

## Policies Guidelines

**600-43 Student Gang, Gang Activity or Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior.** Somerset County Board of Education is committed to providing all students with a safe, nurturing, and supportive learning environment that promotes optimal academic achievement. It is the policy of Somerset County Board of Education to prohibit students to engage in gangs, gang activity, and similar destructive or illegal group behavior in schools, on school buses, and/or at school sponsored activities. The Board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against an individual who reports suspected gang activity. Gangs are defined as: a group or association of three or more persons whose members:

- a. Individually or collectively engage in a pattern of criminal activity;
- b. Have one of their primary objectives or activities the commission of one or more underlying crimes, including acts by juveniles that would be underlying crimes if committed by adults; and,
- c. Have in common an overt or covert organizational or command structure (Criminal Law § 9-801. Definitions, Annotated Code).
- d. Gang reporting forms can be found in the front office and/or school counseling office, for additional information please see any adult in the building.

**These summaries are not intended to give complete information. Other vital information may be contained in the full policy.**

For complete policies please visit [www.somerset.k12.md.us](http://www.somerset.k12.md.us)

Click on the following links:

**District Information (on left of screen)**

**Board of Education (on left of screen)**

**Policies 600 (on right of screen)**

**600-36 - Fighting.** Outlines minimum and maximum days of suspension for fighting at both elementary and secondary levels based on the number of offenses. This policy also requires participation in mandatory counseling sessions by students. Staff should use the strategies on the *“Tiers of Interventions and Disciplinary Responses”* matrix to address potential conflicts.

**600-38 - Corporal Punishment.** It is prohibited in the State of Maryland.

**600-39 – Student Discipline (Major revisions).** To establish discipline policies and regulations that address school safety; reflect a discipline philosophy based on the goals of fostering, teaching, and acknowledging positive behavior. Designed to keep students in school so that they are college and career ready; provide for disciplinary policies based on the use of discretion; explain why and how long-term suspensions or expulsions are last resort options and how the education and counseling needs of suspended students will be met. This policy shall apply to all students at all times on all Board of Educational property, including: (1) school buildings, (2) on school grounds, (3) school buses or vehicles, and (4) at all schools, school –related or Board sponsored activities, including but not limited to fields trips and school sporting invents. See administrative procedures for *“Tiers of Intervention and Disciplinary Responses”* matrix.

**600-40 – Student Searches.** This policy outlines the circumstances and procedures involved in conducting searches of students’ person, property, and school facilities. Authority to conduct searches is limited to the Principal, Assistant Principal or school security guard. Designation of a teacher who has been trained must be in writing and is limited to school-sponsored trips. This policy also requires a police officer to have a search warrant prior to being permitted to search the school or a student unless there is imminent danger to the safety and welfare of the students. Annual training of staff members is recommended.

**600-42 Use of Video for Security.** This policy is to establish a framework for ensuring that Somerset County Public Schools’ security cameras are managed in a secure fashion. Audiovisual security equipment is used to promote safety and monitor behavior on school grounds, in school buildings and on school buses.

**600-33 – Educational Records.** A parent, guardian, or eligible student shall be given the opportunity to inspect and review student records. The Somerset County Public Schools shall comply with a request for access to student records not more than 45 calendar days after the request has been made. A parent/guardian or eligible student who believes the record is inaccurate may request the records be amended. Somerset County Public Schools may disclose personally identifiable information from the student records without the written consent of the parent or guardian of the student or the eligible student, if the disclosure is: to other schools or school systems for enrollment purposes, to authorized representatives of the federal government, military, in connection with application by the student for financial aid, to comply with a judicial order and other situations defined in the policy. A parent does have a right to opt-out of this personal identifiable information being released as out lined in the policy.

**600-34 – Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation.** We are committed to providing all students with a safe, nurturing, and supportive learning environment that is free from any form of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation of any person is prohibited on school property or at school sponsored function. Additional reprisal or retaliation against individuals who report acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation or who are victims, witnesses, bystanders, or others with reliable information about an act of bullying, harassment, or intimidation are prohibited. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation forms are located on line at <http://www.somerset.k12.md.us/BOE/Departments/Student%20Services/index.htm> or in the front office and/or school counseling offices for additional information please see any adult in the building.

**600-35 – Serious Threats of Violence.** In the event a principal determines that a threat to a student or staff member constitutes a serious threat with a perceived ability/intention to carry through on the threat, the principal has the option to require a violence prevention screening/assessment prior to readmission to school.

**600-31 – Personal Electronic Devices.** Such devices must be deactivated and out of sight in a book bag, backpack, purse, secure pocket or locker. Violators will have such devices confiscated. Personal camera devices may not be used to violate the rights/privacy of another.

**600-32 – Administration of Medication.** All prescription and nonprescription (over the counter) medication to be given in school must be ordered by a physician, nurse practitioner, dentist or midwife. The order shall be signed by the physician, nurse practitioner, dentist or midwife. An authorization form must accompany each medication order. A physician's order should be renewed annually. Written parental consent is required for each medication ordered by the physician. In the event that Epinephrine is given for an anaphylactic reaction, 911 will be called and the dispatcher will be informed that epinephrine has been administered. Parent/guardian or emergency contact will be notified.

