

## ❖ STUDENT BEHAVIOR

### COMMENTS CONCERNING THE CODE OF CONDUCT

A student has the responsibility to conduct himself/herself in a manner that does not disrupt the learning process. It shall be each student's responsibility to fully understand school regulations, uphold them, and respect the leadership role of the entire school staff.

The student who interferes with or prevents the learning process for himself/herself and others shall be considered disruptive to the school environment. Acts such as disrespect, fighting, use of profanity and failure to follow school and individual classroom rules are examples of disruptive behavior.

When a student violates the basic rights of others and/or the rules of the school, he/she shall expect certain measures to be taken by the school to correct the matter.

The administrators will have latitude in the final determination of the execution of the code of conduct. Action taken by school authorities shall be free from bias based on race, sex, national origin, religion, creed, social standing, family background, economic position, political affiliations, or handicapping conditions.

The student is primarily responsible for communicating to parents any referrals s/he receives due to inappropriate behavior. The student is expected to inform parents or guardians and to return the signed referral upon return to school. Signed slips indicate that parents are aware of the problem, not that they necessarily agree with the charge or the discipline. Parents should call the school if they have any questions or place a note on the referral slip. The student will lose privileges and other consequences will occur if **referral slips** are not returned.

### TIME OUT CLASSROOM (DETENTION CLASSROOM)

Time out is a highly structured process where a student is not permitted to attend his/her classes. The student remains in the area to do work and receives credit for it. The code of conduct has been established to try to prevent a suspension or expulsion from school.

The following guidelines will be used during the student's visit to the time out room:

1. The supervisor will follow the time out procedures and rules which are posted.
2. Students will complete a time out sheet (Blue) which deals specifically with the problem that caused the student to be in time out.
3. Students have to successfully serve the duration assigned to time out. The student's behavior should be exemplary while in time out and if a student is not successful (i.e. s/he receives the second warning within a class period), s/he will remain in the time out area until s/he successfully serves the periods assigned or will be suspended out of school if poor behavior continues.
4. If a signed referral is not returned, the student will continue to serve time in either Time Out Lunch Detention or Café Lunch Detention until the referral is returned.

### SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

A school resource program is a full-time law enforcement officer in the schools with the goal of creating and maintaining a safe educational environment for students, teachers and staff. With such a program, the officer represents a superior model of community policing. A School Resource Officer Program (SRO) represents a specialized approach providing evidence of a community's desire to ensure that a safe and secure learning environment exists in its schools.

School Resource officers are a valuable resource for their assigned schools as well as the school district to which they are assigned.

The SRO's obtain 40 hours of specialized training to fulfill four basic roles:

- \* First and foremost, they are Law Enforcement Officers whose primary purpose is to "keep the peace" in their schools so students can learn.
- \* Second, they are advisors who provide guidance to students about law enforcement questions.
- \* Third, they are a resource to act as a link to support services both inside and outside the school environment.
- \* Fourth, they are law related teachers who provide the schools with an additional resource by sharing their expertise in the law-related education classroom.

Beyond these identified roles and perhaps most important, SRO'S are Positive Role Models for many students who are not exposed to such role models in today's society. SRO's do not replace the administrative duties or discipline of the pupils within the building.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### Class Cutting

- **Not in Assigned Area/Skipping**  
Absent from or leaving the assigned area without prior permission from staff is considered not in assigned area and/or skipping.
- **Leaving School Grounds**  
Leaving school campus without administrative approval any time during the school day is not permitted.
- **Tardiness**  
Tardiness is not being in the classroom when the tardy bell rings.
- **Truancy**  
Absent from school without permission is truancy.

### Disrespect/Classroom Disruption

- **Insubordination**  
Insubordination is refusing to comply with reasonable instruction with regard to school rules, classroom management, or safety issues.
- **Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom**  
Disruptive behavior is behavior which interferes with one's own and/or other's learning.
- **Inappropriate Language, Tone, Actions, or Gestures**  
Language, tone, gestures, or actions which are considered indecent, disrespectful, abusive, profane, or obscene by the recipient or by staff members and may or may not be directed at another are inappropriate.
- **Gum/candy is not permitted anywhere in the building.**
- **Inappropriate Items**
  - a) Distracting objects will be dealt with as a disruption.
  - b) Electronic devices may not be used in the school from arrival to dismissal

**Food and drink: Candy, food, or drinks are not permitted outside the cafeteria unless used as a behavior modification or culminating activity with administrative approval.**

### Dress Code

- **Inappropriate Dress**  
**Head coverings** may not be worn in the building.  
**Clothing/accessories** that are inappropriate, unsafe, or disruptive to the educational environment is not permitted in the school building by any student. Examples include, but are not limited to: choke chains, any clothing or apparel with profanity, alcohol, tobacco, drug, or sexual references (i.e. Playboy logo).
  - a) No tube tops, halter tops, tank tops, see through or revealing tops may be worn. Straps must be 3 fingers wide.
  - b) Backs, bellies need to be covered.
  - c) Shorts and skirts must be a least finger tip length.
  - d) No book bags in class.
  - e) No uniform or gym clothes may be worn that **DO NOT** meet this dress code.

### Sexual Activity

- Engaging in inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature (this includes kissing).
- Southern Middle School has a "hand holding only policy".

### Sexual Attack

- Intentionally engaging in behavior toward a school system employee or student that is physically and sexually aggressive.

**Harassment**

- **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is **unwanted** and **unwelcome** behavior of a sexual nature which interferes with a student’s right to learn, study, work, achieve, or participate in school activities in a comfortable and supportive atmosphere. Under federal and state laws and policies, sexual harassment is illegal and is prohibited in school settings.

