

# STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

## I. FOREWORD

The primary goal of the Southfield School District is to create a positive learning environment in which all students are provided an opportunity to grow academically and socially. In order to attain this goal there must be a shared commitment among parents, staff and students to understand and accept a balance between individual freedom and the limitations of responsible behavior.

The Student Code of Conduct ("Code") was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year about your responsibilities as a student within the Southfield School District. The Code contains important information that you should know. Become familiar with the contents and keep the Code available for reference. If you have any questions that you believe are not addressed by the Code, please talk to your teachers and/or building principal.

The Code summarizes the current status of Michigan law as it pertains to student conduct, and more specifically, the subsequent discipline that may be imposed when students engage in certain types of unacceptable behavior. The Code also contains many of the official policies and administrative guidelines that the Board of Education and the District



have adopted. This Code, in immediate effect, supersedes any prior Code and/or other written material on the same subject.

This Code does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the law, Board policies and School rules as of June 30, 2011. If the law or any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after June 30, 2011, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

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## II. SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS RESPECT CODE

Mutual respect among all members of our school community is the cornerstone of our interaction and behavior. We acknowledge the dignity and worth of one another. We strive to create a welcoming atmosphere by our courtesy to others and our conduct.

Students and staff of Southfield Public Schools have the right to be physically safe. In order to enjoy this right, staff and students have the following responsibilities:

1. To refrain from harming other people or their belongings; and
2. To value school property and help maintain a clean and safe environment.

In addition, students and staff have the right to be emotionally safe. This right can only be maintained if the acceptance of self and others is promoted and consideration and/or sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others is honored.

Further, the right of students and staff to communicate their needs and feelings is also valued within Southfield Public Schools. However, each individual has the responsibility of expressing him/herself in a constructive, non-threatening manner. If a student offends another individual via his/her communication, it is expected that he/she will attempt to make amends with the offended individual.

### **III. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

A major component of the educational program at Southfield Public Schools is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accord with established standards. The District expects each student to do the following:

1. Abide by National, State, and local laws as well as the rules of the District;
2. Respect the civil rights of others;
3. Act courteously to adults and fellow students;
4. Be prompt to school and attentive in class;
5. Work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal, regardless of the other's ability, gender, race, religion, height, weight, age, sexual orientation, familial status, marital status, disability, or ethnic background;
6. Complete assigned tasks on time and as directed;
7. Help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly and productive; and
8. Act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family, and the District.

In addition to the above, the District also recognizes that students cannot be successful in their educational endeavors without the strong support and/or involvement of parent(s)/guardian(s). To that end, it is imperative that parent(s) and/or guardian(s) commit to the following:

1. Support the school's effort to provide a safe and orderly learning environment;
2. Ensure that the student attends school regularly and on time;
3. Provide for the general health and welfare of the student;
4. Provide a home atmosphere and a study area suited for learning and the development of good study habits;
5. Cooperate with school personnel and community agencies in solving their student's problems;
6. Work within the existing structure of the school to address concerns; and
7. Know and support school and District rules and policies.

#### **A. STUDENT SAFETY**

School safety is the responsibility of both the staff and students. All staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire and tornado drills, and accident reporting procedures. Should a student become aware of any dangerous situation or accident, he/she must notify any staff person immediately.

#### **B. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS**

School staff have the following responsibilities to students:

1. Provide a positive atmosphere for learning and teaching;
2. Accept students as important and worthwhile individuals;
3. Help students as group members to act in responsible ways;
4. Enforce the rules and policies of the school consistently and fairly;
5. Encourage students to participate in classroom, extracurricular and other school related activities; and
6. Participate in the formulation of rules and procedures in the school.

#### **C. TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS**

In addition to the aforementioned responsibilities of staff, teachers within the Southfield Public Schools have the following responsibilities to students:

1. Schedule conferences with students, parents and other school personnel in an effort to understand and resolve academic and behavioral problems before they become serious matters;
2. Keep parents informed of a child's progress and/or problems; and
3. Provide homework to students who are out of school for excused absences.

#### **D. COUNSELORS' RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS**

School counselors have the following responsibilities to students:

1. Provide counseling and guidance to every student;
2. Seek conferences with parents, staff and students about problems as soon as possible;
3. Help students obtain schedules appropriate to their needs and interests;
4. Help students understand and resolve their problems; and
5. Coordinate support services and/or other agencies on behalf of students.

#### **E. BUILDING ADMINISTRATORS' RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS**

Building Administrators within the District have the following responsibilities to students:

1. Provide leadership, supervision and evaluation of the total educational program;
2. Listen to and advise students, faculty and parents;
3. Enforce fairly the policies of the District;
4. Use appropriate methods for handling discipline problems to ensure that a student's rights are respected;

5. Maintain proper disciplinary measures that protect the rights of the individual to learn in a safe and orderly environment; and
6. Ensure that school rules and due process procedures are clearly presented to students, parents and faculty.

