



BUILDING THE STEPS TO SUCCESS

CODE OF CONDUCT

FOR

RIDGEDALE MIDDLE SCHOOL

2015-2016

FLORHAM PARK DISTRICT STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Florham Park is a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. All students, parents, teachers and staff have the right to be safe and feel safe in their school community. With this right comes the responsibility to be law-abiding citizens and to be accountable for actions that put at risk the safety of others or oneself.

Each school maintains a Code of Conduct that applies to any student who is on school property, who is in attendance at school or at any sponsored activity or whose conduct at any time or place has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools or maintaining the safety and the welfare of the students and staff.

The goal of the STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT is to provide a framework for student conduct and discipline. Its intent is to establish an atmosphere for student conduct, which creates support or positive personal growth and achievement. The district is firmly committed to implementing the STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT in a fair, unbiased manner.

Principals are to ensure that the Student Code of Conduct is distributed to each student at the beginning of the school year and to any and all incoming students throughout the year and is reviewed by the classroom/homeroom teacher during the month of September. Expectations for student conduct are reviewed in each classroom.

The Student Code of Conduct and expectations for student behavior should be reviewed with parents. Parents are encouraged to reinforce the Student Code of Conduct with their child(ren).

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All students entering the Florham Park Schools must provide proof of immunization. Proof of residence is also required and any health records that are available should be provided to the school nurse. Immunizations are a STATE requirement before a student can be admitted to school he/she must be immunized. If a student does not have the necessary immunizations for school admission, the parent/guardian is required to have his/her child immunized immediately.

Our students have the following responsibilities regarding their education:

- To attend school and all classes
- To adhere to all school rules, policies and directions from teachers and others in authority.
- To respect the rights of others to reach their educational goals.
- To demonstrate mutual respect and tolerance for personal differences.
- To participate to the fullest in the educational process.
- To express themselves in a manner which does not disrupt the orderly operation of the school or the management of classrooms.
- To pursue the prescribed course of study.
- To respect and care for school property.
- To adhere to all school safety and health regulations and procedures.

Failure to comply can result in disciplinary actions, which may include any (or a combination) of the following:

- Required parent conference
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Students may be excluded from participation in school activities, field trips, programs and athletics.
- Out-of-school suspension
- Restitution
- Community service assignments

Student Rights

An effective, instructional program requires an orderly school environment, and the effectiveness of the educational program is, in part, reflected in the behavior of students. Such an environment must include respect for self and others, as well as for district and community property.

- Our students have the right to receive an education, which allows for maximum personal growth and prepares them to be productive members of our society.
- Our students have the right to participate in all aspects of school – regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, sex or handicapping condition.
- Our students have the right to present information and be told the disciplinary action for the specific infraction.
- Our students have the right to a safe, comfortable and orderly school environment.
- Our students have the right to due process.

Concerted efforts are made to recognize students who have previously exhibited marginal or unacceptable behavior and have demonstrated improvement in their behavior. If the student continues to show unacceptable behavior, the student will be considered exempt from school incentives.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT GOALS

1. Creation and preservation of a safe, orderly environment conducive to learning on all areas of school property and within all school activities and functions on-site and off.
2. Understanding of the social contract inherent in all civilized society whereby the individual foregoes certain acts so as to enjoy and receive the benefits of belonging to society. Within the context of the school, any individual must conform to expectations to be a part of the school. The discipline code shall be known to all by inclusion in appropriate handbooks, postings, class discussions, and parent meetings.
3. The prompt, fair and consistent enforcement of all expectations.
4. The creation of opportunities for students to be of service to others, to practice good citizenship and to work toward the improvement of discipline in themselves and others.
5. The development of programs to train students, parents, faculty and others in ways that will help the students successfully manage their own behavior and the behavior of others in their school.
6. The gathering of information and opinions in a systematic manner so as to develop meaningful data as to the effectiveness, fairness, can be evaluated both objectively and subjectively from the varying points of view of students, parents, teachers, administrators and others.
7. To help remediate the behavior(s) of the student through guidance and CST services when necessary and appropriate.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. All persons in the school in any capacity (student, staff member, parent, visitor, etc.) have an affirmative duty toward the enhancement of safety and order.
2. All persons in the school in any capacity have an affirmative duty to act in a way that will create and protect learning opportunities for themselves and others.
3. All persons in the school in any capacity are individually responsible for their acts. The acts or statements of others, including parents, will not excuse or mitigate unacceptable behavior in schools.
4. Any person unable or unwilling to conform to these principles may not be appropriately placed in the mainstream public school setting.
5. The Florham Park Public Schools will cooperate fully with the police, DYFS, and other law enforcement or social service agencies. Any sanction resulting from criminal convictions or other agency action will not necessarily relieve a student from sanctions within the school system as well.
6. Any person with knowledge or otherwise in a position to prevent an action which can affect the safety of others has the absolute duty to make an immediate and complete report to a teacher or other person in authority. Failure to do is a violation of this Code of Conduct.
7. The Code of Conduct may not anticipate all situations. The Principal may waive or modify any provision of this code if unusual circumstances make that change advisable for sound educational and safety reasons. Any deviation from this code, however, is conditional upon the immediate report to and approval by the Superintendent of Schools.
8. The Code of Conduct shall apply to all students in the Ridgedale Middle School with the exception of those students with educational disabilities whose individualize education programs expressly include exemptions from the specific areas of the discipline code.