- **Bullying**

Bullying is when someone repeatedly endures deliberate, hurtful actions by one or more individuals.

- **Harassment**

Harassment Is non-physical frightening or tormenting another person by verbal threats and taunts, such as harassment, stalking, and racial/ethnic slurs, and name calling which continues after being warned.

**Threat: Verbal or Physical**

- **Directed toward student**

Threatening or aggressive language or behaviors directed toward another student is prohibited.

- **Directed toward an adult**

Threatening or aggressive language or behaviors directed toward an adult will not be tolerated.

**Extortion**

- Seeking or obtaining a payment or other profit from another person by intimidation, as by threat or injurious revelations, accusations, or injury to a person or property is extortion.

**Academic Dishonesty, Including Cheating or Plagiarism**

- **Cheating**

Cheating is an attempt to improve one’s performance through deceit or fraud. Cheating involves giving information as well as receiving it.

- **Plagiarism**

Any work submitted by a student must represent his or her own effort. When material is obtained from another source, it must include clear and appropriate attribution.

- **Forging Documents**

Forging documents include writing or signing a document which contains deliberately misleading, false, or inaccurate information. This includes forging parent/guardian/staff names or initials.

**Theft**

- Theft is taking or being in possession of the property of another without the owner’s consent.

**Vandalism/Destruction of Property**

- Vandalism is intentional destruction or defacement of any property (including books, supplies, facilities, equipment, etc.) while in school or during school related activities.

**Drugs/Alcohol/Placebos and/or Other Dangerous Substances or Paraphernalia**

- **Possession or use**

Possession or use includes coming to school or a school activity after having used any of the above mentioned substances.

- **Distribution**

Distribution of substances intended for use as alcoholic beverages or drugs or offered as alcoholic beverages or drugs is considered distribution.

**Tobacco/E-Cigarettes**

- **Possession**

Possession of tobacco products, matches, or lighters is not permitted on school grounds at any time.

- **Use**

Use of tobacco or tobacco products is not permitted on school grounds at any time.

**Physical Altercation/Attacks/Fighting**

- **Physical Altercation**

Inappropriate physical behavior such as pushing, shoving, bumping, kicking, pulling on book bags is prohibited.

- **Physical Attack**

An unprovoked physical attack which is intended to harm another is considered a physical attack.

- **Fighting**

Fighting is a physical confrontation involving two or more students.

**\*Our school has a zero tolerance for students who choose to act or react violently.** Because someone has hit you or has insulted you, does not give you the right to react in kind. We realize that many of you have been taught to hit back – to “defend” yourself. A response of this nature will result in you being treated the same as the person who hit or offended you. Hitting back is getting even, not self-defense. **Defending is defined as making attempts to de-escalate the confrontation, making attempts to get help, attempting to leave the area, telling the other person(s) you don’t want to fight in school, covering up or blocking the blows, keeping yourself away from the other person(s), and other acts that are clearly attempts to avoid the physical confrontation rather than reacting in kind.**

Our school has to be a “safe” environment in which you are given the responsibility to solve problems in a non-violent fashion. **We expect that students use our conflict resolution process to solve problems.** We can, and must, solve our problems in a non-violent fashion.

Physical confrontations range from what might be called **horsing around/rough-housing**, where all parties involved are mutually engaged in the activity and there is no indication of anger, to **physical attack** where one party, without immediate provocation, physically attacks another party. These two behaviors and all behaviors in between them are inappropriate school behavior and will be dealt with as such.

#### **Dangerous Weapons**

- Possession, use or threatened use of, including, but not limited to, knives of any size, explosive devices and injurious instruments such as chains and/or spiked jewelry.

#### **Firearms**

- Bringing a firearm on school grounds and/or being in possession of a firearm on school grounds is prohibited.

#### **Arson**

- Arson is maliciously burning or helping to burn the building or property of another.

## **NOTES/ADDITIONS TO THE SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. The staff has latitude in the determination of the execution of the code of conduct.
2. The administration and teams will consult concerning alternative consequences for repeat offenders and will follow the agreed upon plan.
3. The administration has final latitude in the determination of the execution of the code of conduct.
4. This should not be viewed as a comprehensive list of all the possible behaviors that could be exhibited. Unlisted behaviors will be grouped into existing related categories and will be dealt with accordingly.
5. During the school year our students have the opportunity to participate in activities not directly related to school, such as school dances and extra-curricular trips. Students who have been placed Office Level II referrals may not be permitted to attend extracurricular school activities for 15 school days and student placed on suspension for 30 school days.
6. Teachers may request parents or guardians to accompany their child(ren) who the teachers feel need a higher level of supervision on curricular or co-curricular and extracurricular trips. With parental notification and principal approval, students may be assigned to an alternative learning experience on field trip days if they meet one of the following criteria: they have committed Level II/suspension level behavior on prior field trips the present school year, or if their recent behavior indicates they are having serious difficulties with compliance to school rules/staff and/or may be a danger to themselves or others.
7. The Incentive Contract that was signed at the beginning of the school year specifies the qualifications to be met to attend/participate in incentives/field trips.

## **PROHIBITED ITEMS**

Problems arise each year because students bring items that may be hazardous, disruptive, or distracting to others or themselves, or interfere in some way with school procedures. Items such as toy guns, water pistols, laser pointers and any dangerous weapon look-a-like and any items that could potentially cause harm to others should be left at home. These items may be impounded by school personnel and will be returned at an appropriate time and manner to the student or parents.

## **VALUABLES**

- Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money, cameras, electronics, etc. to school. Students, not the school, are responsible for personal property. Remember, too, that you are responsible for anything brought from home to be used in class work. Do not bring family heirlooms, books, etc. unless you are willing to assume responsibility for them!!