



Effective: August 14, 2014

I. Policy Statement

The Board of Education of Howard County values diversity and commonality and is committed to a culture that fosters free and open communication. The Board believes that an environment of mutual respect and civil conduct between and among students, school system employees, parents, volunteers, and the general public is critical to the achievement of students and staff. The Board is committed to maintaining a culture that recognizes the worth and dignity of the individual in support of academic achievement and social development.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set clear expectations for civil behavior that support a safe, engaging and supportive environment on school property and at school-related activities.

III. Definitions

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply.

- A. Civility – Mutual respect and consideration reflected in language, attitudes, and behaviors.
- B. Bullying – Intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, or written conduct, or an intentional electronic communication that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student’s or staff member’s educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with their physical or psychological well-being and is:
 - 1. Motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic including race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, familial status, or physical or mental ability or disability; or,
 - 2. Threatening or seriously intimidating; and,
 - 3. Occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus; or,
 - 4. Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school or workplace.
- C. Harassment – A sufficiently severe action or persistent, pervasive pattern of actions or statements, directed at an identifiable individual or group, that is

intended to be, or which a reasonable person would perceive as, ridiculing or demeaning.

- D. Intimidation – Subjection to intentional action that seriously threatens and induces a sense of fear and/or inferiority which adversely affects one’s ability to participate in or benefit from the educational or work setting.
- E. School Property – Any property owned or leased by the Howard County Public School System. The concept of property shall extend to school activities such as field trips, use of parks and recreation facilities, proms at hotels, etc. This means that when a facility is scheduled for student use, it will be considered an extension of school property.
- F. School-related Activity – On or off premises activity in which a student directly participates (e.g. field trip, school system-sponsored athletic event, or class/graduation activity), or in which the student does not directly participate, but represents the school or student body simply by being there (e.g. spectator at a school system-sponsored event).

IV. Standards

- A. Expected behaviors include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Respect and courtesy in language, demeanor, and actions
 - 2. Moderate tone and volume of voice
 - 3. Active and respectful listening
 - 4. Respectful acknowledgment of cultural differences
 - 5. Respect for the personal, civil, and property rights of others
 - 6. Appropriate and courteous use of telephone, public address systems, two-way radios, and any other verbal communication device
 - 7. Appropriate and courteous written communication, including notes, letters, email, and text messages.
- B. Unacceptable behaviors include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Rude, insulting, or demeaning language and/or actions
 - 2. Persistently unreasonable demands
 - 3. Intrusive and/or interruptive behavior
 - 4. Displays of temper
 - 5. Harassment and intimidation
 - 6. Threatening and/or abusive gestures and behavior.
- C. Incidents of uncivil behavior should be resolved cooperatively with the individual(s) most directly involved.

V. Compliance

- A. Each individual is responsible for behaving in a civil manner and for cooperating in resolving incidents of uncivil behavior.
- B. The Superintendent/designee is responsible for determining whether an incident occurring on school property violates an existing board policy and for responding appropriately.
- C. The Superintendent/designee will provide for annual notification of this policy to students, staff, parents, and community members.

VI. Delegation of Authority

The Superintendent is authorized to develop appropriate procedures for the implementation of this policy.

VII. References

- A. Legal
 - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Subtitle 26, School Security, Sections 101 and 102
 - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Criminal Law Article, Subtitle 6, Trespass, Section 409
- B. Other Board Policies
 - Policy 1010 Discrimination
 - Policy 1020 Sexual Harassment
 - Policy 1040 Safe School Environments
 - Policy 2030 Ombudsman
 - Policy 2040 Public Participation in Meetings of the Board
 - Policy 3020 Trespassing or Willful Disturbance
 - Policy 7030 Employee Discipline
 - Policy 9020 Students' Rights and Responsibilities
 - Policy 9040 High School Grievance Procedure
 - Policy 9200 Discipline
 - Policy 9270 Student Assault and/or Battery on School Staff
 - Policy 10000 Parent, Family, and Community Involvement
 - Policy 10020 Use of School Facilities by Non-School Groups
- C. Other
 - Student Code of Conduct

VIII. History

ADOPTED: September 7, 2006

REVIEWED:

MODIFIED: August 14, 2014

REVISED:

EFFECTIVE: August 14, 2014

I. Training and Resources

- A. The Superintendent/designee will communicate expectations for civil behavior outlined in the policy to all school administrators and central office personnel.
- B. The principal/supervisor or designee will communicate expectations of civil behavior annually to their staffs, students, parents, and community groups as appropriate.
- C. The principal/supervisor or designee will provide appropriate resources, guidance, and professional development with the goal of promoting civil behavior and addressing related concerns within the school system.

