

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

*I. INTRODUCTION

The Code of Student Conduct has been prepared to provide consistency in developing standards of student conduct in all schools of the Columbia County School District.

The Code recognizes that increasing age and maturity which accompany a student's progress through the grades and from school to school carry increasing expectations of responsibility for one's actions. Variations in age, maturity and disabling condition, when applicable, are recognized in determining disciplinary action. The general procedures described in the Code apply to all students, grades Pre-K through Adult.

The Code is applicable at all times when a student is in school, participating in or is present at any school sponsored activity, is aboard a school bus, is awaiting a school bus at a school stop or is on school board property.

The Code is directed at maintaining a school environment conducive to the learning process. Student conduct is expected to be such that distractions, frictions and disturbances which interfere with the educational opportunity of others shall be eliminated. In keeping with these standards, this district maintains that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful for all students and prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students on school premises or as part of any of its activities.

An environment conducive to the learning process shall be considered as one in which students and school personnel work cooperatively toward mutually accepted goals within a calm, friendly and business-like atmosphere.

The Columbia County School District is Zero Tolerant for School Related Violent Crime and Substance Abuse. It is essential that schools be safe and orderly to provide environments that foster learning and high academic achievement. (See policy 5.10).

Corrective steps shall in all instances be directed toward improving a student's attitude, behavior, and conduct. The basic effort shall not be punitive in nature; informal disciplinary efforts should be exhausted by the teacher before formal efforts are instituted except in major infractions. A student may not be punished for speaking a language other than English.

Informal Disciplinary Efforts May Include:

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI) plan

Strategies such as:

Student/Teacher Conferences
Student/Counselor Conferences
Student/Principal Conferences
Student/Parent participation in any or all of the above
Student Schedule/Program Revisions
Peer Teacher Placement
Other

Formal Disciplinary Efforts May Include:

Student Schedule/Program Revision

Detention (to include pre-detention parent notification and family transportation responsibility)
Behavioral probation-exclusion from extra-curricular activities
Work assignment
Corporal punishment (in accordance with board policy)
Temporary removal from class or classes
In-school suspension
Suspension
Alternative Programs
Alternative to Suspension (ATS)
Expulsion
Other

THE PRINCIPAL OR DESIGNEE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MOVE FROM ANY STAGE OF THE INFORMAL EFFORTS TO ANY STAGE OF THE FORMAL EFFORTS WHEN, IN HIS/HER JUDGMENT, THE SPECIFIC OFFENSE IS OF SUFFICIENT SEVERITY OR THE STUDENT INVOLVED HAS AN EXTENSIVE HISTORY OF MISCONDUCT REPORTS.

Individual cases for students with disabilities may be renewed utilizing the Columbia County School Board Programs and Procedures document.

This Code of Conduct applies to any student who is:

1. on school property;
2. in attendance at school;
3. at any school sponsored activity; or
4. whose conduct at any other time or place has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline or protecting the safety and welfare of the students or staff in the schools.

*II. RECORD REQUIREMENTS:

The principal of each school center shall keep records of each referral made for student misconduct. Teachers or bus drivers shall make every effort to correct students. When a teacher's or bus driver's judgment indicates that the assistance of the principal is appropriate, a written chronological summary will be provided to include all efforts made to correct the problem and the results prior to the referral. This summary shall be made a part of the discipline record so that a complete history will be made available to the principal in determining the most appropriate course of action considering the best interests of the student, the faculty and the student body in general.

It shall be considered a matter of routine procedure to involve parents at all stages, except for the most minor incidents, of the disciplinary process. This involvement may be accomplished through telephone contact or written reports which may be carried by the student. The nature of the communications including date and time will become a part of the disciplinary record.

Copies of the written communications and appropriately signed return receipts or certification of date and time of delivery by the attendance or security officer shall become a part of the student conduct record.

*III. STUDENT/PARENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. STUDENT RIGHTS:

When student conduct reaches the point of corporal punishment, suspension, expulsion, or alternative placement the student shall:

1. Be advised of the reason for the punishment.
2. Have an opportunity to present his "side" of the charge.
3. Have an opportunity to submit names of witnesses who may assist in presenting his views.

B. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Attend school/classes daily and be punctual in attendance.
2. Prepare for class with assigned work and appropriate materials.
3. Account for one's own work.
4. Dress in a neat, clean and well groomed manner.
5. Show respect for and consideration to all individuals and property.
6. Abide by the rules and regulations established.
7. Seek change in an orderly acceptable manner.

C. PARENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Parents may expect to be contacted in all but minor incidents and will be expected to assist the school in correcting the problem. Parents of students who have reached the age of eighteen (18) may expect courtesy contact if the student still resides in the parent's household. This courtesy contact will have no bearing on the case and all specifics will be handled with the adult student directly.

School board policy shall be the final authority in any applicable situation.

D. GRIEVANCE arising out of disciplinary action:

A. Hearing by principal or designated representative. NOTE: THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION SHALL NOT BE DELAYED BY THE APPEAL PROCESS.

B. Following the hearing, the principal or the principal's designee shall cancel, modify or affirm the original action.

Dissatisfaction of the principal's decision may be appealed to the Superintendent within five (5) school days.

*IV. STATUTE REFERENCES

A. Florida Statutes permit a principal to suspend a student immediately, without the necessity of seeking parental assistance or employing other alternative measures, if the student commits a serious breach of conduct. A serious breach of conduct is defined as, but not limited to, willful disobedience, open defiance of authority of a member of the staff, violence against persons or property or any other act that substantially disrupts the conduct of the school.

B. Florida Statutes permit a principal or the designee to search a student's locker, vehicle or other area if there is reasonable suspicion that a prohibited or illegally possessed substance or object is contained within the area. Students may be subject to the use of electronic detecting devices (metal detectors).

C. REASONABLE FORCE:

The use of reasonable force is prefaced by the use of good "common sense." Reasonable force is defined as appropriate professional conduct including physical force as necessary to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment. Instructional personnel may use reasonable force

to protect themselves or others from injury according to standards recommended by the Education Standards Commission and the Education Practices Commission and adopted by the State Board of Education, as outlined below:

The use of reasonable force is permitted to protect the student from:

1. conditions harmful to learning,
2. conditions harmful to student's mental health,
3. conditions harmful to student's physical health,
4. conditions harmful to safety, and
5. harm and/or injury to self, school personnel, and others.

Whether or not force is reasonable may be determined using a set of guidelines that would include but not be limited to:

1. severity of offenses,
2. size and physical condition of participants,
3. patterns of behavior,
4. potential danger, physical and other,
5. availability of assistance, and
6. actions taken prior to use of physical force. (F.S. 1006.11)

Reasonable force cannot be excessive or cruel or unusual in nature. Physical force being used should cease upon the restoration of a safe and orderly environment. (F.S. 1001.41)

D. SUSPENSION/EXPULSION/FELONY:

1. The principal has the authority to provide for suspension upon the recommendation resulting from an administrative hearing of any student who is formally charged with a felony for an incident which allegedly occurred on other than public school property, but which is shown to have an adverse impact on the educational program, discipline, or welfare in the school in which the student is enrolled.
2. When a student is formally charged with a felony or with... [1006.09]...adult, by a proper prosecuting attorney, the principal shall proceed as prescribed in Section 6A-1.0956 of state board of education regulations.
3. Any student who is suspended as the result of such proceedings may be suspended from all classes of instruction on public school grounds during regular classroom hours for a period of time as determined by the superintendent. Such suspension shall not

affect the delivery of educational services to the student, and the student shall be immediately enrolled in a daytime alternative education program. If the student is not subsequently adjudicated delinquent or found guilty, the suspension shall be terminated immediately. If the student is found guilty of a felony, the superintendent shall have the authority to determine if a recommendation for expulsion shall be made to the school board; however, such suspension or expulsion shall not affect the delivery of educational services to the student in any residential or nonresidential program outside the public school. Any student who is subject to discipline or expulsion for unlawful possession or use of any substance controlled under Chapter 893 shall be entitled to a waiver of the discipline or expulsion:

- a. If the student divulges information leading to the arrest and a finding of guilty by a court of competent jurisdiction or a plea of guilty or a plea of nolo contendere by the person who supplied such controlled substance to him or her, or if he or she voluntarily discloses his or her unlawful possession of such controlled substance prior to his or her arrest. Any information divulged which leads to such arrest and conviction is not admissible in evidence in a subsequent criminal trial against the student divulging such information.
 - b. If the student commits himself or herself, or is referred by the court in lieu of sentence, to a state-licensed drug abuse program and successfully completes the program.
4. The principal or the principal's designee shall make a good faith effort to immediately inform a student's parent by telephone of a student's suspension and the reasons for the suspension. Each suspension shall be reported in writing within 24 hours to the student's parent by United States mail. Each suspension and the reasons for the suspension shall also be reported in writing within 24 hours to the district school superintendent. A good faith effort shall be made by the principal or the principal's designee to employ parental assistance or other alternative measures prior to suspension, except in the case of emergency or disruptive conditions which require immediate suspension or in the case of a serious breach of conduct as defined by rules of the district school board. Such rules shall require oral and written notice to the student of the charges and an explanation of the evidence against him or her prior to the suspension. Each student shall be given an opportunity to present his or her side of the story. No student shall be suspended for unexcused tardiness, lateness, absence, or

truancy. The principal or the principal's designee may suspend or expel any student transported to or from school at public expense from the privilege of riding on a school bus for violation of district school board transportation policies, which shall include a policy regarding behavior at school bus stops, and the principal or the principal's designee shall give notice in writing to the student's parent and to the district school superintendent within 24 hours. School personnel shall not be held legally responsible for suspensions of students made in good faith.

Any student who is suspended/expelled from school is not allowed on any school campus without prior permission of an onsite administrator or designee.

E. INTERSCHOLASTIC EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Any student who is convicted of a felony, or adjudicated to have committed a delinquent act which would have been a felony had the student been an adult, must satisfy a probationary period prior to participating in any extra-curricular activities. The probationary period shall be twelve (12) months, unless the student demonstrates rehabilitation during the initial six (6) months. A student may demonstrate rehabilitation by having:

1. No unexcused absences
2. No founded disciplinary referrals
3. No arrests by any law enforcement agency
4. Completed all court ordered probationary tasks, community hours, restitution, etc. (Policy 5.16)

*V. CLASSIFICATIONS OF VIOLATIONS

Violations of the Code are grouped into three classes - minor, intermediate and major. Each classification is followed by a disciplinary procedure which is to be implemented by principals and their designees. In the following classes of violations and disciplinary procedures it is understood that the principal or the principal's designee shall hear the student's explanation and consult further with school personnel, if necessary, before determining the classification of the violation. Each classroom teacher will deal with general classroom disruption by taking in-class disciplinary action, by making a personal call to the parents or guardians when feasible, and by scheduling conferences with parent(s) or guardian and other school staff. Only when the action taken by the teacher is ineffective, or the disruption is sufficiently severe, should the

student be referred to the principal or his designee. Failure to bring notebook, pencil, books, required materials and equipment to class or to work in class is not cause for disciplinary referrals. The classroom teacher should have made an attempt to notify the parent of academic problems and after the teacher's efforts have not brought about change, the student should be referred to the guidance counselor. However, if classroom disruption results from the student refusing to work in class, this is cause for a disciplinary referral.

A. Class I - Minor Offenses

1. Distraction of other student. Any conduct and/or behavior which is disruptive to the orderly educational process in the classroom or any other similar grouping for instruction.
2. Illegal organization - Any participation in prohibited or secret societies.
3. Tardiness - Reporting late to school or class. (Continued tardies - more than four - become a Class II).
4. Inappropriate public display of affection.
5. Selling of items (candy, etc.) at school for any outside organization or for personal gain.
6. Dress code violation
7. Food or drink violation

Disciplinary Actions for Class I Offenses

Elementary Students:

First Offense:	In-school conference and parental contact when warranted.
Second Offense:	Parental contact and/or disciplinary action.
Subsequent Offenses:	Parental contact and/or disciplinary actions as follows: in-school disciplinary action such as probation, detention, work assignments before or after school. Corporal punishment or suspension may be administered at the discretion of the principal or

designee.

Secondary Students:

Parental contact and/or disciplinary action as follows: in-school disciplinary action such as probation, detention, work assignments before or after school. Corporal punishment or in-school suspension may be administered at the discretion of the principal or designee.

B. Class II - Intermediate Offenses

1. Students shall not be permitted to be in possession of and/or use of tobacco products, imitation tobacco products or facsimiles while on school board property or at a school sponsored activity. There shall be no use or possession of any tobacco products, tobacco pipes, imitation tobacco products or facsimiles on school buses, in gymnasiums, classrooms, lunchrooms or any other school facility of the Columbia County School District.

It is unlawful for any person under 18 years of age to purchase, possess, sell or use tobacco products.

Penalties include but are not limited to:

- a. \$25.00 fine
 - b. 16 hours community service
 - c. attendance at an anti-tobacco educational program
 - d. suspension, revocation, or withholding of the driver's license
2. Assault, threat, harassment, or intimidation of students - The intentional, unlawful threat by word, act, or electronically to do violence to another student, coupled with an apparent ability to do so, and doing some act which creates a well-founded fear in a person that such violence is imminent.
 3. Hitting or any physical conflict between two or more individuals.
 4. Vandalism - Intentional and deliberate action resulting in injury or damages of less than \$200 to public property or the real estate or personal property of another.

5. Stealing/Larceny/Petit Theft - The intentional unlawful taking and/or carrying away of property valued at less than \$100 belonging to or in the lawful possession or custody of another.
6. Trespassing - Willfully entering or remaining in any structure, conveyance, or property without being authorized, licensed, or invited; or having been authorized, licensed, or invited, is warned by an authorized person to depart and refuses to do so. Violators are subject to being turned over to the police.
7. Gross inappropriate public display of affection.
8. Use of profane or obscene language.
9. Possession of objects or materials (including electronic messages) with profane or obscene language or use of profane or obscene language (including electronic messages).
10. Leaving school grounds without permission.
11. False Information - Intentionally providing false information to a School Board employee including giving false student information data and concealment of information directly relating to school business. This includes forgery of school notes, readmit slips, tardy slips, excuse blanks, report cards, hall passes, field trip forms, scholarship warnings, use of another student's lunch identification number, notes from parents or guardian or any other related material.
12. Wireless Communications
 - a. A student may be in possession of a wireless communications device while the student is on school property or in attendance at school or at a school function; however, while a student is in attendance at school, such devices may not be visible (must be in pocket, purse, backpack, book bag, vehicle, etc.) and may not be turned on until after the final dismissal of the official school day. Violation of the above or use of such devices will result in imposition of disciplinary action, and use in a criminal act will result in criminal penalties.
(Section 1006.07, Florida Statutes)

- b. Wireless communications devices must not be visible, in use, or turned on while a student is on a school bus or in a school vehicle; however, while on a school-sponsored activity and under the supervision of a school official or chaperone, a student may use a wireless communications device.
 - c. A student may be in possession of and may use a wireless communications device at school-sponsored activities (i.e., dances, football games, etc.) which occur after school hours unless the use is disruptive to the event or used for a criminal act.
 - d. In addition to other Level II consequences, a first offense will result in confiscation of the device which will be released only to the parent/guardian. A second subsequent offense or a serious first-time violation (such as class disruption, etc.) will move the event to Level III.
- 13. Students shall not be permitted to be in possession of and/or use laser pointers while on school board property or at a school sponsored activity unless given specific direction by teacher or faculty member to use a school owned laser pointer.
 - 14. Gambling - Any participation in games of chance for money and/or other things of value.
 - 15. Unauthorized absence from class.
 - 16. Insubordinate nonconformity to dress code.
 - 17. Possession of materials or items which promotes or sensationalizes the use of drugs, alcohol, sex, racism, beer, tobacco, including tattoos, body paintings, jewelry or any other related material with suggestive phrases or are against community values and standards, including electronic messages.
 - 18. Possession of matches, lighters, or any other items capable of starting a fire.

19. Hazing - There shall be no type of hazing in any club, organization, athletic activity or extracurricular activity within the school. The principal shall see that the provision of the rule is strictly enforced. (School Board Policy 5.16 (d.)
20. Excessive Distraction of other student. Any conduct and/or behavior which is disruptive to the orderly educational process in the classroom or any other similar grouping for instruction which cannot be corrected by appropriate classroom management.
21. On and off campus use of social networking and/or electronic devices causing a disruption to the school day.

Disciplinary Actions for Class II Offenses

Elementary Students:

First and Second Offense: Parental contact and/or disciplinary action. Corporal punishment may be used under appropriate circumstances and according to district guidelines. In-school suspension may be included.

Subsequent Offense: Special detention time; extended work assignments before or after school; suspension, in or out of school, for 1 to 5 school days. Corporal punishment may be used under appropriate circumstances and according to district guidelines.

Secondary Students:

The principal has discretion to recommend any of the following actions:

- Suspension for 1 to 10 days;
- In-school suspension;
- Parental/principal disciplinary conference;
- Detention;
- Corporal Punishment (middle only)
- Non-attendance at school functions while on suspension for any reason
- Alternative Placement

C. CLASS III - Major Offenses

1. ALCOHOL:

- a. The possession, distribution, consumption, attempt to purchase, or selling of any alcoholic or intoxicating beverages is prohibited on school board property or at any school sponsored activity by any person. Use of a medication authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician for a specific student shall not be considered a violation of this rule. Pursuant to School Board Policy 5.11 and 1006.062, F.S., any medication prescribed by a licensed physician must be delivered to the school clinic and administered under the supervision of a school employee.
- b. Whenever a student is believed to be under the influence of, in possession of, or consuming alcohol or other intoxicating beverage, this suspicion shall be reported immediately to the principal or other person in actual or apparent authority.
- c. Verification of the suspicion noted in (b) shall cause the principal to suspend the student from school for ten school days.
 - 1) The principal or designee shall offer the student the opportunity to have five days held in abeyance on the first offense only if the student enrolls in and successfully completes a state licensed drug treatment program. Verification of enrollment must be presented to the principal or designee within the first five days of the suspension. The substance abuse treatment program must be provided by a professional licensed by the Department of Professional Regulations (DPR) or the program must be licensed under Chapter 396 and 397, Rule 10-E-16, FAC. The Coordinator of Comprehensive Health Education can provide a list of available programs. If the student/parents choose not to participate in a treatment program or if the student fails to

complete a treatment program, the suspension shall be for ten days out of school.

- 2) The principal or designee may hold in abeyance the ten day suspension if the student voluntarily discloses his/her unlawful possession of alcohol or intoxicating beverage prior to detection of such possession by school staff and/or his/her arrest.

- d. In the event possession of alcohol or an intoxicating beverage is detected or the student is apparently experiencing a behavior modification as a result of use of such substance, the principal shall simultaneously place the student in custody of his parents, guardian or custodian and notify the appropriate law enforcement agency and the superintendent of schools. Medical attention shall be secured in the event of severe physical problems.
- e. A student shall not be permitted to represent his/her school in any school activity such as athletics, band, chorus, student organizations, etc., during the period of suspension or during the period of time that the student is enrolled in the treatment program.

2. ASSAULT AND BATTERY OF SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD EMPLOYEE PROHIBITED:

Any student who assaults an employee of the School Board shall be subject to suspension or dismissal from school. When a student assaults or batters an employee of the School Board the following procedure will be observed.

When the principal, upon investigation, determines that assault or battery has occurred, the incident shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency, and to the School Board through the Superintendent. Immediate disciplinary action shall be administered as follows:

a. Assault or Battery

Grades K-5 - Disciplinary action as determined by the principal.

Grades 6-12 - Mandatory suspension for 1 to 10

days (length of suspension discretionary with principal) and/or recommendation for expulsion by principal.

b. Aggravated Assault or Aggravated Battery

Mandatory ten (10) day suspension and/or expulsion.

If a recommendation for expulsion is made by the principal, the suspension shall be extended by the Superintendent until adoption of final order by the Board on the recommendation. Any hearing which may result in the dismissal of a student shall provide for the due process.

In the application of this rule, assault and battery shall be defined as follows:

- 1) Assault - "An 'assault' is an intentional, unlawful threat by word or act to do violence to the person of another, coupled with an apparent ability to do so, and doing some act which creates a well-founded fear in such other person that such violence is imminent."
- 2) Aggravated Assault - "An 'aggravated assault' is an assault:
 - (a) With a deadly weapon without intent to kill;
 - or
 - (b) With an intent to commit a felony."
- 3) Battery - "A person commits battery if the person:
 - (a) Actually and intentionally touches or strikes Another person against the will of the other;
 - or
 - (b) Intentionally causes bodily harm to an individual."
- 4) Aggravated Battery - "A person commits aggravated battery who in committing battery:

- (a) Intentionally or knowingly causes great bodily harm, permanent disability, or permanent disfigurement;
- (b) Uses a deadly weapon;
or
- (c) A person commits aggravated battery if the person who was the victim of the battery was pregnant at the time of the offense and the offender knew or should have known that the victim was pregnant.”

*3. DRUGS/CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

A definition for substance abuse was adopted as a common definition throughout our school systems in the state. It reads:

“The use of any drug when such use is unlawful and use of any drug when such use is detrimental to the user or to others but is not unlawful”

- a. The possession, distribution, consumption, attempt to purchase or selling of any controlled substance as defined in Chapter 893, F.S., is prohibited on school board property or at any school sponsored activity by any person. Use of a medication authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician for a specific student shall not be considered a violation of rule. Pursuant to school board policy 3.15 and 232.46, F.S., any drug prescribed by a licensed physician must be delivered to the school clinic and administered under the supervision of a school employee.
- b. The possession, use, distribution, attempt to purchase or selling of any drug paraphernalia or drug facsimile is prohibited on school property or at any school sponsored activity by any person. Paraphernalia includes but is not limited to pipes, rolling papers, roach clips, or any item otherwise defined as paraphernalia by Florida Statutes, Chapter 893 (*regardless of its actual proximity to any controlled substance*).
- c. Whenever a student is believed to be under the influence of or in possession of any narcotic drug, central nervous system stimulant, hallucinogenic drug, inhalants, medication without a prescription or barbiturates as defined in Chapter 893, F.S. this suspicion shall be reported immediately to the

principal or other person in actual or apparent authority.

- d. Verification of the suspicion noted in (b) or (c) shall cause the principal to suspend the student from school for ten school days.
 - 1) The principal or designee shall offer the student the opportunity to have five days held in abeyance on the first offense only if the student enrolls in and successfully completes a state licensed drug treatment program. Verification of enrollment must be presented to the principal or designee within the first five days of the suspension. The substance abuse treatment program must be provided by a professional licensed by the Department of Professional Regulations (DPR) or the program must be licensed under Chapter 396 and 397, Rule 10-E-16, FAC. The Coordinator of Comprehensive Health Education can provide a list of available programs. If the student/parents choose not to participate in a treatment program or if the student fails to complete a treatment program, the suspension shall be for ten days out of school.
 - 2) The principal or designee may hold in abeyance the ten day suspension if the student voluntarily discloses his/her unlawful possession of any controlled substance as defined in Chapter 893, F.S., prior to detection of such possession by school staff and/or his/her arrest.
 - 3) Pursuant to state law, a student shall be entitled to a waiver of the discipline or expulsion if the student divulges information leading to the arrest and a subsequent finding of guilty by a court of competent jurisdiction, or a plea of guilty or a plea of nolo contendere by the person who supplied such controlled substance to him/her. Any information divulged, which leads to such arrest and conviction, is not admissible in evidence in a subsequent criminal trial against the student divulging such information.
- e. In the event possession of an illegal substance is detected or the student is apparently experiencing a behavior modification as a result of use of such substance, the principal shall simultaneously place the student in custody of his parents, guardian or custodian and notify the appropriate

law enforcement agency and the superintendent of schools. Medical attention shall be secured in the event of severe physical problems.

- f. A student shall not be permitted to represent any school in any school activity such as athletics, band, chorus, student organizations, etc., during the period of suspension or during the period of time that the student is enrolled in the treatment program.

4. ARSON

The willful and malicious burning of any part of a building or its contents.

5. ROBBERY

The taking of money or other property which may be the subject of larceny from the person or custody of another by force, violence, assault, or putting in fear of same.

6. STEALING - LARCENY – GRAND THEFT

The intentional unlawful taking and/or carrying away of property belonging to or in the lawful possession or custody of another. Property valued less than \$100 is a misdemeanor Property valued at \$100 or more is grand theft.

7. BURGLARY OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Breaking, entering or remaining in a structure or conveyance without justification during the hours the premises are closed to the public.

8. CRIMINAL MISCHIEF

Willful and malicious injury or damages at or in excess of \$200 to public property, or to real or personal property belonging to another.

9. WEAPONS:

Possession of weapons and use of weapons are prohibited on school board property, including buses, at school-sponsored activities, and in any vehicle brought onto school property or to a school sponsored activity. Violation of this policy shall be considered a serious breach of conduct. The term “weapon” shall include all items or materials which have no legitimate educational purpose for the student at school and shall include but not be limited to, firearms, explosives, knives, box cutters, razor blades, razors or facsimile, or any pointed, sharp or blunt instrument and such items that closely resemble weapons and operate similarly,

such as pellet guns, BB guns and starter pistols.

If a student makes a threat involving a weapon he/she shall be referred to the Columbia County Sheriff's Office for investigation. This action will be in addition to disciplinary action taken by the school.

FIREARMS:

In compliance with the Guns Free School Act of 1994, a student who brings a firearm to school shall receive an expulsion for at least one full calendar year. A student discharging, possessing, transferring, or selling any firearm, (including a starter gun) whether operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded, or is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame, the receiver or firearm silencer, or any similar destructive device will be recommended for expulsion. State law provides for felony charges against persons displaying or discharging firearms on a school campus.

EXPLOSIVES:

In compliance with Guns Free School Act of 1994, a student who brings any explosive, incendiary or poison gas such as a bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces; missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce; mine, or similar device shall receive an expulsion for at least one full calendar year.

The possession of and/or igniting of fireworks and/or firecrackers by any student is prohibited.

The possession of and/or use of pepper gas, mace, chemical weapon or similar device by any student is prohibited.

OTHER WEAPONS:

The possession of and/or igniting of fireworks and/or firecrackers by any student is prohibited.

The possession of and/or use of pepper gas, mace, chemical weapon or similar device by any student is prohibited.

A student using, possessing, selling, distributing, displaying or transferring a weapon of any type other than a firearm/explosive,

shall be suspended from school for up to ten (10) days, or the principal or his designee may recommend expulsion.

NON-WEAPONS USED AS WEAPONS:

A student using as a weapon any article or substance not normally considered to be a weapon (e.g. rocks, pens, pencils, etc.) shall be suspended for up to ten days, or the principal may recommend expulsion.

Under (Other Weapons/Non-Weapons) above, at the elementary school level (PreK-5 only), the principal may exercise discretion concerning recommendation for expulsion based on the grade level of the child involved in an incident. Principals may use discipline or alternative behavior management measures.

For students with disabilities, the mandatory penalties provided by this policy shall be subject to the Procedures for Expulsion of Students with Disabilities.

10. All Threats - Any such communication(s) directed at School Board employees or students which has the effect of interrupting the educational environment, including electronic messages, on or off campus.
11. Possession of objects or materials (including electronic messages) with obscene manifestations (verbal, written, gesture) or use of obscene manifestations (including electronic messages), (verbal, written, gesture) toward another person.
12. Accessing or possession of lewd or pornographic material (including electronic messages.)
13. Sexual Acts - Act of sexual nature. Written or verbal propositions to engage in sexual acts.
14. Directing obscene or profane language to a School Board employee.
15. Battery Upon Students/Fighting - Actually and intentionally touching or striking another student against the will of the other, or intentionally causing bodily harm to an individual.
16. Sexual Battery - Actually and intentionally touching of a person in a sexual nature against the will of another.

17. Aggravated Battery - Intentionally or knowingly causing great bodily harm, disability or permanent disfigurement; use of a deadly weapon. A person commits aggravated battery if the person who was the victim of the battery was pregnant at the time of the offense and the offender knew or should have known that the victim was pregnant (784.045, F.S.)
18. Aggravated Assault - assault with a deadly weapon without intent to kill or with an intent to commit a felony.
19. Inciting or Participating in Major Student Disorder - Leading, encouraging or assisting in (major) disruptions which result in destruction or damage of private or public property or personal injury to participants or others. (School Board Policy 3.06)
20. Unjustified activation of a fire alarm system.
21. Possession of stolen property with the knowledge that it is stolen.
22. Threats/Extortion - Any communication, oral, written or electronic, maliciously threatening an injury or death to another, with or without the intent to extort money or any pecuniary advantage whatsoever; or with or without intent to compel the person so threatened, or any other person, to do any act or refrain from doing any act against his or her will.
23. Forging a Doctor's Note.
24. Any other offense which is reasonably likely to cause great bodily harm or to seriously disrupt the educational process.
25. Defiance or disrespect of School Board employee's authority - Any verbal or non-verbal refusal to comply with a lawful and reasonable direction or order of a School Board employee or conduct that is rude or discourteous.
26. Gang Activity - Columbia County students, while on the school campus or participating in a school activity, shall not join, form, participate in, or become a member of a gang or secret society or any group not sanctioned by the Columbia County School Board that functions in a manner similar to a gang. Indicators of gang activity include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Unauthorized gathering of suspected gang members
 - b. Wearing or possessing gang identification of any kind
 - c. Wearing clothing or colors in a manner designed to show

- gang membership
 - d. Displaying hand signals or other non-verbal signs for the purpose of showing gang membership
 - e. Writing or displaying items showing gang insignias
 - f. Distributing or possessing gang related literature
 - g. Displaying physical characteristics or expressing verbal comments, phrases or words reflecting gang membership.
- The school administrator or administrator's designee will make the final decision concerning whether or not an incident is gang related in any way and proceed accordingly.

On the first offense, a student will receive a ten day suspension with a recommendation for expulsion if the severity of the incident so warrants. For the second offense, the student will receive a mandatory ten day suspension and mandatory recommendation for expulsion.

Students, school personnel and parents will be notified and informed about the Columbia County School Board policy concerning gang activity.

27. **Bulling as defined in School Board Policy 5.101**

It is the intent of the Columbia County School Board that this policy be stringently followed and enforced by the appropriate school personnel.

Disciplinary Actions for Class III Offenses

Elementary and Secondary Students:

The principal has discretion to recommend any of the following actions:

- Suspension for 1 to 10 days;
- Expulsion;
- In-school suspension;
- Parental/principal disciplinary conference;
- Detention;
- Corporal Punishment (elementary only)
- Non-attendance at school functions while on suspension for any reason
- Alternative Placement

RIDING THE BUS IS A PRIVILEGE. DO NOT ABUSE IT.

Parents or guardians may not board a Columbia District School Bus at any time without the prior written permission of the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

***VI. BUS MISCONDUCT**

Florida Statute 316.6145 (2) requires that “Each passenger on a school bus that is equipped with safety belts or restraint systems shall wear a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt at all times while the bus is in operation...” The law requires the proper usage of the safety belt; therefore the student must be seated in a seat with an operable belt, adjusted and fastened.

Nothing in this section shall make the owner or operator of a school bus liable for injuries for failure to properly adjust or fasten a seat belt or other child restraint system that is in conformity with applicable federal standards when a passenger sustains injury as a result of the passenger’s failure to be seated and belted or restrained.

Any disruptions of the bus conduct standards or failure to follow directions of driver exactly, may result in disciplinary action.

Video/Audio Surveillance: Warning! Your activity on school buses is subject to monitoring/recording at any time.

A. Instructions for Student Riding Buses:

THE DRIVER IS IN FULL CHARGE OF THE BUS AND STUDENTS. STUDENTS MUST OBEY DRIVER AND FOLLOW DIRECTIONS THE FIRST TIME THEY ARE GIVEN.

1. Observe the proper rules of conduct while waiting for the bus, stay off the road and private property other than that on which the stop is established.
2. Stand off roadway on the loading side while awaiting the bus in the morning.
3. Be on time; the bus cannot wait for those who are tardy.
4. Follow proper procedures for getting on and getting off the bus.

5. Remain in your seat at all times; facing forward with your legs and feet in front.
6. Use courteous and appropriate language. No cursing, swearing, or loud talking on the bus or at the bus stop. Do not use rude gestures or tease anyone.
7. Do not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus.
8. Keep the bus clean. Do not spit or throw anything in or out of the bus. Do not mark on or damage the bus in any way. Do not touch or bother anything that belongs to others.
9. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus and to yourself at all times.
10. Do not bring toys, games, animals (dead or alive), weapons or glass containers on the bus.
11. Do not trip others on the bus. Do not push, shove or fight on the bus or at the bus stop.
12. No possession or use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco products on the bus or at the bus stop.
13. Be absolutely quiet at all railroad crossings.
14. Do not tamper with the emergency door.
15. The driver has the right to assign students to a seat.
16. Wireless communications devices must not be visible, in use, or turned on while a student is on a school bus; however, while on a school-sponsored activity and under the supervision of a school official or chaperone, a student may use a wireless communications device.

When leaving the bus in the afternoon, if you must cross the road, walk in front of the bus. Wait for the driver's signal before crossing.

- B. Responsibilities of Parents. The parent or guardian of the transported students shall have the following responsibilities.
1. To require the student to be at the bus stop and on the loading side in the morning on time in accordance with the bus schedule.

2. To provide the necessary protection for the student in going to and from the bus stop where adequate shelter is not provided.
3. To assume joint responsibility with school authorities for the proper conduct of the student.
4. To make a reasonable effort to understand the transportation rules and to cooperate with school personnel responsible for student transportation.
5. Any parent or guardian of a special education student shall have the following additional responsibilities:
 - a. To provide the necessary assistance to the child while he is enroute to and from the bus stop and to provide the necessary supervision of the child at the bus stop.
 - b. To provide instructions in writing to the bus driver as to any special symptoms the child may have or non-medical care which the child may need while on the bus.
 - c. A parent, guardian or adult designee may meet the student at the bus stop for afternoon drop off.

