



WASHINGTON
TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

**MSDWT
STUDENT CODE OF
CONDUCT**

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE
STUDENT/PARENT
HANDBOOK**

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A message from Dr. Woodson, Superintendent of Schools



Dear Students, Parents and Staff:

The Metropolitan School District of Washington Township (MSDWT) has a commitment to ensure a safe and orderly learning environment for students and staff. Responsible behavior of our students, staff and visitors is essential to creating a safe learning environment in our schools. The Code of Conduct for Washington Township Schools serves as a set of expectations based on the concepts of safety, responsibility and respect to support the district mission.

MSDWT provides quality education for our students in schools built on a foundation of outstanding educators, administrators, school board members, and supportive parents. Our mission is to develop lifelong learners and globally-minded citizens by fostering the academic, creative, and social skills needed to achieve excellence in a multicultural environment. Our vision is to offer equitable, affirming and responsive schools to our community.

The Code of Conduct was created with staff input and consultation to ensure an effective support framework based on best practices. The Washington Township Board of Education approved the Code of Conduct at a public school board meeting and supports the principles outlined throughout the Code of Conduct.

Working collaboratively, we can provide a safe, positive and productive learning environment for students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Nikki Woodson
Superintendent

INTRODUCTION

VISION FOR POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

We believe that equitable schools operate with a fundamental belief that every student in every classroom can and will elevate their learning to the highest potential if...

1. There are high expectations through culturally responsive, student-centered instruction.
2. Our students participate in a socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually safe learning community where their identities and voices are affirmed, valued, and represented.
3. A strong teacher and student learning partnership is cultivated with a balance of support, feedback and productive struggle to grow student independence and self-efficacy.
4. Our educators model a growth mindset and commit to purposeful collaboration and professional learning.

Successful implementation of the MSDWT mission will ultimately prepare students for further education, the workplace, and a lifetime of learning. Students will be:

- well-rounded with appropriate social emotional skills;
- critical readers, writers, and speakers using these skills to develop rich arguments that allow them to engage in meaningful dialogue with people with different perspectives in a variety of settings;
- understand their own strengths and challenges as learners using a growth mindset, reflective practices like goal-setting based on their academic, organizational, emotional, and social needs in order to improve their scholarship;
- problem solvers using inquiry to solve real world problems in a collaborative and creative manner;
- able to explore multiple pathways to demonstrate understanding, as well as explore different careers and areas of interest through their studies;
- think critically about and stand up against social injustice;
- value the importance of a strong education and how it can lead to expanded opportunities later in life;
- globally-minded citizens who are positive contributors to society;
- sensitive to how their decisions and actions affect others and cognizant of how others' decisions and actions affect them; and
- able to demonstrate a love of learning.

MSDWT supports students' development of these attributes using research-based best practices to strengthen engagement and relationships under the principle guidance of Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be Responsible. These principles provide an important foundation to guide behavior in an effort to fulfill the vision. When students have difficulty meeting these principles MSDWT commits to providing corrective guidance to support students with their development, understanding and application of these principles.

BE SAFE

- Follow all school regulations and local, state, and federal laws, including those pertaining to possession, use, transmission, and/or selling of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, cell phones, and other portable communication devices.
- Follow the rules of appropriate bus behavior as described in the transportation rules and regulations to ensure the safety and welfare of themselves and others.
- Refrain from and report fighting or any other act of violence against person or property.

BE RESPECTFUL

- Show respect, kindness and consideration for self, others, and property at all times. Exhibit cooperative behavior toward peers, teachers, administrators, bus drivers, other members of the staff and volunteers.
- Take responsibility for learning by being on time to class, by being prepared with assignments and materials, by participating in class activities, by actively listening, and by making their best effort.
- Refrain from language that is profane, inflammatory, degrading, or that provokes disruptive behavior.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior, good citizenship, and sportsmanship while participating in or attending any school-sponsored event or after-school activity.

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Demonstrate academic honesty.
- Attend school daily and remain for the entire school day. Arrive on time to all classes.
- Dress in a manner that is conducive to the learning environment by adhering to school dress code guidelines.
- Refrain from and report bullying and/or harassment of any kind.

BE CURIOUS

- Take an intentional interest in the curriculum and assigned activities
- Question what contributed to an event, topic, or object, and imagine what could become of it.
- Risk asking the question or trying the practice
- Treat failure as data; learn from it and try again

The Student Code of Conduct (SCC) is important for all members of the school community to read and understand. When all partners know, understand and follow the SCC, they will help schools be safe, respectful and productive places for all to learn and thrive.

Students: The SCC is your guide for behavior at school. Your principal, teachers, and other staff members will help you learn and understand the behaviors that are expected of you at school. The SCC describes behaviors that are expected at school and explains the consequences if you behave inappropriately. If you follow the SCC, you will be helping your school be a safe, respectful, and productive place for you and your classmates to learn.

Parents/Families/Guardians: The SCC is your guide for understanding the principles that are expected of your child while at school and the steps that will be taken if your child behaves inappropriately. Please read the SCC with your

child and discuss any questions with the school principal. If you have concerns about your child's safety or behavior, please talk with your school principal so that you and the school staff can cooperate to help your child succeed.