II. Process for Addressing Concerns and Issues

A. Resolution through Cooperative Agreement

Individuals who feel they have been subjected to uncivil conduct are encouraged to resolve the concern/issue with the person or persons directly involved when appropriate. Through a process of cooperative agreement, the affected individuals may be able to reach a mutually effective resolution.

B. General Steps when Resolution is not Reached through Cooperative Agreement

- 1. Either party may cite this policy and notify the other person that they are ending the conversation or the interaction and removing themselves from the situation (for instance, ending a phone call, walking out of the room, or requesting the other individual leave the room).
- 2. There are many existing policies and procedures that cover specific circumstances or general behaviors. In these cases, the appropriate policy or procedure should be followed. (See section II.C.)
- 3. If the issue/situation is not addressed in another policy or procedure, either party may notify the appropriate principal/supervisor or designee. The principal/supervisor or designee will assist the individuals in reaching a resolution. Parents may also use the procedures outlined in A Parent's Guide to Resolving School Concerns and Complaints to formally address concerns that have not been resolved at the school level.

C. References to Appropriate Policies and Procedures

1. Issues between Students

a. Policies

- Policy 1010 Discrimination
- Policy 1020 Sexual Harassment
- Policy 1040 Safe School Environments
- Policy 3020 Trespassing or Willful Disturbance
- Policy 9020 Students' Rights and Responsibilities
- Policy 9040 High School Grievance Procedure
- Policy 9200 Discipline

b. Other

- Student Code of Conduct
- A Parent's Guide to Resolving School Concerns and Complaints
- A Parent's Guide to Reporting Acts of Harassment or Intimidation
Against Students

2. Issues between Students and Employees

a. Policies

- Policy 1010 Discrimination
- Policy 1020 Sexual Harassment
- Policy 1040 Safe School Environments
- Policy 2030 Ombudsman
- Policy 3020 Trespassing or Willful Disturbance
- Policy 7030 Employee Discipline
- Policy 9020 Students' Rights and Responsibilities
- Policy 9040 High School Grievance Procedure
- Policy 9200 Discipline
- Policy 9270 Student Assault and/or Battery on School Staff

b. Other

- Student Code of Conduct
- Circular on Employee Discipline Procedures
- A Parent's Guide to Resolving School Concerns and Complaints
- A Parent's Guide to Reporting Acts of Harassment or Intimidation
Against Students
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

3. Issues between Employees
 - a. Policies
 - Policy 1010 Discrimination
 - Policy 1020 Sexual Harassment
 - Policy 1040 Safe School Environments
 - Policy 2030 Ombudsman
 - Policy 7030 Employee Discipline
 - b. Other
 - Circular on Employee Discipline Procedures
 - Appropriate Master Agreements
 - Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 4.205 (Appeals)
 - Equity Assurance Office procedures
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

4. Issues between Employees and Parent/Community Members
 - a. Policies
 - Policy 1010 Discrimination
 - Policy 1020 Sexual Harassment
 - Policy 1040 Safe School Environments
 - Policy 2030 Ombudsman
 - Policy 2040 Public Participation in Meetings of the Board
 - Policy 3020 Trespassing or Willful Disturbance
 - Policy 7030 Employee Discipline
 - Policy 10000 Parent, Family, and Community Involvement
 - Policy 10020 Use of School Facilities by Non-School Groups
 - b. Other
 - Employee Discipline Procedures Circular
 - A Parent's Guide to Resolving School Concerns and Complaints
 - Appropriate Master Agreements
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

ADOPTED: September 7, 2006

AMENDED:

EFFECTIVE: January 23, 2007