other than the school in which they are enrolled unless they are attending an approved school activity or have the approval of a school staff member. Students whose disciplinary cases are pending a long-term suspension or expulsion decision or students who have been suspended or expelled are not allowed on any school property (including school buses) or at any school-related activities without the permission of the school principal. Students who are trespassing on any school property are subject to arrest and corrective action at school. All visitors must report directly to the office.

Truancy - Attendance is compulsory until age eighteen unless the student has been exempted by law, has graduated, or has completed a G.E.D. program. School attendance officers are authorized to enforce attendance requirements and to refer students and/or parents to the courts for legal action, if necessary. In addition, Virginia law stipulates that if a court has found facts which justify that a student thirteen years of age or older has failed to comply with school attendance and meeting requirements, the court shall order the denial of a child's driving privileges for a period of at least thirty days. If a student under the age of sixteen fails to comply, his or her ability to apply for a driver's license shall be delayed for a period of at least thirty days following his or her sixteenth birthday. If the court finds a second or subsequent truancy offense, it may order the denial of a driver's license for one year or until the student reaches the age of eighteen, or delay the student's ability to apply for a driver's license for a period of one year following the date the age of sixteen and three months is reached. If a student already has a driver's license at the time of the truancy offense, the court may order the student to surrender the driver's license to the court during any period of license denial.

Vandalism - No student shall maliciously or willfully damage, deface, or destroy school property or personal belongings of others. (This includes graffiti, as well as computer and other electronic vandalism.) Corrective action may be taken against students who fail to return property owned by or under the control of the School Board.

Violations of School, Sport, Club, and Activity Rules - In addition to the rules and regulations of the **Code of Behavior**, students are expected to comply with rules established by their schools and with the rules of the sports, clubs, and activities in which they participate. Violators are subject to corrective action as described in the **Code of Behavior** or as stated in the school's handbook. Students may be suspended from participation in sports, clubs, or other school-sponsored activities for violations of the rules of the team or activity, even if the violation occurs off school grounds and outside the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, violations of team training rules related to the use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.

Weapons - Students shall not have weapons, lookalike weapons, or other harmful objects. (See page 13.)

It should be noted that the School Board and staff have a ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY regarding drugs, weapons, acts of violence which harm or endanger others, and threats and/or battery against any staff which should be defined as any unwanted touching. Violators are subject to severe consequences up to and including expulsion from Prince William County Public Schools.

RULES & REGULATIONS SCHOOL BUS RULES



LEAVING THE BUS

Students must:

- **Remain seated until bus comes to a full stop.**
- Leave the bus in an orderly manner, students in the front seats first.
- Leave the bus stop area when safety permits as soon as discharged from the bus.
- Not loiter around the bus.
- Cross the street, if necessary to do so, at the front of the bus and at a distance of at least ten feet in front of the bus.
- Not cross until the driver has signaled that it is safe to do so.

Crossing four or more traffic lanes or a divided roadway is prohibited.

If a disciplinary problem should occur in the afternoon, and the problem is such that, in the judgment of the driver, it is unsafe to proceed, the driver may return to the school to seek immediate disciplinary action and/or assistance. Bus drivers are instructed to report any infractions to the school principal/designee.

CHANGING BUSES

Students must have a written request from the parent to go to other than their regular scheduled stop on their regular scheduled bus. This written request is subject to approval of the school principal or designee. Bus drivers must receive notification by the school office when approval is given to a student to change to an alternate stop or bus.

No change will be made in the location of bus stops or bus routing without approval of the Transportation Department.

No change in the bus assigned may be made without the permission of the school principal and the Transportation Department.

TRESPASSING

Only authorized persons are permitted aboard a school bus (school property). "It shall be unlawful for any person, whether or not a student, to enter upon or remain upon any school property after having been directed to vacate the property by a person authorized to give such direction." (**Code of Virginia 18.2-128**)

RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS IS A PRIVILEGE*

Should a student be reported to the principal, the principal will be responsible for disciplinary action, which may include the loss of the privilege of bus transportation, until the parent, the bus driver, the principal, (and in some instances, a Transportation Department representative) can arrive at an understanding which will correct the problem. The parent will be responsible for the transportation of students who have lost school bus transportation privileges.

Oral or written threats to harm others or PWPCS property, which are planned or made on a school bus or which are intended to be carried out on a school bus, at a school bus stop, or while going to and coming from school, may result in the loss of transportation for a specific period of time or for the remainder of the school year in addition to other disciplinary action.

A School Bus Video Observation System records activities aboard some buses. (See Regulation 433-3)

Please feel free to contact the school principal or Transportation Department for help with problems related to the transportation of your child.

*Riding the school bus is a privilege, except as required by law for students with disabilities.

GENERAL

The **Code of Virginia**, Section 22.1-176, permits school boards to provide transportation for pupils, but does not require them to do so. For Prince William County Public Schools, daily bus service will be provided for all in-boundary students living in excess of one mile from school. Students eligible for transportation may be required to walk up to one mile to reach their regular bus stop. Except for mid-day kindergarten students, students living within a school's established walking boundary will walk to school.

Express bus service will be provided for students enrolled in all Specialty Programs. This service will be to and from express bus stops only.

MEETING THE BUS

State law requires that buses operate on the same routes, as per their schedules, on a daily basis. Parent(s) or their designees are requested to accompany their young child(ren) to and from the bus stop.

Students should:

- Be on time.
- Arrive at their bus stop at least 5-10 minutes before the regular pickup time.
- Stand away from the road. **Do Not** stand on the traveled portion of the roadway while waiting for a bus.
- Maintain proper conduct.
- Respect the property of others.
- Wait until the bus has stopped; then walk to the front door. **Do Not** run alongside a moving bus.
- Board the bus in an orderly fashion.
- Use the bus stop closest to their home. Walking to a friend's house to catch a bus often causes overcrowding at a given stop.

Students Riding the Bus should:

- Obey instructions of bus driver and/or bus attendant.
- Be seated immediately.
- Remain seated, facing forward.
- Share seats equally.
- Be courteous.
- Respect property.
- Keep all body parts inside bus.
- Keep aisles clear.
- Maintain good conduct.

The following infractions are not permitted:

- Fire
- Fighting
- Smoking
- Profanity
- Horseplay
- Eating/Drinking
- Spitting
- Obscene gestures
- Vandalism
- Throwing objects from the bus
- Creating loud noises
- Having glass objects
- Transporting large objects
- Tampering with equipment
- Weapons
- Drug and Substance Abuse
- Littering
- Threats
- Endangering Others
- Use of wireless communication devices
- Other Violations of the **Code of Behavior**

RULES & REGULATIONS PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

The rules governing substances prohibited by Prince William County Public Schools are summarized in this section. Please refer to Regulation 735-1, Prohibited Substances, for all information pertaining to this subject.

In order to assure the safety and welfare of students, staff, and other persons on school property or at school activities, certain substances are prohibited on any school property, at any school-related activity, or going to or from school or any school-related activity, regardless of where that activity takes place. Students involved in the possession, use or attempted use, receipt or attempted receipt, purchase or attempted purchase, distribution or attempted distribution of drugs (illegal, prescription, and/or over-the-counter), alcohol, inhalant intoxicants, lookalikes, placebos, or paraphernalia who are under the influence of same on school property, or at school-related activities, are subject to suspension and/or expulsion from school. In addition, students are subject to suspension and/or expulsion for the possession, use or attempted use, receipt or attempted receipt, purchase or attempted purchase, distribution or attempted distribution or being under the influence of the aforementioned substances at school bus stops or on public property or property open to public use within 1000 feet of a school bus stop.

Students may also be subject to disciplinary action for conduct involving prohibited substances which occurs off school grounds, if the conduct results in a material disruption to the operation of the school, if the conduct is planned in school or at school activities, if the conduct occurs when the student is under the school's authority *in loco parentis*, or is otherwise connected to the school.