School Staff: The SCC is your guide for supporting positive student behavior at school and understanding the steps that may be taken if a student demonstrates inappropriate behavior. If you have concerns about safety or the school's climate, please talk to your school principal or district administrator in order to identify ways to support the implementation of a safe and orderly learning and work environment that meets your needs.

WHEN AND WHERE THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT APPLIES

The SCC applies to students at all times while they are on school property during school hours and immediately before and after school and at any school-sponsored event, including field trips. Incidents that occur off school grounds are generally not addressed by the SCC, however if it is determined that students have engaged in cyberbullying during non-school hours and the behavior seriously affects the climate and safety of other students in the school, administrators may implement intervention or disciplinary responses included in the MSDWT Student Code of Conduct.

MSDWT recognizes that additional steps must be taken when students with disabilities are disciplined. The SCC requires principals and school staff to follow state and federal laws concerning the discipline of students with disabilities. MSDWT is also committed to providing a free and appropriate education unhindered because of race, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, economic status, and other personal characteristics or any reason not related to their individual capabilities.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

MSDWT is committed to creating positive school climates where students, parents/ guardians, and all staff work together respectfully to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment focused on teaching and learning. Students have a right to a disciplinary process that is consistent, fair, and equitably applied. Our schools are the safest and the most successful when everyone - students, parents/guardians, and staff alike - hold a set of responsibilities that promotes successful collaboration and respect for each other's roles, and all are invested in preventative and restorative discipline practices.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Rights	Student Responsibilities
Students have the right to...	Students have the responsibility to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A public education unhindered because of race, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, economic status, and other personal characteristics or any reason not related to their individual capabilities. ● An orderly, safe school and classroom environment that will promote learning for all students. ● Be treated courteously, fairly and respectfully by other students and school staff. ● Be informed about the reason for a disciplinary decision. ● Have school staff or an administrator present if police are called and have a parent or guardian notified of the nature of the investigation and other details as appropriate. ● Receive staff responses that address their social/emotional needs. ● Be explicitly taught how they can best demonstrate positive behavior and follow expected routines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attend school daily, be on time, be prepared for class, and complete assignments to the best of their ability. ● Be responsible for the decisions they make in the classroom and at school related activities. ● Know and follow school rules and instructions given by all school staff. ● Tell school staff about any dangerous behavior or activity that occurs on school grounds or off school grounds if it may result in disruption to the educational setting. ● Keep parents or guardians informed of school-related issues and give them any materials intended for parents or guardians sent home with students by the school. ● Respect school property, community property, and the property of others. ● Ensure that their conduct contributes to a safe environment while being transported to and from school. ● Actively engage in the curriculum throughout the day while at school.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent/Guardian Rights	Parent/Guardian Responsibilities
Parents/Guardians have the right to...	Parents/Guardians have the responsibility to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be actively involved in their children’s education. ● Be treated courteously, fairly and respectfully by all school staff. ● Have access to information about the policies of the Board and be provided procedural safeguards that relate to their children’s education. ● Get regular reports, written, oral, electronic (via email/phone) from school staff regarding their children’s academic progress or behavior, including but not limited to report cards, behavior progress reports and conferences. ● Visit their child’s classroom by pre-arranging a mutually-agreed upon time with the teacher. ● Receive information and prompt notification of inappropriate or disruptive behaviors by their children and disciplinary actions taken by school staff. ● Have access to information and be provided procedural safeguards about due process for disciplinary matters concerning their children, including information on conferences and appeals. ● Receive information from school staff about ways to improve their children’s academic or behavioral progress, including but not limited to counseling, tutoring, after-school programs, academic programs and mental health services within MSDWT and the community. ● Receive information about services for students with disabilities and English language learners, when applicable. ● Request school communication be translated into their native language. ● Serve as collaborative decision-making partners alongside school staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make sure their children attend school regularly and on time and report any absences to the school. ● Tell school officials about any concerns or complaints in a respectful and timely manner. ● Be respectful and courteous to staff, other parents, guardians and students while on school premises. ● Work with school staff to address any academic or behavioral problems their children may experience. ● Support their children’s education by talking with their children about school, expected behavior, and the importance of following/meeting those expectations. ● Read and become familiar with the policies of the Board, administrative regulations and this Code of Conduct. ● Keep all student and family information updated in Skyward, including contact information, addresses, emergency contacts, and students’ medical information and communicate updates to their children’s individual school. ● Respect other students’ and families’ privacy rights. ● Regularly check Skyward for their children’s grades and updates from teachers as well as read all documents sent from school.

STAFF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff Rights	Staff Responsibilities
Staff members have the right to...	Staff members have the responsibility to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work in a safe, secure, and orderly environment. ● Be treated courteously, fairly, cooperatively and respectfully by students, parents or guardians and other school staff. ● Receive supportive professional development and training. ● Receive the necessary resources to deliver quality instruction. ● Training to support the understanding of the Code of Conduct, implementation of positive behavior supports, and other interventions to maintain a positive school climate. ● Carry out disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Conduct and established administrative rules and expectations when student behavior is disruptive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain safe and orderly schools by using proactive and culturally responsive prevention and intervention strategies. ● Explicitly teach, re-teach, and model clear behavioral expectations to all students. ● Be respectful and courteous to students, parents and guardians, other district employees, and visitors. ● Be knowledgeable about District policies, administrative expectations, and school rules, and enforce them fairly and consistently. ● Communicate policies, expectations to families in an education jargon-free manner. ● Respond in a timely manner to parent/guardian and student concerns in an education jargon-free manner. ● Identify and respond to students' social, emotional, and/or behavioral health needs, including referring students for additional support. ● Provide makeup work for students when-absent, including those students who are absent for disciplinary reasons. ● Participate in required professional development opportunities.

