

TRI-VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
CODE OF CONDUCT SUMMARY
2015-2016

The Tri-Valley Central School District (the “District”) strives to maintain high standards of education and conduct. To accomplish this goal, the District has developed a Code of Conduct (the “Code”) that clearly defines students’ responsibilities, describes unacceptable behavior, and provides many alternative disciplinary options and responses. The complete Code is available on the District’s website (<http://www.trivalleycsd.org>) and at the District’s main office.

The following is a plain language summary of the Code. It is intended to help parents inform their children of the basic rights, responsibilities, and consequences attached to misconduct. If there is a conflict between this plain language summary and the District’s Code, the provisions of the Code will always prevail.

STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES (*see Section III of the Code*)

A. Student Rights

To safeguard the rights given to all students under state and federal law, and to promote a safe, healthy, orderly and supportive school environment, all District students have the right to:

- Have a safe, healthy, orderly, supportive and courteous school environment;
- Take part in all District activities on an equal basis regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, sex or socio-economic status;
- Attend school and participate in school programs (unless suspended from instruction and participation in accordance with due process of law and the Code of Conduct);
- Have school policies, regulations and rules available for review and, when necessary, receive an explanation by school personnel;
- In all disciplinary matters, to have the opportunity to present his/her version of the facts and circumstances leading to any disciplinary action to the professional staff member imposing such sanction;
- To appeal when he/she believes that he/she has been falsely accused or unfairly disciplined; and
- To express his/her opinions verbally (as long as his/her expression is respectful and does not interfere with the rights of others or disrupt normal school operations).

B. Student Responsibilities

All District students have the responsibility to:

- Contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning.
- Show respect to other persons and to property.
- Be familiar with and abide by all District policies, rules and regulations dealing with student conduct.
- Attend school every day unless they are legally excused.
- Be in class, on time, and prepared to learn.
- Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement.
- React to direction given by teachers, principals and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
- Work to develop mechanisms to control their anger.
- Ask questions when they do not understand.

- Seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline.
- Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
- Accept responsibility for their actions.
- Conduct themselves as representatives of the District, when participating in or attending school-sponsored extracurricular events.
- Hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.

STUDENT DRESS CODE (*see Section V of the Code*)

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. District personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/ color, jewelry, make-up and nails, shall:

- Be safe and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
- Recognize that extremely brief garments that are revealing or provocative are not appropriate.
- Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing; include footwear at all times.
- Not include hats or head coverings in the school building during the instructional day time except for medical or religious purposes.
- Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, or libelous, that denigrate others on account of race, weight, color, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, sex, gender, sexual orientation or disability, or that contain profane language or sexual references.
- Not promote and/or endorse alcohol use, illegal drug use, or violence.
- Not be considered contrary to good hygiene or distracting or disruptive in appearance and detrimental to the purpose or conduct of the school.

Each Building Principal and his or her designee shall be responsible for informing all students and their parents of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year and any revisions to the dress code made during the school year. Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so will be subject to discipline, up to and including out-of-school suspension.

PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT (*see Section VI of the Code*)

The Board of Education expects students to conduct themselves appropriately with regard for the rights and welfare of other students, District personnel, and school community members, and for the care of school facilities and equipment. The best discipline is self-imposed and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior. District personnel are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to emphasize the students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

The Board recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct while on school property or engaged in a school function specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and to focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct.