Examples of Prohibited Substances - The possession, use or attempted use, receipt or attempted receipt, purchase or attempted purchase, distribution or attempted distribution (by sale, gift, or otherwise), or being under the influence of any prohibited substance or related paraphernalia is expressly forbidden and is a serious infraction of the **Code of Behavior**.

Examples of prohibited substances and related paraphernalia include, but are not limited to, alcohol, non-alcoholic brews, alcohol products or alcohol containers; illegal drugs and substances; prescription and over-the-counter drugs; inhalant intoxicants or other substances inhaled for the purpose of intoxication; anabolic steroids; look-alikes or placebos of the aforementioned items, and drug paraphernalia.

Students for whom medication is necessary while at school or school-related activities, shall provide written documentation from the parent(s)/guardians(s) regarding the necessity for, and dosage of such medication to the school nurse or other school official. All such medications must be immediately surrendered to the school nurse or appropriate school personnel and may only be consumed by students or in the possession of students with the approval of the school nurse or appropriate school personnel.

Mandatory Expulsion - Virginia law requires the School Board to expel from attendance any student who the Board has determined to have brought a controlled substance, imitation controlled substance, or marijuana, onto school property or to a school sponsored activity.

No student shall have or use alcohol, drugs, or anything that resembles alcohol or drugs.

However, the School Board, the Superintendent's designees (the Area Associate Superintendents and the Director and hearing officers of the Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs) shall have the authority to modify the term of expulsion or the type of corrective action when special circumstances exist based on the facts of a particular situation. Students who violate the law shall be referred to local authorities for appropriate action in the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system.

The Zero Tolerance Policy - The list of prohibited substances and paraphernalia for which a student may be expelled under the rules of the Prince William County Public Schools is broader than the list of prohibited substances for which the law mandates expulsion. Even if the prohibited substances or related paraphernalia do not fall within the class of substances prohibited by law, under the School Board's Zero Tolerance Policy any student shall be subject to expulsion if the student is involved in the possession, use or attempted use, receipt or attempted receipt, purchase or attempted purchase, distribution or attempted distribution, of prohibited substances or paraphernalia unless circumstances justify a lesser disciplinary action, or no action at all.

Duty to Report Prohibited Substances - All Prince William County Public School employees and students are required to notify the principal, assistant principal, school resource officer, or security personnel or any teacher or other school employee immediately if they have reason to believe that there are, or are likely to be, prohibited substances or related paraphernalia in school, on school grounds, on school buses, at bus stops, or at any school-related activity. Students who have such knowledge, but fail to report the presence or anticipated presence of prohibited substances or related paraphernalia may themselves be subject to disciplinary action.

Consequences of a Prohibited Substance Violation - Under the Prince William County Public School's Zero Tolerance Policy on prohibited substances or related paraphernalia, any student accused of such a violation shall have an informal conference with the principal or assistant principal of the school. Following the conference and review with the Area Associate Superintendent, a recommendation for expulsion or other disciplinary action shall be made. See summaries of the suspension and expulsion procedures on pages 18 and 19.

Principals, or their designated representatives, **may** offer substance abuse offenders and their parents the opportunity to voluntarily participate in the SUCCEED Program (elementary school level) or the IMPACT Program.

A substance abuse suspension offense shall also result in an immediate suspension for thirty calendar days from participation in all school activities (teams, clubs, and all other school-sponsored activities), including practice. Whether suspended from school or not, coaches and/or sponsors, with the approval of the school administration, may suspend students from participation in school-sponsored activities for violations of the rules of the team, club, or activity. This includes violation of rules regarding the use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs even if that use is off school grounds and outside the school day.

The student may also be subject to disciplinary probation for 90 calendar days during which time principals may require subsequent follow-up with the substance abuse prevention staff.

WEAPONS AND OTHER PROHIBITED OBJECTS

The rules governing weapons and other objects prohibited by PWCPS are summarized in this section. Please refer to Regulation 775-1, Weapons and Other Prohibited Objects for all information pertaining to this subject.

In order to assure the safety and welfare of students, staff and other persons on school property or at school activities and to protect school property, weapons and other prohibited items shall not be permitted on any school property, going to or from school, or at any school-related activity, regardless of where that activity takes place. Students may also be subject to disciplinary action for weapons offenses which occur off school grounds if the offense results in a material disruption to the operation of the school, if the offense is planned in school or at school activities, if the offense occurs when the student is under the school's authority *in loco parentis*, or if the offense threatens the staff and welfare of students, staff or school property.

Examples of Weapons and Prohibited Objects – Weapons and other prohibited objects include any weapons, look-alike weapons, or objects used to threaten, intimidate, or harm others or to damage school property. The possession, use or attempted use, receipt or attempted receipt, distribution or attempted distribution (by sale, gift, or otherwise) of any type of operable or inoperable weapon is expressly forbidden. The other prohibited items under this policy are those objects which are used as a weapon or attempted to be used as a weapon, or which are reasonably perceived to be a weapon such as toy guns, toy knives, scissors, pencils, craft knives, baseball bats, utility tools, etc.

Examples of weapons and prohibited objects include, but are not limited to firearms*; air rifles*; BB guns*; pellet guns*; paintball guns*; other weapons which propel a missile*; are designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile(s) by explosion of a combustible material*; starter guns*; air or gas operated weapons*; parts of weapons which may be combined to form a weapon or destructive device*; weapon accessories such as firearm mufflers* and silencers*; stun weapons* and tasers*; knives**; pocket knives*; pocket knives with folding blades of three inches or less; dirk knives*; Bowie knives*; switchblades*; ballistic knives*; machetes**; razors*; razor blades; sling shots*; spring sticks*; metal knuckles*; blackjacks*; fighting chains*; wallet chains; bicycle chains; dog choke chains; other “non-jewelry” chains; flailing instruments*; darts and other throwing instruments with points or blades*; mace, tear gas, pepper spray and other chemical agents; explosive, incendiary, or poison gasses*; rockets*; bullets*; fireworks; fire bombs*; grenades; and other explosive(s) or destructive devices. (* Possession of such weapons at school, on school buses, at bus stops or at school-related activities is covered under the Gun Free Schools Act and §22.1 227.07 of the **Code of Virginia** which mandate expulsion for not less than one year, subject to certain limited exceptions as provided by law. **In addition, possession or brandishing of a machete or any weapon, with an exposed blade of twelve inches or longer, on school property or within 1,000 feet of school property is a Class 6 felony punishable under §18.2-282.1 of the Code of Virginia.)

Mandatory Expulsion – In accordance with the federal Gun Free Schools Act and Virginia law, the School Board must expel from school attendance for at least one year (365 days) any student who is determined to have brought or possessed a certain type(s) of weapon onto any school property, on a school bus, or at any school-related activity. However, the School Board, or a school

administrator in accordance with School Board policy, shall have the authority to modify the term of expulsion or the type of corrective action when special circumstances exist based on the facts of a particular situation. Students who violate this law shall be referred to local authorities for appropriate action in the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system.

The Zero Tolerance Policy – The list of weapons and prohibited objects for which a student may be expelled under the rules of the Prince William County Public Schools is broader than the list of weapons for which the law mandates expulsion. Even if the weapon does not fall within the class of weapons prohibited by law, under the School Board's Zero Tolerance Policy, students shall be recommended for expulsion for the possession of all weapons or prohibited objects, unless special circumstances justify a lesser disciplinary action or no action at all.

Duty to Report Weapons and Prohibited Objects – All Prince William County Public School employees and students are required to notify the principal, school resource officer, security personnel or any teacher or school employee **immediately** if they have reason to believe that there is, or is likely to be, a weapon in school, or on school grounds, on school buses, at bus stops, or at any school-related activity. Students who have such knowledge but fail to report the presence or anticipated presence of a weapon shall themselves be subject to disciplinary action.

If a student discovers that he or she is in possession of an object that may be considered a “weapon”, that student should report to an administrator or other staff member **immediately**. Follow-up action will take into consideration that the student voluntarily brought this to the attention of the staff.

WEAPON?
For the Safety of ALL
REPORT IT!

