



# 2009-10 Parents' Guide to the Student Code of Conduct

The Howard County Public School System is committed to ensuring that all students are learning in a safe and nurturing environment. To this end, policies are enforced in a fair and consistent manner. The Board of Education has developed a Student Code of Conduct to serve as a disciplinary framework and support all behavioral and discipline policies. All students are expected to be aware of and abide by this Student Code of Conduct. Parents are asked to read this Student Code of Conduct carefully and discuss the information with their children. It takes all of us—school staff, parents, and students—working together, to create and maintain a safe and nurturing environment that is conducive to learning for all children.

## Expected Student Behaviors

In Howard County public schools all students are expected to:

- Engage in learning activities and take school work seriously
- Take responsibility for their own behavior
- Be courteous
- Respect the personal, civil, and property rights of others
- Attend school regularly, on time, and prepared to learn
- Complete assignments on time
- Seek alternatives to verbal or physical conflicts
- Speak appropriately
- Dress appropriately
- Exhibit self-control
- Cooperate with others
- Behave ethically

## Behavior-Related Offenses and Consequences

Offenses in the Student Code of Conduct apply to behaviors that occur on school property, at school-related activities, or when students are otherwise subject to the authority of the Howard County Public School System. Disciplinary action may also be taken for off-campus incidents if the action may have an adverse effect on the order and general welfare of the schools.

Loss of credit for an assignment or course may be appropriate in addition to any of the consequences below. Restitution for loss or damage may also be requested. Where appropriate, law enforcement officials will be involved.

I Staff/Administrative Response	II Parent Involvement	III Reallocation of Student's Time	IV Exclusion from Normal School Activities	V Expulsion
<p><b>OPTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal reprimand</li> <li>• Time-out or removal from class</li> <li>• Loss of privileges</li> <li>• Teacher/administrator conference with student</li> <li>• Contact with parent</li> </ul>	<p><b>OPTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone call to parent</li> <li>• Written notification to parent</li> <li>• Conference with parent</li> <li>• Parent accompanies student to school/ classes</li> </ul> <p><i>Parent notification required</i></p>	<p><b>OPTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detention</li> <li>• Campus clean-up</li> <li>• Contract room</li> <li>• In-school suspension</li> <li>• Saturday school</li> </ul> <p><i>Parent notification required</i></p>	<p><b>OPTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restricted access</li> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Recommendation for evening school</li> <li>• Alternative placement</li> </ul> <p><i>Parent notification required</i></p>	<p><i>Parent notification required</i></p>