C. Offense Categories

Bus misconduct will be placed in three categories. Example of the types of misconduct by categories, are given. Examples of punishment for each type of misconduct are listed. All referrals are to be based upon the driver's personal knowledge and observation. The principal shall have the discretion to move any misconduct from one category to another.

***Category One Offenses**

MISCONDUCT:

Loud talking on bus; eating on the bus; offenses peculiar to the age level; wireless communications device violation; carrying unauthorized items on the bus; chewing gum; unnecessary conversation with the bus driver, similar type misconduct as those listed, and any other offense deemed Category One by the administration.

CONSEQUENCES:

Conference with student; contact parent; warnings; note in file; bus suspension; similar type consequences as those listed, and any other offense deemed Category One by the administration.

***Category Two Offenses**

MISCONDUCT:

Throwing items out of the bus; standing up; multiple referrals; fighting; vulgar speech and actions, continued vulgar and abusive language; disrespect toward school personnel; disrespect toward other students; disrespect of property of school board and/or property of other people; use and/or possession of tobacco products or facsimiles; talking at a railroad crossing; violation of seat belt policy; wireless communications device violation; similar type misconduct as those listed, and any other offense deemed Category Two by administration. Improper exiting of the bus.

CONSEQUENCES:

Corporal punishment (except high school); bus suspension; school suspension; conference with student, parent, and bus driver; payment for damages to school board property; and similar type consequences as those listed.

***Category Three Offenses**

MISCONDUCT:

Multiple offenses; possession of drugs and alcohol; possession of weapons; fighting; willful endangering the safety of students and personnel; similar type misconduct as those listed; and other offense deemed Category Three by the administration.

CONSEQUENCES:

Bus suspension of ten days; recommendation to School Board for bus suspension/expulsion of more than ten days, school suspension, and similar type consequences as those listed.

ALL RULES ARE ENFORCED FOR THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS. ALL VIOLATIONS OF RULES ARE CONSIDERED SERIOUS SINCE SUCH VIOLATIONS ENDANGER EACH PERSON RIDING THE BUS OR WHILE WAITING FOR THE BUS.

VII. DRESS CODE

The wearing of appropriate clothing is an essential part of education; therefore, the wearing of garments suitable for school shall be encouraged. All teachers shall be on the alert to give helpful, friendly guidance in these matters without undue embarrassment to the student.

A. Elementary Students - Pre-K - Grade 5

Elementary students shall dress appropriately for their age and grade levels in accordance with the standards established by the individual schools.

Shoes or sandals (with heel-supported straps) must be worn at all times; flip-flops, bedroom shoes, or shoes with rollers are prohibited.

B. Secondary Students - Grades 6 through Adult Education

This policy of personal appearance is meant to be a set of guidelines to enable students to dress casually but reasonably.

1. The personal appearance of students may be in the style of the day; however, the wearing of overly-tight, extreme, or inappropriate clothing is not permitted. Any item or material which promotes or sensationalizes the use of drugs, beer, tobacco, alcohol, sex, racism, including tattoos, body paintings, jewelry or any other related material with suggestive phrases or are against community values and standards will not be tolerated or worn on school property.
2. Special costumes may be worn when recommended by the principal.
3. Cleanliness of the physical person to a degree consistent with the maintenance of good physical health is mandatory.
4. Slacks or shorts may be worn. All shorts, skirts and dresses must be no shorter than mid-thigh (when standing) and splits in girls' skirts must be no higher than mid-thigh (when standing). Pants are to be worn at the waist, with belts buckled and shirts tucked inside the pants so that belts are visible. Clothing is to be in good repair. Leggings and form-fitting stretch pants must be worn with tops no shorter than mid-thigh (when standing).
5. Bicycle pants or compression shorts may only be worn when covered by skirts or shorts that meet the mid-thigh standard.
6. Exposed midriff or revealing clothing or tops that are bareback below the shoulder blades shall not be worn. Sundresses and overalls must have straps on both shoulders (no spaghetti straps). Visible undergarments are prohibited.
7. Students are allowed to wear sunglasses, hats, or other sun-protective wear while outdoors during school hours. This would include recess, outside physical education classes or other class activities that are outdoors.

8. Shoes or sandals must be worn at all times; bedroom shoes and shoes with rollers are prohibited.
9. Swimwear, dancewear, or physical education shorts shall not be worn except in those respective classes. Dance and physical education classes have their own specific clothing requirement.
10. Bedroom attire is not permitted.
11. Tank tops, spaghetti straps or muscle shirts are prohibited. (Including those with cut-off or ripped sleeves).
12. Sunglasses are not to be worn inside the buildings unless a note is presented by a licensed physician indicating a need for eye protection.
13. Boxer shorts may not be worn as an outer garment.
14. Jewelry with spikes projecting from them is prohibited; rings that cover more than one finger are also not to be worn on campus. Wallet chains or similar size chains may not be worn, in any manner, on campus.
15. Bandannas are not to be worn or displayed on school property. In addition, any symbol or sign normally recognized by law enforcement as being gang-related shall not be permitted.

NOTE: The school administrators will make the final decision on the appropriateness of clothing, jewelry, tattoos, or body piercing worn to school or anything else which does not reflect community values and standards or causes disruption to the educational process or becomes a health hazard to self or others.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:

Violation of the dress code will result in disciplinary action in accordance with penalties set forth in the Code of Student conduct for Class II Offenses.

Repeated violation will move the offense to Class III and subject the student to disciplinary action prescribed for these classifications.

*VII. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A. Confiscated items

Teachers and administrators will not be responsible for any items that are confiscated from students. Confiscated items may be retained at the school site for a period of time to be determined by the school administration for multiple offences.

B. Containers

All containers brought to campus are subject to be checked, confiscated, and/or destroyed.

C. Internet Policy (8.331)

I. General Policy and Guidelines

- a. Inappropriate use of the Internet by students may result in school disciplinary action and/or cancellation of user privileges.
- b. Inappropriate use of the Internet by school district employee may result in disciplinary action and/or cancellation of user privileges.

2. Use of Internet, Wide Area Network, Local Area Networks, Computers and Related Technology

- a. All use of a network must be in connection with education and research and be consistent with the educational purposes of the Columbia County School District.
- b. Students and staff shall not use the school district's computer network to solicit sales or conduct business (e.g., by posting an advertisement to a news group). Students shall not set up web pages for any reason without prior approval by a school administrator.
- c. Any use of a network for private or personal gain is prohibited.
- d. Any use of a network for product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
- e. Users shall not intentionally seek information or obtain copies of data or passwords or modify files belonging to other users or misrepresent other users on a network. Identifications and passwords are confidential. If users give their identification or password to others, they may lose their right to use the system. Examples of identifying information include student's last name, home address

and phone number. Students may be identified by their first names.

- f. Students and staff should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received on the school computer network's system operator, or other designated school board employee, may, at any time, review the subject, content and appropriateness of electronic communications or other computer files, and remove them if warranted, reporting any violation of rules to the school administration or law enforcement officials.
- g. Use of a network shall not disrupt other users on the network.
- h. Neither hardware nor software shall be destroyed, modified or abused in any way.
- i. Malicious use of a network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited.
- j. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, profanity, obscenity or language which is offensive to another user or other antisocial behaviors are prohibited on the network.
- k. Use of a network to access or process pornographic materials, inappropriate text files or files dangerous to the integrity of the local area network and/or the wide area network is prohibited.
- l. The illegal installation of copyrighted software for use on any district computer is prohibited. Copyrighted material is anything written by someone else. It could be an e-mail message, a game, a story, an encyclopedic entry or software.
- m. Students and staff shall not copy and forward, copy and download, or copy and upload to the network or Internet server any copyrighted material, without approval by a school or district administrator.
- n. The user shall maintain the integrity of the school's/district's electronic mail system. The user is responsible to report all

violations. The user is also responsible for making sure all e-mail sent by him or her does not contain pornographic material, inappropriate information, or text-encoded files that are potentially dangerous to the integrity of the local area network or the Internet. Materials received which contains pornographic material, inappropriate information or text-encoded files that are dangerous to the integrity of the local area network or the Internet should be reported to a teacher or an administrator immediately.

- o. Students and staff shall not infiltrate, or “hack,” outside computing systems or networks. Examples: the release of viruses, worms or other programs that damage or otherwise harm an outside computing system or network. Students and staff shall not disrupt a system or interfere with another’s ability to use that system (e.g., by sending “e-mail bombs” that cause a disk to fill up, a network to bog down or a software application to crash) nor shall students or staff do any of these things to the Columbia County School District computer District.
- p. Users shall observe time limits while on-line as mandated by FIRN (Florida Information Resource Network) or their local site.
- q. Student access to the network or the Internet will be monitored by a staff member.
- r. Students and staff shall not access any type of instant messaging system via the district’s equipment or network.
- s. Students shall not access the network or Internet for e-mail or chat rooms except while closely supervised by a staff member as part of an educational activity.
- t. Any violation of the use of the Internet shall be reported to the assigned teacher or the assigned principal or administrator.

3. User Responsibility and Security

Other forms of misconduct arising from, or connected with, the use of the Internet, local area or wide area networks may result in suspension and/or revocation of the offender’s privilege of network access.

4. Disciplinary Action for Violation of Policy

Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary action for students will be Class I, II or III offenses. The severity of the violation will dictate the action of the principal.

D. Student Records and Directory Information

Students' parent(s) defined by Florida Statutes shall be notified annually in the Code of Student Conduct that the School Board may release "directory information" to the general public.

1. Directory information includes the following data about a student:
 - a. Name
 - b. Address
 - c. Telephone number, if listed
 - d. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
 - e. Weight and height, if an athletic team member
 - f. Name of the most recent previous school or program attended
 - g. Dates of attendance at schools in the District and degrees and honors received; and,
 - h. Date and place of birth
2. Information described in subsections 1. a., d., e., f., and g. herein may be published routinely by the School Board in conjunction with press releases about school activities, honor roll announcements, athletic events, and other school-related activities.
3. Directory information requested in writing by educational organizations, school officials, or other agencies identified in Florida Statutes, may be released. Written parental consent is required before the release of personal information for all other persons and agencies not listed in Florida Statutes.
4. Directory information shall not be published when the student's parent(s) submits written notification to the principal within ten (10) days of distribution of the Code of Student Conduct. Failure to advise the student's principal shall be deemed a waiver of any right to preclude release of such directory information pursuant to Florida Statutes or federal laws.

VIII. NOTICE OF LIMITED SUPERVISORY TIMES

THIS SCHOOL WILL PROVIDE SUPERVISION TO ITS STUDENTS:

DURING THE TIME HE OR SHE IS ATTENDING SCHOOLS;

AND

**DURING THE TIME THE STUDENT IS ON THE SCHOOL PREMISES
PARTICIPATING WITH AUTHORIZATION IN A SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITY;**

AND

**DURING A REASONABLE TIME (30 MINUTES) BEFORE AND AFTER A STUDENT
IS ON THE PREMISES FOR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL OR FOR AUTHORIZED
PARTICIPATION IN A SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITY.**

STUDENTS AND PARENTS SHOULD NOT RELY ON ADDITIONAL SUPERVISION.