

Code of Conduct

Purpose

The Clarence School District Code of Conduct is intended to:

- encourage appropriate behavior;
- insure the safety and security of all members of the school community;
- promote a safe and effective learning environment.

The Code governs the conduct of students, school personnel, parents, and other visitors while on school property or attending school functions. It includes the range of penalties that may be imposed for code violations and defines the roles of essential partners (teachers, administrators, other school personnel, the board of education, and parents) in maintaining safe, orderly schools. The Code is reviewed annually and revised as needed. The complete Code of Conduct is available for review in every school and on the District website.

Student Dress Code

Students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately. The responsibility for student dress and appearance rests with individual students and his or her parents or guardians. However, the Board of Education will establish the parameters for appropriate attire for students while at school or attending school functions. The Dress Code is based on the belief that appropriate dress and grooming contributes to a confident and productive learning environment. It is designed to ensure that students dress in a manner that is appropriate for the school setting, helps them achieve success, and respects and values their fellow students. Items that are deemed inappropriate include, but are not limited to, apparel or accessories that display obscene, threatening or suggestive messages, clothing that reveals undergarments or midriffs, and very brief skirts, shorts or dresses. Students who violate the dress code shall be required to modify his/her 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 shall be subjected to discipline up to and including school suspension. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subjected to further disciplinary action.

Prohibited Student Conduct

Behavior that is disorderly, insubordinate, disruptive, violent, or endangers others is prohibited. Plagiarism, cheating, copying, altering records, or assisting students in such actions is considered academic misconduct and, therefore, prohibited.

In accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act, Clarence students will maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. The Dignity for All Students Act Coordinator in each school shall be accessible to students and staff for consultation and guidance as needed to implement this law. The coordinator will accept reports regarding violations and conduct investigations as appropriate.

Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing, or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances, counterfeit and designer drugs, or paraphernalia for use of such drugs or being under the influence of any such substances on school property or at a school function is prohibited. "Illegal substances" including, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, synthetic cannabinoids, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs" are prohibited.

Smoking or using any product including the use of e-cigarettes, atomizer or any other similar device whether or not nicotine is present is prohibited.

Reporting Violations

All students are expected to report violations of the Code of Conduct to those in authority. District staff not authorized to impose disciplinary actions are expected to report violations to their supervisor. Any weapon, alcohol, or other illegal substance will be confiscated immediately. Code violations that constitute a crime may be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Disciplinary Penalties and Procedures

As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. That is, a student's first offense will usually merit a lesser penalty than subsequent violations. The Code of Conduct contains levels of discipline ranging from oral warning to permanent suspension from school. Regardless of the penalty imposed, school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary procedure must inform the student of the alleged misconduct. Students subject to more severe penalties have additional rights as spelled out in the Code of Conduct.

Alternative Instruction

When a student under the age of 16 is removed from class or is suspended from school, the District will take immediate steps to provide alternative means of instruction for the student. When a student over the age of 16 is removed from class or suspended from school, the District will provide instruction in a practical manner.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

While all students are subject to the same Code of Conduct, the Board of Education recognizes that students with disabilities are entitled to additional procedural protections. The Code of Conduct affords students with disabilities subject to disciplinary action no greater or lesser rights than those expressly afforded by applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is defined as an act of physical force upon a student and is forbidden except in cases where persons or property are placed in danger.

Student Searches and Interrogations

Authorized school officials may question a student about an alleged violation of law or the District Code of Conduct. Students are not entitled to a "Miranda" type warning, nor are school officials obligated to contact a student's parents before questioning. School officials, however, will tell students why they are being questioned. In addition, the Board authorizes certain school officials to conduct searches of students and their belongings if there is reasonable suspicion that such a search will result in evidence that the student violated a law or the District Code of Conduct. Searches will be limited to the extent necessary to locate the evidence sought. The rules regarding searches of students and their belongings do not apply to student lockers, desks, and other school storage places. Students should have no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to areas considered school property. This means that student lockers, desks, and other school storage places may be subject to search at any time by school officials without prior notice to students and without their consent.

Visitors to the Schools

All school buildings are locked throughout the school day. All visitors must buzz in and report to the office of the principal upon arrival and register. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public such as PTO meetings or public gatherings are not required to register. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the principal or designee.

Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules of public conduct on school property as contained in the Code of Conduct.

Public Conduct on School Property

All persons on school property or attending a school function, including athletic events, shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function should be properly attired. The District may rescind authorization to be on school property or attend school functions for any visitor who violates the rules of public conduct.