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Range</b>
<b>Absence - Unlawful Truancy</b>	An absence for a school day or any portion of a school day for any reason other than those cited as lawful and/or failure to bring a note written by a parent to verify a lawful absence. (Policy 9010)	<b>I to III</b>
<b>Alcohol Violation</b>	Possession or use of any alcoholic substance, including constructive possession and possession with intent to sell, deliver or distribute. (Policy 9230)	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Arson/Fire Violation</b>	Attempting to, aiding in, or setting fire to a school building or other school property.	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment or Intimidation</b>	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 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, physical or mental ability or disability, or threatening or seriously intimidating; and occurs on school property at a school activity or event or on a school bus; or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school or workplace, including any acts of cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation. (Policy 1060, Policy 1040)	<b>II to V</b>
<b>Bus Misbehavior</b>	Any violation of school system policy or bus driver rules, or interfering with the safe transportation of students on a school bus.	<b>I to IV</b>
<b>Cheating/Academic Dishonesty</b>	Receiving or providing information other than that which is appropriate and authorized for the administration or a test. Action taken by a student that is deemed inappropriate based on information, rules, guidelines, or procedures found in Policy 8120 and in such places as examiner's manuals, test administration and coordinator manuals, handbooks, memos or related documents from the Maryland State Department of Education or the school system. (See also "Plagiarism") (Policy 8120)	<b>II to IV</b>
<b>Computer/Electronic Communication Misuse</b>	Any unauthorized use of computers, software, or Internet/Intranet account to access the Internet/Intranet; accessing inappropriate websites; misuse of a website, Internet/intranet account or Internet/Intranet resource.	<b>I to V</b>
<b>Cutting Class</b>	Unlawful absence from a class or school activity.	<b>II to IV</b>
<b>Defamation</b>	False or unprivileged statements or representations about individuals or identifiable groups of individuals that harm the reputation of the individuals or the group by demeaning them or deterring others from associating or dealing with them. (Policy 1040)	<b>II to IV</b>
<b>Destruction of Property/Vandalism</b>	Damage, destruction, or defacement (including graffiti) of property belonging to the school or others.	<b>I to V</b>
<b>Discrimination</b>	Use of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, physical or mental disability, age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation as a basis for treating another in a negative manner. (Policy 1010)	<b>II to V</b>
<b>Disrespect Toward Adults</b>	Inappropriate comments or physical gestures to teachers, staff members, or other adults in the school community.	<b>I to IV</b>
<b>Disruption, Classroom</b>	Behavior or dress that interferes with the learning of others in any learning environment.	<b>I to V</b>
<b>Disruption, Inciting and/or Participating</b>	Behavior or dress that interferes with the safe and orderly environment of the school or school activity, including behavior that originates off campus.	<b>I to V</b>
<b>Drug Violation</b>	Possession or use of (including constructive possession and possession with the intent to sell, give, or distribute) any inhalants or other intoxicants; controlled dangerous substances including prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, look-a-likes, and substances represented as controlled dangerous substances; or drug paraphernalia. (Policy 9230)	<b>III to V</b>
<b>Extortion/Strong-arming/Blackmail</b>	The process of obtaining property from another, with or without that person's consent, by wrongful use of force, fear, or threat.	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Failure to Serve Assigned Consequences</b>	Failure to serve detention, contract room, Saturday school, suspension or other assigned consequences.	<b>I to IV</b>
<b>False Alarms/ Bomb Threats</b>	Initiating a report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, bomb threats, or discharging a fire extinguisher.	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Fighting</b>	A hostile confrontation with physical contact involving two or more students.	<b>III to V</b>
<b>Fireworks or Explosives</b>	Possession, use, and/or threat to use firecrackers, smoke bombs, flares, combustible or explosive substances, or combination of substances or articles.	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Forgery</b>	To use, make, or reproduce another's signature for deceptive purposes.	<b>I to IV</b>
<b>Gambling</b>	Wagering money or property.	<b>I to IV</b>
<b>Gang-related Activity</b>	Engaging in behavior on school property or at school-related activities that represents affiliation with a gang. This includes, but is not limited to, wearing gang-related clothing or "colors," committing vandalism through the use of graffiti depicting gang signs, exposing tattoos that represent gang affiliation, and engaging in the recruitment of gang members. (Policy 1040)	<b>II to V</b>

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Range</b>
<b>Hazing</b>	Participation in any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliation with, or maintenance of membership in an organization. (Policy 1040)	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Indecent Exposure</b>	Exposure to sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.	<b>II to IV</b>
<b>Insubordination</b>	Failure or refusing to follow a valid directive from a person in a position of authority.	<b>III to IV</b>
<b>Leaving School Grounds Without Permission</b>	Leaving school grounds during regular school hours without written or verbal permission from a parent or someone listed on the emergency procedure card.	<b>III to IV</b>
<b>Pager/Cell Phone Violation</b>	Use of a pager/cellular telephone or other communication devices during the school day.	<b>II to IV</b>
<b>Physical Attack on Staff</b>	Aggressive action directed at school staff, with physical contact, while on school grounds or at a school-related activity, including a situation where a staff member is intervening in a fight or other disruptive activity. (Policy 1040)	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Physical Attack on Students or Others</b>	Unwelcome, aggressive action, with physical contact, directed at another person, student or non-student, on school grounds or at a school-related activity. (Policy 1040)	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Plagiarism</b>	Unauthorized copying from a book, newspaper, journal, or any other print or non-print source without crediting the source or author and with the intention of deriving an academic benefit or reward. (See also Cheating/Academic Dishonesty)	<b>II to V</b>
<b>Profanity</b>	Vulgar or abusive language; cursing, swearing. (Policy 1040)	<b>I to IV</b>
<b>Refusal to Obey School Rules</b>	Failure to comply with school rules, regulations, policies, and/or procedures.	<b>I to V</b>
<b>Sexual Activity</b>	Behavior of a sexual nature including consensual sexual activity; possession of pornographic materials.	<b>I to IV</b>
<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that interferes with a student's ability to learn, study, work, achieve, or participate in school activities or with an individual's term, condition, or privilege of employment/relationship with the school system. (Policy 1020)	<b>II to V</b>
<b>Stalking</b>	A malicious course of conduct that includes approaching or pursuing another person with the intent to place that person in reasonable fear of serious bodily injury or death, or which might cause serious bodily injury or death to a third person.	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Tardiness</b>	Reporting late to school or class when the day/period begins. (Note: Missing class more than 20 minutes equals one class absence. Extended tardiness may be counted as a partial or full day absence from school.) (Policy 9010)	<b>I to IV</b>
<b>Theft</b>	Taking or obtaining the property of another without permission or knowledge of the owner.	<b>II to V</b>
<b>Threat to Staff, Physical or Verbal</b>	Expression, conveyed by word or action, of intent to do physical harm to a staff member.	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Threat to Students, Physical or Verbal</b>	Expression, conveyed by word or action, of intent to do physical harm to another student or groups of students.	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Tobacco Violation</b>	Possession or use of any tobacco or tobacco products. (Policy 9240)	<b>III to V</b>
<b>Trespassing Violation</b>	Entrance onto school property by an individual who is not identified as an authorized user of the property, and who has been given prior legal notice that entry onto or use of the property has been denied, or who remains on the property once notified of the request to leave. This includes unauthorized presence of a student on school property while on a restrictive access, suspension, or expulsion. (Policy 3020)	<b>II to V</b>
<b>Uncooperative Behavior</b>	Intentional failure to follow reasonable directions of staff members or participate cooperatively in a school or class activity.	<b>I to IV</b>
<b>Weapons Violation</b>	Possession of an object or implement capable of causing harm or used to cause harm to another. This includes all guns, knives, and any implement, visible or concealed, possessed under a circumstance that would reasonably lead a person to believe it was a weapon. Weapons are prohibited on school property, school buses, locked/unlocked vehicles on school property, and at school-related activities. (Policy 9250)	<b>IV to V</b>
<b>Willful Disturbance</b>	Willful behavior that prevents the orderly conduct of activities, administration, or classes at a school. Molestation or threatening with bodily harm any student, employee, or other individual lawfully on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-related activity off of school property. Threatening with bodily harm any employee at home by any means if the threat arises out of the scope of the employee's employment. (Policy 3020)	<b>IV to V</b>