Anonymous Tipline
703.791.2821

Consequences of a Weapons Violation - Under the Prince William County Public School's Zero Tolerance Policy on weapons, any student accused of having possession of a weapon or other prohibited object(s), shall have an informal conference with the principal or assistant principal of the school. Following the conference and review with the Area Associate Superintendent, a recommendation for expulsion or other disciplinary action shall be made. See summaries of the suspension and expulsion procedures on pages 18 and 19.

SUMMARY OF DISCIPLINE CODE

The philosophy of Prince William County Public Schools is directed toward a preventive approach to irresponsible behavior. If students are denied their opportunities to learn as a result of irresponsible behavior, the teacher, the principal and/or other appropriate educational staff members shall determine the proper corrective measure. The rules and regulations of the **Code of Behavior** are intended to guide students' behavior in the school buildings, on school buses, to and from school, and during participation in any activity sponsored by Prince William County Public Schools.

As set forth in the Code of Behavior, conduct currently viewed as just cause for disciplinary action shall include but not be limited to any one of the following violations:

- Accumulated offenses
- Academic dishonesty, to include cheating, plagiarisms, forgery, and unethical computer use
- Any threat or attempt to bomb, to burn or to destroy in any manner a school building, school property, or property of school personnel
- Assault and Battery
- Battery of a Teacher
- Bullying
- Chronic failure to be prepared for class
- Conduct dangerous to the physical well-being of others
- Cult, Occult and Ritualistic Activities
- Discrimination
- Dishonesty
- Disrespect and/or disobedience to teachers or any other staff members
- Extortion, harassment or intimidation
- Failure to report to assigned classes while in the school building unless excused by a school official
- Failure to report weapons
- Failure to report other violations
- Fighting
- Gambling
- Gang activity or expressions of gang membership
- Group assault
- Hazing
- Horseplay
- Improper use of cars/vehicles
- Inciting to riot or to fight
- Inappropriate public behavior or display
- Inappropriate student dress
- Indecent exposure
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Littering
- Offenses off school grounds
- Physical or verbal assault
- Possession/control of communication devices (See page 6)
- Possession of laser pointer/devices
- Possession, display, production, or distribution of indecent materials
- Possession, distribution, or use of weapons, look-alike weapons, or other harmful objects (See page 13)
- Possession, distribution, use, or being under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or anything that resembles drugs or alcohol (See page 12)
- Possession of electronic entertainment devices (See page 7)
- Possession of glass/breakable containers
- Profanity, or obscene language or conduct
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual misconduct
- Smoking or possession of tobacco products, lighters or matches on school buses, in the school building, on school property, or to and from school
- Standing by as others violate rules
- Tardiness and/or truancy
- Technology misuse
- Theft
- Threatening and/or abusive language
- Trespassing
- Unauthorized sales or distributions
- Use of profanity
- Vandalism
- Violation of fire regulations to include lighting matches, false fire report, arson, or the lighting of any flame not a part of classroom instruction
- Violation of School Board policy or school regulations
- Willful disruption of any classroom or school activity

Preventive and/or corrective measures currently available to school administrators include but are not limited to the following, and may be utilized in whatever order or manner deemed appropriate:

- Admonition
- Alternative Education Program
- Confiscation of disruptive communication and entertainment devices
- Counseling
- Court Action
- Detention
- Expulsion
- Focus on Tobacco
- IMPACT
- In-School Suspension (ISS)
- Local School Probation
- Mediation
- Night School Program
- No Trespassing Order
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)
- Parent Conference
- Restitution
- Saturday Suspension
- School/Community Service Projects
- Student Assistance Program
- SUCCEED
- Suspension of Student Privileges
- Tasks Assigned by Administration
- Time-out

SCHOOL CONFERENCE



Whenever students or parents feel that the best interests of the individual or of the group have been disregarded, a conference with the teacher, sponsor, coach, counselor, or other school personnel should be arranged. If a routine agreement cannot be reached among student(s) and school personnel, then the student has the right to:

- Arrange a meeting with the principal or the designated assistant principal to discuss such conditions or decisions judged by the student(s) to be detrimental.
- Request a conference of the parent, student and principal if not satisfied with initial meetings.
- Appeal through the appropriate chain of command if conferences are not satisfactory at the local level. See Appeal Procedure as summarized on page 20 and set forth in School Board Policy 731, Appeal of Student Matters.

CORRECTIVE MEASURES

In the event that a school staff member refers a student to the principal for disciplinary action, the Discipline Referral Form shall be filled out and signed prior to any action being taken by the principal. The principal is responsible for completing the form and indicating in writing any disciplinary action which has been taken. Situations may also arise of an emergency or immediate nature where a principal or assistant principal will take disciplinary action prior to the completion of the Discipline Referral Form. In these cases, as a matter of record, a Discipline Referral Form shall also be completed following the incident. Disciplinary action must be administered within a timely manner after the school staff's discovery of the disciplinary offense.

In matters involving fights or physical violence, administrators shall consider self defense as a factor when determining appropriate disciplinary action. Claims of self defense do not constitute a valid reason for possession or use of a weapon on school property or at any school-sponsored activity. Weapons are prohibited on school property and at school-sponsored events.

A student's failure to comply with school rules and regulations may result in the school taking one or more of the following actions, in whatever order or manner the school deems appropriate:

Admonition - Warnings in the form of contracts, verbal or written understandings or agreements, and probation may be appropriate for some students.

Alternative Education Programs - Students in grades 6-12 may be referred to alternative education programs sponsored by the school system. Students who regularly

exhibit behavior problems, and for whom the base school has utilized many interventions with little or no positive results, may be considered for admission. Alternative education programs may be located in separate facilities.

Assigned Tasks - Assignment of students to complete special tasks at school may be beneficial to the student and the school.

Confiscation of disruptive communication and entertainment devices-Administration may take communication and entertainment devices that are disruptive to the learning environment. Confiscated devices must be picked up by parents unless other arrangements have been established by the administrator and parent.

Counseling - Counseling with a student by an administrator or other school staff member may be useful in bringing about a desired change of behavior.

Detention - Detention is held for a specified amount of time either before a student's first scheduled class or following the last scheduled class. Parent(s) are responsible for providing transportation for detention. However, at schools where activity buses are provided, students may be permitted to ride the bus after detention with the principal's permission.

Students serving detentions for bus violations may not be allowed to ride the activity bus home. Parents are responsible for transportation.

Expulsion - The School Board may deny students' attendance at school and school-related activities as explained on page 19.

(continued on page 16)

CORRECTIVE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Focus on Tobacco - Focus on Tobacco is a one-time voluntary educational opportunity for middle and high school students involved in a smoking/tobacco-related infraction of the **Code of Behavior**. Focus on Tobacco, an after-school program, may be used alone or in conjunction with other disciplinary actions by administrators.

In-School Suspension (ISS) - In-school suspension, where programs are available, shall be considered an alternative disciplinary action for selected cases. The parent shall be notified of the temporary change in the student's schedule and the reason for this action. Saturday suspension is held in some schools. The parent is responsible for transportation on Saturday.

Interschool Management of Problems Due to Alcohol, Chemical and Tobacco Involvement (IMPACT) Program - IMPACT is a one-time, voluntary educational opportunity for middle and high school students who are either involved in their first substance abuse offense or who have been identified as having substance abuse problems. Principals may consider IMPACT as a one-time option for repeat offenders of the Smoking Rules and Regulations. This after-school program requires parental participation. (See Substance Abuse Violations.)

Local School Probation - Probation may be considered for minor and infrequent offenses. Participation/attendance in extracurricular activities may be withdrawn. Copies of all discipline referrals resulting in probation shall be sent to the parent. The principal shall specify on the Discipline Referral Form the reason(s) for and the length of the probationary period.

Mediation - This procedure is available in many schools to provide intervention and peaceful settlement of problems. Contact your local school for more information.

Night School Programs - In some instances, a student may take classes counting towards graduation or a GED certificate in night school.