## **F. THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS**

The Superintendent of the District has the following responsibilities to students:



1. Coordinate and support the development of new education programs and strategies which will help promote a positive learning environment;
2. Advise principals on serious student disciplinary matters;
3. Support principals who have acted in accordance with the policies of the District and Michigan law;
4. Consider and take appropriate disciplinary action for student misconduct when long-term suspension is considered;
5. Consider and make recommendations to the Board on student disciplinary action when expulsion is a consideration; and
6. Review with administrators the policies of the Board of Education and State laws relating to student rights and discipline.

## **G. THE BOARD OF EDUCATION'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS**

The Board of Education has the following responsibilities to students:

1. Establish a procedure for the development and revision of a student code of conduct;
2. Ensure that school employees implement local Board policies and other Board recommendations relative to the Student Code of Conduct; and
3. Act on recommendation for expulsion and discipline.

## **H. STUDENT AND PARENT COMPLAINTS**

The policy and procedures in this section DO NOT apply to action(s) that may be taken against students and/or the due process rights associated with said action(s). Thus, to the extent that parents and/or students have complaints about student disciplinary issues, the procedures set forth under Section III of this Code should be reviewed and followed. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as limiting the right of any student or parent to discuss complaints with appropriate school administrators. No reprisals of any kind shall be taken by anyone against any student as a result of initiating this process.

The District is committed to promoting understanding and equitable resolution of non-disciplinary concerns that may arise during the school year. To that end the procedures outlined below have been developed to assist in bringing problems to the attention of involved school personnel, as well as appeal procedures for use if problems are not resolved satisfactorily at the local level. Parents and students are encouraged to initially make every effort to resolve concerns at the local school level. This process should begin with an informal conference between the aggrieved person and either the staff member involved or the building principal. Open and effective lines of communication should be offered by all concerned. The procedure below is to be utilized only in the event the informal conference fails to resolve the problem.

1. Students and parents should first attempt to settle concerns by direct contact with the staff member involved. This may be accomplished by telephone, in writing, or by scheduling a conference with the student, parent and staff member.
2. If the parent and/or student has been unable to resolve the problem or is not satisfied with the decision made by the staff member, the parent and/or student may contact the principal to schedule a conference.
3. If the parent and/or student are not satisfied with the decision made by the principal, the parent and/or student may appeal to a central office administrator. This request for an appeal, either verbal or written, should include any pertinent facts, the principal's decision and the remedy requested. The central office administrator will review all information and may schedule meetings with the parent and/or student, and building principal (together and/or separately). The central office administrator will make a decision that is in line with District policies and student interest.
4. If the central office administrator upholds the decision of the principal, the parent and/or student may contact the Superintendent, verbally or in writing. The Superintendent or designee will review the decisions made by the principal and central office administrator and make a final determination.
5. If the Superintendent upholds the decision of the central office administrator, the parent and/or student may contact the Board of Education in writing. The Board will consider all information provided and may or may not grant the hearing. If the Board does not grant a hearing, the decision of the Superintendent is final and no further appeal process will be considered.

## I. Personal Property

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. Therefore, students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, large amounts of money and the like, are tempting targets for theft and/or extortion. The District cannot be responsible for their safekeeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables.

## J. USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Students must receive the permission of the teacher before using any equipment or materials in the classroom and the permission of an administrator to use any other school equipment or facility. Students will be held responsible for the proper use and safe keeping of any equipment or facility they are allowed to use. Students must also adhere to the District's Computer Technology and Networks policy (as described in Section V-B herein) when utilizing hardware and software that has been placed in District offices, labs or classrooms.

## K. STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION

The District values students' rights to freely express themselves within the guidelines of the Student Code of Conduct. Thus, the opinion of each student is valued and welcomed. If a student has suggestions that he/she believes would improve the District, he/she should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the principal or the student government/council.

