

PREVENTION,  
LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES,  
AND RESTORATION



# Student <sup>2023</sup> Handbook <sup>2024</sup>

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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Greetings and welcome to the 2023-2024 school year!

This student handbook is provided annually as a means of keeping all stakeholders apprised of the behavioral expectations that have been established for the students attending Baltimore County Public Schools. Proactively sharing these expectations and the BCPS Code of Conduct allows students to identify in advance those behaviors which constitute violations and that could lead to disciplinary consequences. The ultimate goal of providing this student handbook is to mitigate those student behaviors that detract from the establishment of safe and supportive learning environments.

While students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, they also have certain rights as students in the Baltimore County Public Schools system. This student handbook outlines some of those rights, such as maintenance of student records, confidentiality of information, participation in student governance, free speech and expression, and more. Both students and caregivers should use this handbook as a tool for gaining a basic understanding of students' rights and responsibilities. Detailed information explaining rights, responsibilities, and procedures can be found by reading pertinent policies and rules.

Throughout this student handbook, readers will see references to Board of Education policies and superintendent's rules. Online versions of these policies and rules are identified by internet hyperlinks that take readers to [BoardDocs®](#), the BCPS online directory of policies and rules. Here, stakeholders can find complete copies of all policies and rules that govern how the school system operates.

For the 2023-2024 school year, clarifying language has been added to certain sections of this student handbook: *scope of authority, student searches, drug-free environment, truancy from the building, admitting unauthorized visitors, airdropping inappropriate content*, and more. Students and caregivers are strongly encouraged to read these updated sections to avoid unintentional violations of the code of conduct. Students who unintentionally violate the code of conduct will be held accountable.

During the opening weeks of schools, administrators across the school system will be scheduling meetings with students at all grade levels in order to review important topics referenced in the student handbook. While the presentation expounds upon select topics, students and caregivers are responsible for reading and understanding all information contained within the student handbook.

After thoroughly reading this student handbook, both students and caregivers are asked to acknowledge receipt and understanding of the information presented. Acknowledgement can be accomplished by signing the acknowledgement page at the back of the student handbook, or by logging into the Focus Parent Portal and providing an electronic acknowledgement.

Again, welcome to the 2023-2024 school year. This year promises to be a productive, rewarding, and exciting time for all. The staff within the Office of School Climate and Culture stand available to support the students, families, faculty/staff, and administrators of this amazing school system!



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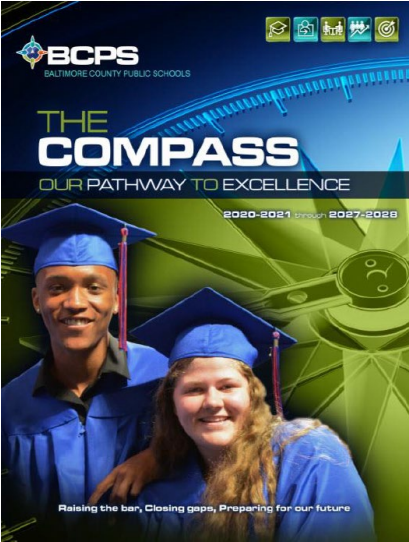
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## Introduction



Baltimore County Public Schools' (BCPS) strategic plan for preparing students for the future is known as *The Compass: Our Pathway to Excellence*. *The Compass* details the system's five focus areas for preparing students:

1. Learning, Accountability, and Results
2. Safe and Supportive Environment
3. High-Performing Workforce and Alignment of Human Capital
4. Community Engagement and Partnerships
5. Operational Excellence

While these focus areas provide a system level overview of the pathway to excellence, each school and office within BCPS is responsible for aligning its resources to support one or more of these focus areas. School-based and central office administrators are guided in their support of *The Compass* by the BCPS core value statements:

- Learning is our core purpose.
- Effective teaching is the most essential factor in student learning.
- Leadership matters. Effective leaders support learning and optimum performance at all levels.
- BCPS is committed to equity. We will do whatever it takes to ensure that every student learns and succeeds, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, orientation, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability.
- Every student will be successful when provided with high expectations and appropriate supports.

