

# Hudson City School District Code of Conduct Plain Language Summary

September 2020

The Hudson City School District (the “District”) and its Board of Education (the “Board”) are 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.

A full copy of the Code of Conduct is available to any student, parent, guardian, and employee, or community member upon request. It is also available on the District’s website at [hudsoncsd.org](http://hudsoncsd.org). This document contains an abridged version of the Code of Conduct of the Hudson City School District. Questions regarding processes, procedures, and penalties, not contained herein should be referred to the unabridged version.

## Student Rights and Responsibilities

The Hudson City School District is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under federal and state law and district policy. In addition, to promote a safe, healthy, orderly and supportive school environment, all district students have the following rights:

### Student Rights:

1. Take part in all district activities on an equal basis regardless of actual or perceived race, weight, color, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, gender (including gender identity and expression), sex, sexual orientation or disability.
2. To be respected as an individual and treated fairly and with dignity by other students and school staff.
3. To express one’s opinions, either verbally or in writing, as long as it is done so in accordance with the code of conduct.
4. Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose consequences.
5. Access school policies, regulations and rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.
6. To be provided with clear expectations regarding:
  - a. Course objectives, requirements and state standards;
  - b. Grading criteria and procedures;
  - c. Assignment requirements and deadlines; and
  - d. School and classroom rules and expectations regarding behavior.

### Student Responsibilities:

1. Contribute to maintaining a safe, supportive and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.
2. Help make school a community free of violence, intimidation, bullying, harassment, and discrimination.
3. Be familiar with and abide by district policies, rules and regulations dealing with student conduct.
4. Attend school every day unless they are legally excused and be in class on time and prepared to learn.
5. Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
6. React to direction given by teachers, administrators and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
7. Use a civil tone of voice and appropriate body language, listening when others are speaking to you.
8. To be truthful when speaking with school officials regarding Code of Conduct violations.
9. Respect personal space.
10. Work to develop skills to manage their emotions and reactions and resolve conflict with others.
11. Ask questions when they do not understand.
12. Seek help in solving problems.

13. Adhere to the dress code for school and school functions.
14. Accept responsibility for their actions.
15. 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.

### **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 garments such as tube tops, net tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, plunging necklines (front and/or back) and see-through garments are not appropriate.
3. Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
4. Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
5. Not include the wearing of head coverings in the classroom except for a medical or religious 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, disability or other protected category under state or federal law, or that would reasonably be anticipated to cause substantial disruption in the school setting.
7. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

### **Prohibited Student Conduct**

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment with the goal of making school a community free of violence intimidation, bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Exclusion from the school environment and suspension will only be used when necessary to protect the safety of students and staff or when all other measures have been exhausted.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

1. Engage in conduct that is disorderly.
2. Engage in conduct that deliberately goes against what a student has been asked to do or where they are supposed to be at any given time.
3. Engage in conduct that prevents others from being able to learn, focus, or be engaged in their work.
4. Engage in conduct that is violent.
5. Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, physical or mental health or welfare of others.
6. Engage in any form of academic misbehavior.
7. Engage in conduct that fails to comply with any District expectation or the directions of teachers, principals or other school personnel regarding the health and safety of students, including, but not limited to expectations and requirements of the District, SED, or the DOH during any health emergency situation.
8. Engage in on or off campus misbehavior that interferes with or can reasonably be expected to substantially disrupt the educational process in the school or a school function.
9. Computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the district's acceptable use policy.

## **Disciplinary Penalties, Procedures and Referrals**

Historically, the discipline of students in schools has focused mainly on handing out punishments based on specific actions. These punishments include reprimands, loss of privileges, office referrals, detentions and suspensions.

However, understanding discipline as a “teachable moment” is fundamental to a positive approach to discipline with the ultimate goal of teaching prosocial behavior. Therefore, the board authorizes restorative practices to be employed where appropriate, use conflict resolution, restitution to those harmed, and group, classroom, community and re-entry circles to address misbehaviors with the ultimate goal of teaching prosocial behavior. This approach seeks concurrent accountability and behavioral change.

The main principles of restorative practices are valuing and restoring relationships, repairing the harm done to affected parties, respecting others’ opinions, and reintegrating into the school community.

Under this model, we ask:

- Who has been hurt?
- What are their needs?
- Whose obligations are these?

Essential to the implementation of restorative practices is helping students who have engaged in unacceptable behavior to:

- Understand why the behavior is unacceptable and the harm it caused;
- Understand what could have been done differently in the same situation;
- Take responsibility for their actions;
- Make reparations and or restitution to repair the harm done;
- Be given the opportunity to learn prosocial strategies/skills to use in the future; and
- Understand the progression of more increasingly punitive consequences may be imposed if the behavior reoccurs.

While there may be more traditional punishments in conjunction with teaching behavior expectations and treating disciplinary matters as teachable moments, this is a more effective approach than merely reacting to specific events unless student behaviors pose an immediate or ongoing threat to the safety of other students and staff.

The Board directs staff and administration to utilize restorative practices where appropriate in addressing student disciplinary issues.

## **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment is any act of physical force upon a student for the purpose of punishing that student. Corporal punishment of any student by any district employee is strictly forbidden.

However, in situations where alternative procedures and methods that do not involve the use of physical force cannot reasonably be used, reasonable physical force may be used to:

1. Protect oneself, another student, teacher or any person from physical injury.
2. Protect the property of the school or others.
3. Restrain or remove a student whose behavior interferes with the orderly exercise and performance of school district functions, powers and duties, if that student has refused to refrain from further disruptive acts.

The district will report all complaints about the use of corporal punishment to the Commissioner of Education in accordance with Commissioner's regulations.

## **Visitors to the Schools**

The Board recognizes that the success of the school program depends, in part, on support by the larger community. The Board wishes to foster a positive climate where members of the community have the opportunity to observe the hard work and accomplishments of the students, teachers and other staff. Since schools are a place of work and learning, however, certain limits must be set for such visits. The Principal or his or her designee is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds, in accordance with the Code of Conduct and the District's School Volunteer Policy (#4532). For these reasons, the following expectations apply to visitors to the schools:

1. Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
2. All visitors to the school must enter through the designated single point of entry and report to the office of the Principal upon arrival at the school. There they will present photo identification, sign the visitor's register and will be issued a visitor's identification badge, which must be worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds. The visitor must return the badge to the main entry point before leaving the building.
3. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public after regular school hours, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings, are not required to sign-in.
4. Parents or citizens who wish to observe a classroom or school activity while school is in session must arrange such visits in advance with the classroom teacher(s) and Building Principal.
5. Teachers are expected to teach and will not be able to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
6. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the Principal or his or her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
7. Engage in conduct that fails to comply with any District expectation or the directions of teachers, principals or other school personnel regarding the health and safety of students, including, but not limited to expectations and requirements of the District, SED, or the DOH during any health emergency situation.
8. All visitors are expected to adhere to expectations for public conduct on school property contained in this code of conduct.