## L. FREEDOM TO PUBLISH

Students are entitled to express their personal opinions in writing and to circulate petitions, provided they do not violate the District's Computer Technology and Networks policy (as more fully described in Section V-B herein) or any other provision contained within this Code. Further, a student's right to publish is also subject to the following:

1. Students who edit, publish or distribute handwritten, printed, duplicated or other matter or who produce radio or television material within the school and/or school community must assume responsibility for the content of such publications and such students' names shall be contained in the publication or production.
2. Students distributing or receiving handwritten, printed, duplicated or other matter shall be responsible for the removal of all litter produced by them.
3. Students offered such materials shall not be pressured or forced into receiving them.
4. No student publication, radio or television production shall contain libelous, pornographic or obscene matters, intentional distortions or statements which evidence a reckless disregard for the truth.
5. The distribution or communication of such material shall not interfere with or disrupt the educational process.
6. Communications, publications, electronic mail, radio or television programs shall not advocate or incite illegal action or disobedience of published rules or interference with the rights of others. This subsection shall not be construed to prohibit the advocacy of ideas or beliefs.
7. No communication shall contain matters which, in the opinion of the administration, will cause harm to the school community.
8. No materials whose major purpose is commercial advantage may be distributed.
9. No communication advocating racial, religious, ethnic or gender intolerance is permitted.
10. Any student responsible for the publication or distribution of proscribed materials shall be subject to disciplinary action.
11. Official school newspapers, radio stations and television channels are Board-sponsored activities which are designed to serve as a means of reporting current events and newsworthy issues to the student body and community. School newspapers, radio and television programs under the management of student editors or directors shall be free of prior censorship or institutional control of editorial policy.
12. Student editors and directors must recognize their obligations in relation to the responsibilities and limitations of freedom of speech and publication. In addition to the responsibilities and limitations that are applicable to all students, student editors and directors are further responsible for providing fellow students, teachers and administrators a reasonable opportunity for the expression of views that differ from editorial policy. Student editors and directors are subject to discipline for breach of such responsibilities and limitations.
13. The building administrator may impose reasonable restrictions on the time and place for distribution of all student publications and communications.

## IV. STUDENT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Students who violate the Student Code of Conduct shall be subject to discipline, which may include but is not limited to suspension and/or expulsion from the District. In all cases, the District shall attempt to make discipline prompt and equitable and to have the punishment match the severity of the incident. The imposition of discipline however, except as specifically mandated by State or Federal law, is within the sound discretion of staff and administration.

If a student and/or parent disagree with any disciplinary action that is imposed, every effort should be made to resolve these concerns at the local school level. Nothing in this policy, however, should be construed as limiting the right of any student or parent to discuss complaints with appropriate school administrators.

It is important to remember that the Student Code of Conduct applies to students traveling to and from school, at school, on school property, at school sponsored events and on school transportation. If misconduct occurs during any of these times and/or events, a student shall be subject to two types of discipline: formal or informal.

### A. INFORMAL DISCIPLINE

Informal discipline takes place within the school. It may include the following:

1. Written assignments;
2. Change of seating or location;
3. Detention;
4. In-school restriction;
5. Work detail/school community service;
6. Time-out

### B. FORMAL DISCIPLINE

Formal discipline removes the student from school. It includes teacher initiated suspensions, suspension for up to ten (10) school days, long-term suspensions for eleven to eighty-nine (11-89) days, expulsion for ninety (90) up to one hundred eighty (180) school days, and in certain extreme or legally mandated circumstances, permanent expulsion. Before a student may be suspended or expelled from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

#### 1. Due Process Rights – Suspension

##### a. One-day suspensions

A teacher may suspend a student from class, subject, or activity for up to one (1) full school day for certain conduct as specified in the Student Code of Conduct. The teacher shall immediately send the student to the principal and specify the reason for the suspension as specified in the Code of Conduct. As soon as possible

after the suspension, the teacher shall schedule a parent-teacher conference regarding the suspension. If feasible, a counselor, psychologist or social worker shall attend the conference. The principal may attend upon request of the teacher or parent. The student shall not be returned to the class, subject, or activity that school day without the consent of both the teacher and the principal.

##### b. Up to ten (10) day suspensions

When a student is being considered for a suspension of ten (10) days or less, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the charge(s) during an informal hearing, prior to removal. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her alleged misconduct and the administrator will then provide the student with the evidence supporting the charge(s). After that informal hearing, the administrator will make a decision whether or not to suspend. If a student is suspended the administrator will attempt to contact the parents within 24 hours. Parents will be notified, in writing, of the reason for and the length of the suspension. The suspension may be appealed within three (3) days after receipt of the suspension notice, to the building principal. The request for an appeal must be in writing. Suspension from co-curricular and extra-curricular activities may not be appealed.

During the appeal process the student shall not be allowed to remain in school. The appeal shall be conducted in a private meeting with the principal.

When a student is suspended, he/she may makeup work missed and may, upon request and concurrence by the principal in suspensions of five (5) or more days, be provided with homework assignments, each of which must be completed prior to receipt of the next.

A student being considered for suspension of more than ten (10) days (i.e., a long-term suspension), will be given due process as described in the expulsion section below.

