

**SEWANHAKA CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**SUMMARY OF CODE OF CONDUCT**

Effective school discipline is an integral part of the learning environment. Because disruptive behavior deprives students of their right to learn it shall not be tolerated in the schools of the Sewanhaka Central High School District. Equally important is ensuring that the school environment is safe and free from disruption or inappropriate interference from staff, parents, or other visitors. Each student will be treated as a person who can reasonably be expected to be responsible for his/her own behavior. Students who cannot accept this responsibility and violate school rules will be required to accept the penalties of more regulated supervision.

**STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**THE RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION AND TO TAKE PART IN ACTIVITIES**

The right to an education is guaranteed to all children. Gifted, regular, and mentally and physically disabled children are provided with an education appropriate to their needs. No student shall be excluded from participation or benefits of any educational program or discriminated against or harassed or bullied on the basis of race, color, creed, weight, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, religious practice, ethnic group, national origin, or disability.

**THE DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT**

New York State's Dignity for All Students Act provides public school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying in any school environment. Each school within the District employs two Dignity Act Coordinators to promote a safe school environment, oversee bullying prevention efforts, and address any issues of harassment or bullying. The Dignity Act Coordinators for each school are as follows:

**1. Elmont Memorial High School:**

- A. Assistant Principal Alicia Calabrese (516-488-9200 or 488-9206)
- B. Suzanne Pugh, Social Worker (516-488-9200 ext. 9280)

**2. Floral Park Memorial High School:**

- A. Assistant Principal John Kenny (516-488-9300 or 488-9302)
- B. Adam Glatzer, Guidance Counselor (516-488-9362)

**3. H. Frank Carey High School:**

- A. Assistant Principal Sharon Flynn (516-539-9400 or 539-9491)
- B. Dr. Christopher Schnepf, School Psychologist (516-539-9400 ext. 9437)

**4. New Hyde Park Memorial High School:**

- A. Assistant Principal Rosemary DeGennaro (516-488-9500 or 488-9502)
- B. Assistant Principal Maria Hecht (516-488-9500 or 488-9501)
- C. Dr. Michele Sanzone-Goodrich, Social Worker (516-488-9556)

**5. Sewanhaka High School:**

- A. Assistant Principal Nichole Allen (516-488-9600 or 488-9601)
- B. Dr. Glen Borkhuis, School Psychologist (516-488-9600 ext. 9675)

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT**

The essential principal of democratic student government is the eligibility of every student to vote and to hold office. It is important for students to recognize that with the right to vote goes the responsibility to exercise that right.

**NEWSPAPER**

Official school publications such as school newspapers should reflect the policy and judgment of the student editors. Students have the responsibility to refrain from libel and obscenity and to observe the normal rules for responsible journalism. School authorities may prohibit material when it would interfere

with the educative process.

### **CLUBS AND ATHLETICS**

All students have a right to take part in the extra and co-curricular activities offered in the school. Student organizations should not restrict membership on the basis of race, sex, national origin, disability, or any other arbitrary criteria. They may establish reasonable membership criteria if these are equally applied to all applicants, such as requiring all French Club members to speak French.

### **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. A student's dress, grooming, and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up, and nails, shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate, and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
2. Recognize that extremely brief garments and see-through garments are not appropriate.
3. Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
4. Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
5. Not include the wearing of hats except for a medical or religious purpose.
6. Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.
7. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline up to and including school suspension.

### **STUDENT SPEECH**

Although freedom of speech is a right that belongs to all Americans, speech which materially interferes with the educational process is prohibited, including the use of obscene, profane language, or gestures.

### **SCHOOL'S COMMUNICATION RESOURCES**

Appropriate student club access to equipment and materials for announcements and information includes use of bulletin boards, the school public address system, and use of school duplicating equipment subject to reasonable limitations of expense. Regulations as to the manner, time, and place for using school communications facilities are obviously subject to certain operational priorities.

### **STUDENT RECORD FILE**

Parents and students have access and rights to confidential student records as defined by the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act."

### **DISCIPLINE**

A Uniform Code of Conduct contains rules pertaining to each particular school. These are reviewed each year with student body and professional staff. The standards of conduct which are established do not infringe upon the constitutional rights of the students. They forbid injury to persons or property and interference with the learning process.

### **SUSPENSION**

The following students may be suspended from required attendance:

...a student who is insubordinate, disorderly, violent, disruptive, or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health, and welfare of others.

All students who are suspended for a period in excess of five school days have an opportunity for a hearing at which the student shall have the right to be represented by an attorney, the right to present witnesses and other evidence on his/her own behalf, and the right to cross-examine witnesses. Any student under the compulsory school age shall be provided with suitable alternate instruction during his/her suspension. Special education students over 16 must be provided with alternative instruction if the suspension exceeds ten days.

