

Student Conduct and Safety: A Guide for Parents and Students

This handbook section outlines important information regarding student conduct, safety, and legal obligations within our school community. We are committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all students. Understanding these guidelines is crucial for fostering a positive school climate.

I. School Threats:

Any threat made towards the school, students, or staff, whether verbal, written, or electronic (including social media), will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Such threats can disrupt the educational process and create a climate of fear. It's important to understand that even seemingly "joking" threats can have serious consequences, including legal repercussions. Law enforcement may be involved, and students may face criminal charges, including felony charges for terroristic threats.

II. Disrupting School Operations:

Arizona law (A.R.S. §13-2908.01) prohibits any action that disrupts school operations. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Threatening to harm others or damage property.

- Intentionally disrupting school activities.

- Refusing to obey lawful orders from school staff or law enforcement.

This law applies to everyone, including students, parents, and visitors. Disruptions can lead to disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, and potential legal consequences.

III. Fighting and Assault:

Physical altercations, including fighting, are strictly prohibited. Assault, as defined by Arizona law (A.R.S. § 13-1203), involves knowingly causing physical injury, creating fear of physical injury, or offensive touching. Fighting can result in charges of assault, disorderly conduct, or disturbing the peace. Both participants in a fight may face disciplinary action and legal consequences.

IV. Bullying and Cyberbullying:

Bullying is defined as repeated negative behavior that involves a power imbalance. It can take many forms:

- Physical: Hitting, kicking, pushing, etc.

- Verbal: Name-calling, teasing, threats, hate speech.

- Psychological: Social exclusion, spreading rumors, intimidation.

Cyberbullying is bullying that occurs through electronic technology, such as social media, text messages, or email. It can be particularly harmful due to its pervasive nature and potential for anonymity. Arizona law (A.R.S. § 13-2921) defines cyberbullying as harassing, threatening, or intimidating behavior that causes fear, alarm, or annoyance.

Our school has a strict anti-bullying policy, and we are committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment for all students. We encourage students to report any instances of bullying or cyberbullying to a teacher, counselor, or administrator. Reports will be investigated promptly and confidentially. Disciplinary action will be taken against those who engage in bullying behavior.

V. Sexual Harassment and Public Sexual Indecency:

Sexual harassment and public sexual indecency are illegal and will not be tolerated. These behaviors include any unwanted sexual advances, touching, or comments. Arizona law (A.R.S. 13-1403) defines public sexual indecency as engaging in certain sexual acts without regard for whether another person may be upset. This includes touching private parts, sexual intercourse, and oral sexual contact. The age of consent in Arizona is 15. Any sexual activity with a minor under 15 is considered sexual abuse, even if the minor claims it was consensual. These offenses carry serious legal consequences.

VI. "Red Flag" Behaviors and Conflict Resolution:

We encourage students to express their feelings and needs in a respectful and constructive manner. Certain behaviors, such as excessive cussing, yelling, screaming, or crying, can be "red flags" indicating that a student may be struggling. We encourage students and parents to be aware of these signs and to seek help from a counselor, teacher, or administrator when needed. We believe in proactive conflict resolution and encourage students to communicate their concerns and work towards positive solutions.

VII. Parent Involvement:

Parental involvement is crucial in creating a safe and positive school environment.

We encourage parents to:

- 1) Talk to their children about appropriate behavior and online safety.
- 2) Monitor their children's social media activity.
 - a) Be aware of what you're kids are posting online and what they are sending to their peers, look through their phones, what sites they visit, who they talk to, ask questions and hold your student accountable for what they do and what they say; if they are responsible enough to be transparent and answer your questions honestly then they are responsible enough to have access to social media and a cell phone as you and your family see fit.

We're not always good at expressing what we feel and what we need. Sometimes our feelings come out in jagged and unfortunate words that hurt.

- b) We should be noticing words that indicate inflamed emotions, then start listening for what might be going on under those words or tone of voice
 - i) Cussing
 - ii) Yelling
 - iii) Screaming
 - iv) Crying

As we back up a little and become observers, it is easier to take things less personally and respond more calmly. That step, of getting curious, is often a pathway to empathy, and once I feel empathy it's easier to be there with the tough emotions

Before you comment, speak or interact with someone else think to yourself...

- Will this encourage someone
- Will this tear someone down?
- Do I really need to say this?
- Is this going to hurt my relationship with another person?
- Would I like someone saying this word or phrase to me?
- Why am I saying this?

- 3) Be aware of the signs of bullying and other harmful behaviors.
- 4) Communicate with the school about any concerns.

VIII. Reporting Procedures:

Students, parents, and staff are encouraged to report any incidents of threats, bullying, harassment, or other safety concerns to a teacher, counselor, administrator, or other school staff member. We are committed to investigating all reports and taking appropriate action.

IX. Consequences:

Students who violate these policies may face disciplinary action, including but not limited to:

Verbal warning
Parent notification
Detention
Suspension
Expulsion
Referral to law enforcement

We believe that by working together, we can create a school community where all students feel safe, respected, and empowered to learn.