#### 2. Due Process – Expulsions/Long-Term Suspensions

If a student is considered for long-term suspension or expulsion, a hearing will be conducted with the principal. Following this hearing, the student may appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent. The request for appeal must be in writing and received by the principal within ten (10) days of his/her decision to suspend or expel. If a student subsequently disagrees with the Superintendent's decision, he/she may appeal to the Board of Education within ten (10) days. The student will subsequently receive a formal letter scheduling a hearing before the Board, which will be addressed to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and shall include:

- a. The charge and related evidence;
- b. The time and place of the Board hearing;
- c. The length of the recommended suspension or expulsion;
- d. A brief description of the hearing procedure;
- e. A statement that the student may bring parents, guardians, and legal counsel;
- f. A statement that the student may give testimony, present evidence, and provide a defense; and
- g. A statement that the student may request attendance of school personnel who were party to the action or accused the student of the infraction.

The hearing before the Board will be formal and testimony will be received as appropriate and available from school administration, the student, his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), witnesses, his/her representative and/or legal counsel. As required by Michigan's Open Meetings Act, the Board hearing will be in open session unless the student or the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) request a closed session. All opportunity to earn grades or credit ceases when a student is expelled.

If possible and appropriate, the District will make a sincere effort to impose disciplinary actions that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. However, all opportunity to earn grades or credit ceases when a student is expelled.

In accordance with State law, specifically MCL 380.1311(1), the District may expel or suspend a student (for a discretionary period of time) who is found guilty of a gross misdemeanor or persistent disobedience.

Further, as mandated by MCL 380.1311(2) and MCL 380.1311a, if a student in grade six (6) or above is found by the District to be guilty of possessing a dangerous weapon, arson, criminal sexual conduct, or physically assaulting a District employee, volunteer, or contractor, he/she will be permanently expelled from all Southfield Public Schools and related school activities. The student may apply for readmission to the District after one hundred fifty (150) school days (from the date of expulsion) have expired. If a student in grade five (5) or below is expelled (for any of the above-cited offenses) he/she may apply for readmission after sixty (60) school days have expired.

It is important to note that a student who is expelled from the District for possession of a dangerous weapon, arson or criminal sexual conduct is also precluded from attending all public schools and public school academies in the State of Michigan during the mandated expulsion period.

### 3. Due Process – Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

#### C. SEARCH & SEIZURE

Search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is en route to and from school, is at school or is in attendance at any school related activity, provided there is reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of a law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches. If student lockers require student-provided locks, each student must provide the lock's combination or key to the principal.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.

<sup>1</sup> Michigan's mandatory expulsion law defines a dangerous weapon as a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over 3 inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles. See MCL 380.1313(4). It should be further noted that the District will not be required to expel a student for possessing a weapon if the student establishes in a clear and convincing manner at least one of the following: 1) the object or instrument was not possessed by the student for use as a weapon, or for direct or indirect delivery to another person for use as a weapon; 2) the weapon was not knowingly possessed by the student; 3) the student did not know or have reason to know that the object or instrument constituted a dangerous weapon; 4) the weapon was possessed at the suggestion, request, or direction of, or with the express permission of, school or police authorities. See MCL 380.1311(2).

## V. STUDENT CONDUCT

### A. ATTENDANCE

It is imperative that students be in regular and punctual attendance in all classes during the instructional school year, in accordance with the compulsory attendance laws of the State of Michigan. Individual study cannot substitute for active participation in classroom and other school activities. The school is also concerned about helping students develop a high quality work ethic which will be a significant factor in their success with future employers. One of the most important work habits that employers look for in hiring and promoting a worker is his/her dependability in coming to work every day and on time. This is a habit the School wants to help students develop as early as possible.

The District believes that repeated absences from school endanger individual progress and therefore, school personnel shall notify students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) when attendance problems develop and shall alert them to possible consequences of continuation. Counseling and other intervention will be offered as appropriate to improve attendance, but ultimately a student could lose credit after continued failure to attend class. (See District Attendance Policy.)

Continuing and excessive absenteeism from school, except for reasons of medical impairment or any similarly excusable condition, shall be considered truancy and/or educational neglect. Such instances shall be referred to Oakland Schools Truancy Program, to Oakland County Assistant Prosecutor School Liaison, to Juvenile Division of Probate Court and the Department of Social Services, as appropriate.