- A high-performing workforce is essential to BCPS becoming a world-class school system.
- Trusting relationships and commitment to our core values will foster learning at all levels.
- Students, parents, employees, community members, and all BCPS stakeholders comprise Team BCPS.
- Every member of Team BCPS has value and makes important contributions towards BCPS becoming a world-class school system.
- Positive and productive relationships among all members of Team BCPS are built through meaningful communication and engagement.
- All members of Team BCPS are partners in raising the bar, closing gaps, and preparing for our future, and are vital to our success.

Schools and offices across the system operate with a shared understanding of BCPS' core values. This student handbook is a framework for students so that they, too, may assume a positive role in the establishment of safe and supportive environments.

During the spring and summer months, administrators worked with members of the school community to develop schoolwide positive behavior plans and schoolwide discipline plans. These school-based plans for behavior are aligned with the BCPS *Code of Student Conduct*.

Throughout the year, the Department of Social-Emotional Supports (DSES) is a resource for school administrators. The DSES is comprised of several offices that support administrators in the areas of student behavior, social-emotional learning, and physical health. School counselors, social workers, nurses, psychologists, pupil personnel workers, MTSS resource teachers, and hearing officers promote the academic success and the emotional well-being of students. These student services personnel help to create safe and supportive learning environments.

The efforts of DSES personnel are framed by three overarching themes: *prevention, logical consequences, and restoration*. This student handbook, as a resource to students, parents, teachers, and administrators, is organized to highlight this framework. The first part of this student handbook focuses on **prevention**, information that can be used in a proactive manner to create and maintain a positive learning environment. Here, information can be found on character education, Conscious Discipline®, Positive Behavioral Interventions and

Supports (PBIS), students' rights and responsibilities, and behavioral policies.

The second part of this handbook contains information on the **logical consequences** for violating the school system's Code of Student Conduct. It also contains information about disruptive behavior, the disciplinary process, and the process for filing an appeal of a disciplinary decision.



The third section of this handbook concerns **restoration**, or the transition of a student back into the school community after a disciplinary infraction has occurred. In this section are listed examples of restorative practices that can be used to aid the transition process. Some of the restorative practices, however, can and should be used in a proactive manner to build a positive classroom community.

The fourth section of this handbook contains required notifications, such as those related to the privacy and confidentiality of students' personal information, inspecting school records, accessing technology, and more. The last section of this handbook highlights some of the policies behind the BCPS *Code of Student Conduct*. Specific references are made to policies governing bullying, harassment, and/or intimidation; involvement in gang-related activities; tobacco use on school system property; and possession of prescription and non-prescription drugs.

The handbook concludes with an acknowledgement page that both students and parents are expected to sign. By signing the acknowledgement page, students and parents are indicating their full understanding of the BCPS policies and procedures outlined in the student handbook. This student handbook should be read carefully and kept readily available as a valuable reference tool. For the 2023-2024 school year, parents and students will be able to acknowledge receipt and understanding of the handbook electronically via the Focus student information system.

## Scope of Authority

The behavior code outlined in this student handbook applies to all students enrolled in BCPS. Additionally, the code of conduct applies in all situations in which students are involved, including:

1. All school-sponsored activities on property owned or leased by the Board or held off of school grounds, including but not limited to: field trips, extracurricular activities, or social events.
2. Travel on school buses or other official means of transportation.
3. On-site or off-site school-related situations which are the result or cause of disruptive behavior on school grounds.

Therefore, a student may be subject to disciplinary responses when he or she commits an act or acts away and apart from school property that can be shown to pose a threat or danger to the safety of other students, staff, or school property; and/or the act or acts prevent(s) the orderly delivery of the instructional program at school.

The school system's scope of authority to discipline students extends to bus stops, to students walking to and from school, and to virtual learning environments. Students who engage in cyberbullying can be disciplined regardless of their physical location at the time that the cyberbullying is initiated.

The aim of this student handbook is to provide students with information that will help to prevent violations of the school system's code of conduct.

## PREVENTION

*Prevention* is about proactively addressing student behavior rather than responding to misbehavior in a reactive manner. In the area of prevention, BCPS supports the use of research-based approaches for promoting positive student behavior, including character education, Conscious Discipline®, and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). These are just three approaches among several designed to prevent misbehavior by promoting positive behavior.