**600-20 – Procedures for the Registration, Transfer and Withdrawal of Homeless Children/ Youth (Unaccompanied).** The purpose is to ensure all homeless children (families in transition) and youth have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education provided other children and youth. This includes preschool education, educational services for individuals and students with limited English proficiency, programs in vocational education, gifted and talented, and school meals program Children and youth are considered homeless if they are living under the following conditions: 1.) Living with friends or relatives due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason (doubled up); 2.) Living in motels, hotels, or trailer parks used to house homeless families; 3.) Living in emergency shelters or in transitional housing; 4.) Living in cars, parks, public spaces, campgrounds abandoned buildings, bus or train stations; and 5.) Foster children awaiting foster placement. The school staff will ensure that homeless children/youth are enrolled in school immediately and that if in the best of interest of the student that they remain in their school of origin. If you need more information about the program and services please contact the Homeless Liaison at (410) 621-6269.

**600-28 – Use of Drug Detecting Dogs.** The Somerset County Board of Education authorizes use of drug-detecting dogs in the schools primarily for the purpose of deterrence. Such searches may be necessary to ensure that our students have a drug-free environment and to protect the reputations of our Somerset County students. When a drug-detection dog suspects the presence of a controlled dangerous substance in a school locker, the student who is assigned to the locker will be asked by the principal to open it. If the student refuses, or is not present the principal, in the presence of a witness other than the student, will open the locker to inspect its contents. Procedures of policy 600-15 will be followed.

**600-15 – Student Alcohol and Drug Abuse.** In cases of drug and alcohol related violations occurring on school property or school functions, appropriate law enforcement agencies must be contacted. Policy outlines specific consequences. Policy also outlines teacher or other professional guidelines for assisting students seeking information to overcome substance abuse. Specific procedures for searching and securing confiscated items are outlined. Confidentiality of substance abuse records is specified. Annual notification to parents and staff training is required.

**600-16 – Dangerous Weapons/Instruments in School.** Students may not bring, possess, use, or threaten to use any weapon, dangerous instrument, or an imitation thereof in a school building, vehicle or at any school related event. ALL violations will be reported to the Superintendent

and appropriate law enforcement officials and could result in a long term or extended suspension or expulsion (see *“Tiers of Intervention and Disciplinary Responses”* matrix).

**600-17 – Student Discipline (Major revisions).** To establish discipline policies and regulations that address school safety; reflect a discipline philosophy based on the goals of fostering, teaching, and acknowledging positive behavior. Designed to keep students in school so that they are college and career ready; provide for disciplinary policies based on the use of discretion; explain why and how long-term suspensions or expulsions are last resort options and how the education and counseling needs of suspended students will be met. This policy shall apply to all students at all times on all Board of Educational property, including: (1) school buildings, (2) on school grounds, (3) school buses or vehicles, and (4) at all schools, school –related or Board sponsored activities, including but not limited to fields trips and school sporting events. See administrative procedures for *“Tiers of Intervention and Disciplinary Responses”* matrix.

**600-7 – Attendance – Elementary and Secondary.** All Students are expected to attend school and all classes daily and to be punctual. There is a significant relationship between regular attendance and academic achievement. Education requires a continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences and study in order to reach the maximum educational benefits for each student. Elementary and Intermediate students who are unlawfully absent the equivalent of more than ten (10) full days per year will have a mandatory retention conference before a student can be promoted. High School and Academy students who are unlawfully absent for five or more class periods in a semester course will receive a failing grade in that course. High School and Academy students enrolled in a yearlong course will receive a failing grade for each semester in which they are unlawfully absent for five or more days. Any student who is unlawfully absent more than four days in any given quarter shall be referred to the Learning Support Team. Eight or more unlawful absences within a quarter are considered excessive and will result in a referral to the State’s Attorney’s office and/or Circuit Court. There are new requirements addressing tardiness and make-up work as well. (Revised and will be presented to the board for approval on Tuesday, August 19<sup>th</sup>).

*A brief summary is provided for each student policy:*

- 600-7 – Attendance – Elementary and Secondary**
- 600-10 – Student Parking**
- 600-12 – Student Dress Code**
- 600-13 – Community Offenses by Students**
- 600-14 – Student Tobacco Use**
- 600-15 – Student Alcohol and Drug Abuse**
- 600-16 – Dangerous Weapons/Instruments in School**
- 600-17 – Student Discipline (Major revisions)**
- 600-20 – Procedures for the Registration, Transfer and Withdrawal of Homeless Children/  
Youth (Unaccompanied)**
- 600-28 – Use of Drug Detecting Dogs**

- 600-31 – Personal Electronic Devices**
- 600-32 – Administration of Medication**
- 600-33 – Educational Records**
- 600-34 – Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation**
- 600-35 – Serious Threats of Violence**
- 600-36 – Fighting**
- 600-38 Corporal Punishment**
- 600-39 Student Behavior Interventions**
- 600-40 Student Searches**
- 600-42 Use of Video for Security**
- 600-43 Student Gang, Gang Activity or Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior**