

## DISTRICT OFFENSES (cont'd.):

- **Disobedience** – Flagrantly, purposefully, or repeatedly failing to comply with or follow the instructions of teachers and other school staff.
- **Gambling** – Playing cards, dice, or games of chance for money or other things of value.
- **Misrepresentation** – Forging a parent's, guardian's, or any other person's signatures on any letter to the school or on any school document. Changing grades or attendance records on official District forms, including attendance reporting sheets and grade books, for any student without authorization of a school official. Providing a false name when asked to identify oneself to a school authority. Providing false information to school personnel, or impersonating another person verbally or in writing to provide false or misleading information regarding a student's attendance or absence from school.
- **Plagiarism** – Cheating or copying the work of other persons or turning in another person's papers, projects, computer programs, etc., as your own.
- **Using or Possessing Tobacco Products** – Using or possessing any tobacco products, to include possession or use of e-cigarettes and other vaporizing devices, by any students in or on public school property, on school buses, and at school-sponsored activities.
- **Misuse of Computers** – Inappropriately using school computers.
- **Graffiti** – Knowingly writing, painting, drawing, scratching, or otherwise marking any inscription, figure, or mark of any type on any District-owned or staff property, unless the student has obtained the permission of a school official or staff person.
- **Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment** – Engaging in intentional, persistent and pervasive written, verbal, electronic, or physical bullying, intimidating, or harassing conduct that: is for the purpose of embarrassing or denigrating another person; physically harms a student or damages the student's property; is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's education; or has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.
- **Sexual Harassment** – Deliberately harassing another person for sexual reasons or in a sexualized manner with unwanted attention, touching, or verbal comments such that the person is uncomfortable, intimidated, or threatened by the behavior.
- **Inappropriate Sexual Conduct** – Engaging in inappropriate mutual sexualized conduct that is not conducive to the learning environment of a school.

## DISTRICT OFFENSES (cont'd.):

- **Inappropriate Touching** – Unwanted or inappropriate touching of the private parts of another person by elementary-age students.
- **Inappropriate Language** – Using words that are hurtful, harmful, demeaning, offensive, or embarrassing, including words that are crude or vulgar, and name-calling.
- **Toy Guns and Toy Weapons** – Possessing a toy gun (BB-guns and other pellet guns are Dangerous Weapons) or other toy weapon not appearing to be a real gun or weapon; or appearing to be a real gun or weapon, but not used or displayed with malice.
- **False Reporting** – Knowingly reporting or corroborating misbehavior of others that did not occur.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Students who damage or vandalize property belonging to the Seattle Public Schools, a contractor of the District, an employee, or another student are required to make restitution for such damage. Failure to do so may result in the withholding of a student's grades, transcript, or diploma.**

**NOTE: In addition to the above rules, each school will adopt and distribute to each student rules which will govern a student's conduct in that particular school. When students break those school rules, they will be disciplined. (See Rule-breaking, above).**

### What Happens If a Student Breaks a Rule?

Whenever you are accused of breaking a rule, you have the right to explain your side of the story to your teacher, counselor, assistant principal, or principal **before** you are disciplined. Your parents may also meet with school staff to help identify and solve problems and to consider appropriate penalties. If some other penalty doesn't work, you could be suspended. If the offense was very serious, you could be expelled. If there is an emergency, you could be expelled right away and have a conference later. If there has been a criminal offense, normally, the police will be called.

### What If You Think You Are Being Treated Unfairly?

If the principal or assistant principal proposes to discipline you, and you think the disciplinary action is unfair or inappropriate, you have the right to appeal the discipline imposed. The various processes for appeal are contained in the **Student Rights and Responsibilities** booklet, which can be obtained from your school, from the Student Discipline Office at 206-252-0820, or on the Seattle Public Schools' website at [www.seattleschools.org](http://www.seattleschools.org) (click on District/Departments/Discipline). The booklet is also sent out with the first formal Notice of Disciplinary Action. Additional information may also be obtained from the Discipline section of the District's website at [www.seattleschools.org](http://www.seattleschools.org) (click on District/Departments/Discipline).

*Sometimes, problems in school can be helped by counseling on health, emotional, or legal concerns. While the Seattle Public Schools can provide some assistance, its resources are limited. A number of community agencies offering such assistance are listed in the Seattle telephone directories, or you may call the Community Information Line at 206-461-3200 or 211.*

## Student Rights

Students, as citizens, have certain constitutional rights. The school system cannot unduly infringe on those rights. The schools may, however set some reasonable limits on those rights in order to meet the District's obligation to educate.