### B. USE OF COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS

Before any student may take advantage of the privilege to use hardware and software that has been placed in District offices, labs or classrooms, the student must sign an agreement which defines the conditions under which he/she may exercise said privilege. Failure to abide by all of the terms of the District's Technology Acceptable Use Policy may lead to termination of the student's computer account and possible disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion from school and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

All hardware and software located in classrooms, labs and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

The use of the Network is a privilege which may be revoked by the District at any time and for any reason. Appropriate reasons for revoking privileges include, but are not limited

to, those outlined within the Technology Acceptable Use Policy, the altering of system hardware and software or the placing of unauthorized information, computer viruses or harmful programs on or through the computer system in either public or private files or messages. The District reserves the right to remove files, limit or deny access, and refer the student for other disciplinary actions.

Personal Access and use of social media, blogs and chat rooms from the district's network is expressly prohibited and shall subject student to discipline in accordance with Board policy.

### C. STUDENT DRESS CODE

Southfield Public Schools is dedicated to preparing each student for college and career readiness. Student dress should promote a positive learning environment, encourage community and family ties, and support healthy and safe behavior.

A Southfield Public School District student will not dress in a manner that negatively impacts the learning process or educational setting. Students may not dress in a manner that is obscene, offensive, provocative, distracting, or indecent as these detract from the learning environment. This includes, but is not limited to, students wearing clothing that positively supports and depicts messages of violence, drugs, sexual themes, hate, vulgarity, and criminal behaviors. Students are expected to adhere to the following appearance guidelines while on school property and during school-related events:

- Clothing must be worn in a tasteful manner. Shirts, blouses, and tops should fully cover backs, torsos, and cleavage on all students (males, females and gender non-conformists), without any indecent exposure, including undergarments and associated undergarment straps or bands. No low-cut tops allowed or bare midriffs (all students). Accordingly, pants that "sag" to expose underwear, torn or ripped pants, or shirts that rise up to expose skin are prohibited.
- Pants, shorts, and skirts should be worn appropriately. Pants, trousers, and bottoms should fully cover undergarments, without any indecent exposure including underwear linings and underwear bands. Skirts should fully cover the entire thigh. If leggings/yoga pants are worn, shirts or skirts should cover the buttocks.
- If students decide to wear clothing or accessories with messaging, the messages must be positive, and not include hateful, offensive, violent or explicit language, images, or words. Students should not wear items of clothing which have obscene, vulgar or sexual statements or pictures/images which promote alcohol, tobacco or illegal substances.



- Students are not to wear pajamas or loungewear, sheer garments and or tight form-fitting clothing. Clothing with excessive tears or otherwise in disrepair should not be worn.
- School-appropriate footwear must be worn on school premises at all times (no flip flops, house shoes or athletic slides).
- Hooded sweatshirts are allowed, but hoods may not be worn indoors. Hats and coats are to be stored in the student's locker during the school day. No bandanas, do-rags or gang-affiliated attire are permitted.

Southfield Public Schools recognizes that each student's choice of dress and grooming is an expression of personal style and individual preference. Southfield Public Schools will not interfere with a student's decision regarding their appearance, except when the choices interfere with the learning environment or school safety.

**Students with three or more dress code violations will be subject to short-term suspension.**

#### **D. SPECIFIC PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS/CONDUCT**

Each of the behaviors described below shall subject the student to disciplinary action, which may include suspension and/or expulsion from school. It is also important to note that attempts toward completion of any of the following acts will constitute a violation and may be punishable to the same extent as if the attempted act had been completed. And further, lying to staff or obstructing an investigation or the operation of the school may result in disciplinary consequences. Police involvement may also be necessary in some instances.

##### **1. Use, Possession, Sale or Distribution of Drugs**

The school has a "drug free" school zone that includes the school building, 1,000 feet beyond the school building, any school-related activity and transportation (i.e., buses that are provided by the District.) This means that any activity – sale, possession, distribution or use of drugs, which includes, but is not limited to, narcotics, marijuana, any controlled substance, anabolic or other steroids, inhalants, look-alike drugs, or over-the-counter medication – is prohibited. Students shall be subject to suspension or expulsion for violation of prohibition.

##### **2. Use, Possession, Sale or Distribution of Alcoholic Beverages**

The use, possession, sale or distribution of alcoholic beverages within the school's "drug free" school zone (i.e., the school building, 1,000 ft. beyond the school building, any school related activity and transportation provided by the District) is expressly prohibited.

The principal may arrange for a breath test for blood-alcohol to be conducted on a student whenever the principal has reasonable suspicion that a student has consumed an alcoholic beverage.

The student will be taken to a private administrative or instructional area on school property with at least one (1) other member of the teaching or administrative staff present as a witness to the test.

The purpose of the test is to determine whether or not the student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The amount of consumption is not relevant, except where the student may need medical attention.

If the result indicates a violation of the Code as described herein the District may suspend or expel the student. If a student refuses to take the test, s/he will be advised that such denial will be considered an admission of alcohol use with the consequent discipline invoked. The student will then be given a second opportunity to take the test.

