

Mark Your Calendars

September 5th - Welcome Back!

September 12th & 14th

Beginner Instrument Night 5:30-7:00 IS

September 14th

PTO Meeting; 6:00pm

September 15th

Spirit Day- International Dot Day!

September 22-29th

PTO Book Fair

September 26th

Big Flats Open House; 6:30-7:30pm

October 3rd

PTO Meeting- Library

October 9th - NO SCHOOL!

Indigenous People Day!

October 17th

Picture Day!

October 20th- NO SCHOOL!

Conference Day

Breakfast is Served

Running short on time in the morning? Your child can eat breakfast for free! It is served between 7:45 a.m. and 8:15a.m. each day. Please note—in the event of a two-hour delay, breakfast will **not** be available. On half days, breakfast will be served, but there will be no lunch.

PaySchools

Horseheads Central School District has an online prepay account for school meals called PaySchools. You can access this information from our 'Big Flats' main page on horseheadsdistrict.com, clicking on the 'Food Services' link. You can also find it directly at <https://www.payschools.com/user-login.asp?src=custom>. You will need to register using your child's student ID number. To obtain this information, please call the cafeteria at (607)-739-6373 x5607

At Big Flats Elementary, we have fun together as we learn, overcome challenges, and make a difference so we can be successful in our future.

APPR of Teachers and Principals

The District is required to implement Annual Professional Performance Reviews (APPR) of most teachers and principals. The outcome of the APPR is that each teacher and principal subject to APPR this year will receive a composite evaluation score between 0 and 100. A score of 0-64 means that the teacher or principal is rated Ineffective, a score of 65-74 means that the teacher or principal is rated as Developing, a score of 75-90 means that the teacher or principal is Effective, and a score of 91-100 means that the teacher or principal is Highly Effective. You may request the final composite rating for the teachers and principals in the school building to which your child is assigned for the current school year by contacting the building principal of your child's school. Further, if you require additional explanation of the ratings for the teachers and principals, you may contact Caitlin DeFilippo Director of Human Resources, at (607)-739-5601 x4211.

September—The month of:

RESPECT

Follow the Golden Rule
Be tolerant and accepting
Deal peacefully with anger and insults

Use good manners, not bad language
Be considerate of the feelings of others
Don't threaten, hit, or hurt anyone



Teacher Qualification

Pursuant to the federal No Child Left Behind Act, parents and guardians have the right to request and receive information about the professional qualification of their children's classroom teachers. Parents wishing such information about their child(ren)'s classroom teachers should contact the building principal.

Dignity Act Coordinator

The Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) for Big Flats Elementary is Elizabeth Scaptura. Complaints regarding discrimination, harassment, or bullying of any student should be referred to Mrs. Scaptura at (607)-739-6373. The Dignity Act Coordinator for the Horseheads Central School District is Caitlin DeFilippo. Mrs. DeFilippo may be reached at Hibbard Road, Horseheads, NY 14845, (607)-739-5601 x4211.

Non-Discrimination Notification

The Horseheads Central School District offers educational programs without regard to race, color, weight, national origin, creed, religion, marital status, military status, sex, sexual orientation, age, or gender identity, predisposing genetic characteristic, or disability, and provides equal access to applicable groups under the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act. Inquiries regarding this policy may be made to Caitlin DeFilippo Title IX/DASA Coordinator, and Co-Civil Rights Compliance Officer; Anthony Gill, Co-Civil Rights Compliance Officer; or Kelly Squires Section 504 Coordinator, Horseheads Central School District, One Raider Lane, Horseheads, NY 14845, (607)-739-5601. This policy of non-discrimination includes access by students to educational programs, counseling services, course offerings, and activities, as well as recruitment and appointment of employees and employment pay, benefits, advancement and/or termination.

The following person(s) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Caitlin DeFilippo Director of Human Resources cdefilippo@horseheadsdistrict.com Hibbard Rd, Horseheads Central School District, Horseheads, NY 14845, (607)-739-5601 —or—

U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights LBJ Department of Education Building 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20202-1100, 1-(800)-421-3481



Welcome

to the 2023-2024 School Year!