- Students have FREEDOM OF SPEECH and may express their personal opinions. That freedom does not allow personal attacks, swearing, threats of violence, or interference with other people's rights to express themselves.
- Students have the RIGHT TO ASSEMBLE peaceably. Any such gathering, which interferes with the operation of the school or classroom, is inappropriate and prohibited.
- Students have the RIGHT TO PETITION appropriate school authorities when they feel that they have been treated unfairly.
- Students have FREEDOM OF THE PRESS and may express their personal opinions in writing. They must take full responsibility for the content of their publications by identifying themselves as authors or editors of the publication. They are not allowed to make personal attacks or publish libelous or obscene material.
- Students have the right to FREEDOM FROM UNREASONABLE SEARCH AND SEIZURE while at school.\* For the protection of all, however, the following rules apply:
  - ~ General searches of school property, including lockers and desks, may be conducted.
  - ~ Items such as firearms, other weapons, firecrackers, or anything else that might reasonably be a threat to safety or security, or disruptive to the educational process may be seized and removed from a student's possession.
- Students have the right to EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY. They shall not be unlawfully discriminated against because of national origin, race, religion, economic status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, marital status, previous arrest, previous incarceration, or physical, or mental or sensory handicap. Such differences shall not be held against a student or used as a basis for determining a student's potential.
- Students have the right to FREEDOM OF RELIGION. Students are free from being controlled or influenced by any particular religious point of view while they are participating in any school district conducted or sponsored activity, or while students are otherwise subject to school district supervision and control.
- Students have the right to obtain course material and homework from teachers during suspensions from classes. Further, they have the right to expect a reasonable reengagement plan to assist in their successful return to class activities and instruction.

\*Washington law (RCW 28A.600.230(3)) **prohibits strip searches of students** by school administrators and persons acting under their supervision. "Strip search" is defined broadly: "[H]aving a person remove or arrange some or all of his or her clothing so as to permit an inspection of the genitals, buttocks, anus, or undergarments of the person or breasts of a female person." In general, searches of students' persons (other than strip searches) or property may be conducted on reasonable suspicion that contraband or other evidence of misconduct is present, so long as the methods used are reasonably related to the objectives of the search and the search is not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student, the nature of the suspected infraction, and the information upon which the search is based.

## The Basic Rules of Seattle Public Schools

2015-2016

### Seattle School Board

Stephan Blanford – Sherry Carr – Harium Martin-Morris –  
Martha McLean – Betty Patu –  
Sharon Peaslee – Sue Peters

**Superintendent**  
Dr. Larry Nyland

#### NOTICE TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS REQUIRED BY FEDERAL DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES ACT OF 1989

The Seattle Public Schools prohibits the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students on school premises or as part of school activities. Compliance with this rule is mandatory; students who disregard the prohibition will be long-term suspended or expelled. The possession and use of illegal drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol are wrong and harmful to health and education. The District offers, or can assist in arranging access to, drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs. For further information, contact your school's principal or counselor.

#### EQUITY AND COMPLIANCE POLICY

Seattle Public Schools Seattle Public Schools ("SPS") provides Equal Educational Opportunities and Equal Employment Opportunities and does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex; race; creed; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; age; economic status; sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity; pregnancy; marital status; physical appearance; a disability; veteran or military status; or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal. SPS provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. SPS complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including but not limited to: Title IX, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and RCW 49.60 ("The Washington Law Against Discrimination"). SPS's compliance includes, but is not limited to all District programs, courses, activities, including extra-curricular activities, services, and access to facilities. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination: Requests for Accommodation • Student 504: Carole Rusimovic, Student 504 Coordinator, 206-252-0118, [crusimovic@seattleschools.org](mailto:crusimovic@seattleschools.org) • Adult Accommodations: Brent Jones, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, 206-252-0027, [bjones@seattleschools.org](mailto:bjones@seattleschools.org) Sexual Harassment • Brent Jones, Interim Title IX Coordinator, 206-252-0027, [Title.IX@seattleschools.org](mailto:Title.IX@seattleschools.org) All Other Forms of Discrimination • Student Matters: Larry Dorsey, 206-252-0707, [securityoff@seattleschools.org](mailto:securityoff@seattleschools.org) • Adult Matters: Brent Jones, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, 206-252-0027, [Title.IX@seattleschools.org](mailto:Title.IX@seattleschools.org) Mail: Seattle Public Schools, P.O. Box 34165, Mail Stop 33-157, Seattle, WA 98124-1165.

### To All Students:

This brochure is intended to tell you about some of the responsibilities which you must assume, the rights which you share with all others, and the general rules you must follow so that you can take full advantage of your educational opportunity without experiencing major discipline problems. Under state law, this information must be given to you at the beginning of every school year.

