



STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

HANDBOOK

2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

www.pgcps.org



Dear Students and Families,

As we embark on another academic year, I am honored to welcome you to the Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) community. Each year, we strive to foster a safe, supportive, and empowering environment where every student can thrive. A crucial part of achieving this goal is ensuring that all members of our community understand their rights and responsibilities within our schools.

The Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook is designed to be a valuable resource for you, providing clear guidelines and expectations that promote fairness, respect and accountability. By familiarizing yourself with this handbook, you are taking an important step in contributing to a positive school culture that supports the success and well-being of every student.

This handbook is not just a list of rules – it is a reflection of our commitment to creating a learning environment where every student feels valued and respected. It outlines the behaviors we expect from all students and details the supports and interventions available to help you make the best choices for your education and future.

Parents and guardians, I encourage you to review this handbook with your child. Your partnership is essential to reinforcing the values and standards that will guide our students toward becoming responsible and engaged citizens.

As we move forward together, let us remember that each of us has a role to play in making our schools a place where everyone feels safe, respected, and motivated to learn. I am confident that by working together – students, families, educators, and community members – we can achieve great things this year.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the success of our students and have a great school year!

Warm regards,

Millard House II
Superintendent
Prince George's County Public Schools

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Prince George’s County Public Schools Executive Cabinet

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Dr. Andrew Zuckerman, Chief of Information Technology

It is the policy of the State of Maryland that all public and publicly funded schools and school programs operated in compliance with: Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; and Title 26, Subtitle 7 of the Education Article of the Maryland Code, which states that public and publicly funded schools and programs may not:

(I) Discriminate against a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability;

(II) Refuse enrollment of a prospective student, expel a current student, or withhold privileges from a current student, or a prospective student because of an individual’s race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability; or

(III) Discipline, invoke a penalty against, or take any other retaliatory action against a student or parent or guardian of a student who files a complaint alleging that the program or school discriminated against the student, regardless of the outcome of the complaint.

SECTION 1: Introduction, Goals, College and Career Ready, Resources Introduction

Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) is committed to fostering positive, nurturing, healthy and engaging learning environments that support graduating all students to be college and career ready. To accomplish this, we must maintain safe schools for students and teachers.

Together, families, students, teachers, staff and administrators share the responsibility in creating and sustaining an environment that supports student achievement and well-being. By following the rights and responsibilities outlined in this handbook, you can help PGCPS become a safer and more supportive environment for all students and staff.

Good discipline is essential to academic success, and we believe it is possible to maintain disciplined, productive learning environments without excluding students from school, except in the most severe instances.

This handbook provides a framework for academic standards and student behavior to promote positive, supportive and inclusive learning environments to maximize student academic achievement and minimize student behavior issues. It is an outline of the expectations, rights and responsibilities of all members of our school community – a structure where students, families and teachers partner for student success.

Application of the Handbook/Code of Student Conduct

This handbook and its contents are in effect during regularly scheduled school hours, as well as at other times and places, including in school vehicles, school sponsored events, field trips and athletic functions where school administrators have authority over students or the behavior has a direct effect on the order of the school. This includes the Middle College and online campuses.

Handbook Goals

- Share policies, procedures and best practices to ensure that students and parents understand and support our goal of academic excellence and a high quality education for all students;
- Share expectations of respectful and responsible behaviors based on age, developmental level and needs of the student and school community;
- Share school and community resources for students, parents and families;
- Identify levels of responses and interventions regarding student behavior; and
- Provide the student appeals process and procedures.

College and Career Ready

PGCPS supports students in their college and career goals with Career and Technical Education (CTE) and college readiness programming. There are opportunities that support students' readiness for successful entry into a college and/or career. The college readiness web page at www.pgcps.org/collegereadiness is designed to help students and parents, as well as staff, to navigate through the wealth of information about preparing for and applying to college. It includes information on our district programs and opportunities for students as well as the regional and national information sites that will give all our students what they need to know to be successful!

PGCPS middle and high school students are able to access the SchoolLinks college and career readiness platform. Students can log in and access tools to research colleges, browse scholarships, keep a list of favorite careers, and track college applications. SchoolLinks is linked with Synergy so student data and other information will be updated on a nightly basis. Students will access their accounts via Clever, which can be accessed from the PGCPS district website. Students will benefit from college and career readiness activities such as:

- Researching careers and clusters;
- Creating SMART goals (career, academic, personal/social, post-secondary);
- Creating/updating a resume;
- Identifying Career Academies of interest by 8th graders;
- Self-assessments to include personality traits, intelligences, and top strengths;
- Saving prospective colleges to the Colleges I'm Thinking About list; and
- Participation in the MSDE Senior Exit Survey for 12th graders.

Scholarships Database

PGCPS is committed to preparing students for college and the world of work. The scholarship link on the student section at www.pgcps.org provides a database of regional, state and national scholarships from a variety of public and private sources. Deadlines and application requirements are included for each scholarship. Information regarding internships, career and summer opportunities is also available.

Resources for Students and Families

Synergy Family Portal

PGCPS has replaced our previous student information system, SchoolMAX, with Synergy as our new student information system. ParentVUE and StudentVUE allow parents/guardians and students respectively to login from any computer to view information, including attendance records, assignments and grades. Parents can find the Synergy ParentVUE Guide at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/parentvueguide>.

School Closings Information

e-Alerts: Sign up for emergency notifications by email or text by visiting the home page and clicking on the "E-ALERTS" button.

Home page: www.pgcps.org

PGCPS Twitter: <http://twitter.com/pgcps>

PGCPS Facebook: www.facebook.com/pgcps

School Status Line: 301-952-6000, option 1

PGCTV (96 Comcast and 38 Verizon)

Frequently Called PGCPS Numbers

Appeals and Hearings | 301-952-6195
Area 1 - Elementary Schools Office | 301-952-6583
Area 2 - Middle Schools Office | 301-952-6584
Area 3 - High Schools Office | 301-952-6585
Board of Education Office | 301-952-6115
Early Learning Programs | 301-808-8240
English Language Development (ELD) (formerly ESOL) | 301-445-8450
Equity Assurance Office | 301-952-6156
Family & School Partnerships | 301-618-7356
Fingerprinting | 301-952-6775
Food & Nutrition Services | 301-952-6580
Fostering Connections | 301-780-5910
GED (Adult Education) | 301-546-8350 or 301-546-0891
Home & Hospital Teaching | 301-567-8642
International Student Admissions & Enrollment | 301-445-8460
McKinney Vento Program | 301-925-2482
Mental Health | 240-455-5105
Neediest Kids Program | 301-780-5910
Psychological Services | 301-431-5630
Pupil Accounting & School Boundaries | 301-952-6300
Pupil Personnel Services | 301-780-5910
School Counseling | 301-567-8669
School Health | 301-749-4722
Section 504 | 301-952-6255
Special Education | 301-618-8355
Student Appeals | 301-952-6195
Student Records, Transfers & Archival Services | 301-567-8751
Student Service Learning | 301-567-8669
Transportation | 301-952-6570

Community Resources

Department of Social Services | 301-909-7000
Emergency Financial Assistance | 301-909-6000
Emergency Food Assistance | 301-909-6343
Health Department | 301-883-7879
Homeless Hotline | 1-888-731-0999
Maryland Crisis Hotline | 1-800-422-0009
Suicide Hotline | 301-864-7130 (County Helpline) | 988 (National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline)

SECTION 2: Rights & Responsibilities

PGCPS respects the rights of all individuals to be treated equally and fairly to ensure that no individual is discriminated against based on race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or disability in the areas of freedom of expression, procedural and due process, personal rights and access to school programs. If you have questions about non-discrimination policies, please use the following contact information:

Non-discrimination policies under Section 504 for students with disabilities:

504 Coordinator
7711 Livingston Road | Oxon Hill, MD 20745
301-952-6255

For non-discrimination policies based on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation and disability:

Equity Assurance Office
14201 School Lane, Room 202 | Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
301-952-6156 | equity@pgcps.org

To report complaints of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence or discrimination and Title IX non-compliance:

Paulette Walker, EEO Administrator/Title IX Coordinator
14201 School Lane, Room 202 | Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
301-952-6156 | paulette.walker@pgcps.org

Stakeholder Rights & Responsibilities

This document outlines various stakeholders' rights and responsibilities. The responsibilities of all stakeholders are outlined below. All teachers, staff, and adults have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

STUDENT RIGHTS

- A free public education subject to provisions of state law and the bylaws, rules and regulations of the Maryland State Board of Education and the Board of Education of Prince George's County;
- An education in a learning environment that is safe, drug-free, free of harassment, accepting of diversity and conducive to learning where high standards and educational equity are stressed;
- Enjoy meaningful freedom of speech, press, assembly (peaceful demonstrations) and religion;
- To appeal the denial of a planned demonstration to the Area Office;
- Due process for academic, attendance and disciplinary measures, as well as other issues which could impact the student's ability to receive a free and appropriate education;
- Inspect, review and seek to amend educational records (students 18 years of age or older); and
- Access to prevention and intervention programs.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Maintain a safe and orderly school environment free of harassment where diversity is accepted and conducive to teaching and learning;
- Know and obey all county and school rules relating to student conduct and achievement;
- Come to school on time and ready to learn each day;
- Pass through security enhancement equipment at schools where they are installed;
- Present the school with a parent/guardian note for absences and tardiness;
- Work to their fullest potential in all academic and extracurricular activities;
- Respect school authority, which includes not only obeying school rules and regulations, but also conforming to the laws of the community, state and nation;
- Obey all instructions from all school employees in a positive and respectful manner;
- Dress in accordance with the dress code for school and school functions;
- Utilize school resources to develop appropriate problem solving skills;
- Ask questions to ensure understanding;
- Accept responsibility for actions;
- Maintain and uphold the highest standards of conduct, demeanor and sportsmanship during extracurricular events;
- Show respect and consideration for the personal and property rights of others and understand the need for cooperation with all members of the school community;
- Bring to school only those items and materials which are appropriate for the instructional program;
- All student demonstrations must be organized by students or student-led groups. The student organizer(s) must meet with the school administration to coordinate the planned event and is encouraged to schedule this meeting no fewer than two days before the planned event. If the planned demonstration or the actions of the demonstrators differ from the agreement, disciplinary actions may follow based on the Code of Student Conduct.

Parent/Guardian Rights & Responsibilities

PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS

- Visit schools and classes at times that respect the educational environment;
- Be treated with courtesy by all members of the school staff;
- Be informed of all services in special education;
- Organize and participate in organizations for parents;
- Be informed of academic requirements of any school program;
- Understand program and school academic requirements;
- Request a conference to (1) inspect their child's cumulative record or (2) make corrections in conformity with Administrative Procedure 5125 and current state and federal government requirements;
- Participate in meaningful parent-teacher conferences to discuss their child's school progress and welfare;
- Be informed of approved procedures for seeking changes in school policies and for appealing administrative decisions;
- Expect reasonable protection for their child from physical harm while under school authority;
- Inspect, review and seek to amend educational and disciplinary records; and
- Be informed of pertinent school policies and administrative procedures.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide proof of a bona fide residence in Prince George's County;
- Provide required immunization documents to PGCPSS;
- During registration, provide PGCPSS with proof of the child's age;
- Notify the school whenever child is absent;[±]
- Ensure child (5-18 years old) attends school regularly;^{±*}
- Monitor student's attendance and grades via Synergy and other electronic platforms;
- Assume primary responsibility for the discipline of the child;
- Model cooperation with school and transportation personnel;
- Respond to school personnel requests for information and meetings;
- Update contact information annually;
- Treat all members of the school community, including students and staff, with respect to promote a school environment that is free of harassment and accepting of diversity;
- Be knowledgeable of and adhere to requirements outlined in the [Code of Conduct for Families, Volunteers and Visitors](#); and
- Monitor their child's/children's use of social media outside of school that may negatively impact their child's/children's or other student's educational opportunities.