##### **3. Use of Tobacco**

Smoking and other tobacco uses are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the sale, distribution, use or possession of any form of tobacco and/or tobacco paraphernalia during school time or at any school activity. This includes inhaling or chewing a tobacco product and the smoking of electronic, vapor or substitute forms of cigarettes, clove cigarettes or other lighted smoking devices. This prohibition also applies when going to and from school and at school bus stops. Violations of this rule shall result in either suspension or expulsion.

##### **4. Student Disorder/Demonstration**

Students will not be denied their rights to freedom of expression, but the expression is not unlimited and it may not infringe on the rights of others. Disruption of any school activity will not be allowed. Students who feel there is need to organize some form of demonstration should contact the Principal to discuss the proper way to plan such an activity. Students who disrupt school activities as described above shall be subject to suspension or expulsion.

##### **5. Possession, Sale or Use of a Weapon**

A weapon includes conventional objects, whether operable or inoperable, like guns, pellet guns, knives, or club type implements. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon shall subject a student to expulsion and possible permanent exclusion. It makes no difference whether or not the weapon belongs to someone else, unless the student can provide convincing evidence that the weapon was placed in the student's possession without his/her knowledge. If it can be confirmed that a student other than the one who possessed the weapon brought a weapon on District property, that student shall also be subject to the same disciplinary action.



State law mandates that a student be expelled from school if found guilty of this offense, subject to a petition for possible reinstatement (as outlined in Section III) if s/he brings onto or has in his/her possession on school property or at a school-related activity any of the following: a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, a pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar or brass knuckles, or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices. Under the law, a student expelled for possessing any of the above-referenced weapons may not attend another public school.

## 6. Use of an Object as a Weapon

Any object that is used to threaten, harm, or harass another may be considered a weapon. This includes, but is not limited to, objects identified in #5 above, padlocks, pens, pencils, laser pointers or jewelry. Intentional injury to another can be a crime and could result in a lawsuit from the injured person.

Use of any of the objects identified in #5 above as a weapon will result in the expulsion of a student from the District. Use of any other object as a weapon shall result in either suspension or expulsion.

## 7. Knowledge of Dangerous Weapons or Threats of Violence

Because the Board believes that students, staff members and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required to report knowledge of dangerous weapons (as defined in #5 above) or threats of violence to the principal. Failure to report such knowledge shall subject the student to discipline.

## 8. Arson

Anything, such as fire, that endangers school property and its occupants will not be tolerated. Arson is a felony and thus, any student that engages in such conduct shall be subject to expulsion.

## 9. Physically Assaulting (Fighting) a Staff Member/ Person Associated with the District

In accordance with State law, a student who physically assaults a District employee, volunteer or contractor while at school will be expelled regardless of whether the assault results in injury. Physical assault is defined as "intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence."

## 10. Physically Assaulting (Fighting) a Student

A student who physically assaults another student while at school shall be subject to suspension or expulsion, regardless of whether the assault results in injury.

## 11. Verbal Threats/Bomb Threats

Verbal assault at school against a District employee, student, volunteer or contractor or making bomb threats or similar threats directed at a school building, property or a school related activity shall result in suspension or expulsion. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

Students who are found guilty of making bomb threats shall be required to pay restitution to the District for any expense(s) incurred as a result of the following:

- The City of Southfield's police and/or fire department(s) being dispatched to school property; or
- The use of District personnel/staff (beyond regular school hours) assisting in the search and/or seizure of purported bombs.

<sup>2</sup> A firearm is defined as any weapon from which a dangerous projectile may be propelled by using explosives, gas or air as a means of propulsion, except any smooth bore rifle or handgun designed and manufactured exclusively for propelling BB's not exceeding .177 caliber by means of spring, gas or air. See MCL 8.3t & 18 USC 921.

## 12. Extortion

Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force or deception to take or receive something from someone else. Extortion is against the law. Violations of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

## 13. Gambling

Gambling, including casual betting, betting pools, organized-sports betting and any other form of wagering, is prohibited. Students who bet on an activity in which they are involved will also be banned from that activity. Violations of this rule shall subject a student to suspension or expulsion.

## 14. Falsification of Schoolwork, Identification, Forgery

Forgery of hall/bus passes and excuses, making or using false ID's, plagiarism and cheating are prohibited and shall subject the student to academic penalties as well as disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion.

## 15. Activating the Fire Alarm System and/or Making False Reports

A false emergency alarm, report or bomb threat endangers the safety forces that are responding, the citizens of the community and persons in the building. What may seem like a prank is a dangerous stunt. Violations of this rule shall subject a student to suspension or expulsion.