A student may appeal the findings and determination of the Superintendent to the Board of Education within 30 calendar days.

## **SEARCH BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

### Persons

When school officials have reasonable grounds to believe that weapons, drugs, liquor/alcohol, stolen property, etc., or other evidence of a violation of law or school rules are secreted on a student's person, they may act upon that suspicion and search the student without the student's consent.

The right to counsel, and the constitutional warning prior to a confession, are inapplicable to searches by school officials. Strip searches are prohibited. If danger to health or safety is present, police should be summoned.

### Lockers

The assignment and the use of student lockers, desks, and other such property by any student is with the understanding that it remains under the control of the administrators and custodial staff of the building and is subject to the right of inspection at any time.

### Automobiles

The use of a school parking lot is a privilege and not a right. The school retains the authority to monitor and control the activities taking place on school property. As such, the school has the authority to conduct a search of a student's automobile when it has reasonable suspicion to believe illegal or unauthorized materials are contained inside.

## **GRADES**

Students have a right to receive grades that reflect academic performance. Grades may not be lowered based upon disciplinary infractions, such as cutting, as long as requirements for a course are met. However, unexcused absences may affect a student's grade and ability to receive credit for a high school course. Please refer to the Attendance Policy for additional information.

## **ACCESS OF OUTSIDE MEDIA TO SCHOOLS**

All requests from outside media for information or interviews are to be referred to the office of the Superintendent of Schools. Interviews of students under the age of eighteen or use of the name of such a student can only be permitted with parental consent. Information concerning an individual student's school record or performance shall not be divulged except as authorized by Board Policy, Students 5591, "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act."

## **SUMMARY**

The Sewanhaka Central High School District believes that students have the right to take part in a strong academic educational program without being discriminated against, harassed, or bullied regardless of race, color, creed, weight, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religious practice, ethnic group, or national origin.

To promote this goal, all district students have the responsibility to:

1. Contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.

2. Be familiar with and abide by all district policies, rules, and regulations dealing with student conduct.
3. Attend school every day unless they are legally excused and be in class, on time, and prepared to learn.
4. Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extra-curricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
5. React to direction given by teachers, administrators, and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
6. Work to develop mechanisms to control their anger.
7. Seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline.
8. Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
9. Accept responsibility for their actions.
10. Conduct themselves as representatives of the district when participating in or attending school-sponsored extra-curricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.

### **Essential Partners**

The Sewanhaka Central High School District believes there are eight essential partners for providing a safe and orderly learning environment where all students can learn and grow to their fullest potential. These partners specifically include parents, teachers, pupil personnel service providers, other school personnel, Principal, Dignity Act Coordinator, Superintendent, and the Board of Education.

### **Prohibited Student Conduct**

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

1. Engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples of disorderly conduct include:
  - A. Making unreasonable noise.
  - B. Using abusive or obscene language or gestures.
  - C. Inappropriate public sexual contact.
  - D. Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of another student or district employee or any person lawfully on school property.
  - E. Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property, including graffiti or arson.
  - F. Disturbing any lawful assembly or meeting of persons.
  - G. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
  - H. Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
  - I. Trespassing - Students are not permitted in any school building, other than the one they regularly attend, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
  - J. Computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing or creating inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the district's acceptable use policy.
  - K. Engages in activities under the school's jurisdiction relating to membership in a prohibited fraternity, sorority, or other secret society. This includes, but is not limited to, initiation activities and the wearing of fraternity/sorority colors or paraphernalia.
2. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate. Examples of insubordinate conduct include:
  - A. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators, or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
  - B. Lateness for, missing, or leaving school without permission.

- C. Cutting.
  - D. Skipping detention.
3. Engage in conduct that is disruptive, specifically, any behavior which adversely interrupts the education process.
  4. Engage in conduct that is violent. Examples of violent conduct include:
    - A. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, spitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon a teacher, administrator, or other school employee or attempting to do so.
    - B. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so.
    - C. Possessing a weapon or what appears to be a weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.
  5. Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others. Examples of such conduct include:
    - A. Lying to school personnel.
    - B. Stealing the property of other students, school personnel, or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.
    - C. Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm their reputation.
    - D. Discrimination, which includes the use of race, color, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, weight, or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner.
    - E. Harassment, which includes a pattern of actions or statements directed at an identifiable individual or group which are intended to be ridiculing or demeaning or creating a hostile environment.
    - F. Intimidation.
    - G. Bullying, which includes any hostile activity that harms or induces fear.
    - H. Hazing.
    - I. Selling, using, or possessing obscene material.
    - J. Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing, or swearing.
    - K. Smoking a cigarette, cigar, pipe, e-cigarette, vaporizer pipes/pens, and/or hookah pipes/pens or using chewing or smokeless tobacco.
    - L. Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing, or exchanging alcoholic beverages, illegal substances, or synthetic cannabinoids or being under the influence of such.
    - M. Possession of drug and/or smoking paraphernalia including, but not limited to, e-cigarettes, vaporizer pipes/pens, hookah pipes/pens, bong, grinders, snorters, rolling papers, scales, cigarette lighters, glassine bags, or bags used for packaging and/or distribution of drugs.
    - N. Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
    - O. Illegal gambling.
    - P. Indecent exposure.
    - Q. Possession, sale, or use of fireworks or noxious materials.
    - R. Initiating a report warning of fire, bomb threat, or other catastrophe without valid cause, misusing 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.
  6. Engage in misconduct while on a school bus.
  7. Engage in any form of academic misconduct. Examples of academic misconduct include:

