

INTRODUCTION

The Irvington Union Free School District is committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive educational environment of excellence for the students in its schools. The District believes that safety and structure are essential to effective education. Maintaining a supportive, orderly educational environment requires everyone in the school community to play a role in contributing to the development of responsible and productive citizens. It also requires the development and implementation of a Code of Conduct that clearly defines individual expectations, responsibilities, describes unacceptable behavior, and provides a procedural framework for disciplinary decisions. This Code of Conduct was developed to comply with the mandated Project [SAVE legislation](#) and the Dignity for all Students Act (DASA"); we should all be aware of its important components.

This Code of Conduct was originally developed in collaboration with student, teacher, administrator and parent organizations, the building level site committees, school safety personnel and other Board-approved school personnel. It is the belief of the District that, to be effective, such a Code must:

- identify, recognize and promote expectations;
- identify, recognize and promote acceptable behavior;
- identify, recognize and prevent unacceptable behavior;
- promote self-management, self-awareness, self-advocacy, and self-reflection
- consider the welfare of the individual as well as that of the school community as a whole;
- foster a respectful partnership among students, families, and the school staff
- distinguish between lesser and greater infractions, as well as between first-time and subsequent offenses;
- provide consistent interventions that are appropriate in response to an infraction;
- outline procedures to ensure that the Code is administered in a way that is equitable, appropriate, and consistent;
- be monitored and evaluated to ensure its equitable implementation;
- ensure a high regard for every student's right to reasonable hearing procedures and due process [in connection with the student disciplinary process](#);
- comply with the provisions of federal, state and local laws, as well as the guidelines and directives of the New York State Department of Education and the Board of Regents.

The aforementioned principles and related procedures will be expanded upon in the following sections of the Code of Conduct. The complete Code is published on the District website and a plain-language version of the Code is reviewed with and distributed to students annually. The Board of Education ensures that essential policies are established to ensure that a safe and effective learning environment is maintained in all schools.

School and District administrators develop regulations which are enforced by the school administration and staff, and staff participates in training on an on-going basis.

Families are expected to assume primary responsibility for supporting the well-being and productive participation of their child(ren). They may be called upon by the District, through effective family-school communication, to cooperate actively with the school in providing the necessary structure to promote their child(ren)'s social and educational growth.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Our goal as an educational organization is to begin with an instructive approach and teach students that they can all achieve and play an important role in maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning. When at all possible, behaviors that are contrary to this Code of Conduct will be identified, and constructive interventions will be implemented before moving to disciplinary consequences.

Commented [KMI]: You may want to consider defining "family" in Section II as you define "Parent". Depending on the definition, you may want to incorporate the term into the remainder of the document (e.g., first paragraph of Section VI)

I. Bill of Students' Rights & Responsibilities (See Board Policy 7310):

Commented [KH2]: Policy 7310 will need to be revised accordingly

Public Education:

Right: Students residing in the Irvington School District have the right to a free, public education.

Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to come to school daily and attend all classes as well as fulfill all assignments required of them.

Supportive Environment:

Right: Students have the right to learn in a welcoming, safe, supportive and orderly school environment that focuses on positive student behavior.

Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to refrain from bullying, harassing and/or discriminating against others in adherence to the requirements of DASA as described within this document and to report any such conduct that occurs to a school staff member.

Freedom of Expression:

Right: Students have a constitutional right to freedom of expression provided such expression does not violate this Code of Conduct or otherwise disrupt or interfere with the educational process (teaching and learning), discipline, or school activities and operations.

Responsibility: A student's constitutional protection to freedom of expression will not extend to hate speech, libelous, slanderous, vulgar, lewd, indecent or obscene words or images or to words or images which by their very use incite others to damage property or physically injure persons.

Freedom of Press:

Right: Students have the right to express their personal opinions in writing as long as such material is signed by the author and follows the guidelines identified in the "Freedom of Expression" section. Responsibility: Student authors must take responsibility for what they write. They must avoid any statements that are considered hate speech, libelous, obscene, or that attack others. Any written material can be distributed only at the times and in the places designated by school officials. Students must see that the distribution of such material does not disrupt the educational process or otherwise violate this Code of Conduct.

Assembly:

Right: Students have the right to assemble peacefully.

Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to see that any meetings on the school campus are a part of the educational process and authorized by the school administration. Meetings or demonstrations that violate this Code of Conduct or otherwise interfere with the normal operations of the school or of particular learning environments or classrooms are not allowed.

Attire:

Right: Students have the right to follow personal standards of dress and grooming. Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to see that their dress and grooming protect the health and safety of themselves as well as other persons in school and that such dress is respectful of others and does not disrupt or interfere with the educational process or otherwise violate this Code of Conduct.

Access to School Facilities:

Right: Registered students have the right to use school facilities in accordance with this Code of Conduct and are subject to the routine operating procedures set at the building level.

Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to use the school facilities in a safe and respectful manner and within the routine operating procedures. Each student must take the responsibility to help keep the school(s) clean and orderly. Each student must see that their use of the school facilities does not infringe on the rights of others to use the same facility.

Extra-Curricular Activities & Clubs:

Right: Students have the right to participate in extracurricular programs and activities subject to the provisions

of this Code of Conduct and the guidelines set forth in the Co-Curricular/Extracurricular Code of Conduct, [subject to eligibility requirements, try-outs, auditions, etc.](#)

Responsibility: Student organizations have the responsibility not to restrict student participation on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, religious practice, sex, gender, weight, physical appearance, national origin, sexual preference, socio-economic status, or any other arbitrary criterion, subject to necessary restrictions. Every student organization must be approved by the school administration before it can use school facilities. It should be noted that any student participating in an extracurricular activity or attending an extracurricular activity as a spectator on or off campus is expected to follow this Code of Conduct as well as the Co-Curricular/Extracurricular Code of Conduct.

Availability of School Rules & Regulations:

Right: Students will be informed of the Code of Conduct of the Irvington Union Free School District on an annual basis. Each student will be provided with access to an electronic copy of the Code of Conduct from the District at the start of each school year as well as being provided with [an age-appropriate](#) plain language summary of the Code of Conduct in school at the beginning of each school year [at a school assembly](#). In addition, electronic copies of the Code of Conduct will be available to parents at the start of each school year. The [complete](#) Code of Conduct will also be made available on the District's website, [including any annual updates or amendments](#). In the event parents and/or students are unable to access the Code of Conduct electronically, they may request a hard copy from the Building Principal. [The District shall make complete copies available for review by students, parents or persons in parental relation to students, other school staff and other community members.](#)

The Code will be reviewed and adopted by the Board of Education annually in conjunction with the opening of school.

In addition, in accordance with 8 NYCRR 100.2, the Board of Education shall provide programs for in-service education for all District staff members to ensure effective implementation of school policy on school conduct and discipline.

Responsibility: All members and visitors of the school community will be responsible for reading and acting in accordance with this Code of Conduct.

Due Process:

Right: Students have a right to a defined procedure for student disciplinary infractions and arriving at decisions. This procedure is called "due process." Students will have a right to be told the reasons for disciplinary actions being considered and a right to present their account of the event(s) in question. Due process is designed to protect students from the arbitrary exercise of authority.

Responsibility: Students have the responsibility to be aware of the steps of due process. They should cooperate with school authorities by providing any and all information needed to make a prompt and fair decision. The formal due process steps are outlined later in this Code of Conduct.

General Student Responsibilities:

All District students have the responsibility to:

- Contribute to maintaining a safe, supportive and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.
- Be familiar with, and abide by all District policies, rules and regulations dealing with student conduct.
- Attend school every day unless they are legally excused and be in class on time and prepared to learn.
- Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
- Respond to direction given by teachers, administrators, and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
- Ask questions when they do not understand.
- Participate in classroom discussions and experiences.
- Seek help in solving problems.

- Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
- Accept responsibility and ownership for their actions to support personal growth.
- Conduct themselves as representatives of the District when participating in or attending school sponsored extracurricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor and sportsmanship.

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS:

Maintaining a safe, supportive, orderly, and learning-rich environment requires the cooperation of all school community members. Below you will find many of the roles that the Board of Education, Teachers, Superintendent, Parents/Guardians, Non-teaching Staff, Administration, and School Counselors are expected to focus upon that will ensure this type of environment. In addition, these essential partners should maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity, which will strengthen students' self-concept and promote confidence to learn. All essential partners are expected to confront issues of discrimination and/or harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional and/or physical health and/or safety of any student, school employee or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.

Board of Education:

- Support opportunities for collaboration among students, teachers, administrators, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel to develop a Code of Conduct that clearly defines expectations for the conduct of students, District personnel and visitors on school property and at school functions.
- Adopt and review at least annually, the District's Code of Conduct to evaluate the Code's effectiveness and the fairness and consistency of its implementation. [The Board of Education shall take reasonable steps to ensure community awareness of the Code of Conduct provisions.](#)
- Lead by example by conducting Board meetings in a professional, respectful, inclusive, courteous manner.

Faculty, Teachers, and Other Professional Staff Members:

- Be prepared to teach in a culturally responsive manner.
- Cultivate a safe, inclusive, welcoming classroom environment; wherein, all students' culture, race, heritage, identity and ability are valued and each individual is respected for who they are.
- Demonstrate interest in teaching, concern for student growth and achievement, and individual differences among students.
- Know school policies and rules, and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
- Communicate to students and their families:
 - Course objectives and requirements
 - Marking/grading procedures
 - Assignment deadlines
 - Expectations for students
 - Classroom expectations
- Communicate regularly with students, parents and other teachers concerning growth and achievement.
- Promptly report to [the building principal, the principal's designee, or the Dignity Act Coordinator](#), incidents of [bullying](#), discrimination, and/or harassment that are witnessed or brought to the teacher's attention, [in accordance with applicable law and Board policies/regulations.](#)
- Promptly address personal biases that may prevent equitable treatment of all students in the school

Deleted: school administration

- or classroom setting. All such matters should be immediately reported to school administration.
- Lead by example by responding to students and parents in a professional, courteous and respectful manner.