Big Flats News

September 2023

Welcome to Big Flats Elementary! We are pleased to have you with us and are looking forward to another exciting year. Please take a few minutes to read through the following with regards to general information and school procedures.

Welcome New Staff and Reassignments of Staff!

Mrs. Huck—PK Teacher

Mrs. Schwab -Mrs. Huck PK TA

Mrs. Hayner- Mrs. Mastronardi PK TA

Mrs. Rios- Mrs. Tingue PK TA

Mrs. Kozemko— Kindergarten

Mrs. Buck— Primary TA

Mrs. Overbeck— 1st Grade Teacher

Miss MacArthur— 3rd Grade Teacher

Miss Gilboy— K-2 15:1:1 Teacher

Miss Taylor— RTI Math Teacher

Ms. Whitford—Speech Pathologist

Mrs. Leone -ENL Teacher

Mrs. Hayes— Contract Substitute

Ms. Clemons— Nurses Office LPN

Ms. Vitale— 1:1 LPN

Miss Yartym-Sr. Clerk Typist Secretary

Necessary Forms

Emergency Information Sheet, Emergency Go Home Form, and the HIV/AIDS Letter need to be completed, signed and returned as soon as possible. **Please be aware that your child's emergency go home address must be on a Big Flats bus route.**

Student Arrival: Classrooms open at 8:00 a.m. each day. The tardy bell rings at 8:15 a.m.; however, we encourage all students arrive by 8:00 a.m. If your child is tardy, they must report to the Main Office with a blue note from a parent and they will receive a late pass to give to their teacher. **If you drive your children to school, they cannot arrive earlier than 7:40 a.m., as the front doors will remain locked until that time.** Students who arrive between 7:40 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. are asked to go to the cafeteria where they will be supervised and dismissed to their classrooms at 8:00 a.m. Our school day ends promptly at 2:25pm.

Important Information Included!

Emergency Information Sheet—**MUST RETURN**

Emergency Go Home Form—**MUST RETURN**

Please note: Even though we are able to offer all students free breakfast and lunch each day, PLEASE complete the Free and Reduced Application especially if you believe your family might be eligible!

Please note the many enclosures and policies within this packet that are very important for you to review and understand. Please also see our Student/Parent Handbook for more information regarding staff and general procedures at Big Flats Elementary.

*At Big Flats Elementary,
we will SOAR together
as we explore our "wonders"
in a fun and engaging
community, where we will
inspire each other to achieve
anything!*

Elementary Lunches (K-6)

School Food Services will be able to provide 1 free breakfast and 1 free lunch to all students this year!

Breakfast: **FREE!**

Lunch: **FREE!**

FREE BREAKFAST AND LUNCHES!
School Hours

Hours for the Elementary Schools are:
8:15 a.m. to 2:25 p.m.

Office Hours

Our school office hours during regular school days are:

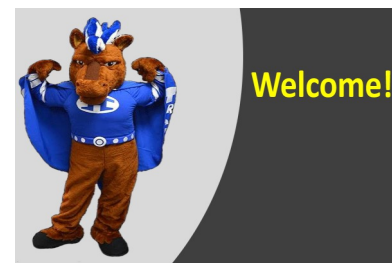
Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Office Phone Numbers

(607) 739-6373
(607) 795-2550

Therapy Dogs:

Throughout the year we will have the opportunity to welcome therapy dogs into our educational setting. The dog will always be on leash and handled by a trained professional. If you have any questions regarding this new practice, please contact the Main Office.



Horseheads Central School District sets the standard of educational excellence by fostering innovative thinking, curiosity, and a passion for learning to maximize the potential of each individual. We engage with our local and global communities to provide a student-centered, nurturing environment.

FRIENDLY REMINDERS:

• Written Excuse/Blue Notes

Please note that a written excuse is required each time your child is tardy, absent, or leaving early from the school day. (*See information below.) Please also see the enclosed Attendance Policy.