PREVENTATIVE AND CORRECTIVE RESPONSES

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT

MSDWT utilizes a tiered support framework referred to as Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to build a school climate that supports the instruction of the academic, social, and behavioral skills needed for successful progression in the curriculum and successful participation in the local community. Many different school resources are utilized to support students in becoming globally-minded citizens who contribute to the benefit of their communities.

Through the lens of the MTSS framework, Corrective Disciplinary Responses are viewed as increasingly individualized and a focused means of supporting student mastery of social-behavioral skills. It is the goal of MSDWT staff and administration to achieve the highest levels of classroom engagement and participation. Every attempt is made by the student's classroom teacher or team of teachers to support social-behavioral skill mastery in the regular classroom. However, some occasions warrant increasingly intense and increasingly individualized means of instructional support. Removals from the classroom, including in-school intervention, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion are viewed as disciplinary consequences of last resort and are utilized for the most disruptive and dangerous behaviors, including illegal activities. All students are supported through a tiered model of increasingly intense interventions or enhancements based upon a student's individual academic and behavioral needs.

Within the MTSS system, research-based diagnostic tools and processes are used at each tier to help identify factors contributing to unacceptable or unexpected behavior in an effort to preempt the need for corrective disciplinary responses. By design, these proactive responses are culturally responsive and collaborative, and they give the student voice and choice in the disciplinary process. Through this collaborative approach, teachable moments are captured and leveraged in an attempt to turn behavioral events into learning opportunities.

CORRECTIVE RESPONSE MATRIX FOR ADDRESSING STUDENT BEHAVIOR

<p>Level 1: Classroom and Building Based Corrective Responses</p>	<p>These responses are designed to <i>teach and/or reteach appropriate behavior</i>. Staff should begin addressing student behavior using the lowest level corrective response possible as part of the implementation of effective classroom management practices. Level-1 corrective responses are implemented by classroom teachers. These should be documented as classroom Referrals.</p>
<p>Level 2: Support Staff, Administrative, and Classroom Teacher Corrective Responses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddy classroom • Check In/Check Out • Classroom-based responses (e.g., verbal correction, written reflection/apology, reminders/redirection, role play, Take-A-Break, quiet space, stress-reduction strategies) • Research based Collaborative Problem Solving • Parent/guardian outreach • Peer mediation • Referral to mental health support • Referral to school counselor • Referral to social worker
<p>Level 3: Intensive Personalized Corrective Responses</p>	<p>These responses are designed to <i>teach and/or reteach appropriate behavior</i>. Staff should begin addressing student behavior using the lowest level corrective response possible as part of the implementation of effective classroom management practices. Level 2 represents behaviors that are more disruptive to the classroom environment or behaviors that may occur more frequently. Level-2 corrective responses are predominately implemented by classroom teachers but may also require the assistance of administrative/other school staff. These should be documented as classroom or office referrals and the responses should be classified according to the offense.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admin student conference • After school detention/Saturday School • Buddy classroom • Check In/Check Out • Research based Collaborative Problem Solving • Mentor • Minor scheduling adjustment • Motivational Screener • Positive incentives and reinforcements • Referral to mental health support • Referral to school counselor • Referral to social worker Student Survey • Take-a-break • Temporary removal from class
<p>Level 4: Corrective Responses for Serious Infractions</p>	<p>These responses aim to <i>correct problematic behavior</i> by focusing on the conditions that may contribute to the student’s disruptive behavior, while still keeping the student in school. These responses may involve in-school intervention or the temporary removal from class. Such a removal should be limited as much as possible without undermining its ability to adequately address the behavior. These responses should be used in a graduated fashion and are facilitated by administrative staff. These should be documented as office discipline referrals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research based Collaborative Problem Solving • Functional Behavior Assessment & Individualized Behavior Intervention Plan • In-School Intervention • Major scheduling adjustment, including partial day, alternative schedule, homebound • Referral to mental health support • Referral to school counselor • Referral to social worker • Saturday school • Short-term/ Temporary Referral to alternative educational setting • Temporary removal from class
<p>Level 4: Corrective Responses for Serious Infractions</p>	<p>These responses remove a student from the regular school environment. When necessary, due to the nature of the behavior or potential implications for future incidences, a student may be removed from the school environment. These responses promote safety of the school community by addressing self-destructive and dangerous behavior and should be used in a graduated fashion. They are used when the student’s behavior is serious and severe; therefore, these consequences are warranted and necessary to maintain a positive educational atmosphere. Administrative staff shall facilitate these responses. These should be documented as office discipline referrals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment to alternative educational setting • Expulsion • Out-of-School Suspension • Homebound

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE GUIDANCE FOR BEHAVIOR INFRACTIONS

The Corrective Response Matrix below provides a *suggested* continuum of tiered responses to inappropriate or disruptive student behavior; school staff have discretion to make disciplinary decisions that consider the totality of the circumstances and are consistent with the discipline philosophy, Board policies, MSDWT regulations, as well as applicable federal and state laws.