DEFINITIONS

Absences (unauthorized or excessive) – absent without an excuse note from parent/doctor or absent for unapproved reasons.

Abusive Language – language directed at one or more other individuals as to humiliate, degrade or show hate, bias.

Administrative Compensatory Service (A.C.S.) – required service to the school community as a result of an infraction. Duties may include, but not limited to the following: peer tutoring in Homework Club, removal of defacement, cleanup, restoration, etc. of the effected area. Compensatory damages may be required for restitution. Implementation of ACS is at the discretion of the administrator.

Alcohol Possession or Use – consumption of alcohol, and presence on school property after consuming alcohol even if consumed off school property, possession including lockers, desks, etc.

Assault – behavior with significant danger of or intent to inflict physical injury on another person.

Behavior Inappropriate – behavior that may interfere with the learning process or safety of the student or others or behavior that has been specially forbidden by school or classroom rule. Behavior intended to or that reasonably could be predicted to interfere with the safety or educational value of a class or other group of students and/or adults in school or at a school activity on-site or off-site.

Being in Unauthorized Area – being in any area without specific permission and/or approved adult supervision.

Blackmail – the threat or act of extracting money or other items or services of value in exchange for the concealment of material items or information or as pressure against another to commit an act.

Bomb Threat/Possession/Knowledge/Making – participating in a bomb threat in any way, possessing any kind of bomb in whole or in part, assisting with the assembling of materials or construction of any kind of bomb in any way, or any knowledge of any sort about a bomb.

Breaking and Entering – entering school property, including outside areas by unauthorized use of keys or by circumvention of fences, doors, windows or other barriers whether damage is done to school property or not.

Co-curricular/Extra-Curricular Activities – any school sponsored activities such as assemblies, performances, sport teams, clubs or service organizations that meet before, during or after school. Any school sponsored one day or multiple day trips, including overnight.

Coercion/Intimidation/Threats – behavior that is intended to or can reasonably be construed to have the effect of forcing one or more to do or not to do something against their will or better judgment under threat of violence, ostracism or other adversity.

Community Service – project opportunities for students to be of service to others, the school or larger community

Cutting/Misconduct in After School Detention – failure to arrive within the first five (5) minutes after school for detention; failure to remain seated and silent; disrupting detention in any way whatever, any disobedience, disrespect or discourtesy whatsoever during detention; leaving detention without permission; failure to leave school property after being excused from detention.

Cutting Class – failure to appear on time for any scheduled class, lunch period, activity or other scheduled event for which the student has been assigned to attend. Leaving class without permission.

Defamatory Materials – writing possession, distribution of any writing, illustration or other representation that casts another person or group in an unfavorable light by gross exaggeration, falsehood, bias or hate.

Disruption on Bus – leaving one's seat, standing, touching another person, speaking to someone more than one seat away, littering, using a window without permission or otherwise acting in any manner that might impair the safety of others on the bus and failure to follow orders of driver and/or bus aide.

Dress Code Violation – see student handbook for specifics.

Drugs (Possession, Knowledge or Use) – using any controlled substance as defined by the Board of Education, entering school property after use of controlled dangerous substance, carrying or possessing controlled dangerous substance on school property, knowledge of the possible presence of a weapon on school property or of someone who may possess a weapon on school property.

Eating in an Unauthorized area – eating permitted only in cafeteria or by teacher/administrator permission.