- A. Plagiarism
  - B. Cheating
  - C. Copying
  - D. Altering records
  - E. Assisting another student in any of the above actions
8. Engage in off-campus misconduct that interferes with or can reasonably be expected to substantially disrupt the educational process in school or at a school function. Examples of such misconduct include:
- A. Cyberbullying, which includes inflicting willful and repeated harm through the use of electronic text.
  - B. Threatening or harassing students or school personnel over the phone or other electronic medium.

### **Reporting Violations**

All students are expected to promptly report violations of the Code of Conduct to a teacher, guidance counselor, the assistant principal, or principal.

### **Procedures and Referrals**

Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be firm, fair, and consistent so as to be the most effective in changing student behavior.

As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. This means that a student's first violation will usually merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations.

### **Penalties**

Students who are found to have violated the District's Code of Conduct may be subject to the following penalties. The school personnel identified after each penalty are authorized to impose that penalty, consistent with the student's right to due process.

- A. Verbal warning - any member of the district staff
- B. Written warning - bus drivers, hall and lunch monitors, coaches, guidance counselors, teachers, assistant principal, principal
- C. Written notification to parent - bus driver, hall and lunch monitors, coaches, guidance counselors, teachers, assistant principal, principal
- D. Detention - teachers, assistant principal, principal
- E. Suspension from transportation - director of transportation, assistant principal, principal
- F. Suspension from athletic participation, extra-curricular activities, and other privileges - coach, advisor, director of student activities, athletic director, assistant principal, principal
- G. In-school suspension - principal
- H. Removal from class - teacher, principal
- I. Suspension from school - principal, superintendent
- J. Referral to police - principal, superintendent

### **Teacher Removal**

A "disruptive student" is a student who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom. A classroom teacher may remove a disruptive student from class for up to two days.

The principal or the assistant principal may overturn the removal of the student from class in the event of the following:

- A. The charges against the student are not supported by substantial evidence.
- B. The student's removal is otherwise in violation of law, including the District's Code of Conduct.
- C. The conduct warrants suspension from school.

## **Suspension from School**

Suspension from school is a severe penalty, which may be imposed only upon students who are insubordinate, disorderly, violent, or disruptive or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others.

### **Minimum Periods of Suspension**

Students who bring a weapon to school, other than a student with a disability, found guilty may be subject to suspension from school for at least one calendar year.

Students who commit violent acts other than bringing a weapon to school shall be subject to suspension from school for at least five days.

Students who are repeatedly substantially disruptive of the educational process or repeatedly substantially interfere with the teacher's authority over the classroom will be suspended from school for at least five days.

The following offenses will result in a minimum five-day suspension and immediate mandatory referral to the Superintendent:

**Arson -** Deliberately lighting a fire on school property

**Assault -** An attack on another person either resulting in physical injury or intended to result in serious physical injury

**Bomb Threat -** The threat of blowing up the school

### **Drug Possession/**

**Use -** The possession, use, or being under the influence of a controlled substance on school grounds or at school functions or off school grounds at school sponsored functions or activities

**Drug Sale-** When a student sells, exchanges, gives, or disburses a controlled substance to another or offers or agrees to do the same

**Fire Alarm-** Causing the fire alarm to be activated without a just Cause

### **Firework/Noxious**

**Materials -** The possession, sale, or use of fireworks or noxious materials on school property resulting in injury to other. The detonation of explosive devices such as firecrackers, M80s, or "cherry bombs"

### **Possession of a**

**Weapon -** The possession or use of a weapon, or what appears to be a weapon, on school grounds or at a school function or off school grounds at school sponsored functions or activities

## **PINS Petitions**

The District may file a PINS (person in need of supervision) petition in Family Court on any student under the age of 18 who demonstrates that he/she requires supervision and treatment by:

1. Being habitually truant and not attending school.
2. Engaging in an ongoing or continual course of conduct which makes the student ungovernable or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of the school.
3. Knowingly and unlawfully possessing illegal drugs.