This brochure does not cover all of the legal details and considerations, such as specific procedures related to special education students, or the appeal processes that are available to you if you feel that discipline is being wrongly or unfairly applied. Full and detailed information is in the **Student Rights and Responsibilities** booklet, which can be obtained from your school, from the Student Discipline Office at 206-252-0820, or in the Parents section of the District's website at [www.seattleschools.org](http://www.seattleschools.org). That booklet is also sent out with the first formal Notice of Disciplinary Action.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Make a determined effort to learn.
- Alert teachers if they are unable to understand course material and ask for assistance.
- Attend all classes every day on time, ready to work, and with the necessary learning materials, books, pencils, etc.
- Respect the rights of other people.
- Refrain from expressing personal prejudices against any individual or group.
- Follow the instructions of teachers and other school staff.
- Find a trusted adult in the school with whom to share issues that may be affecting their mental, emotional, or physical well-being for the purpose of obtaining resources to alleviate barriers to learning.
- Know and obey the rules of the District and individual school.
- Accept reasonable disciplinary actions for breaking school or District rules.
- Identify yourself if asked to by school staff.
- Dress appropriately for school in ways that will not cause safety or health problems, or disruptions.
- Respect the property of other people and of the school.

School staff understands that at times students may be under severe emotional, physical or mental challenges from situations that arise within a school, at home or other places. School staff wants to encourage each child to make these challenges known to their teacher, a school counselor, or other appropriate adult at the school. School staff understands that learning cannot occur in extreme stress situations. Therefore, staff is committed to working with each student to resolve or offer coping mechanisms to each child so that s/he is able to learn to the best of his/her capability.

### **CODE OF PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

#### **EXCEPTIONAL MISCONDUCT:**

Students will be disciplined, and normally will also be referred to the police to face criminal charges, if they commit any of the exceptional misconduct on the list below while in school, on school grounds, on District-sponsored transportation, or at any school-sponsored event. Students will also be disciplined and referred to the police if they

engage in this exceptional misconduct in any other setting having a real and substantial relationship to the operation of the District. Disciplinary action can include such things as losing the privilege of attending District-sponsored activities, losing the privilege of using District-sponsored transportation, suspension, or expulsion.

The School Board has determined that these behaviors amount to "exceptional misconduct" warranting suspension for the first offense, provided that disciplinarians and hearing officers may grant exceptions in cases involving extenuating or exceptional circumstances, or after considering the background of the individual student.

- **Selling Illegal Drugs, and Controlled Substances**
- **Selling Alcoholic Beverages**
- **Distributing Illegal Drugs and Controlled Substances**
- **Distributing Alcoholic Beverages**
- **Possessing or Using Illegal Drugs and Controlled Substances**
- **Possessing or Using Alcoholic Beverages**
- **Assault** – Being physically violent, using unwarranted force, or demonstrating the deliberate and immediate intent to be physically violent toward another person, including domestic violence.
- **Sexual Assault** – Sexually assaulting or taking indecent liberties with another person (includes "panting" behavior by other than elementary-age students).
- **Physical Aggression** – (Generally for elementary students) Being physically violent, using unwarranted force, or demonstrating the deliberate and immediate intent to be physically violent toward another person. (Usually appropriate only for aggressive or violent behavior by elementary students; or appropriate for any student in circumstances when sufficient maturity to understand the consequences of such behavior may be questioned).
- **Extortion, Blackmail, Coercion** – Obtaining money, property or other consideration by violence or threat of violence, or forcing someone to do something against his or her will by force or threat of violence.
- **Fighting** – Engaging in or provoking mutual physical contact involving anger or hostility.
- **Threats of Violence** – Communicating credible, focused threats of violence or harm to an individual or group of individuals, directly or indirectly, whether by physical, verbal, written, telephone, or electronic actions, which cause the other person to believe his or her life, safety, or property is in danger, or which cause a listener to believe that another person's life, safety, or property is in danger.
- **Hazing** – Initiating or harassing another student with meaningless, difficult, dangerous, or humiliating tasks through unsafe or illegal behaviors that cause, or are likely to cause, physical injury or endangerment.
- **Firearm** – Mandatory One-Year Expulsion – Carrying a firearm onto, or possessing a firearm on, school property, school-provided transportation, areas of facilities being used exclusively as school district property, or at school-sponsored events or activities.
- **Dangerous Weapons** – Carrying a dangerous weapon onto, or possessing a dangerous weapon on, school property, school-provided transportation, areas of facilities being used exclusively as school district property, or at school-sponsored events or activities.

