

Recommended

**WASHINGTON CENTRAL UNIFIED
UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Board of Directors' Policy

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

POLICY: C20

WARNED: 9/30/20

ADOPTED: _____

EFFECTIVE: _____

The Board of School Directors is committed to fostering healthy, safe spaces for students to learn and grow, cultivate empathy, build a capacity to listen, understand, and effectively communicate. All students have the right to learn in a physically and emotionally safe environment.

Applying restorative approaches (including mindfulness, positive behavior supports (PBIS), responsive classroom, restorative practices, and trauma informed responses) in response to unsafe and/or unhealthy behaviors fosters opportunities for students to take responsibility for their behavior, move forward, and contribute to fostering a culturally appropriate school climate as a citizen of their community.

Student Conduct: Students are encouraged to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful of themselves and others. Students, with the support of parents/guardians, are responsible for attendance, work completion, and cooperation within the school environment. Familiarity with the family (student-parent) handbook and classroom expectations provide opportunities for students to understand the expectations for conduct.

Responses to the unsafe behavior of students is progressive in nature. When unsafe behaviors occur and cannot be effectively addressed in the classroom, they may be asked to report to the designated person or location available in each building (ex. LOFT, Community, learning center, counselor's office, quiet room, principal's office, etc.) Restorative approaches are practiced with support from a guiding adult with whom the child has a relationship, whenever possible.

The principal or their designee shall be responsible for carrying out discipline procedures within the following guidelines.

When suspension or expulsion of students is deemed necessary, due process requirements must be initiated. The term suspension means removal from school activities for a specified amount of time that is non-negotiable. Once the specified time has elapsed, the student is invited to return to normal school activities, unless otherwise determined by the principal in consultation with the student's parent(s) and teacher(s).

1. **Emergency Removal:** A student who poses an ongoing safety risk, or disruption of the educational environment may be immediately removed from the school, or be placed within the school as determined by the principal or their designee in a manner that allows for continued access to academics. The parent or guardian of a student who is asked to leave school is notified by the principal, or their designee. If the parent or guardian cannot be located, the student shall remain at school for the remainder of the school day.

2. **In School or Out of School Suspensions for < Ten Days:** The principal may suspend a student from school for a period of 10 days or less for unsafe behavior that constitutes a policy violation, and/or an illegal action. The student and their parent or guardian must be given notice of the charges, an explanation of the evidence against the student, an opportunity for the student to tell their side of the story, and a decision in writing to the parent or guardian. Prior to any full day suspension, the student and their parent or guardian shall be given an opportunity for an informal hearing with the principal or their designee. The administration shall provide a restorative approach to meeting the needs of the student, provide opportunity for the student to take responsibility for what happened, and ensure supports are in place that help to foster the future success of the student and reduce recidivism. Students assigned a suspension shall be provided access to academic assignments and reasonable accommodations for completion of those assignments. Restorative reentry meetings may be required prior to a student returning to school from an out of school suspension. Students have the opportunity to repair harm caused in the community with the restorative practices model.

3. **Suspensions for > Ten Days:** The principal or their designee may suspend a student for a fixed period of more than 10 days, for continuous unsafe behaviors that harm the welfare of the school or when required by law Long-term suspension must be preceded by notice and formal due process procedures, including the opportunity for a hearing before the board. The student and their parents must be notified in writing of the date, time, and place of the hearing and given an opportunity to present evidence, cross-examine witnesses, to be represented by counsel, and receive a written decision within 10 days of the hearing. The notice shall also include a statement of the rule infraction(s) alleged, the potential consequences of the hearing, and a summary of the evidence to be introduced at the hearing. The student will be responsible for class assignments during their period of suspension. The school will request a parent conference before reinstating the student to pre-suspension status.

4. **Expulsion:** The superintendent or principal may recommend for expulsion any student whose unsafe behaviors are harmful to the welfare of the school or as required by law. A student may be expelled only after a majority vote of the board supporting the recommendation of the superintendent or principal, preceded by notice and a due process hearing conforming to the requirements set forth in paragraph 4 above.

5. A legal pupil who has a disability or is suspected of having a disability that has yet to be diagnosed is subject to the due process protections outlined in Articles 1 through 13 of **Rule 4313: Discipline Procedures for Students Eligible for Special Education Services** of the Vermont Department of Education Special Education Regulations.

Student Bus Conduct:

Students are encouraged to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful of themselves and others.

Students are expected to follow the expectations set forth in the family (student-parent) handbook and by the bus driver, which is distributed to all families each year by each school. Students are encouraged to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful of themselves and others. Unsafe behaviors will be reported to the school principal. Responses to the unsafe behavior of students is progressive in nature, Parents will be notified by the principal or by their designee when consequences are applied.

Riding the bus is a privilege and not a right. Under certain circumstances, that privilege could be taken away. Consequences often involve assigned seating and may require removal from the bus for a period of time.

In the event a student is denied transportation privileges for a period of time, parents will be given notice by letter as well as by direct verbal contact.

The principal or designee, in consultation with the bus company, may remove a student from the bus when that student's behavior represents a serious immediate threat to the health and safety of fellow passengers and/or the driver. The student's health and safety will be taken into consideration in such instances.

Student behavior may be monitored by video cameras and other monitoring procedures at the discretion of the board. Students' rights of access as stated in Federal Law (IDEA 504 and American Disabilities) will be adhered to.

Bus discipline removal procedures will follow state and Federal regulations and due process procedures.

*Legal Reference(s): 16 V.S.A. §1161a, et seq.
Individuals with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Vt. State Board of Education Manual of Rules & Practices §4313*