Students will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

- **Engage in conduct that is disorderly.** Examples include running in hallways; making unreasonable noise; using verbal or written language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar, or abusive; obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic; engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community; trespassing. computer/electronic communications misuse; or any other violation of the district's Acceptable Use Policy.
- **Misuse computer/electronic communications.** Examples include but are not limited to any unauthorized use of computers, software, or Internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; use of personal electronic devices in the classrooms, except as expressly permitted by a teacher for instructional purposes; use of personal electronic devices in other prohibited areas, as designated by the principal; sexting (sending sexually explicit messages, photos, or videos via cell phone or other electronic means; cyberbullying (engaging in electronic social cruelty, abuse or threats); or any other violations of the District's Acceptable Use Policy.
- **Engage in conduct that is insubordinate.** Examples include failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect; lateness for, missing or leaving school without permission; and skipping detention.
- **Engage in conduct that is disruptive.** Examples of include failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school personnel in charge of students; and interfering with or halting classroom instruction.
- **Engage in conduct that is violent.** Examples include committing or threatening an act of violence upon a teacher, administrator, or other school employee or attempting to do so; committing or threatening an act of violence upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so; possessing a weapon; displaying what appears to be a weapon; threatening to use any weapon, or threatening bodily harm or violence against anyone, while on school property; intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson; and intentionally damaging or destroying school district property.
- **Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others – including harassment/bullying.** Examples of such conduct include lying to school personnel; stealing the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function; defamation; discrimination (which includes the use of the person's actual or perceived race, color, creed, national origin, religion, religious practices, ethnic group, gender, weight, sexual orientation or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner); and harassment/bullying.
 Under the Dignity for All Students Act ("DASA"), harassment /bullying is defined as the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, that (a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; (b) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety; (c) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or (d) occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property. (*See Section II of the Code for a more descriptive definition*).
- **Engage in misconduct while on a school bus.** Examples of such conduct include making excessive noise, pushing, throwing, shoving and fighting.
- **Engage in any form of academic misconduct.** Examples include truancy from, lateness for, missing, cutting or leaving any class or required instruction without permission or excuse; cheating; violating a suspension; and failing to complete an imposed detention.

A student may be subjected to discipline for out of school conduct (including but not limited to internet use) that would violate the Code if committed on school grounds, if such conduct creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property.

DIGNITY ACT COORDINATORS (*see Section IX of the Code*)

The Dignity for All Students Act requires school districts to designate at least one staff member at every school to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex. The following are the Dignity Act Coordinators for the 2014-2015 school year:

Elementary School: Andrea Clevenger, Principal: 845-985-2296 ext. 5305

Secondary School: Robert Peters, Principal: 845-985-2296 ext. 5301

District: Christine Snow, Dir. of Pupil Personnel Services: 845-985-2296 ext. 5516

District Mailing Address: 34 Moore Hill Road, Grahamsville, NY 12740

REPORTING VIOLATIONS (*see Section VIII of the Code*)

A. Reporting Violations of the Code

- All students are expected to promptly report violations of the Code to a teacher, guidance counselor, or the Building Principal and his or her designee. Any student observing a student possessing a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property or at a school function shall report this information immediately to a teacher, the Building Principal and his or her designee or the Superintendent. Reports and reporters will be held in the strictest of confidentiality to the extent possible.
- All district staff who are authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to do so in a prompt, fair and lawful manner. District staff who are not authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are required to promptly report violations of the Code to their supervisor, who shall impose an appropriate disciplinary sanction, if authorized, or refer the matter to a staff member who is authorized to impose an appropriate sanction.
- Any weapon, alcohol or illegal substance found shall be confiscated immediately, followed by prompt notification to the parent of the student involved and the appropriate disciplinary sanction if warranted, which may include permanent suspension and referral for prosecution.

B. Reporting Complaints of Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination

- School employees who witness bullying, harassment, or discrimination, or receive an oral or written report of such acts, must promptly orally notify the Building Principal and his or her designee, Superintendent, or the Dignity Act Coordinator not later than one school day after the employee witnesses or receives a report of such acts, and must also file a written report with the principal, superintendent, or the Dignity Act Coordinator no later than two school days after making an oral report. The Building Principal and his or her designee, Superintendent or the Dignity Act Coordinator will lead or supervise the thorough investigation of all reports of bullying, harassment, and discrimination, and ensure that the investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports.
- When an investigation verifies a material incident of bullying or discrimination, the Building Principal and his or her designee, Superintendent, or Dignity Act Coordinator will take prompt action, reasonably calculated to end the bullying, harassment, or discrimination, eliminate any hostile environment, create a more positive school culture and climate, prevent recurrence of the behavior, and ensure the safety of the student or students against whom such behavior was directed.
- The Building Principal and his or her designee, Superintendent, or Dignity Act Coordinator will promptly notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when it is believed that any bullying, harassment, or discrimination constitutes criminal conduct.
- Retaliation by any school employee or student is prohibited against any individual who reports or assists in the investigation of bullying, harassment, or discrimination in good faith.

The Building Principal and his or her designee must notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency of those code violations that constitute a crime and substantially affect the order or security of the school as soon as practical, but in no event later than the close of business the day the Building Principal and his or her designee learns of the violation.