*Note: When the Board of Education has adopted a specific policy on a particular behavior, the reference to that policy has been included.*

# Consequences for Violations of Behavior and Discipline Policies

The professional staff at a school has the responsibility for taking appropriate actions when a student is involved in a situation which disrupts the learning environment of a school. When determining the consequences, they take the following into consideration:

- The severity of the incident
- A student's previous violations and/or consequences for the same or a related offense
- If the offense interfered with the responsibility/rights/privileges/property of others
- If the offense posed a threat to the health or safety of others
- If the student has an Individualized Education Plan or a 504 Plan
- The logical relationship between the offense and the consequence
- The age-appropriateness of the consequence
- Any specific consequences articulated in Board of Education Policy.

## Alternative Education Programs

Alternative education environments are available for those students who have demonstrated difficulty functioning in a regular instructional setting. Alternative education programs include but are not limited to:

- **Evening School** - an alternative education program for students serving long-term suspensions; the evening school program also provides a number of original credit courses for older students who need an alternative setting to assist in meeting graduation requirements.
- **Gateway Program** - an alternative education program within the Homewood Center, established for students with significant behavioral and academic difficulties whose needs cannot be met in the home school.
- **Passages Program** - an alternative education program within the Homewood Center for youth in transition to the school system from outside placements; Passages may also serve students with disabilities in need of an interim alternative education setting (IAES).
- **Contract Room** - a short-term placement of a student in a setting within the school where the student, under the supervision of a staff member, does work for the classes that are missed and develops a plan to avoid future disciplinary action.
- **In-School Alternative Education Program** - an alternative education program within a comprehensive school that provides participating students with academic and behavioral support, opportunities to learn conflict resolution and anger management strategies, social skills instruction, intensive case management services, and enhanced family outreach and support services.
- **Saturday School** - a program for middle and high school students designed as an alternative to out-of-school suspension or used as part of a hierarchy of consequences for students who engage in rule-breaking behaviors.

**Corporal Punishment** - The Board of Education prohibits the use of corporal punishment, which is defined as physical punishment or undue physical discomfort inflicted on the body of a student for the purpose of maintaining discipline or to enforce school rules.

**Detention** - the placement of a student in a supervised school setting during the school day, before or after school, and on Saturdays.

**Restricted Access** - Under this provision, a student is allowed on school property only during the academic school day.

**Suspension** - the denial of a student's right to attend regular classes or school for a specified period of time for cause.

**Expulsion** - the removal of a student from school, either for a specified period of time or permanently, as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Copies of entire policies and supporting regulations and procedures are available upon request through the school system's Public Information Office, at 410-313-6682, and on the system's website at [www.hcpss.org](http://www.hcpss.org).

The Howard County Public School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, physical or mental disability, age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs. For more information, contact the Equity Assurance Office of the Howard County Public School System at 10910 Route 108, Ellicott City, MD 21042 or call 410.313.6654.