



# Grandville Public Schools

## CODE OF CONDUCT

A major component of the educational program at Grandville Public Schools is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards.

### Expected Behaviors

Each student shall be expected to:

- abide by national, State, and local laws as well as the rules of the school;
- respect the civil rights of others;
- act courteously to adults and fellow students;
- be prompt to school and attentive in class;
- work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal, regardless of the other's ability, gender, race, religion, height, weight, disability, or ethnic background;
- complete assigned tasks on time and as directed;
- help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly, and productive;
- act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family, and in the school.

### Care of Property

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school will not be responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. The school may confiscate such items and return them to the student's parents.

Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student does damage to or loses school property, the student or his/her parents will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will also be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

The Board of Education has adopted the following Student Discipline Code. The Code includes the types of misconduct that will subject a student to disciplinary action. The Board has also adopted the list of behaviors and the terms contained in the list.

It is the school responsibility to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. History has shown that certain student actions are not compatible with a "safe" and "orderly" environment. Discipline is within the sound discretion of the school's staff and administration. Due process ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after review of the facts and/or special circumstances of the situation.

### Explanation of Terms Applying to the Student Discipline Code

Each of the behaviors described below may subject the student to disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

#### 1. *Use of drugs*

- The school has a "Drug Free" zone that extends 1000 feet beyond the school boundaries as well as to any school activity and transportation. This means that any activity, possession, sale, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. If caught, the student could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted.
- The possession, sale, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs that has a negative effect on the school environment is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. This includes nonalcoholic beers and wines, and the like. Many drug abuse offenses are also felonies. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

## **2. *Use of tobacco***

Smoking and other tobacco uses are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the possession, sale, distribution, or use of any form of tobacco during school time or at any school activity. This prohibition also applies when going to and from school and at school bus stops. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

## **3. *Possession of a weapon***

A weapon includes, but is not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons and explosives. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon may subject a student to expulsion and possible permanent exclusion. It makes no difference whether or not the weapon belongs to someone else, unless the student can provide convincing evidence that the weapon was placed in the student's possession without his/her knowledge. If it can be confirmed that a weapon was brought on District property by a student other than the one who possessed the weapon, that student shall also be subject to the same disciplinary action.

State law may require that a student be permanently expelled from school, subject to a petition for possible reinstatement if s/he brings onto or has in his/her possession on school property or at a school-related activity any of the following:

- any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines, or device that can be converted into such a destructive item;
- any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade over three (3) inches long fastened to a handle;
- any similar object that is intended to invoke bodily harm or fear of bodily harm (e.g. air gun, blow-gun, toy gun, etc.).

## **4. *Use of an object as a weapon***

Any object that is used to threaten, harm, or harass another may be considered a weapon. This includes but is not limited to padlocks, pens, pencils, laser pointers, jewelry, and so on. Intentional injury to another can be a felony and/or a cause for civil action. This violation may subject a student to expulsion.

## **5. *Knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence***

Because the Board believes that students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

## **6. *Purposely setting a fire***

Anything, such as fire, that endangers school property and its occupants will not be tolerated. Arson is a felony and will subject the student to expulsion.

## **7. *Physically assaulting a staff member/student/person associated with the District***

Physical assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor which may or may not cause injury may result in charges being filed and subject the student to expulsion. Physical assault is defined as "intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence."

## **8. *Verbally threatening a staff member/student/person associated with the District***

Verbal assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor or making bomb threats or similar threats directed at a school building, property, or a school-related activity will be considered verbal assault. Verbal threats or assault may result in suspension and expulsion. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

## **9. *Extortion***

Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force, or deception to take, or receive something from someone else. Extortion is against the law. Violations of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

**10. *False alarms, false reports, and bomb threats***

A false emergency alarm, report or bomb threat endangers the safety forces that are responding, the citizens of the community, and persons in the building. What may seem like a prank, is a dangerous stunt. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

**11. *Explosives***

Explosives, fireworks, and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs, pipe bombs, bottle bombs, small firecrackers, and poppers are forbidden and dangerous. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

**12. *Trespassing***

Although schools are public facilities, the law does allow the school to restrict access on school property. If a student has been removed, suspended, or expelled, the student is not allowed on school property without authorization of the principal. In addition, students may not trespass onto school property at unauthorized times or into areas of the school determined to be inappropriate. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

**13. *Theft***

When a student is caught stealing school or someone's property, s/he will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Students are encouraged not to bring anything of value to school that is not needed for learning without prior authorization from the principal. The school is not responsible for personal property. Theft may result in suspension or expulsion.