• Drop-off Procedure

We ask that you follow the drop-off line continuously to drop your students off at the cafeteria doors located at the north end of the building. This way, we can keep the morning routine as safe and as smooth as possible.

• Guidelines for Classroom Parties

Another big topic here at Big Flats – Before bringing treats for birthday’s and such, please check with your child’s teacher for approval and to see if any students in the class have any food allergies such as peanuts, chocolate, red dye, etc. No flowers or balloons may be sent or brought to students. Also, **please do not bring frozen items as we have limited freezer space and access.**

***Changes in Going Home Routine and Bus Notes**

If your child is to leave school in a manner other than his/her regular routine, a written note explaining the change in plans must be provided **by 12:00 pm NOON!** Some examples include: a student being picked up instead of riding the bus or vice versa, or a change in who is picking your student up that day. When writing a bus note, please be sure to include the exact street address and name of who your child will then be in care of. This information is extremely important, especially when there is a substitute driving the bus.

Your help in this matter is extremely appreciated and important to ensure that your plans are followed and your child is safely dismissed. If we do not have a note, your child will be asked to follow his/her normal routine.



Half Day for Elementary Schools

When half days are scheduled throughout the 2023 - 2024 school year, breakfast will be served, but no lunch. Dismissal will be at 11:00 a.m. **There is no Kid’s World on half days.** If your child attends Kid’s World, please be sure to send a blue note for his/her dismissal plans for that day.

Important Information from the Health Office

Screenings

Screenings are done yearly. These include height, weight, blood pressure, vision, and hearing. If any problems are found, a referral will be mailed home. Please have your doctor complete their part and return it to the school. If there are parent concerns at any time during the year, please call and we will retest your child.

Medications

Doctor’s written orders are necessary to give any medication in school. The medicine needs to be brought to the Nurse’s office by an adult. **Please do not send pills in a bag, cough drops, etc. as we cannot give them to your child.** ‘Physician’s Order For Giving Medication In School’ forms are available in the school Health Office if needed.

Emergency Forms

Emergency Information Sheets are sent home every year on the first day of school. Please make any corrections, deletions, or updates to the preprinted information sheet and sign it. Do not use emergency contacts that live outside the area. We need someone that can come and pick up your child if we cannot reach you. Please let us know immediately if there are any changes in address or phone numbers.

Go Home Policy

Students are sent home if they are running a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, or by other symptoms, such as vomiting, that warrant going home. Please keep in mind that our school nurses are not physicians. They cannot diagnose your child’s illness or tell if they have a fracture/strep throat/etc. If you have concerns, please contact your child’s physician.

When to Keep Your Child Home

If your child has a temperature, vomiting during the evening or night before school, or you are waiting for the results of a strep test, please keep him/her home for a minimum of 24 hours. With a positive strep test, they must stay home until they have been on antibiotics for a **full 24 hours.**



Response to Intervention

As mandated by the NYS Education Department, all schools must identify and provide academic intervention to any student falling below a designated cut-off on various state and local assessments. Identified students will receive additional instruction which continues until the student passes the required subject-based tests.

Classroom, remedial, and special education teachers may work with, and provide extra support to, your child individually or in a group, both in and outside the classroom. If your child qualifies for RTI, you will be notified by a letter mailed home.

Important Information

BOE Policy 4750: Promotion and Retention

It is essential that each child experience both challenge and success from school activities. To this end, the district will make every effort to place each student in the most appropriate learning level for a successful educational experience.

Early Identification/Intervention

Classroom teachers are expected to make every effort to identify early those students at risk of failing. The Building Principal and the parents/guardian must be notified promptly if retention is anticipated, and a special support program shall be designed for each child identified as in danger of failing. Such support services may include, but are not limited to, individualized assistance before, during or after the school day; remedial classes; a change in instructional treatment, and, where appropriate, referral to the Committee on Special Education for evaluation.

