

Policy

Board of Education Township of West Milford

SECTION: PUPILS

CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE

The West Milford Board of Education believes that an effective instructional program requires an orderly school environment and that the effectiveness of the educational program is, in part, reflected in the behavior of pupils.

The West Milford Board of Education expects pupils to conduct themselves, in keeping with their level of maturity, with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other pupils for the educational purpose underlying all school activities and for the care of the school facilities and equipment.

The West Milford Board of Education believes that standards of pupil behavior must be set cooperatively by interaction among the pupils, parents/guardians, staff and community, producing an atmosphere which encourages pupils to grow in self discipline. Such an atmosphere must include respect for self and others as well as for district and community property.

The best discipline is self imposed, and pupils must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior and for the consequences of their misbehavior. Staff members who interact with pupils shall use preventive disciplinary action and place emphasis on the pupils' ability to grow in self discipline.

The Superintendent of Schools shall develop general guidelines for pupil conduct on school property and shall direct development of detailed regulations suited to the age level of the pupils and the physical facilities of the individual schools. Board policy requires each pupil of this district to adhere to the rules and regulations established by the administration and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned

CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE (Continued)

for infraction of those rules. The Superintendent of Schools shall provide to pupils and their parents/guardians the rules of this district regarding conduct and the sanctions which may be imposed for breach of those rules. Provisions shall be made for informing parents/guardians whose primary language is other than English.

The regulations shall:

- A. Require that pupils conform to reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior; respect the person, property, and rights of others; obey constituted authority, and respond to those who hold that authority;
- B. Establish the degree of order necessary to the educational program in which pupils are engaged.

In developing regulations to implement this policy, the Superintendent of Schools shall provide appropriate recognition for pupils who consistently maintain high standards of self discipline and good citizenship.

Pupils who display chronic behavioral or academic problems may be referred to the Child Study Team by the Superintendent of Schools for possible identification as disruptive or disaffected. Such referrals shall be in strict accordance with the due process regulations prescribed by the administrative code. Pupils so identified shall be provided with appropriate programs and services as prescribed by the Child Study Team.

A pupil whose presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process may be suspended or expelled, following due process. Additionally, any student who threatens, directly or indirectly, to harm a peer or staff member may be required to undergo a psychiatric evaluation before the student is allowed to return to school to insure that he or she is not a "danger to himself/herself or others".

Any pupil who commits an assault (as defined by N.J.S.A. 2C:12-1) upon a Board member, teacher, administrator, or other employee of the West Milford Board of Education shall be suspended from school immediately according to procedural due process, and suspension or expulsion proceedings shall begin no later than 30 calendar days from the date of the pupil's suspension.

CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE (Continued)

Bus Conduct

Students are to ride to and from school on the buses assigned and get on and off the bus at the designated bus stops. Any change in bus assignments must be approved by Supervisor of Transportation and/or the building principal.

The following rules have been established to ensure the safety of all students who ride buses:

1. Use only the bus and bus stop assigned.
2. Orderly behavior is required at the bus stop.
3. Remain seated, facing front, when the bus is in motion.
4. Keep head and arms inside the bus.
5. Do not litter the inside of the bus or throw anything out of the window.
6. Be quiet when the bus is crossing railroad tracks.
7. All play equipment must be put where the driver directs as the students board the bus.
8. Drinking, eating, and smoking are not permitted. Defacing or otherwise damaging the bus is not permitted.
9. Talking must be in conversational tones without vulgar language or gestures either to the driver, passengers, or passersby. Unnecessary conversation with the driver when the bus is in motion is prohibited.
10. Bus drivers have the right to assign seats and grant permission to open the windows.
11. Animals may not be brought aboard the school bus.
12. Should a student miss getting off at his/her assigned bus stop, he/she is to stay on the bus and tell the driver.

CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE (Continued)

13. Video cameras may be used to monitor activity within the vehicle.

Students have the opportunity to review all rules regarding bus transportation.