**14. *Disobedience***

School staff is acting "in loco parentis", which means they are allowed, by law, to direct a student as would a parent. This applies to all staff, not just teachers assigned to a student. If given a reasonable direction by a staff member, the student is expected to comply. Chronic disobedience can result in expulsion.

**15. *Damaging property***

Vandalism and disregard for school property will not be tolerated. Violations could result in suspension or expulsion.

**16. *Persistent absence or tardiness***

Attendance laws require students to be in school all day or have a legitimate excuse. It is also important to establish consistent attendance habits in order to succeed in school and in the world-of-work. Excessive absence could lead to suspension from school.

**17. *Unauthorized use of school or private property***

Students are expected to obtain permission to use any school property or any private property located on school premises. Any unauthorized use shall be subject to disciplinary action. This includes use of the internet and communication networks in a manner not sanctioned by policy and administrative guidelines. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

**18. *Refusing to accept discipline***

When a student refuses to accept the usual discipline for an infraction, the refusal can result in a sterner action such as suspension or expulsion.

**19. *Aiding or abetting violation of school rules***

If a student assists another student in violating any school rule, they will be disciplined and may be subject to suspension or expulsion. Students are expected to resist peer pressure and exercise sound decision-making regarding their behavior.

**20. *Displays of affection***

Students demonstrating affection between each other is personal and not meant for public display. This includes touching, petting, or any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature. Such behavior may result in suspension from school or possibly expulsion.

### **21. Violation of individual school/classroom rules**

Each learning environment has different rules for students. Individual rules are for the safe and orderly operation of that environment. Students will be oriented to specific rules, all of which will be consistent with the policy of the school. Persistent violations of rules could result in suspension or expulsion.

### **22. Disruption of the educational process**

Any actions or manner of dress that interferes with school activities or disrupts the educational process is unacceptable. Such disruptions also include delay or prevention of lessons, assemblies, field trips, athletic, and performing arts events.

### **23. Harassment**

Harassment of students is prohibited, and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers. It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school-sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical or emotional well being. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students.

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the principal or assistant principal, or may report it directly to Timothy Purkey, Assistant Superintendent at 254-6557. Complaints will be investigated in accordance with AG 5517.

Every student should, and every staff member must report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employee, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members. This would include such activities:

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

#### **Harassment**

- submission to such unwelcomed conduct or communication is made either by an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District;
- submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcomed conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions or privileges of the School District;
- the unwelcomed conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

**Sexual Harassment**, may include, but is not limited to:

- verbal harassment or abuse;
- pressure for sexual activity;
- repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
- unwelcomed touching;
- sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.

#### **24. *Bullying***

The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety, or personal degradation.

This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Bullying - intimidation of others by acts, such as, but not limited to:

- threatened or actual physical harm;
- unwelcomed physical contact;
- threatening or taunting verbal, written or electronic communications;
- taking or extorting money or property;
- damaging or destroying property;
- blocking or impeding student movement.

Aggressive behavior is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical or emotional well-being. This type of behavior is a form of harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats.

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of aggressive behavior including bullying or hazing, should immediately report the situation to the building principal or assistant principal, or the assistant superintendent.

#### **25. *Possession of a firearm, arson, and criminal sexual conduct***

In compliance with State law, the Board shall permanently expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone or commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation.

A dangerous weapon is defined as "a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices.

Students with disabilities under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with Board Policy 2461 and Federal due process rights appropriate to students with disabilities. A student who has been expelled under this policy may apply for reinstatement in accordance with guidelines which are available in the principal's office.

#### **26. *Criminal acts***

Any student engaging in criminal acts at or related to the school will be reported to law enforcement officials as well as disciplined by the school. It is not considered double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime), when school rules and the law are violated.

Students should be aware that State law requires that school officials, teachers and appropriate law enforcement officials be notified when a student of this District is involved in crimes related to physical violence, gang related acts, illegal possession of a controlled substance, analogue or other intoxicants, trespassing, property crimes, including but not limited to theft and vandalism, occurring in the school as well as in the community.

#### **27. *Safety concerns***

Students should not use roller blades, bicycles, skateboards, scooters, or any other form of personal transportation device in school hallways or District pedestrian traffic areas. Exceptions may be made to reasonably accommodate students with mobility impairments. Use of any means of travel within buildings and on grounds by other than generally accepted practices where appropriate is prohibited. Students violating this expectation will be subject to disciplinary action.

#### **28. *Profanity***

Any behavior or language, which in the judgment of the staff or administration, is considered to be obscene, disrespectful, vulgar, profane and/or violates community held standards of good taste will be subject to disciplinary action.