No Trespassing Order - In extreme cases, when directions of school personnel have been disregarded, a no trespassing order may be issued by the appropriate authorities.

Non-participation in School-sponsored Activities - Restriction will be set for a fixed period of time or until certain specified requirements have been met. This corrective measure applies to all school-sponsored activities.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) - A student may be suspended from school up to 365 days for serious disciplinary infractions. A student receiving out-of-school suspension for five days or more shall be placed on disciplinary probation for 90 calendar days. Further disciplinary infractions of any type may receive the maximum punishment for the offense. (See page 18)

Parent Conference - Parent conferences are held in an effort to clarify student behavior and to seek help and cooperation from the parent.

Police/Court Action - A student's failure to comply with county or school regulations and/or requirements of law may result in

legal/court action. Offenses involving weapons, alcohol/drugs, intentional injury, and other serious violations shall be reported to the police or other appropriate authorities. In accordance with Virginia law, battery of a teacher, principal or guidance counselor will result in mandatory incarceration for a period of two days; if a gun is used, mandatory incarceration is for six months.

Restitution - If a student willfully damages school property, the law allows schools to collect up to \$2500 from parents to pay for damages.

Saturday Suspension - Saturday Suspension is held in some schools. Consideration shall be given to other obligations of the student when detention is applied, and the parent shall be notified in advance of the extension of the student's schedule. Parent(s) are responsible for providing transportation for Saturday Suspension.

School-Community Service Projects - Projects in and out of school may be assigned in lieu of other disciplinary action.

Student Assistance Program - Various educational measures are available to assist students with substance abuse prevention.

Students Understanding Choices and Consequences through Education and Evaluation of Decisions (SUCCEED)

- The SUCCEED program may be offered as an educational option for elementary school students guilty of tobacco, alcohol, or other drug violations. This program provides accurate, age-appropriate information about the physical, mental, emotional, and legal aspects of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. The student meets for one hour with a Student Assistance Program specialist. During the second hour, the student meets with a school resource officer, while the parent meets with the SAP specialist. Participation is voluntary and may be used as an alternative to other corrective measures for first-time offenders.

"Time-Out" Situation - A student may be removed from the assigned class or classes for a "time-out" situation for a specific period of time or until certain conditions have been satisfactorily met. The school shall assist the student by providing instructional assignments or by making other special arrangements. The parent should be notified if this corrective measure is ineffective. In elementary schools, "time-out" may be served in the front office area.



TEACHER REMOVAL OF STUDENTS FROM CLASS

Teachers may remove disruptive students from class in accordance with Prince William County School Board Policy 702, as stated below.

The **Code of Virginia**, Section 22.1-276.2, provides for the initial authority of a teacher to remove a student from class for disruptive behavior. Further, the **Code** defines disruptive behavior as a "violation of school board regulations governing student conduct that interrupts or obstructs the learning environment."

The Prince William County School Board considers the teacher's removal of a student from class an appropriate response to student behavior if the following criteria are met:

- the student's behavior violates School Board regulations governing student conduct or the **Code of Behavior**;
- removal is necessary to restore a learning environment free from interruptions or obstructions caused by the student's behavior; and
- such action occurs only after teacher and/or administrative interventions have failed to end the student's disruptive behavior.

Application of this criteria to students with disabilities shall be in accordance with state and federal law and regulation.

Staff in each school shall collaboratively develop a discipline plan that includes the 1) conditions that must exist for a student to be removed from class; 2) requirements for incident reporting and written referral to an administrator; 3) procedures for the written notification of the student's parent(s), including contents of the referral form, and the offer of the opportunity to meet with the teacher and school administrators to discuss the student's behavior and the possible consequences if such behavior does not cease; 4) guidelines for the alternative assignment and instruction of such students and for the duration of

such removals; and 5) procedures for the return of students to class, for teacher participation in any decision by the principal to return a student to the class from which the student has been removed, and for the resolution of any disagreement between the principal and teacher regarding such.

This policy shall not be construed to limit or restrict other Prince William County School Board policies and regulations related to suspension and expulsion.



SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

The rules governing out-of-school suspension are summarized in this section. A principal or assistant principal may suspend a student from school for misconduct which includes, but is not limited to, violations of the **Code of Behavior**. Please refer to Regulation 744-1, Long and Short-Term Student Suspension, for the rules governing long and short-term suspensions. The suspension of students receiving special education services shall be in accordance with Regulation 745-2, Discipline of Special Education Students Including Expulsion. Whenever a suspension is imposed, the principal/designee will make all reasonable efforts to contact the parent/guardian to advise them of the impending suspension and to arrange for transportation home.

Suspensions are considered as unexcused absences. Suspensions of five days or more in a reporting period will result in automatic failure in all subjects for that reporting period. However, the principal has the latitude to provide other penalties or make-up options which would be more effective in changing the behavior of given students or to avoid automatic failures.

Students who have been suspended or whose disciplinary cases are pending a long-term suspension decision are not allowed on school property (including school buses) or at any school-related activities without the permission of the school principal. Suspended students who are trespassing on any school property or at school-related activities are subject to arrest and corrective action at school.

In cases where the parent or adult student notifies the principal at the time of the suspension that there will be an appeal, the student shall be allowed to attend school until the case is heard and a final decision has been rendered, unless the principal considers that the presence of the student creates a present and continuing threat to the health, safety and/or welfare of persons or property in the school or may pose a disruption to the educational process.

Long-Term Suspension - In the event of a serious breach of conduct which may merit a suspension greater than ten school days, the principal shall suspend the student for five days and provide written notice of the proposed action and the justification. The principal shall hold an informal conference with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) within five days of the offense. The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided with an explanation of the facts related to the offense and an opportunity to present the student's version of what occurred. Following the conference, the principal shall review the facts of the case with the Area Associate Superintendent to make a determination of the appropriate disciplinary action. Such determination shall take into consideration all circumstances relevant to the student's breach of conduct. If the decision is to recommend the suspension of a student for greater than ten school days but less than 365 calendar days, written notice of the proposed disciplinary action must be provided with the reasons for this action. The student shall be provided with home-

based instruction after the student has been out of school for ten days.

A hearing will be conducted by the Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs (OSMAP) pursuant to those procedures explained in Regulation 744-1, Long and Short-Term Student Suspension. Any further appeal shall be in accordance with Policy 731, Appeal of Student Matters, and Regulation 744-1, Long and Short-Term Student Suspension.

Short-Term Suspension - In the event that the principal or principal's designee intends to suspend a student for ten school days or less, the student shall be given oral or written notice of the charges and if the student denies them, an explanation of the facts known to school personnel, and an opportunity to present the student's version of the events. Any appeal of a short-term suspension must be initially submitted to the principal in writing within three school days of the short-term suspension decision. A final appeal of the principal's decision must be submitted in writing to the Area Associate Superintendent within three school days of notification of the principal's decision.

EXPULSION PROCEDURES

The rules governing expulsion are summarized in this section. Please refer to Regulation 745-1, Student Expulsions, Readmissions, and Exclusions, for all information pertaining to this subject and to Regulation 745-2, Discipline of Special Education Students Including Expulsion, for information regarding the expulsion of students receiving special education services.

The Prince William County School Board may expel students for sufficient cause. A student may be denied the right to attend any school in Prince William County when:

- The individual is a potential or continuing danger to the health, welfare, or safety of others; or
- The student's conduct is disruptive to the educational mission or the orderly operation of the school; or
- The student has engaged in conduct which violates the School Division's policies and regulations or the **Code of Behavior**, or in other conduct which threatens the safety or security of the school, results in a material disruption to the orderly operation or educational mission of the school; or is otherwise connected to the school; or
- The student has obtained an accumulation of offenses for which expulsion is merited; or
- Other circumstances demonstrate that the expulsion of the student is in the best interest of the local school or the School Division.

Any student conduct occurring on or off school property which creates a threat to the safety or security of students or staff, which results in material disruption to the operation of the school, which is planned in school or at school activities, which occurs when the student is under the school's authority *in loco parentis*, or is otherwise connected to the school, may be grounds for expulsion.