## 16. Explosives

Explosives, fireworks and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs, pipe bombs, bottle bombs, small firecrackers and poppers are forbidden and dangerous. Violations of this rule shall subject a student to suspension or expulsion.

## 17. Trespassing

Although schools are public facilities, the law does allow the school to restrict access on school property. If a student has been removed, suspended or expelled, the student is not allowed on school property without authorization of the principal. In addition, students may not enter school property at unauthorized times or areas of the school determined to be inappropriate. Violations of this rule shall subject a student to suspension or expulsion.

## 18. Thefts and Possession of Stolen Property

When a student is found guilty of stealing or acquiring school or someone else's property without consent, s/he will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Theft or possession of stolen property shall subject a student to suspension or expulsion.

## 19. Disobedience/Failure to Cooperate with School Personnel

School staff is allowed, by law, to direct a student as would a parent. This applies to all staff, not just teachers. If given a reasonable direction by a staff member, the student is expected to comply. Disobedience shall subject a student to suspension and/or expulsion.

### a. Refusing to accept discipline

The school may use informal discipline to permit the student to receive corrective action without being removed from school. When a student refuses to accept the discipline imposed for an infraction, the refusal shall result in a sterner action such as suspension or expulsion.

### b. Aiding or abetting violation of school rules

If a student assists another student in violating the Code, they will be disciplined and shall be subject to suspension or expulsion. Students are expected to resist peer pressure and exercise sound decision-making regarding their behavior.

### c. Violation of individual school/classroom rules

Each learning environment has different rules for students. Rules that are specific to a particular school and/or classroom are for the safe and orderly operation of that environment. Students will be oriented to these rules, all of which will be consistent with the policies of

the District. Persistent violations of rules shall subject a student to suspension or expulsion.

### d. Cafeteria misconduct

If a student fails to comply with lunchroom regulations, he/she shall be subject to disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to detention, suspension or expulsion.

### e. Misconduct in another school district

Students engaging in misconduct in other school districts, which includes but is not limited to failure to follow directions, failure to cooperate, intimidation, theft, trespassing, fighting or vandalism, shall be subject to disciplinary action, which may include detention, suspension or expulsion.

### f. Off-campus misconduct in general

If a student engages in misconduct off-campus, which may include criminal activity or any behavior described in subsection (e) above, he/she shall be subject to disciplinary action, which may include detention, suspension or expulsion.

### g. Habitual persistent misconduct

Students that habitually engage in misconduct as described within this section or any other provision with the Student Code of Conduct shall be subject to discipline, which may include detention, suspension or expulsion.

## 20. Damaging Property

Vandalism and disregard for school property will not be tolerated. Violations shall subject a student to suspension or expulsion.

## 21. Unauthorized Use of School or Private Property

Students are expected to obtain permission to use any school property or any private property located on school premises. Any unauthorized use shall subject a student to suspension or expulsion.

## 22. Possession of Electronic Equipment

The school district supplies most electronic equipment necessary in school. Students are not allowed to bring on a bus or to school radios, "boom boxes," portable TV's, electronic toys, MP3 players, iPods, portable cassette or disc players, laser pens and the like, without the permission from school authorities. The property will be confiscated and disciplinary action will be taken. Violations of this rule shall subject a student to suspension or expulsion.

### 23. Possession of Cellular Phones/Devices of Electronic Communication

Students may be in possession of a cellular telephone, pager/beeper or other electronic communications device subject to the Administrative Rules and the terms contained herein. Cellular telephones and other electronic communications devices shall be turned off upon entering campus at the start of the school day and may not be turned back on until after the student completes his/her last class in the afternoon. Such devices shall not be used on any school property, which includes, but is not limited to, school buses. Further, students are prohibited from displaying and/or having the aforementioned devices visible during instructional time or in the passing time between classes.

In no case will students be allowed to use the device's wireless, unfiltered connection to the Internet of the devices.

Parents or guardians are urged to teach their children the proper etiquette of cell phone use and to monitor the use of same.

The District is not responsible for lost or stolen cellular phones and/or electronic communications devices and recommends parents provide insurance for same.

Students violating this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action (i.e., detention, suspension and/or expulsion).

### 24. Harassment

Harassment of students is prohibited and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors and volunteers. It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school-sponsored activities, whether on or off school property.

Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively affect a student's educational, physical or emotional well-being. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as gender, race, color, age, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students. This would include such activities as stalking, bullying, name-calling, taunting, hazing, threatening gestures and other disruptive behaviors.

Any student who believes he/she has been or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the

situation to a teacher, guidance counselor, the principal or assistant principal.