Explosives (Possession, Knowledge or Use) – use or possession of any substance or items whose nature or purpose is to produce an explosion. Knowledge of the presence of such a substance or item in or about on school property.

False Alarm – participating in any way with raising a deliberate false fire, bomb, weather, or other alarm or warning of imminent danger.

Fighting – any dispute between two or more persons involving physical contact such as punching, kicking, etc. (Physical injury should not be criteria.)

Firearms/Weapons (Possession, Knowledge or Use) – any item intended or that might reasonably be construed as useful as a weapon whether carried on the person, stored in a locker or desk or by any means maintained on school property, knowledge of the possible presence of a weapon on school property.

Fires (Settings) – behavior intended to/or with significant risk of causing a fire on school property, possession of matches, lighters or similar materials.

Forgery – creating, using or assisting in any way with creation of use of a signature or document intended to deceive a reader or recipient as to its authorship, content or authenticity.

Gambling – the participation, in any way, of games or contests with money, material, or services at stake, betting in any form, including odds making, holding stakes, recording or judging outcomes, knowingly in the presence of gambling by others, collecting gambling debts, etc.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying – is defined as any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably

perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus, or off school grounds, in accordance with the law, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students, and that: a) A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear or physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or b) Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or groups of students; or c) Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with the student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student. Incidents occurring off school grounds that have a negative effect on the school learning environment are subject to the principal's review as well.

Derogatory use of words such as "gay, queer or homo" is never acceptable and will prompt an immediate HIB investigation.

"Electronic communication" means a communication that is transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager. For more information see Florham Park Board of Education Policy 5131.1.

Indecent Exposure – leaving open to the sight of others whether by undress or by form-fitting or transparent attire, areas of one's person beyond the limits accepted by prevailing social customs, including the torso, upper thighs, buttocks and abdomen with very limited exceptions permitted for unusual activities such as swimming or for very young students.

Insubordination – failure to obey a staff member whether by action, inaction or delay.

Malicious Mischief/Vandalism – willful, wanton or malicious destruction of property or person.

Obscene Language – spoken words, curses, or epithets beyond the limit of polite language, whether directed at any individual or not.

Parent signature missing/no signature – any school document that lacks the proper signature or the signature sheet is missing.

Participation in/part to group disturbance – any incident in which a student knowing becomes involved in an group altercation or incident.

Physical Scuffle – any activity, rather than one directed and supervised by an adult in charge, involving the physical contact of two or more persons.

Riots – participation in concerted group disturbance.

Sexual Conduct/Expressions (Consented or not) - any act of sexual expression involving the unwanted and/or inappropriate touching of one person by another on school property whether consensual or not.

Stealing/Robbery/Theft/Larceny – depriving others of their own property by force, trick, deception, stealth or any other unauthorized means.

Tardiness (Unexcused) – arriving late for school for an unexcused reason. Tardies are a matter of state record. We cannot do away with them. Tardies are cumulative, as so are consequences dealing with tardies.

Throwing Objects (Any Activity) – any activity, other than one directed and supervised by an adult in charge, involving the throwing of any item through the air.

Tobacco (Possession or Use) – carrying, controlling or possessing in any way a tobacco product on school property, or the use of a tobacco product on school property in any way

Unacceptable Cell Phone Usage: - Cell phones are not to be used during the school day. They are to remain off and in student lockers. Use of a cell phone will be defined as: talking, reading or generating text messages, checking voicemail, time, etc., playing games, sending or looking at pictures, and internet browsing. Students found using their cell phones will have their phones confiscated until the parent or guardian retrieves it from the main office.

Unacceptable Electronic Devices Usage: - Camera-equipped cell phones or similar devices may not be used by students as cameras during the school day (unless given permission by a faculty member for instructional purposes). They may neither be used in the school building nor on buses. They may not be used at any time in the lockers rooms or bathrooms.

Students are not allowed to take photographs or videos of students or staff without their knowledge or permission.

The transmission, storing or sharing photographs taken on cells phones or similar devices may constitute criminal behavior.

Unauthorized physical contact (student/faculty): Any physical contact that has the intent of causing harm between students or toward a faculty or staff member.

SANCTIONS

Teacher Detentions – A teacher may require a student to remain after school with that teacher for academic or disciplinary reasons. The teacher will contact the parent/guardian to arrange an appropriate detention time.