Students who violate these rules will be issued a "Bus Conduct Form", which will be submitted to the Principal or designee for appropriate action. Each report will be discussed with the student and signed by the parent/guardian. Students will be issued consequences based on the nature and number of Bus Conduct Reports. Students will be removed from the bus for a minimum of one week upon the issuance of a third Bus Conduct Report during any school year. Students may, however, be removed at any point for any reasonable length of time if the circumstances warrant this action as determined by the Principal or designee.

Substance Abuse

In accordance with statute and code, penalties shall be assigned for use, possession, or distribution of illegal substances and drug paraphernalia as defined in N.J.S.A. 24:21-2. The penalties shall be graded according to the severity of the offense. Infractions shall be reported to the local law enforcement agency in accordance with the district's Memorandum of Agreement. Confidentiality shall be protected in accordance with federal and state law.

Weapons Offenses

Any pupil who is convicted or adjudicated delinquent for possession of a firearm or a crime while armed with a firearm or found knowingly in possession of a firearm on any school property or on a school bus or at a school-sponsored function shall be immediately removed from the school's regular education program for a period of not less than one calendar year. The Superintendent of Schools, with approval of the Board, may modify this suspension on a case-by-case basis. Each pupil so removed shall be placed in an alternative educational program or on home instruction and shall be entitled to a hearing before the Board. The hearing shall take place no later than 30 days following the day the pupil is removed from the regular education program and shall be closed to the public.

The principal shall be responsible for the removal of such students and shall immediately report them to the Superintendent of Schools. The principal shall also notify the appropriate law enforcement agency of a possible violation of the New Jersey Code of Criminal Justice.

The Superintendent of Schools, with approval of the Board, shall determine at the end of the year whether the student is prepared to return to the regular education program, in accordance with procedures established by the Commissioner of Education.

CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE (Continued)

Teaching staff members and other employees of the West Milford Board of Education having authority over pupils shall take such lawful means as may be necessary to control the disorderly conduct of pupils in all situations and in places where such pupils are within the jurisdiction of this Board.

Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

The West Milford Board of Education expects pupils to treat each other with civility and respect and will not tolerate acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Like other disruptive or violent behaviors, this conduct interferes with a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment.

The Board prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any pupil.

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" are defined as any gesture or any written, verbal, or physical acts, inclusive of the use of cell phones, electronic communication devices, or other electronic devices, that are reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical, or sensory handicap, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on any school vehicle and that:

- A. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that it will have the effect of harming a pupil or damaging a pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
- B. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in or substantial interference with the orderly operation of the school.

Any school employee, pupil, volunteer, or a member of the public who has witnessed or has reliable information that a pupil has been subject to harassment, intimidation, or bullying must report the incident to the appropriate school official designated by the administration. The Board will not tolerate an act of reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

The Superintendent of Schools will develop appropriate procedures addressing:

- A. A mechanism for reporting acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, including a means of anonymous reporting;

CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE (Continued)

- B. The prompt investigation of reports of such acts, identifying either the principal or the principal's designee as the person responsible for the investigation;
- C. The range of ways in which a school will respond once an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying is identified; and
- D. Consequences, discipline, and remedial action for a person who commits an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, who engages in an act of reprisal or retaliation against a person who reports such action or who falsely accuses another of bullying as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

The Superintendent of Schools shall take all necessary steps to publicize this policy and will inform pupils and staff that harassment, intimidation, and bullying are prohibited on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on any school vehicle. This information will also be incorporated into the student handbooks and employee training programs.

Disabled

Before disciplining classified, disabled students, a manifestation determination will be made in accordance with State and Federal law.

Staff shall comply with law and the regulations of the New Jersey administrative code in dealing with discipline and/or suspension of classified pupils.

Implementation

The Superintendent of Schools shall ensure that the rules for this policy are applied consistently and uniformly and that all disciplinary sanctions are carried out with necessary due process.

The West Milford Board of Education shall review all related policies on a regular basis.

First Reading: January 22, 2008
Adopted: February 26, 2008