Zero Tolerance Offenses

The principal **shall** recommend for expulsion any student who:

- Violates the School Board's Zero Tolerance Policy on **prohibited substances**, as set forth in Regulation 735-1, Prohibited Substances.
- Violates the School Board's Zero Tolerance Policy on **weapons**, as set forth in Regulation 775-1, Weapons and Other Prohibited Objects.
- Violates the School Board's Zero Tolerance Policy prohibiting **physical or verbal assaults on a school staff member**, as set forth in Regulation 745-1, Student Expulsions, Readmissions, and Exclusions.
- Violates the School Board's Zero Tolerance Policy prohibiting **group assaults**, as set forth in Regulation 745-1, Student Expulsions, Readmissions, and Exclusions.

Expulsion Procedures - In the event of a serious breach of conduct which may merit an expulsion, the principal shall suspend the student for five school days and provide the student and the

student's parent(s)/guardian(s) with written notice of the proposed action and the reasons therefore.

The principal shall hold an informal conference with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) within five school days of the offense for the purpose of determining whether an expulsion is warranted. Following the informal conference, the principal will review the facts of the case with the Area Associate Superintendent for the purpose of determining whether an expulsion recommendation is warranted. Such determination shall take into consideration all circumstances relevant to the student's breach of conduct.

In the event of a decision to recommend the expulsion of a student, the principal shall extend the suspension for an additional five school days, after which time the student is eligible for home-based instruction pending the outcome of the expulsion procedures. The student shall not be permitted on any school property, pending the outcome of the expulsion procedures, without written permission from school officials.

The student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given written notice of the recommendation for expulsion and the reasons within ten school days of the first day of suspension. The written notice shall include the charges against the student, the length of suspension, and notice of the right to a hearing before a hearing officer in the Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs (OSMAP), and the right to an appeal of the recommendation of the OSMAP hearing officer to a committee of the School Board.

The student shall be provided with a due process hearing by an OSMAP hearing officer, acting as the designee of the Superintendent. A copy of the materials supporting the expulsion recommendation may be obtained by the parent(s)/guardian(s) from the OSMAP office three school days prior to the hearing.

The OSMAP hearing officer shall make a decision to uphold, deny, or amend the expulsion recommendation and shall provide the recommendation in writing to the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) within five school days of the date of the hearing. The decision of the OSMAP hearing officer may be appealed to a committee of the School Board as provided in Regulation 745-1, Student Expulsions, Readmissions, and Exclusions, and Policy 731, Appeal of Student Matters. However, the School Board may determine that a longer term of expulsion or different condition(s) for readmission is appropriate.

Students whose disciplinary cases are pending an expulsion decision or students who have been expelled are not allowed on any school property (including school buses) or at any school-related activities without the permission of the school principal. Students who are trespassing on any school property are subject to arrest and corrective action at school.

APPEAL PROCEDURES



One of the goals of site-based management is to resolve issues at the school level. The information in this section summarizes the appeal procedures. School Board Policy 731, Appeal of Student Matters, provides details about this subject.

Summary and Timelines for Appeals

Academic Appeals – grade placement; class assignment; grades, exams and exam grades; promotion/retention; honor rolls; and placement in site-specific programs

- First Appeal – written appeal to the principal (or a committee designated by the principal to make recommendations) within three school days of notification of action, stating reason for appeal and the relief being sought. Principal or committee shall respond in writing within five school days.
- Final Appeal – written appeal to appropriate Area Associate Superintendent or designee within three school days of notification of principal's decision. Area Associate Superintendent shall respond in writing within five school days.

Activities Appeals - athletic and academic eligibility; membership in clubs and organizations

- First Appeal – written appeal to the principal within three school days of notification of action, stating reason for the appeal and the relief being sought. Principal shall respond in writing within five school days.
- Final Appeal – written appeal to the Curriculum Supervisor for Art, Music, Health, Drivers Education, and Physical Education or designee within three school days of notification of principal's decision. Curriculum Supervisor shall respond in writing within five school days.

Graduation Appeals – The procedure and timeline must be expedient due to the time sensitive nature of these appeals.

- First Appeal – informal conference with principal
- Second Appeal – written appeal to appropriate Area Associate Superintendent or designee
- Final Appeal – written appeal to Superintendent of Schools

Transfer Appeals – The procedure and timeline must be in accordance with the provisions set forth in Regulation 721-1, School Attendance Areas.

- First Appeal – Supervisor of Student Support Services
- Final Appeal – written appeal to Director of Student Services

Disciplinary Appeals – The Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs (OSMAP) shall coordinate the School Division's disciplinary appeal procedures for all Level 3 and 4 disciplinary appeals.

- Level 1 Disciplinary Appeals – disciplinary actions involving in-school suspensions and disciplinary actions other than out-of-school suspensions and expulsions
 - First and Final Appeal – informal conference with principal within two school days of notification of action
- Level 2 Disciplinary Appeals – short-term out-of-school suspensions (one to ten days)

- First Appeal – written appeal of the assistant principal/ principal's designee's decision to the principal by parent within three school days of notification of suspension.
- Final Appeal – written appeal to appropriate Area Associate Superintendent, or other designee of the Superintendent, within three school days of notification of the principal's decision.
- In the event that a recommendation for expulsion is made during the imposed suspension, the Level 4 Disciplinary Appeals procedure shall then apply and there shall be no further appeals under this level.
- Level 3 Disciplinary Appeals – long-term suspensions (more than ten days) Recommendations for long-term suspensions shall be forwarded to OSMAP and a due process hearing shall be conducted with an OSMAP hearing officer, acting as designee of the Superintendent, as provided for in Regulation 744-1, Short and Long-Term Student Suspensions.
 - Final Appeal – written appeal of decision of OSMAP hearing officer to full School Board.
 - In the event that a recommendation for expulsion is made during a pending suspension, the Level 4 Disciplinary Appeals procedure shall apply and there shall be no further appeals under this level.
- Level 4 Disciplinary Appeals – expulsions, readmissions, and exclusions from school. The procedure and timeline for each must be in accordance with the provisions set forth in Regulation 745-1, Student Expulsions, Readmissions, and Exclusions.
 - Recommendation for expulsions shall be forwarded to OSMAP and a due process hearing shall be conducted with an OSMAP hearing officer, acting as designee of the Superintendent.
 - First Appeal – Due process hearing before committee of the School Board (final level of appeal, if unanimous vote of committee)
 - Final Appeal – written appeal to full School Board (only available if vote of School Board committee is not unanimous)

Readmissions - The procedures for readmission to school of students who have previously been expelled from the Prince William County Public Schools are set forth in Regulation 745-1, Student Expulsions, Readmissions, and Exclusions.

The principal shall make a recommendation on any petition for readmission to OSMAP. The OSMAP hearing officer, as designee of the Superintendent, shall review the petition and any supporting documentation, and shall make a further recommendation to the full School Board.

Final Appeal - The School Board shall review the recommendation and make a final determination whether the student shall be readmitted to the Prince William County Public Schools and, if so, under what conditions.

Exclusions from School - Written requests for admission of a student who has been expelled or suspended from attendance at school by another school division (or private school) shall be forwarded to OSMAP. A hearing shall be conducted by an OSMAP hearing officer, as designee of the Superintendent, regarding such exclusion.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS IS NOT PERMITTED

Sexual Harassment will not be permitted at school or at school-related activities. The following questions and answers will help students understand what sexual harassment is and what may be done to protect them from it.

Q: What is sexual harassment?

A: Sexual harassment is an illegal form of discrimination based on a person's gender (male or female). It occurs when a student is treated unfairly because of his or her gender, or when a student feels hurt or uncomfortable because of what is said or done by another person (student or adult). Words (spoken or written), actions, or bodily contact may be considered sexual harassment if they are connected in some way with gender, and if they are considered to be unwanted or harmful by the student.

Q: How do I know if I have been sexually harassed?