Behavior Infraction	Suggested Level of Corrective Response			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<i>Staff should begin addressing student behavior using the lowest level corrective response possible.</i>				
Academic Dishonesty	■	■	■	
Aggressive Behavior		■	■	■
Arson		■	■	■
Battery			■	■
Bullying - Combination 2 or more forms of bullying		■	■	■
Bullying - Electronic		■	■	■
Bullying - Physical		■	■	■
Bullying - Social		■	■	■
Bullying - Verbal		■	■	■
Cell Phone Use During Instructional Time	■	■	■	■
Continued Class Disruption	■	■	■	■
Disrespect	■	■	■	■
Failed to Show for Consequence	■	■	■	■
False Alarm	■	■	■	■
Gambling		■	■	
Inappropriate Language/Gestures	■	■	■	
Sexual Harassment		■	■	■
Inappropriate Touching	■	■	■	
Inappropriate Sexual Misconduct			■	■
Inciting Behaviors	■	■	■	■
Intimidation		■	■	■
Physical Altercation		■	■	■
Possession/Use of Tobacco or Alcoholic Beverages (2 nd offense +)		■	■	■
Distribution of Tobacco or Alcoholic Beverages		■	■	■
Possession/Use of Tobacco or Alcoholic Beverages (1 st offense)		■		
Possession Fireworks - Explosive	■	■	■	■
Possession of Inappropriate Object	■	■	■	■
Possession or Use of Weapons			■	■
Possession/Use/Distribution of Control Substance	■	■	■	■
Refusal to Comply	■	■	■	■
Skippping Class		■	■	■
Tardiness	■	■	■	■
Technology Misuse	■	■	■	■
Theft	■	■	■	■
Truancy/Excessive Absence	■	■	■	■
Unauthorized Sale or Distribution	■	■	■	
Vandalism/ Destruction of Property		■	■	■
Verbal Altercation		■	■	■

Violation of Probation	■	■	■	■
<i>Complete definitions for the Behavior Violations listed above can be found at the end of this document.</i>				

TRANSPORTATION EXPECTATIONS

Riding the school bus is a privilege and is a part of the school day experience. So, students should adhere to all bus expectations and procedures to ensure safety while being transported to and from school. Classroom conduct is expected while waiting for, riding, and exiting the school bus. The adults on the bus are always in charge and focused on keeping all students safe while on the bus. All adult directives should be followed promptly.

To promote bus safety, students should remember to **Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible.**

Be Safe	Be Respectful	Be Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain seated by facing forward with feet on the floor until the bus has come to a complete stop • Keep voices at Level two or below¹ • Use approved electronics only when seated² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always follow adult directives • Use school-friendly and profanity-free language • Keep arms, legs, and objects to yourself and inside the bus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be at your stop ten minutes before scheduled pickup time • Keep food and drinks in backpack while on the bus • Keep restricted items off the bus³

1. Students should use appropriate Voice Levels as directed by the transportation staff:
 - Voice Level 0 = voices off
 - Voice Level 1 = conversation with seat partner(s)
 - Voice level 2 = conversations with peers no more than one seat away

2. Electronic devices, including Cell Phones, iPads, Media Devices, and Electronic Books, are allowed on buses, but MSDWT is not responsible for loss, damage or theft of these devices. Such devices must be used with ear buds (1 in and 1 out).

3. Some items should not be used or brought onto the bus:
 - Students are not to bring toys, collectible cards, laser pointers, balloons, or other distracting items to school or onto the bus.
 - Students will not possess the following forbidden items while on the bus: weapons, tobacco, drugs, alcohol, aerosols, sprays, pumps, perfume, combustibles or other contraband.
 - Skateboards and rollerblades are not permitted on school buses or any other school property.
 - The use of any type of camera is prohibited on the bus. This includes regular routes and extracurricular trips.

The Transportation Department will also utilize a 4-level progressive discipline framework. The bus driver, transportation directors and/or school administrators can choose from a range of corrective responses aligned to the framework highlighted below as they determine the most appropriate response to address the student’s behavior. The unique circumstances of everyone's case will be considered before a decision regarding appropriate consequences is made. Every disciplinary consequence will involve personal contact with the parent or guardian from the student’s bus driver.