Teacher/Staff Member Responsibilities

- Be prepared to teach and provide quality instruction within the current curricular framework;
- Exhibit an attitude of respect for students that has a positive influence in helping them develop good citizenship traits;
- Be familiar with Board policies and administrative procedures, as well as school protocols, and enforce them in a fair, impartial and consistent manner for all students;
- Communicate information regarding student progress and achievement on a regular and timely basis to students, parents and other involved professionals;
- Maintain an atmosphere that contributes to positive student behavior;
- Provide daily classwork and assignments for students with lawful absences, including those students on suspension;
- Develop and maintain a positive working relationship with students and staff free of harassment and accepting of diversity;
- Strive to improve the quality of life throughout the school community;
- Maintain an environment of mutual respect and dignity;
- Encourage the use of appropriate counseling services;
- Promptly report bullying, harassment or intimidation;
- Communicate policies and expectations to students and parents, including: course objectives and requirements, grading procedures, assignment deadlines and classroom discipline plans;
- Serve as a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse and/or neglect to Child Protective Services;
- Elevate reports of bullying, harassment or intimidation of students or other staff members to the school administrator for investigation and resolution; -
- Be aware that students who wish to participate in demonstration(s) approved by the school administration may not be punished. Academic makeup work will be permitted in accordance with Administrative Procedure 5113 – Student Attendance, Absence and Truancy.
- Adhere to the expectations and standards of conduct that PGCPSS expects of employees in accordance with the Employee Code of Conduct.

School Administrator Responsibilities

- Support teaching and learning by creating and maintaining a safe and orderly environment;
- Promote communication with all stakeholders and present opportunities for students, staff and parents to address grievances;

- Promote an environment that is free of harassment and accepting of diversity;
- Enforce the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook and ensure the fair, consistent and prompt resolution of concerns;
- Be knowledgeable of and adhere to requirements outlined in the Code of Conduct for Families, Volunteers and Visitors; and
- Monitor student's use of social media outside of school that may impact their child's or other student's educational opportunities;
- Meet with the student organizer(s) of a demonstration at least two days prior to coordinate the event including time, location, means of demonstration and number of expected participants. Students must be allowed the right to choose the means of demonstration except where there is a safety issue or other infringements of the Code of Student Conduct; and
- The school, administration, and PGPCS assume no responsibility or endorsement of the student demonstration(s). All state laws per COMAR will apply per Board Policy 5211.

School Resource Officer Responsibilities

- Provide visible security presence in assigned school and serve as a positive role model for students to prevent juvenile delinquency;
- Confer with school administration to develop strategies to prevent or minimize dangerous situations on or near school grounds;
- Conduct routine foot patrols of the interior and exterior of school grounds;
- Assist with traffic safety and enforcement activities in and around assigned school areas;
- Coordinate assistance at major school events such as athletic events, large dances, or other activities;
- Attend regular security and administrative staff meetings;
- Improve security measures within the school grounds;
- Provide professional advice to students with problematic issues;
- Provide referrals to students and their families to the appropriate agencies for assistance when a need is determined;
- Cooperate with duly authorized county, state or federal police officers as well as investigators of the Prince George's County Fire Marshall's Office, representatives of the Prince George's County Department of Juvenile Services, State's Attorney's Office and caseworkers of the Prince George's County Department of Social Services in accordance with Administrative Procedure 5144 - Cooperation with Law Enforcement Officers and Government Officials Contacting Students;
- Conduct thorough and professional investigations of criminal activity; and
- Work in partnership with citizens to assist in finding resolutions to immediate community problems.

SECTION 3: Annual Notification of Rights

Rights Under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides parents, legal guardians, and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. Administrative Procedure 5134 – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Annual Notice and Directory Information codifies FERPA rights in PGPCS. Under FERPA, a Parent is any one of the following and recognized as the individual(s) legally responsible for the student:

- Biological Parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated.
- Adoptive Parent – A person who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated.
- Custodian – A person or an agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
- Guardian – A person who has been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
- Caregiver – A non-parent/guardian adult who exercises care, custody or control over the student and who satisfies the requirements to be authorized as an informal kinship care provider under Administrative Procedure 5118.1 – Informal Care Arrangements and the Enrollment of Nonresident Student.
- Emancipated minor – a student, under the age of nineteen (19), who is either married, or is enlisted in the military service, or unmarried and has voluntarily left home without financial support from the student's parent(s), or the student has been declared emancipated by a court of law and the conditions leading to that declaration remain unchanged.

These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day PGPCS receives a request for access.

In accordance with Administrative Procedure 5125 and 5134, parents or eligible students will be granted access within three (3) business days to the records they wish to inspect after students should submit to the school principal a written request has been received. The school principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask a PGPCS school to amend a record should submit a written request to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. The building administrator or designee must provide a written decision within 10 school days. If the school decides not to amend the record, the school will

provide the parent or eligible student with a written decision. The parent can elevate the request to the Area Office for review. The request to appeal must be submitted in writing to the Area Office and include the building administrator or designee's written decision. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

Please see the information under #5 below for exceptions to the prior written consent rule.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by a PGCPs school to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:
Student Privacy Policy Office | U.S. Department of Education 400
Maryland Avenue, SW | Washington, DC 20202

5. FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations, including disclosures:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within PGCPs whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- To officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is requested for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.
- To certain authorized representatives of federal or State government.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction.
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- The school has designated as "directory information" and listed under #6 below.
- The right to "opt out" of allowing PGCPs to disclose directory information without prior written consent. PGCPs has designated the following information as directory information:
 - Student's name
 - PGCPs-issued email address
 - Telephone listing
 - Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
 - The most recent school attended
 - Dates of attendance
 - Grade level
 - Honors and awards received
 - Enrollment status
 - Participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, etc.

If a parent does not want PGCPs to disclose directory information from a child's education records without prior written consent, the parent must notify the school principal/designee in writing within five (5) business days of receiving the annual notification. The parent's opt out shall be honored for one school year. The parent must re-submit the opt-out notice upon receipt of the annual notification in subsequent school years.

Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

This notice informs parents/guardians and eligible students (emancipated minors or those 18 and older) of their rights regarding conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These rights are spelled out in the *Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment* (20 U.S.C. § 1232h; 34 CFR Part 98). The law and regulations require educational institutions such as PGCPs to notify parents/guardians and eligible students of their right to:

1. Provide or withhold consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (USDE):

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family
- Sexual behavior or attitudes
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior
- Critical appraisals of others with whom participants have close family relationships

- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers
 - Religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or parents/guardians
 - Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility
2. **Receive notice and an opportunity to inspect any third party survey, protected information survey, instrument collecting student information for the purposes of marketing or selling such information, or instructional material used as part of the student’s educational curriculum.**
 3. **Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:**
 - Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 - Any nonemergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance administered by the school or its agent and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for lead, hearing or vision screening or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law; and
 - Any activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

PGCPS developed and adopted administrative procedures regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. PGCPS will directly notify parents/guardians and eligible students of these procedures at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes.

PGCPS also will *directly* notify parents/guardians and eligible students, by U.S. mail or e-mail, at least annually at the start of each school year, of the specific or approximate dates of the following activities, if PGCPS has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time; and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution;
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by USDE; and
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents/guardians and eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with the: Student Privacy Policy Office | U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW | Washington, D.C. 20202-4605 | Phone: 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327)

SECTION 4: Graduation Requirements

Prince George’s County Public Schools’ students must satisfy credit, service learning, and assessment requirements to be eligible for graduation. See **Administrative Procedure 6150 Educational Requirements and Options in Secondary Schools** for detailed information.

Student Service-Learning

Student Service-Learning is a learning experience for students in grades 6 -12 that combines meaningful service to the community with curriculum-based learning. Students improve their academic skills by applying what they learn in school to the real world; they then reflect on their experience to reinforce the link between their service and their learning.

[Only approved activities](#) may qualify for service-learning credit. Students must complete the [student verification form](#) to receive credit. Talk to your child’s Professional School Counselor or the school-based Service-Learning Coordinator assigned to the school.

SECTION 5: Student Attendance

Student Attendance Policy

Students shall be considered in attendance while instruction takes place face to face; on a Prince George’s County Public Schools online campus; or other times when participating in school-sponsored activities during the school day, and when that participation is approved by the Superintendent, the school principal or any persons duly authorized by the Superintendent or principal.

Face to face – students attend classes in the school buildings.

Online Campus – a form of education in which the main elements include physical separation of teachers and students during instruction and the use of various technologies to facilitate student-teacher and student-student communication.

Asynchronous – students learn the same material at different times and locations through online channels without real-time interaction.

Synchronous – students learn the same material at the same time through online or distance education that occurs in real time.

Students Reporting Late to School

It is imperative for students to be on time at the beginning of the school day and on time at the beginning of each class. The official school attendance documentation is recorded during this time. Schools are required to admit students to school regardless of the time they arrive.

However, students who arrive late to school must report first to the appropriate administrative office to obtain a late pass before being admitted to any classroom or other area of the school. This pass must be shown to all of the student's teachers as the student reports to each class during the day, as well as to teachers of any missed classes during the next school day. If the student does not obtain and show the pass to all teachers, the tardy will be UNEXCUSED. Additionally, for the tardiness to be excused, students are required to bring a note from the parent/guardian explaining the reason for the tardiness.

Lawful Absence

Absence from school, including absence for any portion of the day, shall be considered lawful only for the following reasons:

- Death in the immediate family (i.e., parent, guardian, brother, sister, grandparent) or extended family and close non-relative;
- Illness of the student. The principal may require a physician's certificate from the parent/guardian of a student reported absent for illness at least three school days. If the absences reach six days, a physician's certificate will be required;
- Behavioral health needs: The principal or a pupil personnel worker shall require a licensed or certified mental health practitioner's certificate from the parent or guardian of a student reported continuously absent for behavioral health needs;
- Pregnancy and parenting related conditions: absences due to labor, delivery, recovery, prenatal and postnatal medical appointment; absences due to an illness or medical appointment of the student's child (after four days of such absences during a school year a physician's note may be required); a parenting student is allowed a minimum of 10 days excused after the birth of a child; absences due to legal appointments related to family law;
- Court summons;
- Hazardous weather conditions that would endanger the health or safety of the student;
- Work approved or sponsored by the school, the local school system, or the State Department of Education, accepted by the Superintendent or the school principal, or their designees, as reason for excusing the student;
- Observance of a religious holiday;
- State of emergency;
- Suspension;
- Lack of authorized transportation (This shall not include students denied authorized transportation for disciplinary reasons.);
- Health Exclusion, which includes immunizations and other health-related communicable or contagious diseases;
- Absence due to Military Families. A lawful absence shall be granted to a student while visiting with a parent or legal guardian who is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone. Military orders may be requested;
- Mental Health Day – students may receive as an excused absence one (1) day of absence in each semester of each school year for a student's mental health needs. A note from a physician to excuse a student's absence for mental health needs is not required; and
- Other emergency or set of circumstances approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee, including but not limited to: civic engagement (limited to three days); college visits and interviews (limited to three days); and technical issues during approved online instruction only, such as broken equipment or internet outages (limited to five days). The technical issues must be immediately communicated to the student's teacher and designated school staff.

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Absences from class due to use of the lactation space to nurse or express milk will be excused. In addition to Home and Hospital Teaching, pregnant and parenting students may make up work in ways by retaking a semester, participating in an online course credit recovery program, and continuing at the same pace with six extra weeks to complete the semester.

Unlawful Absence/Truancy

Unlawful absence is defined as the act of a student being absent from school for a day or any portion of a day from an individual class for any reason other than those defined as lawful. Teachers are not required to provide make-up work for students when absences are unlawful. Habitual truancy is defined as being unlawfully absent for 20% or more days enrolled during the school year.

Possible Responses for Parents/Guardians for Unlawful Absences of Students

By law, parents/guardians must ensure regular attendance for their school-aged children who are enrolled in the public schools. If a child has excessive unexcused absences, the parent/guardian may be convicted of a misdemeanor and imprisoned or fined by the courts. Additionally, any other adult who persuades or attempts to persuade a student to be unlawfully absent, or who

harbors a child who is unlawfully absent, may also be convicted of a misdemeanor and imprisoned and/or fined.

Available Responses for Students Who Regularly Miss School

- Denial of opportunity to make-up class/homework assignments, tests and/or quizzes (for unlawful absences)
- Referral to Pupil Personnel Services for possible referral to court for violation of the compulsory attendance law or to Juvenile Services for intake services
- Before and/or after school detention
- Behavioral probation
- Written contract
- In-school suspension or intervention
- Saturday School Program
- Removal of school privileges
- Reduction in grades or loss of credit
- Restriction of extracurricular activities
- Referral to an alternative educational program
- Referral to Attendance Committee
- Referral to Student Intervention Team (SIT)
- Referral to community program

SECTION 6: Coping with Problems

School Problems

If you have a problem related to discipline, security, personal safety or vandalism, you should talk to:

- The nearest teacher, security or administrator when there is a discipline or security problem. Explain what happened and seek their guidance.
- The school counselor, psychologist, mental health clinician, pupil personnel worker or social worker to learn ways to deal with problems so you will feel safe and gain the skills to deal with similar problems in the future. If you are having difficulty locating one of these people at your school you can email mentalhealth@pgcps.org and someone will assist you.
- Always talk to your parent/guardian.

Personal Problems

For assistance with personal problems that may impact your school performance or your personal happiness, please discuss the problem with your parent/guardian. Seek the assistance of the school counselor, mental health clinician or any adult that you are comfortable with at your school. They may lead you to resources within the school and/or community. Talk to a peer. Many times fellow students are able to help with problems.

Students may also visit our Mental Health website at <https://www.pgcps.org/offices/student-services/mental-health> to find numbers you should call when you are in immediate crisis.

Medical and Mental Health Problems

Students will have access to telehealth services while in school to support their physical and mental health needs. This initiative is designed to provide timely and convenient access to healthcare professionals, ensuring students can receive necessary medical advice, mental health counseling, and other health-related services without having to leave the school premises. By integrating telehealth into the school environment, we aim to enhance student well-being and academic success. Access can only be allowed with parental consent on file.

Parents may sign up to provide consent to begin telehealth services at the following link: <https://getstarted.hazel.co/district/pgcps>. For additional mental health support, students should see their School Counselor or Mental Health Clinician located within their schools. For further information, they should visit our system's mental health website at <https://www.pgcps.org/offices/student-services/mental-health> or email their questions to mentalhealth@pgcps.org.

Academic Problems

For assistance with an academic problem or grade, students should:

- Talk to their teacher when having difficulty with subjects, making poor grades or need extra assistance. The teacher may ask for a conference with the student and their parent/guardian.

- Seek assistance from the counselor. They can help with finding a peer that can assist you.
- Discuss the academic concern with the assistant principal/principal.

Alternative Education Options for School Completion

Instructional delivery and academic support will be provided through a variety of venues: flexible scheduling; in-person instruction; individualized support and instruction using learning management systems (i.e. Edgenuity, Canvas); synchronous (live and interactive) and asynchronous (self-paced with teacher support) instruction; project-based learning; and Career & Technical Education (CTE).

Non-Traditional Programs:

Non-Traditional North (Grades 9-12) | 2112 Church Road | Bowie, MD 20716

Non-Traditional South (Grades 9-12) | 9400 Surratts Road | Cheltenham, MD 20623

Non-Traditional Middle School (Grades 6-8) | 2001 Shadyside Avenue | Suitland, MD 20746

Physical, Sexual, Mental Abuse

Abuse can happen to any child regardless of race, gender expression, disability, socioeconomic status, religion or culture. No student should be subjected to physical, sexual or mental abuse.

If a student feels they are being abused, the student should contact the school counselor or the school administrator. If a parent feels their child is being abused, the parent should contact the school counselor or the school administrator.

If you have reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect, you must contact your local Department of Social Services or the Police Department. Prince George's Department of Social Services may be reached at their Hot Line 301-909-2450 or during the evenings and weekends at 301-699-8605.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

SECTION 7: PGCPS Behavioral Expectations

PGCPS is committed to providing a safe and orderly learning environment conducive to rigorous instruction. Students must maintain appropriate behaviors at all times whether face-to-face or in an approved online instruction. Setting clear behavior expectations for students is essential for creating a positive and effective learning environment. Outlined below are the key behavior expectations.

Alcohol, Drugs, Controlled Substances and Other Substances

Unlawful possession, use and/or distribution of any Alcohol, Marijuana, Prescription Drugs, Controlled Dangerous Substances, Imitation Controlled Substances, Synthetic Intoxicants, CBD products intended for consumption and ingestion, Inhalants, other Intoxicants including THC and/or K2, on school property, including Board of Education owned vehicles or while in attendance at any Board of Education sponsored and supervised activity, are prohibited under this Code.

Students who possess, use or distribute substances represented as or intended to be used as alcohol or a controlled dangerous substance will be treated by the rules and regulations of these procedures as if they were possessing, using or distributing alcohol or a controlled dangerous substance even though the substance itself may ultimately be determined not to be alcohol or a controlled dangerous substance.

Students who have been trained in the administration of Narcan are permitted to carry Narcan (naloxone) on school premises without fear of disciplinary repercussions. In conjunction with Board Policy 0112, this policy is enacted to ensure the safety and well-being of all students, recognizing the importance of timely intervention in cases of opioid overdose. Students who choose to carry Narcan must do so responsibly and in accordance with school guidelines to ensure it is accessible in emergency situations.

Possession implies that a student has any of the above substances on their person or with their personal property or has under their control by placement of and knowledge of the whereabouts of the substance on Board of Education property or other property on which they are present, by virtue of being within the jurisdiction of school authorities.

Use implies that a student is reasonably known to have ingested any of the above substances (e.g., drinking alcohol, smoking, marijuana, taking a pill, etc.) or is reasonably found to be under the influence of a substance while under the jurisdiction of school authorities.

Distribution implies the transfer of any of the above substances to any other person, with or without the exchange of money or other valuables.

Student Possessor with Intent to Distribute – A student found in possession of alcohol, controlled dangerous substances or other substances listed under the heading Alcohol, Drugs, Controlled Substances and other Substances with the intent to distribute shall be

in violation of a Student Code of Conduct, Level 5 infraction. The intent to distribute may be inferred by the totality of the facts and circumstances of the matter, including, but not limited to, the weight of the substance, the amount of the substance, the packaging, the presence of a scale, cash or paraphernalia, the student’s statement and other witness statements. “Possession” means actual possession, constructive possession or joint possession as defined by Maryland law.

OFFENSE	DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE
FIRST OFFENSE	<p>Any student that is found to have committed a first offense and subsequent offenses for use or possession of alcohol, controlled dangerous substance, drug paraphernalia and/or other substance will immediately receive a Notification of Suspension (short-term suspension).</p> <p>In addition, the student must attend mandatory counseling sessions through the Alternative to Drugs and Alcohol Program (ADAP). The principal designee will provide the student’s parent/guardian with a list of community agencies that can provide the two counseling sessions. The school must call in the violation to the Office of Student Engagement and School Support.</p>
SECOND OFFENSE	<p>If a student commits a second offense under this section, the principal designee will provide the student’s parent/guardian with a list of community agencies that can provide four mandatory counseling sessions.</p> <p>The school must call in the violation to the Office of Student Engagement and School Support. The student must provide to their school and the Office of Student Engagement and School Support documentation stating the counseling appointment dates from the approved agency.</p>
THIRD OFFENSE	<p>If a student commits a third offense under this section, it will result in a referral for more intense counseling services.</p> <p>All students suspended/expelled for alcohol/controlled dangerous substance offenses are to be requested to reveal their source of the alcohol /controlled dangerous substance to the principal.</p>

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI), providing, receiving or viewing answers to quiz or test items or independent assignments. Utilizing books, notes/notebook, mobile devices or other support resources during tests without permission.

Plagiarism means to deliberately present the ideas, work, or statements of another as one’s own, without acknowledgement of the source.

Artificial Intelligence

[Board of Education Policy 0123](#) (Artificial Intelligence) defines Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a system of machine learning that is capable of performing complex and original tasks such as problem-solving, learning, reasoning, understanding natural language, and recognizing patterns in data. AI systems use algorithms, data, and computational power to simulate cognitive functions and make autonomous decisions, enabling them to perform a wide range of tasks and improve their performance over time through learning and adaptation.

Teachers will guide and monitor the use of AI in the classroom setting and during instruction, ensuring that it aligns with Board policies and PGCPs administrative procedures. Inappropriate use of AI in which Board policies and/or PGCPs administrative procedures, or State and federal laws and regulations have been violated, may result in disciplinary action. (Board Policy 0123, pg. 3)

Attack/Assault or Battery of an Adult

Assault is defined as attempting to cause serious physical injury to another person intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly. To demonstrate an assault, there must be (1) an intentional threat or attempt to do bodily harm, (2) the apparent ability to do bodily harm, and (3) result in the immediate placement of a person in fear of bodily harm. No bodily contact is necessary. An assault may be communicated verbally, in writing or online.

Battery is defined as unlawful physical contact with another person without their consent. The contact must be intentional, harmful or offensive.

Unintentional battery may occur when a student unintentionally strikes an adult when the adult is breaking up a fight or other disruptive activity.

Any student who is found to have committed assault or battery (intentional or unintentional) upon an adult at school, on school property, or at a school supervised activity shall be recommended for appropriate disciplinary action up to and including an expulsion. Aggravating factors, including presence of a weapon or injuries sustained, will escalate the response level.

Attack/Fighting

Intentional, harmful or offensive physical contact with another person:

Jumping/Banking – Two or more persons intentionally attack one student;

Fighting – Mutual combat where two students consent by words or actions to fight each other (one versus one)

Breaking and Entering

Unauthorized entry upon a school building with either the intent to commit a Code of Conduct Infraction, including, but not limited to, trespassing, theft and or vandalism or the subsequent commission of a Code of Conduct infraction. 'Breaking' means creating an opening such as breaking or opening a window or pushing open a door. Breaking includes entry by fraud, trick or force. 'Entry' occurs if any part of the student's body enters the structure. A student in violation of this rule is trespassing.

Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation

These issues must be brought to the attention of school administration. Unresolved concerns may be elevated to the Director of Student Services. All types of bullying, harassment or intimidation are reported.

What Is Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation?

Bullying is unwanted, demeaning behavior among students that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated or is highly likely to be repeated over time. To be considered bullying, the behavior must be intentional and include (1) an imbalance of power (students who bully use their physical, emotional, social or academic power to control, exclude, or harm others) and (2) repetition (bullying behaviors happen more than once or are highly likely to be repeated based on evidence gathered). Bullying can occur through verbal, physical or written conduct or electronic communication that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's physical or psychological well-being.

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, tablets or other electronic communication. Cyberbullying can occur through texting, apps, or online via social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting or sharing negative, harmful, false, or hurtful content about another student. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. "Electronic communication" means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager.

Harassment includes actual or perceived negative actions that offend, ridicule, or demean another student with regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, gender expression, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability, or disability.

Intimidation is any communication or action directed against another student that threatens or induces a sense of fear and/or inferiority. Retaliation may be considered a form of intimidation.

What to Do If You Are Bullied, Harassed or Intimidated

- Report the behavior to any adult.
- Tell the bully to stop. Be firm and clear.
- Complete and submit the online [Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation \(BHI\) form](#) via the Bullying Reporting App at stopbullying.pgcps.org.

Students may seek guidance, support and/or advocacy in addressing matters related to bullying, harassment or intimidation.

Who Reports Allegations of Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation?

Anyone can report allegations of bullying, harassment and intimidation. Students, parents, teachers, school administration, other staff, school volunteers or the community-at-large must report these behaviors.

How Do I Report Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation?

All reports are to be submitted digitally via the Online Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reporting App. Reports must be promptly and appropriately investigated by school administrators/designee, consistent with due process rights, using the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Incident School Investigation form within two (2) school days after receipt of a report. Submission of a report may be made via a web link by entering stopbullying.pgcps.org into any internet browser, or visit the Apple App Store or Android Google Play Store using the search terms "PGCPS iStopbullying" to download to your mobile device.

What Happens After the Report Is Submitted?

Once the report is submitted to the school, the administration or the administrative designee will promptly and appropriately conduct an investigation. Findings of the investigation will be documented on the Bullying, Harassments or Intimidation Incident School Investigation form. The school will notify parents of the targeted student and the offender of the outcome of the investigation once the investigation has been completed. The notification must respect the confidentiality of the targeted student and the offender; therefore, specific information related to disciplinary consequences will not be provided (See Administrative Procedure 5143 Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation). If bullying, harassment or intimidation is substantiated, the school team should develop a plan of support for both targeted student and alleged offender.

Disrespect and Disruption

Before a discipline consequence is assigned to a student for an act of disrespect or disruption, administrators must confer with the student or school counselor to assess whether the student has experienced a recent traumatic or distressing event (family displacement, sudden death, etc. that either may have contributed to the student's behavior or contributed to the perception that the student is being disrespectful. If it is determined that there is an intervening cause of the behavior or perceived behavior, administrators must ensure the student receives the necessary counseling support.