Promotion/Retention

No student will be retained without an appropriate educational plan defining what will occur that is instructionally different for the student. Once the educational plan has been implemented, the student will be monitored regularly. The educational plan will be revised until the student demonstrates acceptable performance. The following provisions shall apply to promotion and placement decisions:

1. No student promotion or placement decision for grades three through eight shall be based solely on student performance on the ELA or Mathematics State assessments;
2. Student assessment scores may be considered as a measure of student performance only if the decision making process uses multiple measures of assessments and data in addition to the State assessments and the State assessments are only a minor factor in the promotion/placement decision;
3. In making promotion and placement decisions, the school will consider in class performance, teacher observation, homework, input of the parent, social and emotional needs as well as any other applicable measures, other than State assessments;
4. The final decision regarding placement and promotion is the decision of the building administrator;

This policy shall be posted on the district’s website.

Homeless Students/Students in Temporary Housing Notice

Children and youth in temporary housing have the right to:

- Stay in the same school and get free transportation even if it is across district lines
- Immediately enroll in school without records (school, medical, or vaccination records, proof of residency)
- Receive special education services immediately if the student has a current Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Participate fully in any school activities, including before- or after-school activities
- Receive support services and help with things like school supplies through Title I
- Receive free school meals without filling out an application
- Receive help enrolling in pre-k, Head Start, other preschool programs, and Early Intervention
- Receive help applying for financial aid for college if the student is an unaccompanied youth

For assistance, please contact the Horseheads Central School District Director of Student Services at (607)-739-5601 x4300.

NYS Dignity for All Student’s Act

On July 1, 2012, New York State enacted the ‘Dignity for All Students Act’ which was put into place to ensure that all school environments are free of discrimination and harassment. In an effort to continue to teach our students and staff about this law, I meet with students grades 1-4 and conducted Town Hall Meetings to review the Core 4 to SOAR expectations as well as addressing this law, during the first two weeks of school. I meet with our PK and K students within the first four weeks of school. Please ask your student(s) what they’ve learned in Mrs. Scaptura’s Town Hall Meeting, and reiterate the importance of standing up against bullying and telling an adult about any incidents that break our Core 4 to SOAR

Parents’ Bill of Rights Relating to Student Data

The Horseheads Central School District, in compliance with Education Law 2-d, hereby establishes the following Parents’ Bill of Rights in regard to student data:

1. A student’s personally identifiable information will not be sold or released for any commercial purpose;
2. Parents have the right to inspect and review the complete contents of their child’s educational record. Procedures for reviewing student records can be found in the Board Policy entitled ‘Student Records,’ Policy 5500, Regulation 5500-R;
3. Security protocols regarding confidentiality of personally identifiable information are currently in place and the safeguards necessary to protect the confidentiality of student data are maintained at industry standards and best practices. The safeguards include but are not limited to: encryptions, firewalls, and password protection.
4. New York State maintains a complete list of all student data collected by the State and the data is available for public review at www.nysed.gov, or by writing to: 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234.
5. Parents have the right to have complaints about possible breaches of student data addressed. Complaints should be directed to the Superintendent of Schools, One Raider Lane, Horseheads, NY 14845.

Legal Information

Please keep us informed throughout the school year of any contact information or legal changes pertaining to you or your child(ren). If an emergency situation should arise, it is imperative that all the information we have is current. This includes but is not limited to: phone number, custody agreement, and emergency contacts. Please call the main office with the correct information as soon as possible.

If the child(ren)’s parents are not residing together, we require custody papers stating which parent has physical custody, legal custody, and to note any other legal decisions regarding the child(ren). Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Please find and review these included Board of Education Policies:

- Code of Conduct
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Network & Internet Acceptable Use/E-mail Acceptable Use
- 100: Comprehensive Student Attendance
- 8505: Charging of School Meals
- 4750: Promotion & Retention

Horseheads Central School District Code of Conduct

The following is a shortened version of the district's Code of Conduct, as required by New York State SAVE legislation of 2000. For a copy of the complete code, visit the district's web site at www.horseheadsdistrict.com or call 739-5601, x4201.