Corrective Responses can include but are not limited to the following:

Level	Corrective Response	Corrective and Restorative Actions
Level 1	Level -1 corrective responses are appropriate for behaviors that can be managed by the driver and usually do not warrant a discipline referral to an administrator. These behaviors are of low-level intensity, can be passive in nature, and are non-threatening. Level-1 corrective responses will NOT include removal from the bus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Building meaningful relationships with students ● Reteaching bus expectations ● Modeling and acknowledgement of bus expectations ● Parent communication
Level 2	Level-2 corrective responses are appropriate for behaviors that should be managed by the driver, with possible assistance from an administrator, if needed for access to supports. These behaviors can be chronic behaviors that have not been resolved through Level-1 corrective responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent communication ● Conference with administrator ● Loss of privilege ● Detention ● Restitution ● Restorative conference
Level 3	Level-3 corrective responses are appropriate for behaviors that are frequent in nature or are a display of unsafe behaviors that are impeding the safety of the student or the safety of others on the bus. These behaviors may be of a threatening or harmful nature and/or are legal violations and warrant administrative involvement. Level-3 responses to behavioral incidents may include temporary removal from the bus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent communication ● Conference with administrator ● Loss of privilege ● Restitution ● Saturday School ● In School Intervention ● Short term suspension from bus (up to 5 days)
Level 4	Level-4 corrective responses are appropriate for behavior that seriously affects the safety of the student and/or others on the bus or is a legal violation. Corrective responses at this level are determined by an administrator and could include suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent communication ● Conference with administrator ● Saturday School ● In School Intervention ● Long term suspension from bus ● Referral to School Police

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE GUIDANCE FOR BUS INFRACTIONS

The Corrective Response Matrix below provides a suggested continuum of tiered responses to inappropriate or disruptive student behavior; transportation and school staff have discretion to make disciplinary decisions that consider the totality of the circumstances and are consistent with the discipline philosophy, Board policies, MSDWT regulations, as well as applicable federal and state laws.

Behavior Infraction	Suggested Level of Corrective Response			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<i>Staff should begin addressing student behavior using the lowest level corrective response possible</i>				
Aggressive Behavior	■	■	■	
Battery				■
Cell Phone Non-compliance		■	■	
Disrespect	■	■	■	
Drugs				■
Harassing others		■	■	■
Inappropriate Language/Gestures	■	■		
Inappropriate Sexual Misconduct			■	■
Inciting behavior	■	■	■	■
Physical Altercation			■	■
Refusal to Comply	■	■	■	■
Smoking/Vaping			■	■
Vandalism		■	■	■
Weapons			■	■

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

RULES OF CONDUCT AND STUDENT DUE PROCESS

MSDWT is governed by laws (IC 20-33-8) which permit school administrators to suspend and expel students for violating school regulations on school grounds; immediately before, during, and after school hours, and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group, off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event, or traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event.

The administration and faculty of the MSDWT consider suspension and expulsion severe forms of discipline. They are used when the student's behavior is serious and severe such that these consequences are warranted or when necessary to maintain a positive educational atmosphere in the school.

All students will be afforded "Student Due Process." This means that students who violate school rules will be told what they did, what rule was violated, and be given a chance to respond to the allegations being made.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Questions or concerns about due process, expulsion, and/or Code of Conduct can be directed to the Chief Academic & DEI Officer, Dr. Nataki Pettigrew (RPettigrew@msdwt.k12.in.us).

DEFINITIONS

"Suspension" means any disciplinary action that does not constitute an expulsion under Indiana Code (IC) 20-33-8-7 whereby a student is separated from school attendance for a period of not more than ten (10) school days. The term does not include situations in which a student is:

1. Disciplined under IC 20-33-8-25, including short term removal by a teacher or assignment by the principal;
2. Removed from school in accordance with IC 20-34-3-9 for illness; or
3. Removed from school for failure to comply with the immunization requirements of IC 20-34-4-5

"Expulsion" means disciplinary action or other action whereby a student is:

1. Separated from school attendance for a period of more than ten (10) school days;
2. Separated from school attendance for the balance of the current semester or current year unless a student is permitted to complete required examinations in order to receive credit for courses taken in the current semester or current year; or
3. Is separated from school attendance for the periods prescribed under Section 16, which may include an assignment to attend an alternative school, an alternative educational program, or a homebound educational program.

The term does not include situations when a student is:

1. Disciplined under IC 20-33-8-25 including short term removal by a teacher or assignment by the principal;
2. Removed from school in accordance with IC 20-34-3-9 for illness; or
3. Removed from school for failure to comply with the immunization requirements of IC 20-34-4-5.

GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Grounds for suspension or expulsion include student misconduct or substantial disobedience, IC 20-33-8-14. The following are examples of student misconduct or substantial disobedience. (This list is not intended to be all inclusive.):

1. Interference with school purposes or procedures.
2. Damage to school property, stealing, or attempting to steal school property.
3. Damage to personal property, stealing, or attempting to steal personal property.
4. Physical injury to any person.
5. Intimidation (threatening anyone) and/or verbal attacks against another person.
6. Bullying; defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically); physical acts committed; aggression; or any other behaviors committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student, creating for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment; ***malicious use of Generative AI, deep fakes, and online bullying (social media).***
7. Possession of a firearm .
8. Possession of a deadly weapon or other device or substance designed to inflict bodily harm.
9. Possessing, using, transmitting, manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, being under the influence, or selling of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.
10. Criminal law violation, including but not limited to theft and forgery.
11. Insubordination (willful failure to comply with directions of school personnel).
12. Violation of state law, including habitual truancy.
13. Violating or repeatedly violating any rules that are reasonably necessary in carrying out school purposes or an educational function and are validly adopted and published by individual schools within the District.
14. Lack of legal settlement within the District.
15. Sending, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, emails, or other material of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form, including the contents of a cell phone or other electronic device.
16. Academic Dishonesty.