Disrespect is to willfully intimidate, insult, and/or negative interaction by use of body language, verbally or in writing to any member of the school staff, student body or community; or the refusal or willful failure to respond to or carry out a reasonable request by authorized school personnel.

Disruption is talking out in class; throwing objects; picking on, bothering or teasing other students; inappropriate or unauthorized use of PEDs; and other behavior that distracts from student learning; directly instigating or prompting others to cause a disruption.

DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS	
FIRST INCIDENT OF DISRESPECT OR DISRUPTION	A student may: (1) Write a letter of apology to the teacher or participate in restorative conversation.
SECOND INCIDENT OF DISRESPECT OR DISRUPTION	A student may: (1) Receive an in-school suspension; and (2) Participate in social emotional learning (SEL) course with documented completion; and (3) Write a letter of apology to the teacher or participate in restorative conversation.
THIRD INCIDENT OF DISRESPECT OR DISRUPTION	A student may: (1) Receive a short-term out of school suspension; (2) Attend two evening counseling center sessions with parents; and (3) Write a letter of apology to the teacher; or (4) Participate in restorative conversation; and attend a session with the counselor or clinician upon their return. Note: Students should be referred to the Student Intervention Team. Consider conducting a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) for repeaters and create a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).
FOURTH INCIDENT OF DISRESPECT OR DISRUPTION	A student may: (1) Receive a long term out of school suspension; and (2) Loss of extracurricular activities, sports, etc. that require adult sponsorship; or (3) Consideration of administrative transfer to non-traditional programs. Note: Student's previous referral to the Student Intervention Team should be revisited. (Is the Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) still in progress or completed? Is the Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) being followed or effective?)

EXAMPLES OF EGREGIOUS ACTS OF DISRESPECT

VERBAL ABUSE	Includes but is not limited to a student repeatedly uses of offensive (e.g., sexually inappropriate, racially discriminatory, etc.) language and derogatory remarks toward a teacher or adult in the building and/or during a lesson; derogatory remarks about a person's race, gender, or appearance; speaking loudly, aggressively, and/or challenging the authority of the staff member, especially in a way meant to undermine their position and/or invade staff's personal space.
PUBLIC HUMILIATION	Includes but is not limited to such statements/behaviors as mocking or imitating a teacher's accent, attacking their teaching methods in class; spreading false rumors; sharing private information; or placing staff pictures on social media with comments.
INSUBORDINATION/ BLATANT DEFIANCE	Behavior or statements to refuse multiple direction/redirection from staff, including but not limited to refusals to turn over contraband, lower hoods, remove hats, etc. or refusing to enter class or walking out of class.
SCHOOLWIDE DISRESPECT/ DISRUPTION	During assemblies, school events, or any school setting outside the classroom, engaging in inappropriate behavior or statements, including but not limited to heckling, shouting, inappropriate gestures, starting/or inciting fights.
IMPACT TO THE TESTING ENVIRONMENT	Failure to adhere to assessment protocols which impacts the testing environment of others.
DISRUPTING SCHOOLWIDE SAFETY PROTOCOLS	Failure to follow directives and evacuation procedures during significant safety drills (fire, evacuation, earthquake, lockdown, etc.)

Egregious and repeated acts of disrespect or disruption would be escalated to the next level of disciplinary consequences.

Dress Code

Students attending PGCPs should dress appropriately and in a way that is consistent with learning being a priority. Students are expected to adhere to policies governing attire, except for attire required by a religious organization. Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in a discipline violation.

DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS

CLEAR BACKPACKS	Clear backpacks are required for 9th through 12th graders and students in the Non-Traditional Programs (North, South and Middle). Students may carry a small, non-clear pouch in their backpack to hold personal items, such as cellphones, money and hygiene products. At present, clear backpacks are optional for students in grades 6-8.
HEAD DRESS	Head dress may be worn indoors for religious or health reasons only.
SHOES	Shoes must be worn.
SHIRTS & BLOUSES	Shirts and blouses should be continuous from neckline to waist. The mid-section should never be visible. Tank tops and muscle shirts are not allowed. Clothing with vulgar language, obscene pictures, weapons, drugs/alcohol, drug paraphernalia, or tobacco products are not allowed. Identifiable gang/crew clothing or paraphernalia are not allowed. Sheer clothing is not allowed.
SKIRTS, DRESSES & SHORTS	Skirts, dresses, and shorts must be no higher than the student's fingertips when the student's arms are hanging straight down at the student's side.
PANTS	Pants should be secured at the waist. Pants should not be worn below the waist exposing undergarments. Tights, stretch pants, leggings and spandex body suits must be worn with clothing long enough to cover the buttocks.

Extortion/Shakedown/Robbery

Taking property, or attempting to do so, or conspiring to do so, from someone else or from their presence and control, by force or threat of force, including, but not limited to, verbal threats, physical threats, use or display of a weapon, or other forms of intimidation. This includes force or threat of force used to frighten another into relinquishing control of property.

Firearm Possession or Use

Students are prohibited from bringing firearms to school. A firearm in this section means a firearm as defined by 18 U.S.C. 921 and includes antique firearms: (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a

projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device, including but not limited to 'ghost guns.'

Gambling

Gambling is defined as the illegal betting for money or valuables and is prohibited on school property.

Gangs, Gang Activity and Similar Destructive or Illegal Behavior

Gangs, gang activity and similar destructive or illegal behaviors are prohibited under the Code of Student Conduct, in accordance with The Safe Schools Act of 2010. A student may not threaten an individual, or a friend or family member of an individual, with use of physical force or violence to coerce, induce or solicit the individual to participate in or prevent the individual from leaving a criminal gang; a) in a school vehicle, or b) in or within 1000 feet of real property owned or leased by the Board of Education.

A student criminally charged with participating in a criminal street gang may automatically be remanded to an alternative education program by the court. When said behavior might substantially disrupt the educational environment, the school will provide the family with a list of community resources and proceed with a school transfer. Behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- Gang recruitment
- Gang initiation (hazing)
- Group fighting
- Bullying
- Bias harassment
- Defacing school property with gang graffiti
- Throwing gang signs
- Threatening to retaliate against a student or staff for reporting said behavior

A gang or criminal gang for the purposes of this Handbook is 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 as 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

Guns, Other Weapons

Students are prohibited from bringing any look-alike guns (water or toy guns) or non-firearm guns (pellet guns, BB guns, airsoft gun, gel blaster, or weapons: possessing an implement that is likely to cause serious bodily harm) on school property. Students in violation will be subject to disciplinary action.

Reportable Offenses (formerly Community Offenses)

Notice of a reportable offense, as defined in COMAR 13A.08.01.17, cannot be the only basis for the suspension, reassignment, or expulsion of a student from school. School administrators, with parent/guardian input, will determine whether a student's presence in the home school creates a safety and/or security risk and develop the appropriate educational program. Appropriate educational programming and related services will be provided to an identified student with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and corresponding state law.

Search of Students

The principal, assistant principal, or school security staff may make a reasonable search of a student on school grounds or on a school-sponsored trip if the teacher has a reasonable belief that the student has in the student's possession an item, the possession of which is a criminal offense under state law or a violation of a Board policy or PGCPs administrative procedure. Additionally, a principal may designate, in writing, a teacher who may conduct reasonable searches while students are on a school-sponsored trip if the teacher he/she has a reasonable belief that a student has possession of an item, the possession of which is a criminal offense or a violation of other state law or PGCPs policies or PGCPs administrative procedures.

Authorized personnel conducting a search of the student's person, possessions, locker or assigned personal space will make a reasonable effort to inform and explain the basis of the search to the student. Illegal items that are seized will be turned over to law enforcement personnel. All other items will be returned to the student or parent/guardian within a reasonable period of time. COMAR 13A.08.01.14, Board Policy 5120 – Search and Seizure.

Sexual Harassment

Any conduct that violates Administrative Procedure 0104 - Title IX Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Sex against students or staff is inappropriate. Conduct that is of a sexual nature may include overt sexual solicitation, inappropriate touching, sexual jokes and inquiries about a person's sex life, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation. This includes unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment also includes acts that are not overtly

sexual, but are directed at individuals based on their gender, such as gender specific profanity or rude behavior.

Sexual Misconduct

Sexual harassment – e.g., unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature

Sexual misconduct – e.g., indecent exposure, engaging in sexual activity, soliciting, and sexting

Sexual attack – any physical, non-consensual offensive physical contact with another for the purpose of sexual gratification where the student knew or should have known the contact was non-consensual at the time contact was made. Contact with an intimate area of the body shall be presumed to be for the purpose of sexual gratification.

Social Media

PGCPS ordinarily does not govern the personal use of technology outside of school. However, in instances where the use of social media has a direct effect on the order of the school, including but not limited to, creating an actual, potential or perceived threat to students, staff or administration within the school environment and/or interfering with the educational process and/or the safety of the school environment – including but not limited to, the school campus, PGCPs vehicles and school activities – the school reserves the right to apply disciplinary action in accordance with this Handbook.

Social media misuse includes internet/computer and the misuse of other electronic devices that may have the impact of substantially disrupting the educational environment. Social media is inclusive of, but not limited to, web-based and mobile technologies, social networking sites, blogs, instant messaging, X (formerly Twitter), social blogs and video-based sites such as YouTube. The most common misuse of social media is cyberbullying. When cyberbullying takes the form of harassment of a protected characteristic, it may be prosecuted as a violation of a person's civil rights. Parents are strongly encouraged to monitor their child's use of social media outside of school, which may impact their child's or other student's educational opportunities.

Violations of the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, Board Policies, or Administrative Procedures pertaining to social media may result in a disciplinary response. Complete guidelines for the acceptable use of technology are contained in Administrative Procedure 5180 - Student Use of Social Media in Schools.

Technology

The increasing availability of technology creates both opportunities and risks for students. Since the potential for harm from the misuse of technology is significant, PGCPs has established guidelines by which students can use technology in a legal, safe, productive, and ethical manner.

Google Apps for Education is a free service to PGCPs students that includes the use of email, calendars, documents and sites through the convenience of a web browser. Students can communicate with teachers and peers, use easy to manage to-do-lists, access a calendar to keep dates organized, participate in online discussion boards and access online spreadsheets, documents and presentations. For safety and security reasons, students' communication is limited to other PGCPs students and staff only.

All use of technology under these guidelines is to be for legitimate educational purposes under the guidance or direction of school system staff. The following conduct is prohibited while using the PGCPs network:

- Utilize the PGCPs computer network for any illegal activity, including, but not limited to, gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to resources, files or devices on the network;
- Access "chat lines" or enter "chat rooms" that are not part of a class activity under the direct supervision of a teacher;
- Access or link to websites that contain material deemed vulgar, offensive, or otherwise inappropriate, including, but not limited to, websites promoting hatred, racial/religious/sexual discrimination, use of illegal drugs/alcohol/tobacco, gaming or gambling, criminal activities or computer/network hacking;
- Use or display copyrighted or otherwise licensed or contractual material without specific written permission or authorization from the appropriate party;
- Utilize the network for commercial purposes or display any logo of any commercial entity not directly related to PGCPs;
- Post, use or download any files which cause congestion or impede network operations;
- Utilize technology, including AI, to misrepresent themselves or someone else, including the creation of deepfakes and/or any video, audio or digitally altered images of face, body, or voice to misrepresent or falsely share information;
- Trespass in or vandalize another's files, folders, data or work;
- Post anonymous messages or in any way misrepresent one's own identity;
- Use an account password of another user;
- Use abusive, harassing or otherwise objectionable language in any message;
- Use e-mail or any portion of the PGCPs Wide Area Network (WAN) to promote the annoyance, harassment, bullying, or attacking of students or staff members;
- Take or facilitate the theft or damage of data, equipment or intellectual property, including degrading or disrupting equipment or system performance; or

- Copy licensed software, download or copy files without permission;
- Capture images of other students or staff from another device;
- Use inappropriate screensavers and inappropriate background settings; or
- Intentionally damage technology.

Consequences for misuse may include, but are not limited to, suspension of equipment access, confiscation of the technological device, disciplinary action commensurate with the level of misconduct and/or legal action as appropriate. Complete guidance for the acceptable use of technology is contained in Administrative Procedure 0700.