Introduction

The Horseheads Central School District Board of Education is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The board recognizes the need to clearly define these expectations for acceptable conduct on school property, to identify the possible consequences of unacceptable conduct, and to ensure that discipline when necessary is administered promptly and fairly. To this end, the board adopts this Code of Conduct.

Unless otherwise indicated, this code applies to all students, school personnel, parents and other visitors, when on school property or attending any school function (whether on or off campus), including, but not limited to athletic events, extra-curricular activities, academic programs and programs that highlight the arts. Additionally, students who participate in athletics or extra- or co-curricular activities are expected to adhere to all aspects of this policy at all times and may be disciplined (including a suspension from their athletic team or extra- or co-curricular activity) for conduct which violates this Code, even if the conduct occurs at a non-school event. Students engaged in athletics are also expected to adhere to the Athletic Code of Conduct, which is attached as an appendix to the Code of Conduct.

Student Rights

The district is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law. In addition, to promote a safe, healthy, orderly and civil school environment, all district students have the right to:

1. Take part in all district activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color, weight, creed, national origin, religion, gender (including gender identity and gender expression) or sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected class under state and federal law.
2. Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.
3. Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.

Student Responsibilities (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship)

All district students have the responsibility to:

1. Contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.
2. Be familiar with and abide by all district policies, rules and regulations dealing with student conduct.
3. Attend school every day unless they are legally excused and be in class, on time, and prepared to learn.
4. Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
5. React in a respectful, positive manner to direction given by teachers, administrators and other school personnel.
6. Work to develop mechanisms to control their anger.
7. Ask questions when they do not understand.
8. Seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline.
9. Dress appropriately for school and school functions (e.g., in accordance with the Code of Conduct or any other applicable instructions for school events).
10. Accept responsibility for their actions.

11. Conduct themselves as representatives of the district when participating in or attending school-sponsored extracurricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.
12. Use District property, including district technology, according to established guidelines and rules.

Student Dress Code

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up and nails, shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
2. Recognize that extremely brief or revealing garments that may be offensive to others and disruptive to education are not appropriate. For example, stomach, lower back, pelvis and buttocks, and chest must be completely covered and shirts must not be strapless. The following is a non-exhaustive list of clothing that are not allowable: tube tops, bralettes, crop tops, shirts that are open or cut on the sides, clothing items that are see-through, and pants that do not fit around the waist and need to be held up with a hand.
3. Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
4. Include footwear at all times. Footwear that poses a safety hazard in the instructional setting will not be allowed.
5. Comply with the rule that hats, hoods, bandanas, visors, or other head coverings which obscure a student's identity, may not be worn inside school buildings during regular school instructional hours, except for a religious or approved medical purpose.
6. Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
7. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.
8. Student-athletes shall wear attire appropriate to their athletic activity for practice and competition outside of the instructional day. The athletics program shall enforce appropriate expectations.

Each building principal or his or her designee shall be responsible for informing all students and their parents of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year and any revisions to the dress code made during the school year.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to disciplinary action. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension.

Prohibited Student Conduct

A student shall be subject to disciplinary action in relation to the following:

- A. Engage in conduct that is disorderly, insubordinate or disruptive. Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to:
 1. Disrespecting staff.
 2. Failure to comply with the directions of a teacher, administrator or other school employee.
 3. Violation of the district's dress code.
 4. Lateness for, missing or leaving school or class without permission from or an excuse given by a faculty member, staff member, or other authorized person.
 5. Any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
 6. Disrupting the educational process.

7. Interfering with the teacher's authority over the classroom.
8. Issuing disruptive or harassing electronic communications ("cyberbullying"), even if the communication did not originate from the District or through District servers.
9. Engaging in any act of discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying, and/or harassment as defined in this Code.
10. Retaliating against any individual who, in good faith, reports or assists in the investigation of, among other things, sexual harassment, harassment, bullying and/or discrimination.