## **Juvenile Delinquents and Juvenile Offenders**

The Superintendent is required to refer the following students to the County Attorney for a juvenile delinquency proceeding before the Family Court:

1. any student under the age of 16 who is found to have brought a weapon to school; or

2. any student 14 or 15 years old who qualifies for juvenile offender status under the Criminal Procedure Law.

### **Alternative Instruction**

When a student of any age is removed from class by a teacher, the District will take immediate steps to provide continued educational programming. When a student of compulsory attendance age is suspended from school, the District will take immediate steps to provide alternative means of instruction for the student.

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

It may be necessary to suspend, remove, or otherwise discipline students with disabilities to address disruptive or problem behavior. Students with disabilities enjoy certain procedural protections whenever school authorities intend to impose discipline upon them. The board is committed to ensuring that the procedures followed for suspending, removing, or otherwise disciplining students with disabilities are consistent with the procedural safeguards required by applicable laws and regulations.

### **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment is any act of physical force upon a student for the purpose of punishing that student. Corporal punishment of any student by any district employee is strictly forbidden. However, in situations where alternative procedures and methods that do not involve the use of physical force cannot reasonably be used, reasonable physical force may be used to:

1. Protect oneself, another student, staff member, or any person from physical injury.
2. Protect the property of the school or others.
3. Restrain or remove a student whose behavior interferes with the orderly exercise and performance of school district functions, powers and duties, if that student has refused to refrain from further disruptive acts.

The District will file all complaints about the use of corporal punishment with the Commissioner of Education in accordance with Commissioner's regulations.

### **Visitors to the Schools**

The Board encourages parents and other district citizens to visit the district's schools and classrooms to observe the work of students, teachers, and other staff. Since schools are a place of work and learning, however, certain limits must be set for such visits. The building principal or assistant principal is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds. For these reasons, the following rules apply to visitors to the schools:

1. Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
2. All visitors to the school must report to the office of the principal upon arrival. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings, are not required to register.
3. Teachers are expected not to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
4. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the principal or assistant principal. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
5. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in this Code of Conduct.

### **Public Conduct on School Property**

The District is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of an environment, it is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school functions.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property.

#### Prohibited Conduct

No person, either alone or with others, shall:

1. Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so.
2. Intentionally damage or destroy school district property or the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, other district employee, or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
3. Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs, or other school activities.
4. Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school program.
5. Intimidate, harass, or discriminate against any person on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, creed, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, age, gender, sex, sexual orientation, or disability.
6. Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
7. Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies.
8. Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations, or other restrictions on vehicles.
9. Possess, consume, sell, distribute, or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function.
10. Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers or except as specifically authorized by the school district.
11. Loiter on or about school property.
12. Gamble on school property or at school functions.
13. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
14. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this Code.
15. Smoke inside any enclosed school facility used to provide education services at any time. Smoke anywhere on school grounds during school hours or during any student activity that is supervised by faculty or staff or during any officially sanctioned school event. Smoke in any vehicles used to transport children or school personnel.
16. Operate a mini bike, go-cart, motorized equipment, or other unlicensed motor vehicle.
17. Operate a bicycle on athletic fields or running tracks.

18. Enter school property with a dog unless it is a dog for a handicapping condition.
19. Drive, chip, or pitch golf balls on school property.
20. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance, or board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

The building principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for enforcing the conduct required by the Code.

### **Dissemination and Review**

The Board will work to ensure that the community is aware of this Code of Conduct by:

1. Providing copies of a summary of the Code to all students at a general assembly held at the beginning of each school year.
2. Making copies of the Code available to all parents at the beginning of the school year.
3. Mailing a summary of the Code of Conduct written in plain language to all parents of district students before the beginning of the school year and making this summary available later upon request.
4. Providing all current teachers and other staff members with a copy of the Code and a copy of any amendments to the Code as soon as practicable after adoption.
5. Providing all new employees with a copy of the current Code of Conduct when they are first hired.
6. Making copies of the Code available for review in the community libraries by students, parents, and other community members.

**This document is a summary of Board Policy, Students 5500, Code of Conduct, that has been reviewed by all of the constituencies of the Sewanhaka Central High School District and approved by the Board of Education. Anyone wishing to receive the Code of Conduct in its entirety should request a copy from the Main Office of any district school or from the office of the School Attorney in the Central Office. A copy is also available on the District website. All community, students, and staff are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this document.**

**Revised July 2012; approved by the Board of Education on July 11, 2012**

**Revised July 2013; approved by the Board of Education on July 9, 2013**

**Revised and approved by the Board of Education on July 8, 2014**