A: Sometimes it is not easy to know if you have been sexually harassed. If you are singled out, left out, teased, embarrassed, or harmed in some other way because of your gender, it may be sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may be as simple as a dirty joke which makes you feel uncomfortable, or as serious as somebody touching you when or where you do not want to be touched. It may only happen once or it may be repeated. If it is connected to gender, if you do not like it, and if it is serious or repeated, it may be considered sexual harassment.

Q: What should I do if I have been sexually harassed?

A: If you believe that you have been sexually harassed, tell your teacher, counselor, assistant principal, principal, or parents immediately. These people will listen to you, give you the help that you need, and see that the harassment stops. You have the right to complain any time you believe that you have been harassed, discriminated against, or treated unfairly in any way.

Q: How will sexual harassment complaints be handled by the school administration?

A: All complaints of sexual harassment will be handled according to policies and regulations of PWCPS. The person accused of sexual harassment will be told about the complaint and given a chance to explain. Parents of the students involved will be informed. Otherwise, nobody will be told except when necessary to gather information about the complaint. All such information will be considered before any decisions are made about the guilt of the accused person or what will happen to that person.

Q: What will happen to those guilty of sexual harassment?

A: If the person is found guilty, the consequences will be determined by the seriousness of the harassment. For students, the consequences will be based on the "Corrective Actions" described in the **Code of Behavior**, and may range from a warning or counseling to suspension or expulsion. If an adult staff member is found guilty of sexual harassment, that person may be reprimanded, suspended, or dismissed from the job depending on the seriousness of the harassment. In addition, the police will be contacted when any laws may have been broken.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

(CONTINUED)

Q: What happens to me if I complain about sexual harassment?

A: Students should feel free to report harassment so that the problem can be corrected. Those guilty of sexual harassment will be warned that there may be more serious consequences if they attempt to retaliate against the person who reported them, or if they continue the harassment. Every effort will be made to protect the student from retaliation or continued harassment, and to see that the student receives whatever help is needed. All students should understand, however, that complaints will be taken seriously and that corrective action may be taken against a student for making a complaint of harassment which is not true.

Q: What if sexual harassment is not handled in a satisfactory way at the school?

A: The parent/guardian of either student (accuser or accused) may appeal to the Area Associate Superintendent if dissatisfied with the way the school has handled a sexual harassment complaint. Appeals should be delivered in writing to the Area Associate Superintendent within three school days as explained on Page 20 of the **Code of Behavior**.

Q: What can students do to stop sexual harassment?

- A:** Students can help to stop sexual harassment by:
- Letting others know when their behavior is unacceptable.
 - Telling the harasser very firmly to stop, and doing so at the first sign of harassment.
 - Keeping notes of dates, times, places, witness names, etc.
 - Asking for the help of a teacher or counselor.
 - Reporting harassment to the principal or assistant principal.

Any student or parent who would like help in dealing with sexual harassment should talk with the principal, counselor, or teacher at the school, or call the Office of Student Services at (703) 791-7257. A copy of the policy and regulation on sexual harassment is available on request.

SEX DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

Prince William County Public Schools is committed to a school environment in which students are free from sex discrimination by other students, employees, or third parties. The school administration will take appropriate steps to prevent sex discrimination and will deal promptly and decisively with reported incidents of discrimination. Sexual harassment is one form of sex discrimination which, like others, is strictly prohibited. Regulation 733-3 provides detailed information about sexual harassment and is available upon request from the school's office or by calling Student Services at (703) 791-7257. Following is a summary of information from that regulation.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when one or more of the following applies:

- Submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of employment, instruction, or participation in school activities.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for making decisions about the student.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with performance in school or creating an intimidating, abusive, offensive, or hostile environment.

A "hostile environment" is created when acts of a sexual nature are sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive as to deny the benefits of the school to the student. A single "severe" act, such as inappropriate touching or the touching of an intimate part of the body, may constitute sexual harassment. A pattern of less-severe acts may be sexual harassment if pervasive or repeated, depending on the nature, frequency, context, and target of the acts. An isolated act, such as a verbal comment would not generally be considered sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is determined by its effect on the victim (based on the "reasonable person" standard), not on the intent of the harasser. It is harassment if the victim, as any "reasonable person" might be, is harmed—if the victim feels offended, intimidated, threatened, abused, or persecuted to the extent that the victim is denied certain benefits of the school or participation in school programs.

Complaint Procedure

All students should be informed of their right to protection against sexual harassment and the right to file a complaint if they believe they have been harassed. School administrators are responsible for investigating each complaint, determining if the complaint is legitimate in accordance with the above definition, and taking corrective action where warranted. Any student can file a complaint by talking to an administrator and/or completing a complaint form, available in the school's office, and returning this form to an assistant principal or principal. All teachers, counselors, and educational support staff should be informed of the students' rights to file a complaint and should be able to help as appropriate, and will provide assurance of corrective action and protection against retaliation.

School administrators will respond to complaints of sexual harassment according to guidelines in Regulation 733-3. Complaints will be investigated in a prompt and impartial manner by the principal or designee who will interview the accused, as well as witnesses, and consider all relevant information/evidence. The accused and the parents of both parties will be informed of the complaint; otherwise, confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible. The principal or designee will advise the complainant of counseling services or other sources of help as appropriate, and will provide assurance of corrective action and protection against retaliation.

Corrective Action

Anyone accused of harassment will be informed of the specific complaint and given the opportunity to provide an explanation in defense. If a student is found guilty of sexual harassment, corrective action will be taken in accordance with established disciplinary procedures. Corrective action may range from admonition and counseling to suspension or expulsion depending on the seriousness of the incident and the need to protect other students from future harassment. If an employee is found guilty of sexual harassment, disciplinary action will be taken and may include reprimand, suspension, or dismissal depending on the seriousness of the offense. In addition, students, employees, and third parties may be reported to authorities for appropriate legal action. NOTE: Any student who knowingly files a false complaint of harassment may also be subject to corrective action.

Protection Against Retaliation

Students should feel free to report harassment without fear of retaliation from the accused. Any attempt of retaliation will be addressed by appropriate corrective action up to and including expulsion for students. School Division employees who make any attempt to retaliate as a result of a harassment charge will also face disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal from their job.

Appeal Procedure

Both parties (accuser and accused) have the right to appeal the decision of the school administration in any sexual harassment case. Appeals must be stated in writing by the parent/guardian or emancipated student and forwarded to the appropriate Area Associate Superintendent. Parents/guardians and emancipated students have the right of further appeal to the Superintendent.

Preventive Measures

The school will act to prevent sexual harassment as described in Regulation 733-3. Students can help to prevent or stop harassment if they will:

- Let the harasser know very clearly that such actions are not wanted.
- Tell the harasser very firmly to stop.
- Keep written notes of dates, times, places, witness names, and other information about actual occurrences of harassment.
- Keep notes, letters, and other evidence of harassment.
- Talk with a counselor or administrator and, if appropriate, file a complaint.

Sources of Help

Any student or parent who needs help in understanding the sexual harassment regulation or in knowing how to deal with concerns about sexual harassment should talk with the principal, assistant principal, or counselor at school or call the Office of Student Services at (703) 791-7257.

Complaint of Sexual Harassment

The Prince William County Public Schools **Code of Behavior** states, "Words, gestures, or physical contact which offend, intimidate, threaten, or persecute others will not be tolerated." The principal and staff of this school are committed to enforcement of the **Code of Behavior** and will respond promptly and appropriately to complaints of harassment. Any student can file a complaint by talking to an administrator and/or completing this form and returning it to an assistant principal or principal.

PLEASE PRINT!

Name of Complainant: _____

School: _____

Name(s) of person(s) accused of harassment: _____

Description of Complaint (use specific dates, times, witness names, etc. if possible:

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

NOTE: All complaints will be followed by an investigation. Those accused as well as the parents of students involved will be informed of complaints, witnesses will be interviewed, and all information will remain confidential except for that which must be shared as part of the investigation.