Superintendent:

- Promote a welcoming, safe, supportive, orderly and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning.
- Review with District administrators the policies of the Board of Education and state and federal laws relating to school operations and management.
- Provide training to all staff in research-based practices to support student growth and development including implicit bias and culturally responsive education.
- Ensure that acts of discrimination, bias and other actions that would cause harm to individuals and/or disrupt the educational operations and the educational process are properly addressed to support growth and maintenance of a welcoming, supportive school community.
- Inform the Board about educational trends relating to student discipline.
- Work to create instructional programs that minimize problems of misconduct and are sensitive to student and teacher needs.
- Work with District administrators in enforcing the Code of Conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.
- Promptly report incidents of bullying, discrimination and/or harassment that are witnessed or brought to the Superintendent's attention to the principal, the principal's designee, or Dignity Act coordinator, in accordance with applicable law and Board policies/regulations.

Parents, Guardians, and Families:

- Recognize that the education of their child(ren) is a joint responsibility of the parents/guardians and the school community.
- Send their children to school ready to participate and learn.
- Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
- Ensure absences are excused.
- Encourage their children to be advocates for themselves and others.
- Monitor children for appropriate dress in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
- Help their children understand that rules are required to maintain a safe, positive orderly environment where learning, cooperation and collaboration is possible.
- Know school rules and help their children understand them.
- Convey to their children a supportive attitude toward education and the District.
- Foster relationships with teachers, other parents, and other students.
- Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
- Support their children in being prepared for school and encourage them to put their best effort forth daily.
- Support their children in ways that maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, physical appearance, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity or sex in accordance with Dignity for All Students Act.
- Promptly report incidents of bullying of their children to school personnel.
- Recognize, respect and comply with District policies, including this Code of Conduct, while on school property or at a school function.

Commented [KM3]: We suggest adding this language as it aligns with Policy 0115.

Non-teaching Staff:

- Know school policies and rules, and implement them in a fair and consistent manner.
- Convey to students and parents a supportive attitude toward education and the District.
- Lead by example by responding to students and parents in a professional, courteous and respectful manner.
- Promptly report to the building principal, the principal's designee, or the Dignity Act Coordinator, incidents of bullying, discrimination, and/or harassment that are witnessed or brought to the staff member's attention, in accordance with applicable law and Board policies/regulations

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Administration:

- Promote a welcoming, safe, supportive, orderly, and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning.
- Ensure that students and staff have the opportunity to communicate regularly with the Principal and approach the Principal to address concerns they may have.
- Evaluate all instructional programs on a regular basis.
- Support the development of and student participation in appropriate extracurricular activities.
- Be responsible for enforcing the Code of Conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly equitably, and justly.
- Promptly report incidents of bullying, discrimination, and/or harassment that are witnessed or brought to the administrator's attention to the principal, the principal's designee or the Dignity Act Coordinator, in accordance with applicable law and Board policies/regulations.

Commented [KM4]: We suggest adding this language for administration and school counselors as the law/policy 0115 include school employees/staff, respectively.

School Counselors:

- Assist students to develop the skills to cope with peer pressure and to positively and proactively address personal, social, and emotional challenges
- Initiate conferences with the appropriate stakeholders (student/teacher/school counselor/guardian /outside resources), as necessary, as a means to resolve student issues
- Regularly review with students their educational progress and career plans.
- Provide information to assist students with college and career planning.
- Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extracurricular programs ● Seek to identify, and remove, barriers that interfere with students achieving or being their personal best.
- Promptly report incidents of bullying, discrimination and/or harassment that are witnessed or brought to the counselor's attention to the principal, the principal's designee or the Dignity Act Coordinator, in accordance with applicable law and Board policies/regulations.

The Dignity Act Coordinator(s) shall:

- Promote a welcoming, safe, supportive, inclusive, equitable, orderly and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, physical appearance, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, sex, or any other distinguishing characteristic.
- Oversee and coordinate the work of the District-wide and DASA-related committees.
- Identify curricular resources that support infusing civility in classroom instruction and classroom management and provide guidance to staff as to how to access and implement those resources.
- Coordinate with the Professional Development Committee training in support of the bullying prevention committee.
- Be responsible for monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of the District's anti-bullying,

harassment & discrimination policy/Dignity for All Students Act policy.

- Address issues of discrimination and harassment, or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, school employee, or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.
- Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students and staff.
- Respond to any reports of bullying, harassment or discrimination.