Students shall:

- Know their login information
- Report virtually to their scheduled class on time
- Be respectful to adults and peers
- Follow PGCPs technology equipment user agreement
- Follow Use of Technology guidelines (provided in this Handbook)

Threat

A threat is an expression of an intent to cause physical harm to someone. The threat may be expressed or communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means; and is considered a threat regardless of whether it is observed by or communicated directly to the target of the threat or observed by or communicated to a third party; and regardless of whether the target of the threat is aware of the threat. Threats may be direct (“I am going to beat you up.”), indirect (“I’m going to get him.”) or conditional (“Give me your money or you will regret it.”).

Threat of Mass Violence

A threat of mass violence is a threat which would cause a reasonable person to fear that an act intended to kill or injure multiple people in the same site or location would be committed at or near the time the threat is communicated:

- The site or location where the crime is threatened has a significant drop in attendance; or
- Persons located at the site or location where the threatened act was to occur are directed to shelter in place until the threat is investigated; or
- The site or location where the threatened act was to occur is temporarily evacuated until the threat is investigated.

The threat assessment team will conduct a threat assessment through appropriate student interviews and record reviews.

Tobacco, Nicotine Products & Vaping

It is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct for students to use or possess any tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to, vaping products on school property. Vaping and use of vaping paraphernalia shall be presumed to be used to ingest tobacco, tobacco products unless there is a preponderance of evidence that another substance was ingested or intended to be ingested in the school using vape paraphernalia.

OFFENSE	DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE
FIRST OFFENSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental notification by referring administrator; • Administrative referral to Office of Student Engagement and School Support; and • Completion of an appropriate tobacco education program provided by the Office of Student Engagement and School Support no later than four weeks from the date of the code violation.
SECOND OFFENSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental notification by referring administrator; • Administrative referral to Office of Student Engagement and School Support; • Parent/guardian conference; and • Student and parent/guardian will complete the Anti-Tobacco Use Program (ATUP) no later than four weeks from the date of the code violation.
THIRD OFFENSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental notification by referring administrator; • Administrative referral to Office of Student Engagement and School Support; • Parent/guardian conference; and • Student and the parent/guardian will complete the Anti-Tobacco Use Program (ATUP) no later than four weeks from the date of the code violation.
FOURTH AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES	Thereafter, for offenses beyond the third infraction of this section, it will result in a referral for more intense counseling.

Transportation and Bus Behavior

Riding the school bus is an integral part of the school day for many students, and directives in this Code apply fully to students when they ride the bus. Riding the bus is a privilege. This privilege may be temporarily denied or permanently revoked if misconduct

jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus or the safety of students and/or staff riding the bus. Students on school buses will be subject to audiovisual camera surveillance with posted notification. Audiovisual recordings may be used as part of an investigation in a student discipline matter on the bus. School suspension is a possible option. Students are expected to observe the following rules for safety and courtesy on the bus.

At the Bus Stop

- Use your assigned bus stop.
- Wait in a quiet and orderly manner.
- Be aware, cautious and respectful of traffic.
- Respect private property.
- Avoid pushing.

Boarding the Bus

- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Make sure the bus warning lights are activated before boarding.
- Board the bus when it is safe to do so.
- Avoid pushing and crowding.
- Upon entering the bus, go directly to an available or assigned seat and remain seated until the bus arrives at the school or your stop.
- Do not use Portable Electronic Devices (PEDs) while boarding the bus.

Riding the Bus

- Follow the instructions or directives of the bus driver and/or aide (if applicable).
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- Stay in your seat; keep aisles and exits clear.
- Keep your hands, arms, legs, head and other objects inside of the bus window.
- Avoid the use of foul language or profanity.
- Be respectful of the rights and safety of others.
- PEDs may be used on the bus if it does not impact the safe operation of the bus. Avoid taking pictures, videos, passing PEDs around, or using PEDs while it is dark outside if the PED light causes distraction to the bus driver.

Exiting the Bus

- Remain in your seat until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Do not use PEDs while exiting the bus.
- Exit the bus in an orderly and prompt manner.
- Exit at your assigned bus stop.
- Use care when crossing a street controlled by bus warning lights.

Trespassing

Trespassing for the purposes of this Handbook includes the following:

- Any student, who while serving a suspension, has an unauthorized presence on any PGCPs property, after being warned not to come onto school property;
- Any student who enters a school building or school campus and knows or should have known that they are not permitted to enter the school building or school campus has committed a trespass; or unauthorized presence on school property after being warned to leave;
- Any student who facilitates the unauthorized entry of another into a school building at a point of entry other than the school's designated point of entry, which includes propping doors open;
- Any student who commits a Code of Conduct violation while trespassing; or
- Facilitating unauthorized entry of another resulting in fighting, weapons possession, firearm possession, theft, threats, drugs/tobacco/alcohol and/or a material disruption to the school (Level 5).

Weapons or Instruments Used as Such (Possession and/or Use)

The Board of Education strongly believes that any student found in violation of this section will serve an extended suspension or be expelled by the Superintendent. A weapon or instrument used as such is one intended to cause bodily harm, and includes but is not

limited to, switchblade knife, hunting knife, folding knife, razor, brass knuckles, any mace derivative, tear gas, pepper spray, box cutter.

- For students enrolled in grades 3 through 5, the principal may use discretion as to responses for possession or use of a weapon.
- For students enrolled in grades 6 through 12, principals may make a request for expulsion to the Superintendent for the possession or use of a weapon by any student.



SECTION 8: Disciplinary Interventions & Strategies

Discipline should be both corrective and instructive and designed to foster growth and understanding in the student. Appropriate responses to misbehavior are determined by the age and maturity of the student. While there are instances in which formal disciplinary measures must be used, teachers and administrators are encouraged to develop and utilize a variety of informal disciplinary and guidance strategies to maintain effective learning conditions. These strategies may include but are not limited to:

504 Team: A multidisciplinary team responsible for identifying, evaluating and monitoring the provision of accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The 504 team is composed of individuals knowledgeable about the student, disabilities, evaluation procedures, and placement options. The school-based team serves to ensure that students with disabilities are provided the same educational access to school curriculum, activities and programs as their non-disabled peers through reasonable accommodations and services.

Affective Statements: An informal process, usually an "I" statement that shares observations and feelings conveying how a behavior affects someone. This process can be used with both positive and negative behaviors. If responding to a negative behavior, an affective statement also shares the needs and requests in order to express the desired behavior. Affective statements teach empathy.

After-School/Extracurricular Activities: Revoking a student's right to participate in extracurricular activities, including sports and clubs.

Alternatives to Drugs and Alcohol Program (ADAP): ADAP is an educational resource for the violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Students who have been suspended for alcohol or other drug offenses are required to participate in this program with their parents/guardians.

Anti-Tobacco Use Program (ATUP): ATUP is a consequence for violation of the Code of Student Conduct prohibiting the sale, use, and/or possession of tobacco in any form by students at all times on school property and school-sponsored activities. Students and parents/guardians are required to participate.

Behavioral Intervention Plan: An approach to correcting inappropriate or disruptive student behavior through a plan designed by school staff to offer positive behavioral interventions, strategies and supports. This plan is appropriate for students with and without disabilities.

Behavioral Probation: The principal designee may place any student who has been involved in an act of Level 1, 2, 3 or 4 misconduct on behavioral probation in addition to, or instead of, suspension. School personnel must, however, perform an investigation of the situation; provide formal notice to the student and parent/guardian, and an opportunity for a parent/guardian conference. Behavioral probation should be for a definite period during which critical examination and evaluation of the student's progress is to take place.

Cafeteria Duty/In-School Work Detail: Students participate in a school-based activity that requires the student to spend time on a beautification project in the school or on school grounds.

Community Conferencing: Allows students, school staff and others involved in a conflict to discuss the conflict and to propose solutions.

Community Service: Allows students to participate in activities to serve and benefit the community. Examples include working at a soup kitchen, cleaning up public spaces, helping at a health facility, etc.

Conference: Involves students, parents, guardians, teachers, school staff and principals in discussion about student misbehavior and potential solutions that address social, academic and personal issues related to the behavior.

Conflict Resolution: An attempt to resolve individual/group conflicts by actively communicating information about their conflicting motives or ideologies to the rest of the group by engaging in collective negotiation. The goal is to empower students to take responsibility for peacefully resolving conflicts.

Detention Hall: The principal, or teacher upon approval by the principal, may establish a Detention Hall. The Detention Hall shall meet daily, or as needed, before or after regular school hours, with the time for each session determined by the administrator.

The Detention Hall shall serve as an alternative to a suspension for students who have been involved in persistent minor Level I or Level II disciplinary infractions. The Detention Hall may be organized to serve the needs of each individual school.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team: A group of individuals who are responsible for identifying and evaluating students with disabilities; developing, reviewing and revising IEPs for students with disabilities, as well as developing, reviewing and revising Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavioral Intervention Plans; and determining the placement of students with disabilities in a least restrictive environment.

In-School Suspension: In-school suspension is when the administrator determines that a student's conduct warrants removal from class but not the school building. Removing the student within the school building from the student's educational program for up to but not more than 10 days in a school year for disciplinary reasons by the school principal. The school principal will provide the parent with a written notification of the in-school suspension.

Manifestation Determination: Is applicable to students with known and suspected disabilities, including but not limited to students with Individualized Education Plans and 504 Accommodations. COMAR Md. Code Regs. Section 13A.08.03.08 - Manifestation Determination.

The IEP team shall meet to determine whether a student's behavior that resulted in a disciplinary removal is a manifestation of the student's disability each time the student is subject to a removal:

- As set forth in Regulation .03B of this chapter;
- That constitutes a change of placement in accordance with Regulation .05 of this chapter; or
- To an interim alternative educational setting in accordance with Regulation .06 of this chapter.

The IEP team shall meet within 10 school days of the date when school personnel take disciplinary action for the removal of a student with a disability as set forth in §A of this regulation to determine:

- Whether the student's behavior that resulted in disciplinary removal is a manifestation of the student's disability; and
- The services to be provided during the removal in accordance with Regulation .06C of this chapter to ensure the provision of FAPE.

Parent Outreach: Requires school staff to inform parents/guardians of their child's behavior and seek their assistance in correcting inappropriate or disruptive behavior. Outreach made in writing or by telephone is intended to make parents aware of the student's behavior, task completion and achievement, and can include a request for parents to accompany students to school for a portion of the day or all day. Parent Shadowing Involves parent/guardian participating in a shadowing experience by accompanying their child to class(es) for a specified period of time.

Police Contact or Report to Law Enforcement/Juvenile Justice System: Reporting a student to law enforcement or to the juvenile justice system. Schools must only refer a student to law enforcement when the immediate safety of the student and/or other school community members is threatened. This generally occurs in only the most serious and extreme acts of criminal activity. Parents/guardians must be immediately contacted.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS): An initiative that uses data to enhance the capacity of schools to educate all students by developing research-based, school-wide and classroom discipline systems.

Peer Mediation: Conflict resolution techniques in which students help other students deal with and develop solutions to conflicts.

Referral to the Office of Student Engagement and School Support: Occurs for behavior related to alcohol, tobacco and/or substance abuse.

Referral to School-Based Services: Referral to school counselor, pupil personnel worker, health care provider or social worker. Sessions can be individual, include family members or done in groups.

Reflective Essay: Students are assigned a writing activity to reflect on the behavior that disrupted the learning environment. The assignment requires the student to address the incident and identify ways to handle a like situation in the future.

Restorative Approaches: When implemented in schools, creates a positive climate and culture that is inherently just, and socially and racially equitable. Restorative approaches build relationships, prevent and repair harm due to conflict and inappropriate behavior through dialogue in the form of individual and/or collective accountability to promote safe school environments for students, staff members, and families.

RA includes all stakeholders (students, staff members, families and community partners) in the process to build and maintain a sense of belonging, safety, and social responsibility in the school community. These approaches build the capacity for people to engage with one another in a way that fosters respect, dignity and mutual concern for all.

Restorative Circle: Circles used to address and repair harm due to minor conflict that happens due to inappropriate behavior or situations. It allows for all people involved to be supported and reach agreements on how to move forward.

Restorative Conversations/Chats: One to one or small group setting to resolve lower level incidents between 2-3 people. Restorative conversations allow people to communicate with and listen to others empathetically.