DISTRICT PENALTY GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC MISCONDUCT

The following chart outlines the District’s guidelines for imposing disciplinary actions for specific forms of misconduct. The District has the discretion to impose the penalties it deems appropriate based on the circumstances of the misconduct or the student’s past disciplinary record. In appropriate circumstances the Building Principal and his or her designee is granted the authority to exercise his-her good judgment and apply a greater or lesser consequence than those stated below.

Behavior-Infraction	Elementary		Secondary
	Grades UPK-2	Grades 3-6	Grades 7-12
<i>Forgery, Cheating, Plagiarism or Altering Records</i>	Warning - Lunch Detention	Zero score; Detention - OSS (1-5 days)	Zero score; Detention - OSS (1-5 days)
<i>Inappropriate Language-Gestures</i>	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)
<i>Racial Statement</i>	Warning - OSS (1-3 days)	OSS (1-5 days)	OSS (2-5 days)
<i>Electronics Violation</i>	Warning; Confiscation - OSS (1-5 days)	Warning; Confiscation - OSS (1-5 days)	Warning; Confiscation; OSS (1-5 days)
<i>Physical Horseplay</i>	Lunch Detention - OSS (1-5 days)	Lunch Detention - OSS (1-5 days)	2 days Detention - OSS (1-5 days)
<i>Fighting</i>	ISS (1-5 days) - OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing; Possible Refer to Law Enforcement	OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing; Possible Refer to Law Enforcement	OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing; Possible Refer to Law Enforcement
<i>Bullying-Harassment</i>	Warning - OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing	Warning - OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing	Warning- OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing
<i>Sexual Harassment (physical)</i>	<i>Sexual Harassment (physical)</i>	OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing	OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing
<i>Sexual Harassment (verbal)</i>	Warning - OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing	Lunch Detention - OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing	ISS (1-5 days) - OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing
<i>Theft-Vandalism</i>	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)	ISS (1-5 days)- OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing	ISS (1-5 days) -OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent’s Hearing

Behavior/Infraction	Elementary		Secondary
	Grades UPK-2	Grades 3-6	Grades 7-12
<i>Threatening</i>	Warning - OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent's Hearing; Possible Refer to Law Enforcement	Lunch Detention - OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent's Hearing; Possible Refer to Law Enforcement	OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent's Hearing; Possible Refer to Law Enforcement
<i>Use, possession or sale of Drugs or Alcohol</i>	OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent's Hearing; Possible Refer to Law Enforcement	OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent's Hearing; Possible Refer to Law Enforcement	OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent's Hearing; Possible Refer to Law Enforcement
<i>Bus Incident</i>	Warning; Bus Suspension - After school Detention	Warning; Bus Suspension - OSS (1-5 days)	Warning; Bus Suspension - OSS (1-5 days)
<i>Inappropriate Behavior</i>	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)
<i>Insubordination-Disrespect</i>	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)
<i>Inappropriate Display of Affection</i>	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)
<i>Late to Class- every 3 lates</i>	N-A	N-A	Warning - OSS (1-5 days)
<i>Late to School- every 3 lates</i>	N-A	N-A	Warning - Detention
<i>Motor Vehicle Violation</i>	N-A	N-A	Warning - Driving Permission Revoked; OSS (1-5 days); Possible Superintendent's Hearing; Possible referral to Law Enforcement

MINIMUM PERIODS OF SUSPENSION FOR CERTAIN OFFENSES

- Any student found guilty of bringing a weapon onto school property will be subject to suspension from school for at least one calendar year. The Superintendent will also refer any student found guilty of bringing a weapon to school to law enforcement. Before being suspended, the student will have an opportunity for a hearing. The Superintendent has the authority to modify the one-year suspension on a case-by-case basis.
- Any student who is found to have committed a violent act, other than bringing a weapon onto school property, may be subject to suspension from school for at least five days.

- Any student who repeatedly is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom will be suspended from school for at least five days. The Superintendent has the authority to modify the minimum five-day suspension on a case-by-case basis.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Notwithstanding the foregoing disciplinary guidelines, a student with a disability may be suspended only in accordance with the requirements of state and federal law. Please see Section XII of the Code for a full discussion of the procedures related to the discipline of students with disabilities.