Lunch Detentions (Mid-Day Time Out) – A teacher or administrator may exclude a student from the regular lunch and/or playground for school infractions. Students may also be assigned to Mid-Day Time Out for consistently not completing homework. These detentions will not be recorded in the district database unless authorized by the administration.

Administrative Detentions – A student assigned to administrative detention must be referred by a teacher on the approved Discipline Incident Form. The referring teacher must speak to the student's parent/guardian by telephone or in person and report that conversation on the prescribed form. This conversation must occur within two school days of the incident leading to the detention. After three (3) unsuccessful, documented telephone call attempts to the home, business or cell telephones, the teacher may write a letter in place of this and detention will be assigned. The detention will be subject to the following conditions:

- ❖ The student will voluntarily report to the assigned location no later than 2:30 PM or 7:00 AM.
- ❖ The student will remain in detention for 45 minutes or the time determined by the teacher.
- ❖ The student will remain in a seat silently, with no disturbances to others.

In-school Suspension – A student assigned to an in-school suspension must be referred by a teacher on the approved Discipline Incident Form. Prior to assigning an in-school suspension, the Principal shall hold a conference by phone or in person. The referring teacher, the student, and the student's parent-guardian must all be invited to attend. It shall be deemed reasonable notice of an opportunity to participate in such a conference if the Principal or designee shall attempt to call the parent and offer a meeting as soon as possible or defer to a phone conference. At the conference, the student and parent shall be free to raise questions or provide information as to whether that student committed the alleged infraction and as to whether any extenuating or mitigating circumstance should be considered. Only the Principal shall assign an in-school suspension. Any student assigned to an in-school suspension, except for the first time in any school year, shall be assigned for one (1) to three (3) days in-school suspension. Each subsequent in-school suspension shall normally be for one (1) day longer than any previous suspension, except that no suspension will be any longer than nine (9) days. Each day of suspension will be served subjected to the following conditions.

- ❖ The student will voluntarily report to the assigned location with the necessary materials no later than 7:45 AM on the assigned day (s).
- ❖ The student will secure assignments or other work from teachers that can be completed during the suspension.
- ❖ The student will remain in the designated suspension room through all classes and lunch periods until dismissal.

- ❖ The student may make any necessary trip from the room (e.g.: bathroom, nurse, etc) only with the specific permission and under the conditions set out by the staff member in charge.
- ❖ The student will remain in the seat silently with no disturbance to others.

Sunset School – A student assigned to Sunset School must be referred by a teacher on the approved Discipline Incident Form. The referring teacher must speak to the student’s parent/guardian by telephone or in person and report that conversation on the prescribed form. This conversation must occur within two (2) school days of the incident leading to the detention. After three (3) unsuccessful, documented telephone call attempts, the teacher may write a letter in place of this requirement. The letter must be submitted to the Principal for approval and mailing. Only the Principal shall assign Sunset School detention. The detention will be subject to the following conditions:

- ❖ The student will voluntarily report to the assigned location with necessary materials at 2:30 PM on the assigned date. If the student arrives unprepared, appropriate grade level assignments will be given.
- ❖ The student will remain in detention for the hours set forth by the Principal.
- ❖ No food or drink will be allowed.
- ❖ No electronics, games, cards, magazines, etc. will be allowed.

Out of School Suspension – A student assigned to out of school suspension must be referred by a teacher on the approved Discipline Referral Form. Prior to assigning an out of school suspension, the Principal shall hold a conference. The referring teacher, the student, and the student’s parent/guardian must all be invited to attend. It shall be deemed reasonable notice of an opportunity to participate in such a conference if the Principal or designee shall attempt to call the parent and offer a meeting at the close of the current school day or before the beginning of the next school day. At that conference, the student and parent shall be free to raise questions or provide information as to whether that student committed the alleged infraction, and as to whether any extenuating or mitigating circumstances should be considered. Only the Principal shall assign an out of school suspension. Any student assigned an out of school suspension, except for the first time in any school year, shall be assigned for one (1) to five (5) days of out of school suspension. Each subsequent out of school suspension shall normally be for one (1) day longer than any previous suspension, except that no suspension shall be longer than nine (9) days. Each day of suspension will be served subject to the following conditions:

- ❖ While suspended, the student will remain off school property at all times until 7:45 AM on the day he/she is assigned to return to the regular school program.
- ❖ The student will secure assignments or other work from the teachers that can be completed during suspension before and after that suspension.
- ❖ The parent/guardian must accompany the student to the Principal’s office with completed assignments by 7:45 AM on the return to the regular school program for re-admission to school.