Saturday School: Requires students to attend school for a specified period on Saturday to complete academic assignments and/or participate in a school-based beautification project.

Schedule Adjustments: Requires a change in all or part of a student's schedule. School-based administrators will recommend options to meet the needs of individual students.

Student Intervention Team (SIT) and Student Support Team (SST): Both the SIT and SST are school-based committees charged with helping the school provide all students with the opportunity to learn and progress in the general curriculum. Both teams recognize that parents/guardians are critical partners in student success and must be consulted throughout the process. Teachers, parents, staff, and students themselves can request the assistance of the SIT and/or SST.

Teen Court: Referring students to a "court" of peer jurors for resolution.

Temporary Removal from Class: Removing a student within the school building from their regular education program.

SECTION 9: Disciplinary Response Levels

The Level of Responses and Interventions chart is used to correct inappropriate behavior and actions of PGCPs students. If interventions are successful, a referral to the school administrator may not be necessary. These interventions aim to teach, correct and replace behaviors so students can learn and demonstrate safe and respectful behaviors. Staff members are encouraged to implement a variety of teaching and classroom management strategies.

Staff members are encouraged to implement various levels of responses and interventions with students at all times during regularly scheduled schools hours. In addition, this procedure applies while a student is located on or off school property during field trips, school sponsored events, athletic functions, while being transported on PGCPs vehicles and during any other school related extracurricular activity.

Administrators are encouraged to use the lowest Level of Response to address inappropriate behavior. Serious behaviors that are deemed harmful to the safe and orderly environment of the school will be addressed at the highest level.

Response Level 1

These responses aim to teach and correct inappropriate behavior so students can learn, act respectfully and contribute to a safe environment. The classroom teacher or counselor will correct the behavior of the student committing a minor offense. Teachers are encouraged to try a variety of teaching and classroom management strategies. This response can be used when the student has no history of prior incidents.

Interventions

- Contact parent via telephone, e-mail or text message
- Conduct a teacher or student conference
- Correct and provide verbal redirection in the classroom
- Establish the buddy teacher system (placing a student in temporary time out in another classroom)
- Develop a daily behavior progress sheet
- Take time with a student to reflect on the behavior or allow the student to apologize
- Remove classroom privileges from a student (does not include recess)
- Reassign the student's classroom seat
- Referral to School Instructional Team (SIT)
- Referral to IEP/504 team (students with disabilities)
- Restorative approaches (affective statements, restorative chat)
- Referral to Professional School Counselor or Mental Health Clinician

Response Level 2

The administrator, pupil personnel worker or counselor will work with the student to correct the behavior of the student committing the violation. This level will be appropriate for incidents that are inappropriate and disruptive to the learning environment. These responses address the potential implications for future harm while keeping the student in school.

Interventions

- Change in schedule or class
- Reprimand by appropriate administrator
- Parent/guardian notification
- Mentoring Program
- Revision to IEP/504 plan (for students with disabilities)
- Loss of privileges
- In-school suspension
- Detention
- Referral to Pupil Personnel Worker
- Restitution
- Conflict resolution and community conferencing
- Assignment of work projects
- Referral to Professional School Counselor or Mental Health Clinician
- Referral to community organizations
- Referral to School Psychologist
- Referral to School Instructional Team (SIT)
- Referral to IEP/504 team (students with disabilities)
- Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/Behavioral Intervention Plan
- Restorative approaches (restorative conversation/chat)
- In-school intervention

Response Level 3

If a student disrupts the school environment and/or school-related activities, a short-term suspension of one-three days may be given by the principal to a student committing the violation because of the severity of the behavior. The duration of the short-term removal is to be limited as much as practicable while adequately addressing the behavior through the use of interventions and responses.

Interventions

- Notify parent/guardian
- Referral to IEP/504 team (students with disabilities)
- Referral to Professional School Counselor or Mental Health Clinician
- Revision to IEP/504 plan (students with disabilities) as needed
- Referral to Office of Student Engagement and School Support
- Referral to Pupil Personnel Worker
- Referral to School Instructional Team (SIT)
- Referral to community organizations
- Referral to Student Support Team (SST)
- Develop/Revise Functional Behavioral Assessment
- Assessment/Behavioral Intervention Plan
- Referral to School Psychologist
- Beautification Project
- In-school suspension
- Short-term suspension (1-3 days)
- Restorative approaches (restorative conversations/chats, restorative circle)
- Professional school counselor, mental health clinician or school psychologist completes a [Suspension Re-Entry Check-In](#)

Response Level 4

Long-Term Suspension (4-10 days) – Appropriate for behavior that significantly disrupts the educational environment in the school, on the bus or at school activities and affects the safety of others. These responses focus on the safety of the school community and ending self-destructive and serious behaviors. In addition to Response Level 1-3 Interventions:

Interventions

- Notify parent/guardian
- Referral to Professional School Counselor or Mental Health Clinician
- Functional Behavioral Assessment
- Behavioral Intervention Plan
- Community conferencing or mediation
- Referral to community organizations
- Referral to Office of Student Engagement and School Support
- Referral to IEP/504 team (students with disabilities) for manifestation determination
- Alternative Programs
- Suspension Request (long-term 4-10 days)
- Alternative Administrative Services
- Restorative approaches (restorative circle, community conference)
- Professional school counselor, mental health clinician or school psychologist completes a [Suspension Re-Entry Check-In](#)

Response Level 5

These responses involve the removal of a student from the school environment for over 10 days because of the severity of the behavior. A student may be removed and/or referred to a Disciplinary Alternative Program or transferred to another Prince George's County public school for behavior that seriously disrupts the educational environment in the school, the bus or at a school activity that affects the safety of others.

Interventions

- Referral to Professional School Counselor or Mental Health Clinician
- Behavioral Intervention Plan
- Referral to community organizations
- Community Conferencing
- Referral to Office of Student Engagement and School Support
- Referral to IEP/504 team (students with disabilities) for manifestation determination
- Alternative educational placement
- Behavioral Threat Assessment
- Extended suspension (between 11 and 45 days)
- Expulsion (45 days or longer; to be considered in most extreme cases)

Note: In accordance with COMAR 13A.08.01.12-1, and the Annotated Code of Maryland, Criminal Law Article, § 4-102, when a student is expelled for possession or use of a firearm, the student shall remain out of school for a minimum of one year. After one year, the student, or the parent/guardian, acting for the student, may apply to the Superintendent for readmission.

Pre-K - Grade 2 Disciplinary Response Levels

Suspension and expulsion of students in Pre-K through Grade 2 is limited by state law and regulation. Md. Code Ann., Educ. 7-305.1; COMAR 13A.08.01.11. Principals/designees must (1) consult with a school psychologist or other mental health professionals (2) to determine if there is an imminent threat of serious harm to other students or staff that (3) cannot be reduced or eliminated through other interventions and supports.

The Suspension Checklist: Pre K - Grade 2 must be completed by the school administrator and be uploaded to the Google form. If all measures have been exhausted, the child's suspension cannot exceed five school days. Students in Pre-K through Grade 2 may only be expelled as allowed by Federal law.

Pre-K - Grade 2 Interventions

- Behavior Contract
- Behavior Intervention Plan
- Check in, check out
- Code of Conduct lessons
- Conference with parent/guardian
- Crisis Prevention and Intervention (CPI)
- De-escalation
- Functional Behavioral Assessment

- In-school intervention
- Meeting with mental health professional
- Notify parent/guardian
- Parent shadowing
- Positive Behavior and Supports (PBIS)
- Referral to school-based student support
- Referral to Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 team
- Referral to community-based services
- Restorative approaches
- Review of class rules
- Safety plan
- School-based mentoring
- Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (SEFEL)
- Threat Assessment

SECTION 10: Overview of Out-of-School Suspensions

COMAR 13A.08.01.11 – Disciplinary Action, provides regulatory guidance on the authority to impose out-of-school suspensions for student disciplinary consequences. Out-of-school suspension may be appropriate when other interventions and disciplinary measures have been exhausted or deemed ineffective in addressing student behavior that poses a threat to the safety of others or disrupts the learning environment. COMAR 13A.08.01.11(A)(6) requires that student exclusion is utilized as a last resort option and is limited to the shortest period practicable.

Students with IEPs and students who have or may have a disability who are recommended for suspension or expulsion - students may be entitled to have a manifestation determination meeting to review whether the behavior that led to the suspension recommendation was related to a disability.

Short-Term Suspension

A short-term suspension denies a student the right to attend school and to take part in any school function for a period of 1-3 school days.

Procedure for Disputing a Short-Term Suspension

If a parent disputes the issuance of a short-term suspension, the parent shall contact the Pupil Personnel Worker within five days of the student's first day of suspension. The Pupil Personnel Worker shall meet with the principal to review the circumstances of the suspension and, if appropriate, meet with the principal and parent together to resolve the request for a review.

Long-Term Suspension

A long-term suspension denies a student the right to attend school and to take part in any school function for 4-10 school days.

Procedure for Disputing a Long-Term Suspension

A review of a long-term suspension shall not serve to delay the suspension. If a parent disputes the issuance of a long-term suspension, the parent shall contact the Pupil Personnel Worker within five days of the student's first day of suspension. The Pupil Personnel Worker shall meet with the principal to review the circumstances of the suspension and, if appropriate, meet with the principal and parent.

Extended Suspension

An extended suspension is the exclusion of a student from the regular school program for a period between 11 and 45 school days. The Superintendent's designee for issuing final decisions on extended suspensions is the Office of Appeals and Hearings. An extended suspension may be granted if:

- The student's return to school prior to the completion of the suspension would pose an imminent threat of serious harm to other students and/or staff; or
- The student has engaged in a chronic and extreme disruption of the educational process that has created a substantial barrier to learning for other students across the school day and other available and appropriate behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted.

Expulsion

An expulsion from school denies students the right to attend their regular school program for 45 school days or longer. The Superintendent's designee for issuing final decisions on expulsions is the Office of Appeals and Hearings. An expulsion may occur only if:

- The student has violated a Level 5 infraction in the Student Code of Conduct; and
- The Office of Appeals and Hearings has determined that the student's return to school prior to the completion of the expulsion period would pose an imminent threat of serious harm to other students or staff.

Procedures for Extended Suspensions and Expulsions

1. On the day a student is recommended for an extended suspension or expulsion, the principal must provide written notification to the parent/guardian that articulates the policy violated and pending disciplinary request.
 2. The principal will notify the Pupil Personnel Worker and the Office of Appeals and Hearings within 24 hours of the incident by emailing the Office of Appeals and Hearings at appeals.office@pgcps.org with required incident information.
 3. The Pupil Personnel Worker will serve as the Superintendent's designee for the purpose of conducting a thorough investigation of the incident and making a determination as to whether an extended suspension or expulsion is warranted. If the determination is in the affirmative, the Pupil Personnel Worker will submit relevant documents within five school days of the student's first day of suspension to the Office of Appeals and Hearings.
 4. The parent/guardian will receive an investigative report from the Pupil Personnel Worker prior to the conference. Appropriate and available behavioral support services will be offered.
 5. As required by COMAR, 13A.08.01.11C(4)(f), the Office of Appeals and Hearings will schedule and conduct the conference before the student's tenth consecutive day of suspension. The Office of Appeals and Hearings will issue a written determination indicating whether the request for extended suspension or expulsion will be upheld, denied, or modified. A parent/guardian has the right to appeal any determination issued by the Office of Appeals and Hearings to the Board of Education within ten calendar days of the date of issuance.
- This due process conference allows an opportunity to exchange views regarding a student's well-being, and at times may include discussion of confidential information pertinent only to the parties immediately affected by the information. While the overall record of a student should be considered, the determination of whether a student has committed the misconduct of which they are charged must be based solely on information that relates to the specific incident.
 - The student and parent/guardian have the right to be represented by legal counsel, provided the parent/guardian gives their verbal consent for such representation, or if absent, gives written consent for representation. If the student and parent/guardian are to be represented by legal counsel, prior notification of this fact shall be given to the Office of Appeals and Hearings.

Appealing an Extended Suspension or Expulsion

A parent has the right to appeal the decision for an extended suspension or expulsion to the Board of Education within ten calendar days of the written letter from the Office of Appeals and Hearings. Written statements of appeal inclusive of new information or additional supporting evidence, must be sent to the Board of Education, Attn: Board Appeals at Prince George's County Public Schools, 14201 School Lane, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 or via email at board.appeals@pgcps.org.