BULLYING

BULLYING OF STUDENTS IS NOT PERMITTED

Each school is committed to creating an environment in which students are free from bullying. Students are strongly encouraged to report incidents to the school administration. The school administrator will take appropriate steps to respond quickly and decisively to student reports of bullying. Students may use the form on page 26 to report incidents of bullying. The Bullying Complaint Form is also located in the guidance department or main office.

Q: What is bullying?

A: Bullying consists of any words or actions that harm or threaten another person's body, property, self-esteem or group acceptance. Bullying happens when someone says or does something that hurts or threatens another person or makes them feel bad. This includes all oral, written, electronic, or non-verbal forms of ridicule, harassment, and intimidation. If allowed to continue, bullying can result in serious acts of violence, health problems, declining grades, and loneliness. Bullying can make people hurt themselves or other people, get sick, get bad grades, and feel lonely. In addition, bullies in school are more likely than their peers to commit crimes after they grow up.

Q: What behaviors are considered to be bullying behaviors?

A: Some examples of bullying behaviors include purposely not including people, taunts, threats, gestures, insults, gossip, humiliation, teasing, horseplay, pushing, tripping, hitting, stealing or destroying property, cursing, and laughing at others based on their appearance, academic or athletic ability, or any other reason. There are many different ways that bullying happens. Sometimes it's just people making other people feel left out. Other times it's hitting, teasing, or threatening to hurt someone. Stealing or bothering someone's lunch or books is bullying, too, and so is laughing at someone because they wear glasses or different kinds of clothes, or because they aren't good at sports. Other things like that can be bullying, too.

Q: How can I report bullying?

A: Any student can report bullying by talking to an administrator or staff member, or completing the Bullying Complaint Form on page 26. Staff members must report your complaint to the school administration. This information should also be shared with your parent(s)/guardian(s).

Q: What should I do if the bullying continues?

A: Report this to a school administrator or staff member immediately. It is also important to tell your parent(s)/guardian(s) that the bullying is continuing. Administrators will take disciplinary action up to and including expulsion if the student accused of bullying attempts to get back at the victim for reporting his/her bullying behavior.

Q: Are there immediate actions that I can take if I am bullied?

A: Yes. These actions include:

- Telling the bully very firmly to stop.
- Keep written notes of dates, times, places, witness names and other information about any incident of bullying.
- Talking with a staff member, counselor, administrator or parent about the incident immediately.

BULLYING BEHAVIORS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, ON SCHOOL GROUNDS, OR AT SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES. PWCPS TIPLINE: 703-791-2821

COMPLAINT OF BULLYING

The Prince William County Public Schools **Code of Behavior** states, "Actions which cause the physical, verbal, or emotional abuse of others will not be tolerated. Taunts, threats, insults, gossip, humiliation, teasing, pushing, tripping, and hitting, are all considered to be bullying behaviors." The principal and staff of this school are committed to enforcement of the **Code of Behavior** and will respond promptly and appropriately to complaints of bullying. Any student can complain about bullying by talking to an administrator and/or completing this form and returning it to an assistant principal or principal. A copy of this form is also located in the guidance department or main office.

PLEASE PRINT!

Name of Student completing this form: _____

School: _____

Name(s) of Student(s) accused of bullying: _____

Description of the Incident (who, what, when, where, why and how). Use specific dates, times, locations, witness names, etc. if possible.

Signature of student completing this form: _____

Date: _____

NOTE: All complaints will be followed by an investigation. Those accused as well as the parents of students involved will be informed of complaints, witnesses will be interviewed, and all information will remain confidential except for that which must be shared as part of the investigation.

LEGAL NOTICES TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS

This section of the Code of Behavior contains legal notices pertaining to student rights under federal and/or state law. You are responsible for reading these notices and your signature on the student's Emergency Information Card acknowledges that you have read and understand these notices.

Notification of Parental Responsibility and Involvement Requirements **Under § 22.1-279.3 of the Code of Virginia**

§22.1-279.3 of the **Code of Virginia** contains provisions addressing parental responsibility and involvement that are intended to promote proper student conduct and ensure school attendance. This law states that "Each parent of a student enrolled in a public school has a duty to assist the school in enforcing standards of student conduct and compulsory school attendance in order that education may be conducted in an atmosphere free of disruption and threat to persons or property, and supportive of individual rights." Therefore, parents must work in partnership with school administrators to maintain a safe and orderly school environment. Most of our parents are involved and support our schools, helping to create the environment that is necessary to promote learning. Consequently, the School Division recognizes that it will not need to resort to the enforcement provisions of this law unless a parent willfully and unreasonably fails to meet their legal responsibility as outlined below. Rather, this legislation provides the School Division with an additional tool for involving all parents in the maintenance of a safe school environment. Requirements of this law are summarized as follows:

- Parents must sign and return a statement acknowledging receipt of the School Board's **Code of Behavior** and recognizing their responsibility to assist the school in enforcing the standards of student conduct set forth in the **Code of Behavior**, and ensuring school attendance. In signing that statement, which is set forth on the back of the student's Emergency Information Card, parents and students acknowledge that they have read and understand the provisions of the **Code of Behavior** and that a parent's failure to comply with the requirements of the law could result in court action against the student and the parents. By signing the statement, parents shall not be deemed to have waived, but to expressly reserve, their rights protected by the constitutions or laws of the United States or the Commonwealth. A parent shall have the right to express disagreement with a school's or School Division's policies or decisions. Students/parents also maintain the right to appeal a suspension or expulsion under §22.1-277.04-06 of the **Code of Virginia**.
- The law authorizes the principal to request that the student's parent, (or parents, if both parents have legal custody and physical custody of such student), meet with the principal or his or her designee to review the **Code of Behavior** and the parent's or parents' responsibility to participate with the school in disciplining the student and maintaining order, to ensure the student's compliance with compulsory school attendance law, and to discuss improving the student's behavior, school attendance, and educational progress.
- The law authorizes the principal to notify the parent(s) when a student violates the **Code of Behavior** or other School Board policy or the compulsory school attendance law, when such violation could result in a suspension or the filing of a court petition, whether or not the school administration has imposed or initiated such action. The notice shall state (i) the date and particulars of the violation; (ii) the parent(s) obligation to take action(s) to assist the school in improving the student's behavior and/or compulsory school attendance; (iii) that, if the student is suspended, the parent(s) may be required to accompany the student to meet with school officials; and (iv) that a petition with the juvenile and domestic relations court may be filed under certain circumstances to declare the student a child in need of supervision.
- Suspended students may not be readmitted to the regular school program until the student and parent meet with school officials to discuss improving the student's behavior. However, the principal or designee is authorized to readmit the student without the parent conference if it is appropriate for the student.
- If parents fail to comply with these requirements, or other requirements under the statute, the School Board may petition the juvenile and domestic relations court to proceed against the parents for willful and unreasonable refusal to participate in efforts to improve the student's behavior and/or school attendance. The court may take the following actions:
 - Order the parent to meet with school officials;
 - Order the student and/or parent(s) to participate in treatments or programs to improve the student's behavior and school attendance, including participation in parenting, counseling, or a mentoring program as appropriate, or be subject to other limitations and conditions as the court deems appropriate, and/or impose a fine upon the parent of up to \$500.00.