### **EXCEPTIONAL MISCONDUCT (cont'd.):**

- **Small Folding Knives** – Carrying onto or possessing a small folding knife with a blade length of 2½" or less and with a blade width of ½" or less on school property, school-provided transportation, areas of facilities being used exclusively as school district property, or at school-sponsored events or activities.
- **Fireworks, Explosives, Chemicals, and Incendiary Devices** – Carrying an uncommon firework, explosive, chemical, or incendiary device onto, or possessing any of the foregoing on, school property, school-provided transportation, areas of facilities being used exclusively as school district property, or at school-sponsored events or activities.
- **Toys Used As Weapons** – Possessing and using with malice (in a threatening manner) objects that appear to be capable of causing bodily harm such that a person believes his or her safety is in danger, including toys that appear to be weapons regardless of size.
- **Robbery** – Taking another's property by force or threat of force.
- **Theft** – Stealing school district property or the property of a staff member, student, or school visitor.
- **Burglary** – Forced entry or remaining unlawfully in a District building or room in the building for the purpose of taking property.
- **Possession of Stolen Property** – Knowingly receiving, retaining, possessing, concealing, or disposing of stolen property.
- **Malicious Property Damage** – Intentionally causing damage to any school property, staff property, or school buses. Also, writing, painting, drawing, or otherwise marking graffiti on any school property, staff property, or school bus that is so extensive that the cost of removing it exceeds \$100. This includes damage to intellectual property, such as, but not limited to, damaging or destroying a staff person's or student's work, whether artistic, written, or on the computer, and graffiti or other willful damage to public or private property while participating in a school sponsored activity away from school grounds. Malicious Property Damage is a property damage offense, not an offense or attack against another person.
- **Intimidation of School Authorities** – Interfering, or attempting to interfere, with the discharge of the official duties of District personnel by using direct, deliberate, or focused threats, force, or violence, such that the staff person believes his or her safety or the well-being of his or her property is in danger.
- **Interference with School Authorities** – Interfering with the discharge of the official duties of District staff by: using force or violence that is non-deliberate and not focused on the staff person, such as attempting to continue a fight when a staff person is trying to stop the fight and inadvertently striking that person; disobeying the orders of school officials to leave school property or disperse as instructed; heckling or harassing school authorities engaged in any lawful task, function, process, or procedure of the school district such that it interferes with their ability to maintain order or complete their lawful duties, including use of abusive or foul language directed at a school district employee and use of any electronic means that has the purpose of embarrassing, denigrating, or demeaning school staff; or hindering the investigation of an incident by school staff, including but not limited to: refusing to submit to a search for reasonable cause or respond to reasonable questions, or deliberately lying about, or encouraging others to lie deliberately about, the facts of the incident.
- **Malicious Harassment** – Maliciously and intentionally committing one of the following acts because of a perception of that person's

### **EXCEPTIONAL MISCONDUCT (cont'd.):**

race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, or mental, physical, or sensory handicap: Causing physical injury to the victim or another person, or causing physical damage to or destruction of the property of the victim or another person, or threatening a specific person or group of persons such that the persons, or members of the specific group of persons, are in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or their property, including their right to an education or their safety at school.

- **Gang/Hate Group Activity** – Belonging to an organized gang, hate group, or similar organization or group and knowingly engaging in gang/hate group activity on a school grounds or during school activities or functions.
- **Trespass** – Entering or remaining unlawfully in a school building or on any part of school grounds or school property for any purpose excluding theft of property.
- **Computer Trespass, Tampering, and Misuse** – Intentionally violating a school's or the District's computer system or database.
- **Arson** – Intentionally setting a fire or causing an explosion.
- **False Alarm** – Activating a fire alarm or calling 911 for other than the intended purpose of the alarm.
- **False Threats** – Falsely reporting any type of bomb or person with a firearm in any school building or structure, on school grounds, on District-provided transportation, or at a school-sponsored function.
- **False Reporting** – Knowingly and maliciously falsely reporting or falsely corroborating misbehavior of others that did not occur, including spreading a false rumor maliciously at school, on school grounds, on school-provided transportation, or at a school-sponsored function.
- **Lewd Conduct** – Engaging in inappropriate sexual or social behavior, such as sexual acts, either singly or consensually with another person, including sexual intercourse, oral sex, sexual touching, indecent exposure, or voyeurism.
- **Other Exceptional Misconduct** – Engaging in any other activity that would constitute a felony or gross misdemeanor under city, state, or federal law.

### **DISTRICT OFFENSES:**

In addition to Exceptional Misconduct, students are not allowed to engage in other behaviors which disrupt or interfere with the educational process. Students will be disciplined for participation in any of the following behaviors in school, on school grounds, on District-sponsored transportation, or at any school-sponsored event. Students will also be disciplined for such behavior in any other setting having a real and substantial relationship to the operating of the District.

- **Disruptive Conduct** – Flagrantly and substantially interfering with teaching or learning in the classroom, school activities, or extracurricular activities.
- **Rule-breaking** – Breaking a specific, published school rule. This includes breaking school bus rules and violating a specific safety or behavior contract.

(Continued on reverse side.)