B. Engage in conduct that endangers the safety, morals and health and welfare of others.

1. Stealing, lying, cheating, plagiarism, other acts of dishonesty, or unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) or similar technology.
2. Written, verbal, or physical intimidation.
3. Fighting or causing physical harm to another.
4. Using in either words, clothing, signs, or actions profane, lewd, vulgar, abusive language, words, messages, or behavior (electronic or otherwise) which may incite or offend another person.
5. Vandalizes school property or the property of a student or staff member.
6. Violates the civil rights of another student.
7. Engaging in acts of harassment as defined in the Code of Conduct and/or in the district's Sexual Harassment Policy and Regulation, its Racial Harassment of Students Policy and Regulation, or its Dignity for all Students Act Policy and Regulation.
8. Being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, drinking an alcoholic beverage or being in possession of an alcoholic beverage on school property or at a school function. Alcoholic beverages shall mean and include alcohol, spirits, liquor, wine, beer, any type of "powdered alcohol," and cider having alcoholic content. When a student creates a look-alike situation by presenting a substance as an alcoholic beverage, the District's reaction will be the same as if an actual alcoholic beverage was present.
9. Being under the influence of, or the use, possession, sale, distribution, or gift of any illegal or controlled substance or any instruments for the use of such illegal or controlled substances such as, but not limited to, a pipe, syringe, vaping devices, vaping cartridges, or other paraphernalia, while on school property or at a school function. "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to, inhalants, e-liquids, including propylene glycol (liquid nicotine), synthetic cannabinoids (e.g., K2, Spice), cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, marijuana, over-the-counter drugs or prescription medication on school property when not in compliance with the medication policy, look-alike or "counterfeit" drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs." When a student creates a look-alike situation by presenting a substance as an illegal or controlled substance, the District's reaction will be the same as if the actual substance was present. Excepted is any drug taken in accordance with a current prescription signed by a physician which is to be taken by the particular student at the time in question. All medication must be administered through the school health office.
10. Possession or use of or threatening to use, or displaying what appears to be, a weapon as defined in Section II of the full Code of Conduct on school property or at a school function.
11. Falsely reporting an emergency or tampering with safety or security equipment.
12. Selling, using or possessing obscene material.
13. Use or possession of tobacco products or cannabinoids (marijuana) on school property or at a school function. Tobacco products shall include, but not be limited to, vapor pens (and any material used in vapor pens or similar devices), electronic cigarettes or any nicotine dispensing product, chewing tobacco, snuff, cigarettes, cigars, or loose tobacco.
14. Acting as a violent student as defined in Section II of the full Code of Conduct.
15. Engaging in any act of discrimination or harassment as defined in this Code.
16. Retaliating against any individual who, in good faith, reports or assists in the investigation of, among other things, harassment, bullying and/or discrimination.
17. Indecent exposure, including exposure to the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.

Reporting Violations

All students are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to a teacher, school counselor, the building principal or his or her designee. Any student observing a student possessing a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property or at a school function shall report this information immediately to a teacher, the building principal, the principal's designee, a school resource officer, or the superintendent.

Any student, parent or other family member, or visitor may report an incident of discrimination, bullying and/or harassment. Reports may be made to any staff member, including Dignity Act Coordinators, administrators, teachers, and school counselors. In the event that a report is made to a staff member other than a Dignity Act Coordinator, such staff member shall immediately inform a Dignity Act Coordinator of the report. All District employees who have contact with students are required to report incidents of discrimination, bullying and/or harassment when the individual witnesses or receives reliable information regarding any such incident. Allegations of discrimination, bullying and/or harassment will be treated as confidential and private to the extent possible.

All district staff who are authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to do so in a prompt, fair and lawful manner after a prompt and thorough investigation. District staff who are not authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to their supervisor, who shall in turn impose an appropriate disciplinary sanction or refer the matter to a staff member who is authorized to impose an appropriate sanction.