Change of School Assignment

The Office of Appeals and Hearings may involuntarily transfer a student if after careful review and, based upon a preponderance of evidence, the Office determines that the health, safety or welfare of students would be substantially at risk by maintaining the student in their current school assignment. The parent / legal guardian and student will be informed of the reasons for the transfer.

Participation in School and School-Related Activities

Students who have been expelled from school are not eligible to participate in any school functions or be on any Board of Education property for the duration of their expulsions, except for attendance at previously scheduled appointments, and, if the student is a minor, only with the parent/guardian. This prohibition includes attendance at athletic events and other school-related activities. COMAR 13A.08.01.11(C)(5)

Students Currently Expelled from Another School System

A student who has been expelled from or placed on an extended suspension from another school system or who has been expelled from an alternative middle or high school and who enrolls or attempts to enroll in PGCPs, may be denied attendance for a length of time equal to the time the student has been expelled or suspended by the other school system or alternative school.

The Office of Appeals and Hearings will conduct a conference to review and determine educational services for entering students.

Suspension and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

Please refer to Chapter 18 of the Special Education Process Guide which sets forth the federal and state regulations that must be adhered to when students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are recommended for suspension or expulsion. Chapter 18 also provides the specific processes around manifestation determinations, the provision of a Free

Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for disciplinary removals upon the 11th school day, disciplinary timelines, prohibited suspensions based on identified disabilities, and due process procedures that must also be adhered to when considering disciplinary removals for students with disabilities. For details on accommodations for students under Section 504, see Administrative Procedure 5146 | Procedural Guidelines for Students Disabled Under Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Educational Services for Students with IEPs

Schools are required to provide students with IEPs a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE). When a student with an IEP, or a student who may have a disability that is causing behavior that led to a suspension, is suspended for more than 10 school days during the school year, the school must hold a manifestation determination meeting to determine if the behavior that led to the suspension is related to the student's known or suspected disability. These students must continue to receive educational services in order to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and make progress toward their IEP goals. The educational services should be documented on the Manifestation Determination Worksheet and explained to the parent/guardian.

Educational Services for General Education Students and Students With 504 Plans

For short-term and long-term suspensions, school work will be provided. For extended suspensions and expulsions, if the student is not placed in an alternative educational program the School Liaison will ensure on a weekly basis that daily classwork and assignments are provided, graded, recorded and returned to the student. The school liaison will communicate with the student and parent/guardian on a regular basis.

Tests and Examinations

Principals may allow a student to take tests and examinations missed while on suspension. A student temporarily returning to school or another location solely to take tests or examinations must be accompanied by their parent/guardian and obtain prior permission from the principal.



SECTION 11: Disciplinary Response Matrix (Grades 3-12)

The following disciplinary response matrix serves as a guide to establish a fair, equitable, and supportive disciplinary framework that promotes positive behavior, addresses underlying issues, and fosters a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. Disciplinary consequences shall be based on a thorough assessment of the circumstances of each case that may include a student's disciplinary history, interventions provided, the effect of the misconduct on the school environment, and relative mitigating facts.

Escalated or repeated behaviors may result in further responses according to the Student Code of Conduct. The student will receive due process, beginning with referral to the administrator with written documentation by the referring adult, contact to parent/guardian, and an opportunity to present what happened.

VIOLATION	DESCRIPTION	GRADE LEVEL	RESPONSE LEVEL(S) 1 - 5
Academic Dishonesty	Dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), providing, receiving or viewing answers to quiz or test items or independent assignments. Utilizing books, notes/notebook, mobile devices or other support resources during tests without permission	3-12	1 2
Alcohol	Use or possession	3-12	2 3
	Distribution, possession with intent to distribute to others	6-12	4 5
Arson/Fire	Intentionally or recklessly aiding in or attempting to set fire on school property or during a school-related activity; or the unauthorized possession of a flammable liquid or materials with the intent to set fire on school property or during a school-related activity	3-5 6-12	2 3 3 4 5
Attack/Fighting	Attack or fight with minor injuries (e.g., shoving or pushing)	3-12	1 2 3
	Attack or fight that results in serious bodily injury; or Attack or fight with the use of a weapon or instrument used as such	6-12	4 5
	Jumping/banking: two or more persons intentionally attacking one student	6-12	3 4 5
Attack/Assault or Battery on Adult	Assault: attempt to cause serious physical injury to an adult, intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly. There must be (1) an intentional threat or attempt to do bodily harm (2) the apparent ability to do bodily harm and (3) result in the immediate placement of a person in fear of bodily harm.	3-5 6-12	2 3 4 3 4 5
	Unintentional, offensive physical contact with an adult	3-5 6-12	1 2 2 3
	Battery (intentional) – an unlawful physical contact with another person without their consent. The contact must be intentional, harmful or offensive and may be accompanied by circumstances which reflect the student's blatant disregard for the safety of employees or other persons evidenced by, but not limited to, the student's intentional conduct, disregard of directions, or the fact that the battery resulted in serious bodily harm; or	3-5	2 3 4
	Physical contact with an adult without their consent including contact made while the adult is attempting to intervene in an altercation.	6-12	4 5

VIOLATION	DESCRIPTION	GRADE LEVEL	RESPONSE LEVEL(S) 1 - 5
Attendance-Related Offenses	Class-cutting, loitering, leaving class or an area without school or permission, persistent tardiness to school or class	3-12	1 2
	Unauthorized departure from school, leaving school or a school-related activity without the permission from a parent or appropriate school official	3-12	1 2
Bullying/Harassment	Minor harassment (e.g., unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment)	3-12	1 2
	Cyber bullying – Using information and communication technologies (e.g., email, mobile devices, text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal websites, personal polling sites, videotaping or a combination of these) to support deliberate repeated and hostile behavior by an individual or group with the intention of physically or psychologically intimidating others.	3-12	2 3
	Persistent or prolonged bullying/harassment that includes the use of bias language, gestures, written material, social media, text or other technology meant to demean or ridicule a student or staff member based on race, gender-identity, gender expression, religion, pregnancy or parenting status, language, immigration, citizenship status or cognition	3-12	3 4
	Hazing – Action by an informal or formal group, a school student organization, or school team which subjects a member or aspiring member to abuse against their his or her will.	3-12	3 4 5
Destruction of Property or Vandalism	The act or attempted act of willful destruction or defacement of school or private property either on or off the school – Property valued below \$500	3-5	1 2
		6-12	2
	The act or attempted act of willful destruction or defacement of school or private property either on or off the school – Property valued at \$500 or above	3-5	2 3
		6-12	3 4
Disrespect	Willfully intimidate, insult, and/or negative interaction by use of body language, verbally or in writing to any member of the school staff, student body or community; or the refusal or willful failure to respond to or carry out a reasonable request by authorized school personnel. Refer to Section 7 Disrespect and Disruption for progressive strategies to address disrespect.	3-12	1 2 3 4
Disruption	Talking out in class; throwing objects; picking on, bothering or teasing other students; inappropriate or unauthorized use of PEDs; and other behavior that distracts from student learning; directly instigating or prompting others to cause a disruption Refer to Section 7 Disrespect and Disruption for progressive strategies to address disruption.	3-12	1 2 3 4
Dress Code/School Uniform Policy	Failure to adhere to policies governing attire (see Administrative Procedure 5152) and dress code expectations outlined in this Handbook	3-12	1 2
Drugs/Controlled Substances and Other Substances	Unauthorized use or possession of prescription drugs	3-12	2 3
	Use or possession of illegal drugs, controlled substances, pills, prescription medication, imitation, synthetic, CBD products used for consumption or ingestion and other substances	3-12	3
	Unauthorized possession or use of over-the-counter medication	3-12	2 3
	Unauthorized distribution of over-the-counter medication	3-5	2 3
		6-12	2 3 4
	Possession of drugs, controlled substances or other substances with intent to distribute (includes but not limited to, Prescription Drugs, Controlled Dangerous Substances, Edibles, Imitation Controlled Substances, Synthetic Intoxicants, Inhalants, Other Intoxicants)	3-5	3 4
	6-12	4 5	

VIOLATION	DESCRIPTION	GRADE LEVEL	RESPONSE LEVEL(S) 1 - 5
Drugs/ Controlled Substances and Other Substances	Unauthorized use or possession of prescription drugs	3-12	2 3
	Use or possession of illegal drugs, controlled substances, pills, prescription medication, imitation, synthetic, CBD products used for consumption or ingestion and other substances	3-12	3
	Unauthorized possession or use of over-the-counter medication	3-12	2 3
	Unauthorized distribution of over-the-counter medication	3-5	2 3
		6-12	2 3 4
	Possession of drugs, controlled substances or other substances with intent to distribute (includes but not limited to, Prescription Drugs, Controlled Dangerous Substances, Edibles, Imitation Controlled Substances, Synthetic Intoxicants, Inhalants, Other Intoxicants)	3-5	3 4
	6-12	4 5	
Explosives	Possession, use or threatened use of any explosives or other such explosive instrument(s) capable of inflicting substantial bodily injury (does not include small fireworks)	3-12	2 3
		6-12	3 4
	Possession, use or threatened use of any fireworks items such as lady fingers, sparklers, Roman candles or other similar items	3-12	2 3
Extortion/ Shakedown/ Robbery	Taking property, or attempting to do so, or conspiring to do so, from someone else or from their presence and control, by force or threat of force, including, but not limited to, verbal threats, physical threats, use or display of a weapon, or other forms of intimidation. This includes force or threat of force used to frighten another into relinquishing control of property.	3-5	2 3
		6-12	2 3 4 5
Failure to Pass Through a Security Enhancement Device	Willful and intentional avoidance or failure to pass through security enhancement equipment at schools where they are installed.	3-12	1 2
False Alarm (Bomb Threat or Fire)	The act of initiating a fire alarm, bomb threat or a report/ warning without cause; causes school lockdown, school closure, evacuation, contacting fire department, etc.; or	3-5	2 3
	Any threat communicated or intended to be communicated to the public that an explosive device or bomb is located on school property or at a school event, fire alarm, whether true or false. It shall not be a defense to making a false threat that the threat was conveyed as a joke or prank including but not limited to using social media.	6-12	3 4 5
	Threat Behavior Assessment Required		
Forgery	Falsely signing the name of another person, or falsifying times, dates, grades, addresses or other data on school forms or correspondence directed to or from the school	3-12	2
Gambling	Illegal betting for money or valuables (requires the use of money or exchangeable goods)	3-12	2

VIOLATION	DESCRIPTION	GRADE LEVEL	RESPONSE LEVEL(S) 1 - 5
Group Fight	Any attack or fight by two or more students against another group of two or more students causing a material disruption to the school day	6-12	3 4 5
	Any attack or fight by two or more students against another group of two or more students resulting in serious bodily harm	3-5	2 3
		6-12	4 5
Possession/Use of Other Guns or Weapons	Other weapons: possessing an implement that is likely to cause serious bodily harm	3-5	1 2
		6-12	2 3 4 5
	Use or attempt to use, or intent to use a weapon or instrument used as such ("Intent to Use" includes, but is not limited to, possession for use of self-defense)	3-5	4 5
		6-12	4 5
	Possession/Use of Other Guns: Look-alike gun (e.g., water guns, toy guns)	3-5	1 2
		6-12	3 4
Possession/Use of other guns: non-firearm gun (e.g., pellet guns, BB guns, airsoft gun, gel blaster)	3-5	1 2	
	6-12	2 3 4 5	
Possessing Firearms	Possessing firearms	3-12	5
Internet/Computer Misuse	Use of Internet and/or computer resources for purposes other than legitimate educational activity under the direction of professional staff	3-5	1 2
		6-12	2 3
Personal Electronic Device (PED)	Persistently having out or using a PED without permission, or inappropriately using a PED after being warned. Devices include cell phones, music players, tablets, electronic gaming devices and other portable electronic devices	3-12	1 2
Sexual Misconduct	Sexual harassment (e.g., unwelcome sexual advances; request for sexual favors; and other inappropriate verbal, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature)	3-5	1 2 3
		6-12	2 3 4
	Sexual activity or sexual misconduct (e.g., indecent exposure, engaging in sexual activity, soliciting and sexting)	3-5	2 3
		6-12	3 4
	Sexual attack: any physical, non-consensual offensive physical contact with another for the purpose of sexual gratification where the student knew or should have known the contact was nonconsensual at the time contact was made. Contact with intimate area of the body shall be presumed to be for the purpose of sexual gratification.	3-5	3
		6-12	4 5
Theft	The act of taking or acquiring the property of others without their consent – Theft less than \$500	3-12	2
	The act of taking or acquiring the property of others without their consent – Theft above \$500	3-5	2 3
		6-12	3 4
Threat	Expression of an intent to cause physical harm to a student*	3-12	1 2 3
	*Behavior threat assessment required.		
	Expression of an intent to cause physical harm to an adult*	3-12	3 4
	*Behavior threat assessment required.		