Parents seeking additional information about Virginia's compulsory attendance laws are referred to Regulation 724-1, Attendance and Excuses and Sections 22.1-254 et.seq., of the Virginia Code, available online at <http://leg1.state.va.us>

Annual Notification Of Prince William County Schools Records Policy

The Prince William County Public Schools maintain Student Educational Records for students which may contain the following data, if available or applicable:

1. name, address (including electronic), phone number, student number
2. birth date, birthplace, birth certificate number, sex of student
3. name, address, phone number of parent/custodian
4. date entered school, attendance record
5. scholastic work completed, level of achievement (grades, test scores), grade point average (secondary school), type of diploma
6. health-physical fitness data
7. citizenship status (if other than United States)
8. tentative high school program of studies plan
9. state and local test results
10. school and community activities (when appropriate)
11. record of employment counseling and placement and evaluations
12. vocational assessment data
13. record of counseling interview (date, reason, etc. not content)
14. legal custody records and medical records
15. discipline records (related to out-of-school suspension or expulsion)
16. permission for release of information (if appropriate)
17. verified reports of serious atypical behavior patterns
18. reports from agencies such as juvenile court, social services, etc.
19. records of physical problems deemed sensitive by the parent
20. interviews, recommendations, case studies
21. standardized recommendation check list (personal characteristics)
22. educational, psychological, sociological, and physiological assessment including medical, speech, hearing, and vision data
23. permission for testing and placement
24. record of parent conference to discuss special educational placement
25. record of eligibility committee recommendations for placement
26. report of annual review of placement
27. reports of appeals (if appropriate)
28. Individual Education Program (I.E.P.)
29. any parent/eligible student waivers on confidential letters and statements
30. home language survey
31. transfer of age majority rights

Student records are maintained at the school of attendance for active students and at the Prince William County Public Schools Records Center for graduates and withdrawals. Eligible persons may direct requests for explanations and interpretations of records material to the custodian of records. The principal and/or designee and records manager are responsible for the security and maintenance of student records.

Parents/eligible students may obtain copies of material contained in the student's records. There is a **\$2.00** per page charge for student records for personal use. There is no charge for disclosure of records to parents, their designee, eligible student, or those to whom scholastic data shall be disclosed. This shall include inspection, review, search and/or retrieval of such information.

All student records are collected, stored, and disposed of (when applicable) in accordance with applicable county, state and federal regulations pertaining to such records. Questions should be referred to the Records Center at 703-791-7365. (Persons wishing copies of this material prior to the destruction of such material should send their request to the Records Center at Independent Hill).

Copies of Policy 790 and its implementing Regulations which pertain to the Management of Student's Scholastic Records in Prince William County Schools are kept in the administrative office of elementary schools and the administrative and guidance offices of middle and senior high schools, and are available for review upon request.

Notification of Rights Regarding Student Educational Records under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law, affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to a student's educational records, which are:

- (1) The right to review and inspect the student's educational record. Within 45 days of the day the school division receives a request for access, parents or eligible students should submit to the principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The custodian of records will arrange for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. The school official who is responsible for the records, or his or her designee, shall be present for the records review and shall maintain custody of those records.
- (2) The right to request the amendment of a student's educational record(s) that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Such requests shall be made in writing and shall clearly identify the part of the record the parent or eligible student wants changed, and specify what part of the record is inaccurate, misleading or a violation of privacy rights, and in what manner. If the Prince William County Public Schools decide not to amend the record as requested, the school division will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. If the decision is made not to change the record, the parent/eligible student also has the right to place a statement in the records commenting on the information in question. Additional information regarding the procedures for such a hearing shall be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- (3) The right to consent to disclosure(s) of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational record, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

Disclosure of Educational Records without Consent

The law allows schools to disclose educational records, without consent, to the following:

- (a) to officials within the Prince William County Public Schools who have a legitimate educational interest in such information, including duly elected school board members, administrators, teachers, supervisors, administrative or instructional substitutes (for the period of employment as a substitute), persons under contract to the School Board as secretary, clerk, auditor, or school attorneys. A school official has a "legitimate educational interest", if the official needs to review the educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility;
- (b) to officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student intends to enroll;
- (c) to the eligible student (an eligible student is one who is 18 years old or older, or who is enrolled in a postsecondary institution);
- (d) to the parent(s) of the student;
- (e) to authorized representatives of the Comptroller General of the United States, the Attorney General of the United States, the Secretary of the United States Department of Education, or other federal and state or local educational authorities and their designees;
- (f) to state and local officials or authorities to whom this information is allowed to be reported or disclosed by state law, if the disclosure concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve the eligible student;
- (g) to persons designated in writing by the parent or eligible student;
- (h) to an employee of the local or state health department to review pre-school physical examination reports;
- (i) to a party when the disclosure is in connection with financial aid for which the student has applied;
- (j) to accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions;
- (k) to a party to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; or to a court in any legal action initiated against the Prince William County Public Schools by the student or parent;
- (l) to a party that has requested personally identifiable information which the School Division has identified as "directory information" under Regulation 790-4, Release of Information;
- (m) to the parent of a student who is not an eligible student; and
- (n) to comply with any state or federal laws requiring the reporting of instances of child abuse, violence, drug or weapons offenses.

Release of Directory Information

Certain personally identifiable information contained in a student's educational record has been designated by the Prince William County Public Schools as directory information. See, Regulation 790-4, Release of Directory Information. This is information contained in an educational record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The Prince William County Public Schools may disclose designated directory information without written consent, unless you have advised the school division to the contrary in accordance with the procedures set forth in Regulation 790-4. By executing Attachment I of Regulation 790-4, parents/eligible students may instruct the school not to release parts or all of a student's directory information.

The items designated as directory information are as follows:

- (1) Name of student (includes former students);
- (2) Address, including electronic address;
- (3) Date and place of birth;
- (4) Telephone listing;
- (5) Dates of attendance;
- (6) Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- (7) Height and weight, if member of athletic team;
- (8) Degrees and awards received;
- (9) Other similar information; and
- (10) Photograph(s) and videotape(s) of students, whether hard copy or electronic.

Right to Opt-Out of Disclosure of Directory Information

Unless the student/parent executes Part B of Attachment I to Regulation 790-4, advising the school division that he/she does not consent to the disclosure of directory information, the Prince William County Public Schools may release directory information to educational institutions, scholarship providers, elected public officials, prospective employers, and room parents and organizations such as Parent Teacher Associations. Photographs and video are routinely provided to the media for the purpose of recognizing students for academic, athletic, or extracurricular accomplishments. Unless the student/parent executes Part C of Attachment I to Regulation 790-4, advising the school division that he/she does not consent to the disclosure of student names, degrees, and awards and photograph(s)/videotape(s), such information may be given to the media, but may not be used for commercial or private advertising purposes. Directory information will also be disclosed to military recruiters unless the student/parent executes Part D of Attachment I to Regulation 790-4.

Complaints concerning alleged failure of the school division to comply with the requirements of FERPA may be filed with the United States Department of Education. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5901.

Notification of Rights Under PPRA

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) gives parents and students who are 18 or older or emancipated minors ("eligible students") certain rights regarding a school district's conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and conduct of certain physical exams. These include the right to:

1. Consent to federally funded surveys concerning "protected information." A student's parents or an eligible student must consent in writing before the student may provide information relating to the following categories:
 - Political affiliations;
 - Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
 - Sexual behavior or attitudes;
 - Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 - Critical appraisals of student's family members;
 - Privileged or similar relationships recognized by law, such as with attorneys, doctors, and ministers;
 - Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parents; or
 - Income other than that required by law to determine program eligibility.

A survey that concerns any of these points is called a "protected information survey."

2. Opt out of certain surveys and exams. Parents and eligible students shall receive notice of any of the following activities and shall have the right to opt out of them:
 - Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for purposes of marketing or selling or otherwise distributing the information to others;
 - Any protected information survey, regardless of funding; and
 - Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent and scheduled by the school, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student or of another student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law.
3. Inspect certain material. Parents and eligible students have the right to inspect the following, upon request, before the district uses them:
 - Protected information surveys of students (including any instructional materials used in connection with the survey);
 - Documents used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 - Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.
4. Receive notification of district policy. Prince William County Public Schools has developed a policy, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, and has made arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Prince William County Public Schools shall directly notify parents and eligible students of this policy at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes are made.

NOTIFICATION OF NON-DISCRIMINATION: The Prince William County School Division does not discriminate in employment or in its educational programs and activities against qualified individuals with disabilities, nor on the basis of age, gender, race, color, religion, or national origin. Inquiries may also be directed to Compliance Officer, Prince William County Public Schools, P.O. Box 389, Manassas, VA 20108, (703) 791-7200 or Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20201.