A principal or designee may require that a student who:

Is at least sixteen (16) years of age and wishes to reenroll after an expulsion do the following:

- attend an alternative educational program evening classes;
- perform 120 hours of service with a nonprofit organization if the parent or guardian approves.

The grounds for suspension or expulsion apply when any student is:

1. On school grounds immediately before or during school hours, or immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
2. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event.

In addition to the grounds specified, a student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if:

1. The unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function; or
2. The student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property; including an unlawful activity during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

As previously noted, possession of a firearm, destructive device, or deadly weapon serve as grounds for suspension or expulsion as defined under IC 20-33-8-16. The Superintendent or administrative designee shall notify the Marion County Prosecutor if a student is expelled under either of the two offenses below.

"Firearm" and "Destructive Device" has the meaning set forth in IC 35-47-1-5. A student who is:

1. Identified as bringing a firearm or destructive device to school or on school property; or
2. In possession of a firearm or destructive device on school property; must be expelled for a period of at least one (1) calendar year, with the return of the student to be at the beginning of the first school semester after the end of the one (1) year period. The Superintendent may, on a case-by-case basis, modify the period of expulsion for a student who is expelled under this section. A student with disabilities who possesses a firearm or destructive device on school property is subject to procedural safeguards under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act.

"Deadly Weapon" has the meaning set forth in IC 35-31.5-2-86. A student who is:

1. Identified as bringing a deadly weapon to school or on school property; or
2. In possession of a deadly weapon on school property; may be expelled for a period of not more than one (1) calendar year.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES

School administrators have the right to suspend or expel students when such removal is reasonably necessary to carry out or to prevent an interference with the educational function.

When a student is recommended for expulsion by the principal or designee, the student and parent/guardian will be afforded the opportunity to attend an expulsion meeting before an expulsion meeting examiner designated by the Superintendent. Attorneys are not allowed to be present at expulsion meetings. The expulsion meeting examiner will be responsible for providing the recommendations of appropriate disciplinary action following the expulsion meeting. Appeals of the expulsion examiner's decision are not heard by the MSDWT Board of Education. Appeals must be made through the county court system.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Disciplinary Actions

Part of a parent(s) role in partnership with the school is to gain an understanding of the school rules their student must follow. When a student with a disability breaks one of the school rules, he/she may be disciplined the same as a student without a disability. However, a student with a disability has additional protections in certain situations. Federal and state law sets forth the due process rights of students with disabilities who are recommended for suspension or expulsion. These rights are fully explained in the document, *Navigating the Course: Finding Your Way Through Indiana's Special Education Law*.

Disciplining Students with a 504 Plan

Students with a Section 504 Plan are subject to the same disciplinary action as a non-disabled student, provided that the student's behavior is not a manifestation of the student's qualifying disability. A 504 Team must conduct a manifestation determination whenever a disabled student is subject to out-of-school suspension for 10 consecutive school days or more. If the 504 Team concludes that the violation is a manifestation of the student's qualifying disability, the discipline process must end and the 504 Team should review the 504 Plan to determine if changes are appropriate. If the violation is not a manifestation, the student is subject to the same disciplinary action that any non-disabled student would receive for the same violation.

MONITORING STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The district and each school will monitor and track student discipline data each quarter through the Quality Assurance Review process. At the conclusion of each school, school teams and district teams will analyze and evaluate student discipline data making decisions leading to continuous improvement.

CONCLUSION

It is important to emphasize that this Student Code of Conduct contains suggested guidelines for specific behaviors, but principals and other MSDWT staff retain discretion to consider the totality of the circumstances as they make discipline decisions.

School staff will be provided professional development opportunities to ensure the safety and security of our students and the fair and equitable implementation of disciplinary policies, regulations, and protocols.

Further, this is a living document, as part of the district's effort to reduce suspensions, increase student engagement, and ensure equitable outcomes for all students. District administrators will continue to evaluate data and gather feedback from a wide array of stakeholders to ensure the aspects of this Code of Conduct meet the needs of students and staff.

MSDWT leadership remains committed to working with students, parents/guardians, and staff as we refine our disciplinary practices to support MSDWT students' to demonstrate the core expectations of safety, respect, and responsibility.