Exclusion from Co/Extra Curricular Activities – A student receiving exclusion from these activities as a consequence must be referred by a teacher on the approved Discipline Incident Form. Prior to assigning the exclusion, the Principal may hold a conference. The referring teacher, the student, and the student’s parent/guardian may be invited to attend. It shall be deemed reasonable notice of an opportunity to participate in such a conference if the Principal or designee shall attempt to call the parent and offer a meeting at the close of the current school day or before the beginning of the next school day. At the conference, the student and parent shall be free to raise questions or provide information as to whether that student committed the alleged infraction and as to whether any extenuating or mitigating circumstance should be considered. Only the Principal shall assign exclusion from Co-Curricular Activities. The exclusion will be subject to the following conditions:

- ❖ The student will not be allowed to attend school assemblies or performances.
- ❖ The student will not be allowed to participate in clubs either before, during, or after school.
- ❖ The student will not be allowed to participate in sport programs or tournaments, or allowed to attend games held on-site.
- ❖ The student will not be allowed to participate in school trips, either one-day duration or multiple-day duration, including overnight.

Placement Review – Referral to the Child Study Team. Parent will be asked to consent, or formal process will be invoked so as to accomplish a full evaluation of the student if deemed advisable by CST.

RIDGEDALE MIDDLE SCHOOL CONSEQUENCE CHART

	School Detention	Admin Detention	Sunset School	In-School Suspend	Out of Sch. Suspend	Exc. Ex. Curricular	Community Service/ ACS	I&RS CST/	Expulsion Hearing
Absence (Unauthorized or excessive)	1	1	2			1,2,3,	1,2,3		
Abusive language	1	1	2	1	3	2	1,2,3		
Alcohol – possession or use					1	1	1,2,3	1	2
Assault				1	1,2,3	1,2,3			
Breaking & Entering				1	1,2,3	1,2,3		1	12,3
Behavior inappropriate	1,2	1,2	3	1,2,3	1,2,3		1,2,3	3	
Being in an unauthorized area	1,2	2		1	3	1,2,3			
Blackmail*				1	1,2	1	1,2,3	1	3
Bomb threat/poss./ knowledge/use*					1	1	1,2,3	1	1
Breaking/Entering				1	1,2,3	1,2,3	1,2,3	1	2,3
Coercion/Intimid/ Threatening	1	1,2		1,2	1,2	1,2,3		1	2,3
Cutting/misconduct/ in detention		1	2,3	2	3	3	1,2,3		
Cutting/misconduct/ in in-school suspension				1	2,3	2	1,2,3	2	
Cutting class		1	2	3		2	1,2,3	2	
Defamatory material (writing, possession, etc.)*				1	2	2	1,2,3	2	
Disruption on bus		1	2	3		2	1,2,3		
Dress code violation	1,2	2,3				3	1,2,3	3	
Drugs/possession/ knowledge/use*					1	1	1,2,3	1	1,2

***Police notification**

	School Detention	Admin Detention	Sunset School	In-School Suspend	Out of Sch. Suspend	Exc. Ex. Curricular	Community Service / ACS	I &RS CST	Expulsion Hearing
Eating in unauthorized area	1,2	3	3			3	1,2,3		
Explosives/possession/knowledge/use*					1	1	1,2,3	1	1
False alarm				1	1,2	1	1,2,3	1	2
Fighting		1,2,3		1,2,3	1,2,3	1			1
Firearms/weapons/possession/knowledge					1	1	1,2,3	1	1
Fires/setting*					1	1	1,2,3	1	1
Forgery	1	2	3	3	3	3	1,2,3	3	
Gambling	1	2	3	2	3	2	1,2,3	2	
Gum chewing on school property	1,2	3	3			3	1,2,3		
Harassment/intimidation/bullying		1		1,2	2,3	1,2,3	1,2,3	2	3
Inappropriate use of cell phone	2	2,3							
Inappropriate use of electronic device				1,2	1,2,3				
Indecent exposure		1	1	1	2,3	2,3	1,2,3	2	
Insubordination to staff members	1	2	2	1,2,3	1,2,3	1,2,3	1,2,3	2	
Malicious mischief/vandalism(restitution &)				1	2	2	1,2,3	2	
Obscene language	1	1	2,3	1,2,3	1,2,3	2	1,2,3	2	
							1,2,3		

- Police Notification