VIOLATION	DESCRIPTION	GRADE LEVEL	RESPONSE LEVEL(S) 1 - 5
Threat of Mass Violence	A threat which would cause a reasonable person to fear that a violent crime intended to kill or injure multiple people in the same site or location will be committed at or near in time to when the threat is communicated and one or more of the following*:	3-5	2 3
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A significant drop in attendance at the site or location where the crime is threatened; or 2. Persons located at the site or location where the crime is threatened are directed to shelter in place until the threat is investigated; or 3. The site or location where the crime is threatened is temporarily evacuated until the threat is investigated. 	6-12	4 5
*Behavior threat assessment required.			
Tobacco and Nicotine Products & Vaping	The act of possessing, using or distributing tobacco or nicotine products (including but not limited to cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipe, tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco or smokeless tobacco) anywhere on school property and/or during school-sponsored events.	3-12	1 2
Transportation & Bus Behavior	Damaging bus (vandalism)	3-12	3
	Eating or drinking on the bus	ALL	1
	Fighting on the bus causing minimal disruption	3-12	3
	Fighting on the bus causing substantial disruption	3-12	4
	Heads, arms, and/or legs out of bus windows	ALL	1 2
	Refusal or willful failure to respond to or carry out a reasonable request by the school bus driver or assistant	ALL	1 2 3
	Riding or attempting to ride unassigned bus without authorization	3-12	1 2
	Smoking/lighting matches/lighter	3-12	1 2 3
	Standing when seats are available	ALL	1
	Threatening the driver or attendant	3-5	2 3
		6-12	3 4
	Throwing or shooting objects on the bus	3-12	2 3
	Throwing objects from the bus	3-12	2 3 4
	Too loud; too boisterous (talking or speaking)	ALL	1
	Using foul or abusive language	ALL	2
Using unassigned bus stop without authorization	3-12	1 2	
Trespass	Includes but is not limited to Breaking and Entering	3-12	2
	Any student, who while serving a suspension, has an unauthorized presence on any PGCPs property, after being warned not to come onto school property		
	While trespassing, if a student commits a violation found in the Code of Student Conduct, the student will receive a response according to the infraction committed (example, fighting, weapons possession, etc.)	6-12	3 4 5

SECTION 12: Glossary

Behavior Threat Assessment

A comprehensive structured group process used to identify, assess and manage the risk of threats of targeted violence posed by an individual or group. A threat assessment process provides preventive and intervention measures for students, staff, volunteers, contractors and other non-affiliated individuals whose behaviors pose a threat to the safety of the school environment. Addressing the safety and mental health needs of all parties involved in this process is a top priority.

Bias Behavior and Language

Intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, graphic or written conduct, or an intentional electronic communication directed towards a person or groups of persons that:

- Creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's physical or psychological well-being;
- Is based on an actual or perceived characteristic of a person or a group of persons, including race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ethnicity, marital status, disability, or homelessness; and
- Occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus; or on a school issued device; or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school regardless of where the incident occurs.

CBD

Cannabidiol, which is one of the many chemical compounds found in the cannabis plant.

Due Process

Due process in the context of school suspensions refers to the legal rights and procedural safeguards afforded to students to ensure fair treatment before they are suspended from school. Due process ensures that students subject to suspension receive notice, have the opportunity to be heard before an impartial decision-maker, have the right to appeal; and are not unjustly deprived of their right to an education.

Edibles

Refers to food or beverage products that contain cannabinoids, such as tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) or cannabidiol (CBD), derived from the cannabis plant. These products are consumed orally and can include a wide range of items, such as cookies, brownies, candies, chocolates, gummies, beverages, and more.

When people refer to "edibles" as a drug, they are often specifically referring to cannabis-infused edibles that contain THC, the psychoactive compound in cannabis. THC is responsible for the "high" or intoxicating effects commonly associated with cannabis use. Use of edibles containing THC, carries potential risks, including impairment, dependence, negative mental health effects, and legal implications.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Eligible students with disabilities receive specialized educational services which are tailored to their individual needs and designed to provide educational benefit.

Imminent Threat of Harm

Imminent threat of serious harm is defined as "likely and immediate danger of significant physical injury."

Indecent Exposure

Deliberate exposure of the private parts of the body in a public place on school grounds or at a school-related activity.

Loitering

Willful presence in a school building or restricted area of same without permission.

Restitution

If a student damages, destroys or substantially decreases the value of school property or any personal possessions on school property while committing an offense of this Code or any other law or regulation, the principal may require the student or parent/ guardian to make restitution. The following is applicable in all cases except those which have been referred to the Department of Juvenile Services.

- The principal may require restitution through financial payment, a student work project at the school or an appropriate combination of these.
- If the principal orders financial restitution, the restitution amount is not to exceed the fair market value of the property.
- The maximum amount of financial restitution that may be ordered by the principal is \$2,500.

Self-Defense and Defense of Others

The act of committing an assault either to defend oneself or defend another. Self-Defense/Defense of Others will only apply if the student proves, by a preponderance of evidence, that the student:

- Had no time to leave the location of the fight before engaging in self-defense or defense of others;
- Had no time or opportunity to summon help;
- Employed the least amount of force necessary;
- Could not have safely retreated rather than fight; and
- Could have taken no other action to adequately protect the student involved in the fight.

School Liaison

The school liaison serves as a contact between teachers and students/parents/guardians during out-of-school suspensions or expulsions.

Serious Bodily Injury

Severe physical damage or harm caused to the structure or function of the body caused by an outside agent or force requiring extensive medical treatment or hospitalization. Such injuries should include substantial risk of death; temporary or permanent loss of, or loss of the use of, any body part, organ, or mental faculty; unconsciousness; disfigurement; and/or prolonged physical pain.

THC

Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the psychoactive compound in cannabis. THC is responsible for the “high” or intoxicating effects commonly associated with cannabis use.

Threat

A threat is an expression of an intent to cause physical harm to someone. The threat may be expressed or communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means; and is considered a threat regardless of whether it is observed by or communicated directly to the target of the threat or observed by or communicated to a third party; and regardless of whether the target of the threat is aware of the threat. Threats may be direct (“I am going to beat you up.”), indirect (“I’m going to get him.”) or conditional (“Give me your money or you will regret it.”).

Truancy

Being unlawfully absent from school for 8 days or more in a quarter, 15 days in a semester, or 20 days in a school year. Md. Code, Education § 7–302.2

Vaping

The act of inhaling and exhaling vapor produced by an electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) or similar device., which burn tobacco, nicotine, THC CBD or K2 to produce smoke, e-cigarettes and vaping devices use a battery-powered heating element to vaporize a liquid solution, commonly known as e-liquid or vape juice.

Board of Education Policies and Administrative Procedures

[Board of Education Policy 0103](#) | Inclusive Environments for LGBTQIA+ People
[Administrative Procedure 0103](#) | Transgender and Gender Diverse
[Board of Education Policy 0104](#) | Title IX
[Administrative Procedure 0104](#) | Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Sex
[Board of Education Policy 0114](#) | School Uniforms
[Administrative Procedure 0114](#) | School Uniforms
[Board of Education Policy 0115](#) | Information Technology Services Acceptable Usage
[Administrative Procedure 0700](#) | Information Technology Services Acceptable Usage Guidelines
[Board of Education Policy 0123](#) | Artificial Intelligence
[Board of Education Policy 0125](#) | Nondiscrimination
[Board of Education Policy 0127](#) | Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect
[Administrative Procedure 0500](#) | School Visitors
[Administrative Procedure 2300](#) | Tobacco-Free School Environment
[Administrative Procedure 2952](#) | Student Behavior Threat Assessment Process
[Board of Education Policy 2952](#) | Behavior Threat Assessment
[Administrative Procedure 4170](#) | Discrimination and Harassment
[Administrative Procedure 5062](#) | Student Behavior Interventions
[Administrative Procedure 5110.3](#) | Student Transfers
[Board of Education Policy 5110.3](#) | Transfer of Students
[Board of Education Policy 5113](#) | Student Attendance, Absence, and Truancy
[Administrative Procedure 5113](#) | Student Attendance, Absence, and Truancy
[Board of Education Policy 5115](#) | Student Appeals of Disciplinary Action
[Administrative Procedure 5115](#) | Student Appeals of Extended Suspensions and Expulsions
[Administrative Procedure 5118.1](#) | Informal Care Arrangements and the Enrollment of Non-Resident Students
[Administrative Procedure 5119.3](#) | Educational Programs-Services for Pregnant and Parenting Students
[Board of Education Policy 5119.3](#) | Pregnant and Parenting Students
[Board of Education Policy 5121](#) | Grading and Reporting for Elementary and Secondary Students
[Administrative Procedure 5121.1](#) | Grading and Reporting for Elementary Schools (Early Childhood through Grade 5)
[Administrative Procedure 5121.2](#) | Grading and Reporting for Middle Schools (Grade 6 through Grade 8)
[Administrative Procedure 5121.3](#) | Grading and Reporting for High Schools (Grade 9 through Grade 12)
[Board of Education Policy 5122](#) | Interscholastic and Extracurricular Activities
[Administrative Procedure 5122](#) | Requirement for Participation in Interscholastic Athletics and Extracurricular Activities
[Administrative Procedure 5123.2](#) | General Procedures Pertaining to Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students
[Administrative Procedure 5124](#) | Student Intervention Team (SIT) and Student Support Team (SST)
[Administrative Procedure 5125](#) | Individual Student School-Based Records
[Board of Education Policy 5131.1](#) | Bus Conduct
[Administrative Procedure 5131.1](#) | School Bus Conduct
[Board of Education Policy 5132](#) | Portable Electronic Devices in the Schools
[Administrative Procedure 5134](#) | Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Annual Notice and Directory Information
[Board of Education Policy 5175](#) | Policy to Address Gangs, Gang Activity, and Similar Destructive or Illegal Behavior
[Administrative Procedure 5142](#) | Gangs, Gang Activity and Similar Destructive or Illegal Behavior
[Board of Education Policy 5143](#) | Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation
[Administrative Procedure 5143](#) | Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation
[Administrative Procedure 5146](#) | Procedural Guidelines for Students Disabled Under Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973
[Board of Education Policy 5152](#) | Student Dress Code
[Administrative Procedure 5152](#) | System-Wide Student Dress Code
[Board of Education Policy 5180](#) | Student Use of Social Media and Portable Electronic Devices in the Schools
[Board of Education Policy 5211](#) | Student Demonstrations
[Administrative Procedure 6150](#) | Educational Requirements and Options in Secondary Schools
[Administrative Procedure 10201](#) | Disruptive Acts Requiring Security Measures

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF REVIEW OF THE STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES HANDBOOK

Student's Name

Teacher/Grade

Please review the Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook with your child. Good behavior is important whether instruction is face to face or online. It is so central to success in school that there will be periodic reviews of important sections of the Code of Student Conduct during the year.

It is essential that the school and home work together to assure that all students meet the high expectations for behavior established in the Code of Student Conduct. This enables students to succeed in school and the community. Your support is vital in this process.

After you have reviewed the Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook and the Code of Student Conduct with your child, please sign and return the signed form to the school. For quick reference, you may access the handbook at: www.pgcps.org/offices/pupil-personnel-services/student-rights-and-responsibilities-handbook.

As the parent/guardian of the above student, I have read and discussed the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, including the Code of Student Conduct.

I understand that the Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook and the policies and regulations it references apply to all students at all times, during distance learning, in school system buildings, on school system property and in all school vehicles; and at all school, school-related, or Board-sponsored activities, including but not limited to, school field trips and school sporting events, whether such activities are held on school property, virtually, or at locations off school property, including private business or commercial establishments.

I understand that students who violate the Code of Student Conduct may be prohibited from participation in extracurricular activities including prom, graduation and others.

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

Student's Signature

Date

Please return this form to your child's teacher.



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