Definitions of Behavior Violations

Behavior Violation	Behavior Definition
Academic Dishonesty	Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility by doing their own work and submitting authentic products. Students should avoid plagiarizing work and forging documents. Students must not use, submit or attempt to obtain data or answers dishonestly, by deceit or by means other than those approved by the teacher.
Aggressive Behavior	Students are expected to resolve conflicts peacefully. Doing so demonstrates respectful behavior. Students must not engage in any physical contact that causes or may cause injury to others or objects. Aggressive behavior is defined as aggressive physical contact that is NOT characterized by physical blows.
Arson	Students are expected to support a safe school environment. Students are not to set fire to any school building or property at school or school sponsored events.
Battery	Students are expected to resolve conflicts peacefully. Doing so demonstrates respectful behavior. Students must not knowingly or intentionally physically touch another person in a manner, which causes bodily injury and results in arrest.
Bullying - Combination two (2) or more forms of bullying	An <i>overt repeated</i> attempt to harass or intimidate someone by engaging in at least 2 of the following acts: electronic bullying, physical bullying, social bullying, or verbal bullying. IC 20-33-8-0.2
Bullying – Cyberbullying	If a student’s expression of thoughts or ideas asserted through social media, <i>malicious use of Generative AI, deep fakes</i> , or cyberbullying reasonably interferes with school purpose or constitutes unlawful activity, the principal or their designee has the authority to suspend or expel for such actions under IC 20-33-8-15 to restore order or to protect persons on school property.
Bullying - Electronic	Students are expected to show respect by treating everyone in the school environment as if they are highly important. Students must not engage in <i>overt repeated</i> electronic attempts to harass or intimidate someone by engaging in commentary through the use of electronic devices such as computer or cell phones. IC 20-33-8-0.2
Bullying - Physical	Students are expected to show respect by treating everyone in the school environment as if they are highly important. Students must not engage in <i>overt repeated</i> physical attempts to harass or intimidate someone by hurting a person’s body or possessions. IC 20-33-8-0.2
Bullying - Social	Students are expected to show respect by treating everyone in the school environment as if they are highly important. Students must not engage in <i>overt repeated</i> social attempts to harass or intimidate someone by engaging in behavior aimed to hurt a person’s reputation or relationship, telling other students not to be friends with another student, leaving a student out on purpose, spreading rumors or embarrassing a person in public. IC 20-33-8-0.2

Bullying - Verbal	Students are expected to show respect by treating everyone in the school environment as if they are highly important. Students must not engage in <i>overt repeated</i> verbal attempts to harass or intimidate someone by saying mean things, including ongoing teasing, name-calling, taunting, inappropriate sexual comments or threats to cause harm. IC 20-33-8-0.2
Continued Class Disruption	Students are expected to demonstrate respect for/in the classroom environment. Students should refrain from engaging in repeated behaviors that disrupt or interfere with an orderly and effective academic environment.
Disrespect	Students are expected to show respect by treating everyone in the school environment as if they are important. Students must not show disregard toward anyone in the school environment or at a school-sponsored event.
Failed to Show for Consequence	Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility by completing assigned tasks. Students must report to all assigned settings and fulfill assigned consequences as instructed by school staff.
False Alarm	Students are expected to demonstrate safety and responsibility by maintaining a safe environment. Students must not activate emergency alarms and/or make emergency phone calls and/or shout a false alarm except in the case of a true emergency.
Gambling	Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility engaging in behaviors that have been approved by school staff. Students must not engage in games of skill or chance for money or anything of value while at school.
Inappropriate Language/gestures	Students are expected to demonstrate respect by using kind language or gestures. Students must not verbally, electronically or by written words or gestures, photographs, drawings, direct profanity or offensive descriptors toward anyone in the school environment.
Sexual Harassment	Students are expected to demonstrate responsible and safe behavior by regarding the personal boundaries of others. Students must not engage in any unwanted and repeated physical, verbal, or nonverbal actions that are sexual in nature.
Inappropriate Sexual Misconduct	Students are expected to demonstrate responsible and safe behavior by regarding the personal boundaries of others. Students must not engage in behavior that is sexual in nature toward another or self, while at school or school sponsored events/bus.
Inappropriate Touching	Students are expected to demonstrate responsible and safe behavior by regarding the personal boundaries of others. Students must not engage in any behavior or physical contact that may involve touching or exposing their own private area or another student's private area.
Inciting Behaviors	Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility by contributing to a positive, respectful, and safe environment. Students must not contribute, instigate, encourage, or urge others to engage in behaviors, which disrupt the educational environment.

Intimidation	Students are expected to show respect by treating everyone in the school environment as if they are highly important. Students must not engage in any form of communication with another person with the intent to force another person to engage in conduct against their will or be placed in fear of retaliation.
Physical Altercation	Students are expected to resolve conflicts peacefully. Doing so demonstrates respectful behavior. Students must not physically fight with another person. A Physical Altercation is defined as physical contact exchanged between two or more people.
Possession/Use/ Distribution of Alcoholic Beverages	Students must demonstrate safe and responsible behavior by refraining from bringing alcohol to school or school sponsored events. Students must not use, be under the influence of, or buy or sell alcohol while at school or while attending school events. This section also applies to any substance made to look like, or represented to be, alcohol and any related paraphernalia.
Possession/Use/ Distribution of Tobacco	Students are expected to protect their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others while at school. Students must not possess, distribute, smoke or use any kind of tobacco product, vaping or associated paraphernalia.
Possession of Fireworks - Explosive	Students are expected to contribute to a safe learning environment. Students must not bring to school or possess, handle, transmit, conceal or use any fireworks (poppers, firecrackers, rockets, sparklers, smoke bombs or other types) or other explosive while at school.
Possession of Inappropriate Object	Students are expected to demonstrate safety, respect, and responsibility. Students should refrain from bringing objects to school that disrupt the learning environment.
Possession or Use of Weapons	Students are expected to contribute to a safe learning environment by keeping dangerous objects out of school. Students must not possess, handle, transmit or use as a dangerous weapon defined as an instrument capable of harming another person.
Possession/Use/ Distribution of Control Substance	Students are expected to protect their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others. Students must not possess, be under the influence or distribute any substance that is classified as a controlled substance while at school or school sponsored events. Students may only possess and/ or use a controlled substance at school or school sponsored events when under the supervision of school-based health staff and with a medical authorization.
Refusal to Comply	Students are expected to demonstrate respect and responsibility by following school rules and expectations. Students should listen to and follow the instructions of all adults while at school. Student must not willfully disregard staff instructions.
Skipping Class	Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility by attending all scheduled classes. Students must not fail to report to an assigned class