## DISCIPLINE

It is important to remember that the school's rules apply going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, and on school transportation. In some cases, a student can be suspended from school transportation for infractions of school bus rules.

Ultimately, it is the principal's responsibility to keep things orderly. In all cases, the school shall attempt to make discipline prompt and equitable and to have the punishment match the severity of the incident.

Two types of discipline are possible, informal and formal.

**Informal discipline** takes place within the school. It includes:

- writing assignments;
- change of seating or location;
- lunch-time;
- after-school detention;
- in-school restriction.

### Detentions:

A student may be detained after school or asked to come to school early by a teacher, after giving the student and his/her parents one (1) day's notice. The student or his/her parents are responsible for transportation.

**Formal discipline** removes the student from school. It includes emergency removal for up to seventy-two (72) hours, suspension for up to ten (10) school days, and expulsion from school. Suspensions and expulsions may carry over into the next school year. Removal for less than one (1) school day without the possibility of suspension or expulsion may not be appealed. Suspension and expulsion can be appealed.

Students being considered for suspension or expulsion are entitled to an informal hearing with the building administrator, prior to removal, at which time the student will be notified of the charges against him/her and given an opportunity to make a defense.

If a student is suspended, the parents may appeal the suspension, in writing, to the superintendent and a formal appeal hearing will be held. When a student is being considered for expulsion, a formal hearing is scheduled with the Board of Education and the parents will be given written notice of the hearing and will be expected to attend. The superintendent then takes testimony and determines if a recommendation to expel is to be made to the Board of Education. This decision may also be appealed. In the case of expulsion, the student remains out of school during the appeal period. Work missed during an expulsion cannot be made up and usually results in a loss of credit.

If a student commits a crime while at school or a school-related event, s/he may be subject to school disciplinary action as well as to action by the community's legal system. These are separate jurisdictions and do not constitute double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime).

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## DUE PROCESS RIGHTS

Before a student may be suspended or expelled from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

### **Suspension from school**

When a student is being considered for a suspension of ten (10) days or less, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the charges. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her side and the administrator will then provide the student the evidence supporting the charges. After that informal hearing, the principal will make a decision whether or not to suspend. If a student is suspended, s/he and his/her parents will be notified, in writing within one (1) day, of the reason for and the length of the suspension. The suspension may be appealed, within two (2) school days after receipt of the suspension notice, to the assistant superintendent. The request for an appeal must be in writing.

**During the appeal process,**

- the student shall not be allowed to remain in school,
- OR**
- the student is allowed to remain in school unless safety is a factor. If that is the case, the student shall be immediately removed under the Emergency Removal Procedure.

The appeal shall be conducted in a private meeting and the student may be represented. Sworn, recorded testimony shall be given. If the appeal is heard by the Board of Education, the hearing is governed by the Open Meetings Act. Under the Open Meetings Act, the hearing must be public unless the parents request that the meeting be conducted in a closed session.

**When a student is suspended, s/he may make-up work missed,**

- after the return to school,
- OR**
- while on suspension.

Any learning that cannot be made up such as labs, field trips, skill-practices, or any learning that the student chooses not to make-up may be reflected in the grades earned.

A student being considered for suspension of more than ten (10) days will be given due process as described in the expulsion section below.

**Long-term suspension or expulsion from school**

When a student is being considered for long-term suspension (more than ten (10) days) or expulsion, the student will receive a formal letter of notification addressed to the parents which will contain:

- the charge and related evidence;
- the time and place of the Board meeting;
- the length of the recommended suspension or expulsion;
- a brief description of the hearing procedure;
- a statement that the student may bring parents, guardians, and counsel;
- a statement that the student may give testimony, present evidence, and provide a defense;
- a statement that the student may request attendance of school personnel who were party to the action or accused the student of the infraction.

Students being considered for long-term suspension or expulsion may or may not be immediately removed from school. A formal hearing is scheduled during which the student may be represented by his/her parents, legal counsel, and/or by a person of his/her choice.

Within five days (as in AG 5610) after notification of long-term suspension or expulsion, the long-term suspension or expulsion may be appealed, in writing. The appeal will also be formal in nature with sworn testimony before an official (s) designated by the Board of Education. The appeal will be heard in an open session unless the student or the student's parent or guardian requests a closed session. Again, the right to representation is available. All opportunity to earn grades or credit ends when a student is expelled.

The school makes a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take place that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. Should a student or parent have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the assistant superintendent.

**Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches. If student lockers require student-provided locks, each student must provide the lock's combination or key to the principal.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.