Any weapon, alcohol or illegal substance found shall be confiscated immediately, if possible, followed by notification to the parent of the student involved and the appropriate disciplinary sanction if warranted, which may include permanent suspension and referral for prosecution.

The building principal or his or her designee must notify the appropriate school resource officer or local law enforcement agency of those code violations that constitute a crime and substantially affect the order or security of a school, including but not limited to incidents of harassment, bullying and/or discrimination which may constitute a crime, as soon as practical after the building principal determines that the violation occurred. The notification may be made by telephone, followed by a written notification on the same day as the telephone call is made. The notification must identify the student and explain the conduct that violated the code of conduct and constituted a crime.

Disciplinary Penalties, Procedure and Referrals

As a general rule, discipline is progressive in nature. This means that a student's first violation will usually merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations. However, the administration reserves the right to escalate the penalty based on the severity of the conduct at its discretion.

Penalties

Students who are found to have violated the district's code of conduct may be subject to the following penalties, either alone or in combination: verbal warning, written warning, written notification to parent, detention, suspension from transportation, suspension from athletic participation, suspension from social or extracurricular activities, suspension of other privileges, including district technology or web servers, in-school suspension, removal from classroom by teacher, short-term (five days or less) suspension from school, long-term (more than five days) suspension from school, permanent suspension from school.

Procedures

The amount of due process a student is entitled to receive before a penalty is imposed depends on the penalty being imposed. In all cases, regardless of the penalty imposed, the school personnel authorized to impose the penalty must inform the student of the alleged misconduct and must investigate, to the extent necessary, the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.

Students who are to be given penalties other than a verbal warning, written warning, written notification to their parents or detention occurring during the school day at a non-instructional time are entitled to additional rights before the penalty is imposed. These additional rights are explained in the complete Code of Conduct.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

The board recognizes that it may be necessary to suspend, remove or otherwise discipline students with disabilities to address disruptive or problem behavior. The board also recognizes that students with disabilities enjoy certain procedural protections whenever school authorities intend to impose discipline upon them. The board is committed to ensuring that the procedures followed for suspending, removing or otherwise disciplining students with disabilities are consistent with the procedural safeguards required to applicable laws and regulations.

This code of conduct affords students with disabilities subject to disciplinary action no greater or lesser rights than those expressly afforded by applicable federal and state law and regulations.

Student Searches and Interrogations

The board of education is committed to ensuring an atmosphere on school property and at school functions that is safe and orderly. To achieve this kind of environment, any school official authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty on a student may question a student about an alleged violation of law or the district code of conduct. Students are not entitled to any sort of “Miranda-type” warning before being questioned by school officials, nor are school officials required to contact a student’s parent before questioning the student. However, school officials will tell all students why they are being questioned.

In addition, the board authorizes the superintendent, building principals, and district security officials to conduct searches of students and their belongings (including consumables, a student’s cell phone or a student’s car that is on school property) if the authorized school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in evidence that the student violated the law or the district code of conduct.

An authorized school official may conduct a search of a student’s belongings (including consumables) that is minimally intrusive, such as touching the outside of a book bag, without reasonable suspicion, so long as the school official has a legitimate reason for the very limited search.

An authorized school official may search a student or the student’s belongings (including consumables, a student’s cell phone or a student’s car that is on school property or at a school function) based upon information received from a reliable informant. Individuals, other than the district employees, will be considered reliable informants if they have previously supplied information that was accurate and verified, or they make an admission against their own interest, or they provide the same information that is received independently from other sources or they appear to be credible and the information they are communicating relates to an immediate threat to safety. District employees will be considered reliable informants unless they are known to have previously supplied information that they knew was not accurate.

Before searching a student or the student’s belongings, the authorized school official should attempt to get the student to admit that he or she possesses physical evidence that violated the law or the district code, or get the student to voluntarily consent to the search. Searches will be limited to the extent necessary to locate the evidence sought.

Whenever possible, searches will be conducted in the privacy of administrative offices and students will be present when their possessions are being searched.

Student Lockers, Desks and other School Storage Places and Consumables

The rules in this code of conduct regarding searches of students and their belongings do not apply to student lockers, desks and other school storage places, or email or computer accounts, including storage devices (i.e. CDs, disks, flash drives, etc.). Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to these places and school officials retain complete control over them. This means that student lockers, desks and other school storage places may be subject to search at any time by school officials, without prior notice to students and without their consent.

Additionally, students should be aware that any consumable items (food or beverages) are subject to search and inspection by the Administration.

Police Involvement in Searches and Interrogations of Students

District officials are committed to cooperating with police officials and other law enforcement authorities to maintain a safe school environment. Police officials may enter school property or a school function to question or search a student or to conduct a formal investigation involving students if they have

a search or an arrest warrant; or probable cause to believe a crime has been or is being committed on school property or at a school function; or been invited by school officials.

The principal or designee will be present during any police questioning or search of a student on school property or at a school function. Students who are questioned by police officials on school property or at a school function will be afforded the same rights they have outside the school.

Visitors to the Schools

Since schools are a place of work and learning, certain limits must be set for visits by parents and other persons or agencies. The building principal or his or her designee is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds. For these reasons, the district has adopted a visitor policy in Policy 1240 Visitors to the Schools. See that policy for specific rules as to school visits.

Public Conduct on School Property

The district is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of an environment, it is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school functions. For purposes of this section of the code, "public" shall mean all persons when on school property or attending a school function including students, teachers and district personnel.

The restrictions on public conduct on school property and at school functions contained in this code are not intended to limit freedom of speech or peaceful assembly. The district recognizes that free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the objectives of the district. The purpose of this code is to maintain public order and prevent abuse of the rights of others.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property.

Prohibited Conduct

No person, either alone or with others, shall:

1. Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so.
2. Intentionally damage or destroy school district property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee or any other person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
3. Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs or other school activities.
4. Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school program.
5. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected class under state and federal law.
6. Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
7. Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies.
8. Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles;
9. Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances including, but not limited to, TCH, or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function.
10. Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers (on active duty) or except as specifically authorized by the school district.
11. Loiter on or about school property.
12. Gamble on school property or at school functions.
13. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
14. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code.
15. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or board policy while on school property or while at a school function.
16. Commit any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.

Penalties

Persons who violate this code shall be subject to the following penalties:

1. Visitors. Their authorization, if any, to remain on school grounds or at the school function shall be withdrawn and they shall be directed to leave the premises. If they refuse to leave, they shall be subject to ejection. Depending upon the severity of the violation, future access to school property and events may be restricted.
2. Students. They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant, in accordance with the due process requirements.
3. Tenured faculty members. They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Education Law §3020-a or any other legal rights that they may have.
4. Staff members in the classified service of the civil service entitled to the protection of Civil Service Law §75 or any other legal rights that they may have.
5. Staff members other than those described in subdivisions 4 and 5. They shall be subject to warning, reprimand, suspension or dismissal as the facts may warrant in accordance with any legal rights they may have.

Enforcement

The building principal or his or her designee shall be responsible for enforcing the conduct required by this code.

When the building principal or his or her designee sees an individual engaged in prohibited conduct, which in his or her judgment does not pose any immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the principal or his or her designee shall tell the individual that the conduct is prohibited and attempt to persuade the individual to stop. The principal or his or her designee shall also warn the individual of the consequences for failing to stop. If the person refuses to stop engaging in the prohibited conduct, or if the person's conduct poses an immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the principal or his or her designee shall have the individual removed immediately from school property or the school function. If necessary, local law enforcement authorities will be contacted to assist in removing the person.

The district shall initiate disciplinary action against any student or staff member, as appropriate, with the "Penalties" section above. In addition, the district reserves its right to pursue a civil or criminal legal action against any person violating the code.

The board of education will review this code of conduct every year and update it as necessary.