	without permission from an adult. Students also must not leave the school campus without adult permission.
Tardiness	Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility by getting to class on time. Students who arrive to class after class has started (ex: after the bell/signal, or established start time) are considered tardy.
Technology Misuse	Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility by using technology as directed by school staff. Students must refrain from using technology in a fashion that does not benefit educational goals as identified by school staff. The student is responsible for maintaining a 100% working computer at all times. The student shall use reasonable care to ensure that the computer is not damaged. The student and parent will be billed a fee for damages and/or repair according to the schedule listed in the Student Handbook.
Theft	Students are expected to show responsibility by using their own belongings unless permission from another is given to borrow an item. Students must not take anything that does not belong to them. Taking any item that does not belong to student without permission is considered theft.
Truancy/ Excessive Absence	Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility by attending school regularly. Students are considered to be truant if they accumulate ten (10) or more days of unexcused absences.
Unauthorized Sale or Distribution	Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility of their own belongings. Students must not buy, sell, distribute or trade any items without administrator permission.
Vandalism/ Destruction of Property	Students are expected to demonstrate respect by using property with care. Students must not participate in any activity that results in the destruction or defacement of property.
Verbal Altercation	Students are expected to demonstrate respectful behavior. Students should refrain from engaging in verbally aggressive (offensive, obscene) communication and are expected to resolve conflicts peacefully.
Violation of Probation	Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility. Students should refrain from violating the terms of their school probation agreement.

Indiana Department of Education Discipline Codes

Behavior Descriptor	Code Value	Short Description	Long Description
Behavior Descriptor	1	Alcohol	Alcohol
Behavior Descriptor	2	Drugs	Drugs
Behavior Descriptor	3	Deadly Weapons (other than firearms)	Deadly Weapons (other than firearms)
Behavior Descriptor	4	Handguns (includes BB / Pellet Gun)	Handguns (includes BB / Pellet Gun)
Behavior Descriptor	5	Rifle or Shotguns (does not include BB, Gas, or Spring-loaded guns)	Rifle or Shotguns (does not include BB, Gas, or Spring-loaded guns)
Behavior Descriptor	6	Other Firearms	Other Firearms
Behavior Descriptor	21	Non-Deadly Weapons	May include Ammunition / Bullets (no gun), Paintball Gun, Airsoft Gun, or Stun Gun.
Behavior Descriptor	7	Tobacco	Tobacco
Behavior Descriptor	9	Legal Settlement	Legal Settlement
Behavior Descriptor	10	Other	Suspension / Expulsion Reasons not covered by any of codes provided or other for reporting gang related activity and arrest events not resulting in suspension or expulsion.

Behavior Descriptor	11	Fighting - Incident does not rise to the level of Battery	Fighting - Incident does not rise to the level of Battery
Behavior Descriptor	12	Battery	Battery - Student knowingly or intentionally touches another person in a rude, insolent, or angry manner causing or intent to cause bodily injury.
Behavior Descriptor	13	Intimidation	Intimidation - Communicating a threat with the intent that the other person engage in conduct against their will or be placed in fear of retaliation.
Behavior Descriptor	14	Verbal Aggression or Profanity	Verbal Aggression or Profanity
Behavior Descriptor	15	Defiance	Defiance
Behavior Descriptor	16	Attendance	Attendance
Behavior Descriptor	17	Destruction of Property	Destruction of Property
Behavior Descriptor	18	Theft	Unlawful taking of property.
Behavior Descriptor	19	Sexual Misconduct	Behavior used to obtain sexual gratification at the expense of another.
Behavior Descriptor	20	Technology Misuse	To use technology in a fashion that does not benefit educational goals; may include cell phone usage.
Behavior Descriptor	30	Physical Bullying	Hurting a persons body or possessions; including spitting, hitting / kicking / punching, tripping or pushing, taking or breaking someone's things, and making mean or rude hand gestures.

Behavior Descriptor	31	Verbal Bullying	Saying mean things, can include teasing, name-calling, taunting, inappropriate sexual comments, or threatening to cause harm.
Behavior Descriptor	32	Social / Relational Bullying	Hurting a persons reputation or relationship, telling other students not to be friends with another student, leaving a student out on purpose, spreading rumors, or embarrassing a person in public.
Behavior Descriptor	33	Written Communication / Electronic Bullying	Cyber-bullying, collective or group note writing, any bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices such as computer or cell phones.
Behavior Descriptor	34	Combination (more than one time of Bullying)	More than one type of bullying.
Criminal Gang Related Event Descriptor	0	Not Criminal Gang-Related	Not Criminal Gang-Related
Criminal Gang Related Event Descriptor	1	Criminal Gang Related - Investigation Disposed of Internally	Criminal Gang Related - Investigation Disposed off Internally
Criminal Gang Related Event Descriptor	2	Criminal Gang Related - Case Referred to Local Law Enforcement	Criminal Gang Related - Case Referred to Local Law Enforcement