Every student should – and every staff member must – report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to a building principal, assistant principal or the Superintendent.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred it will result in prompt and appropriate corrective action. This may include up to expulsion for students; up to discharge for employee; exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors; and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

#### a. Harassment in general

This is when unwelcome conduct or communication (as described above) becomes a factor in a student obtaining the benefit of an education.

#### b. Sexual harassment – may include, but is not limited to:

1. verbal harassment or abuse based on gender or sexual orientation;
2. pressure for sexual activity;
3. repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
4. unwelcome touching;
5. suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, safety, job or performance or public duties.

#### c. Bullying – intimidation of others by acts such as, but not limited to:

1. threatened or actual physical harm;
2. unwelcome physical contact;
3. threatening or taunting verbal, written or electronic communications;
4. taking or extorting money or property;
5. damaging or destroying property;
6. blocking or impeding student movement.

**d. Hazing – any type of initiation procedure for any school related activity, which involves conduct such as, but not limited to:**

1. Illegal activity, such as drinking or using drugs;
2. Physical punishment or infliction of pain;
3. Intentional humiliation or embarrassment;
4. Dangerous activity;
5. Activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress;
6. Forced detention or kidnapping;
7. Undressing or exposing one's genitalia.

## 25. Criminal Sexual Conduct

In compliance with State law, the Board shall expel any student who commits criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation.

## 26. Criminal Acts

Any student engaging in any criminal act at or related to the school will be reported to law enforcement officials and shall also be subject to discipline by the school, which may include suspension or expulsion. Criminal acts include, but are not limited to, physical violence, gang related acts, illegal possession of a controlled substance, analogue or other intoxicants, trespassing, property crimes (i.e., theft or vandalism), which occurs in the school or within the community. It is not considered double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime), when a student is both disciplined for violation of school rules and punished by the courts for a crime as a result of the same incident.

## 27. Safety Concerns

Students should not engage in any activity that threatens the safety of students, staff or visitors. Students should not use roller blades, bicycles, skateboards and scooters in school hallways or District pedestrian traffic areas. Use of any means of travel within buildings and on grounds by other than generally accepted practices where appropriate is prohibited. Students violating this expectation will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion.



## 28. Distribution of Unauthorized Materials

The act of distributing or selling materials on school property without authorization of the building administration is expressly prohibited. Violators of this provision shall be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion.

## 29. Disruptive Conduct

(A) Conduct which materially and substantially interferes with the educational process. (B) Horseplay: The act of bodily contact, such as pushing, pulling, tripping, etc. (short of injury and without intent to harm) in or on school property or going to or from school, including any activity under school sponsorship. (C) Malicious mischief including "pranks." This could include disruption of performances and ceremonies with "catcalls," paraphernalia and any actions used to distract and demean a student, employee, event or activity. Students who engage in any of the above referenced conduct shall be subject to suspension or expulsion.

## 30. Gang Behavior/Activity/Insignia

Gang behavior, activity and insignia will not be tolerated. Examples of gang behaviors or activities are those promoted or committed by organized groups which threaten the safety or well-being of persons or which are disruptive to the school environment.

Students wearing, carrying or displaying gang paraphernalia or exhibiting behaviors or gestures which symbolize gang membership or causing and/or participating in activities which are designed to intimidate another student shall be subject to suspension or expulsion.

## 31. Gross Misbehavior

The act of deliberate or willful conduct detrimental to the normal functioning of a program or school related activity, which may include, but is not limited to, prohibited conduct as outlined within the Code, computer/internet misuse, gambling, open defiance, persistent disobedience and acts of poor judgment which either interrupt normal school routine or threaten the health, safety and welfare of others. If a student is found guilty of gross misbehavior he/she shall be subject to suspension or expulsion.



## **SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

24661 Lahser Road  
Southfield MI 48033

### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

If students or parents/guardians have any questions about the Southfield Public Schools Student Code of Conduct, please feel free to contact your local school principal or the Superintendent's Office.

For information, call (248) 746-8500 or visit [www.southfield.k12.org](http://www.southfield.k12.org).

ALL PROVISIONS OF THE SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT SHALL BE APPLIED CONSISTENT WITH CHANGES TO MICHIGAN STATE LAWS ESTABLISHED ON AUGUST 1, 2017.

**SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION & EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY** - Southfield Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, age, height, weight, marital status, genetic information or any other legally protected characteristic, in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. The following individuals have been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Title VI Coordinator - Andrea Phillpotts, 248-746-8976; Title II & Title IX Coordinators - Ricky Fountain, 248-746-8580 or Alise Collier, 248-746-4338; Section 504 Coordinator - Daryl Beebe, 248-746-0045. All complaints may be addressed to 24661 Lahser Road, Southfield, MI 48033.