## Character Education

Character development is an important component of the BCPS systemwide approach to providing environments that are safe, inclusive, respectful, and conducive to learning. Modeling good character is expected of all students. Seeing tangible examples of good character is a powerful tool for developing and reinforcing positive behavior within schools. Students who exhibit good character contribute to the overall safety and orderliness of the school, promote student achievement, and increase student and staff morale (Board of Education [Policy 5510](#) and Superintendent's [Rule 5510](#)).

The following are BCPS character objectives:

1. Develop the wisdom and good judgment to make reasoned decisions.
2. Develop a sense of justice that is informed by fairness, honesty, and civility.
3. Develop and demonstrate respect for self, respect for others, and respect for property.
4. Demonstrate tolerance and understanding of others regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, disability, national origin, religion, creed, socioeconomic status, marital status, pregnancy, personal record, sexual orientation, or political belief.
5. Demonstrate compassion for others through the development of empathy, kindness, and service.
6. Demonstrate discipline and responsibility by exhibiting self-control and the willingness to admit mistakes and correct them.
7. Develop a positive attitude that reflects hope, enthusiasm, flexibility, and appreciation.
8. Demonstrate pride in oneself and others by doing the best for self, family, school, and community and by respecting the achievements of others.
9. Exhibit personal and academic integrity through honesty, expressing beliefs in appropriate ways, and working to one's full potential.

## Conscious Discipline®

BCPS is committed to providing an environment that is safe, orderly, and conducive to learning. BCPS administrators believe that positive behavior in the school is essential for increasing student achievement. Conscious Discipline is a brain-based approach for creating a positive school environment that begins with teaching students about the brain/body connection. Once students develop an awareness of

how their thinking affects their actions, students learn to regulate their own behaviors. The overarching goal of Conscious Discipline® is to teach students to be disciplined *with* their behaviors so that they are not subjected to disciplinary consequences *for* their behaviors.

A second component of Conscious Discipline® focuses on the behavior of adults when responding to students' misbehavior. According to Conscious Discipline® teachings, adults possess skills that should be used to transform behavioral incidences into teachable moments:

- Composure
- Encouragement
- Assertiveness
- Choices
- Empathy
- Positive intent
- Consequences

Conscious Discipline® requires that the adults use these skills and teachable moments to teach students life-long strategies for positively interacting with others. Positive responses from adults when presented with misbehavior from students help to establish and foster a school family relationship. Conscious Discipline® as a behavior management tool, transforms classrooms into environments of warmth, caring, and mutual respect.

## Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

BCPS administrators believe that clear expectations for appropriate behavior should be communicated and taught. BCPS administrators further believe that consequences for inappropriate behavior should be established and equitably administered. With those beliefs in mind, school-based administrators publish behavioral expectations in the form of school-wide positive behavior plans.

The foundation for many schools' positive behavior plans is a philosophy grounded in *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports* (PBIS). PBIS programs are designed to recognize and reward students who exemplify positive behaviors. Students who are recognized and rewarded publicly become role models for other students who wish to be recognized and rewarded in the same manner.



## Students' Responsibilities and Rights

The following is a list of areas under which students have responsibilities and rights. For the complete explanation of students' responsibilities and rights, see Board of Education [Policy 5600](#) and [Rule 5600](#).

### Responsibilities and Rights

- Attendance
- Disciplinary Action
- Due Process
- Appeal
- Privacy of Records
- Student Expression
- Student Activities, Student Governance, Student use of Facilities
- Personal Property Searches
- Nondiscrimination

## Student Responsibilities

### Responsibility for Attendance

Students are responsible for complying with attendance guidelines detailed in Board of Education [Policy 5120](#) and Superintendent's [Rule 5120](#), *Student Attendance and Excuses*. A student absent from school shall present to the school principal a note signed by the parent. The absence note must be presented no later than five days after the student's return to school. It is the responsibility of the student and/or the parents to request missed assignments for each lawful absence. Teachers will assist students in making up work for excused absences. The student assumes responsibility for maintaining the continuity of learning regardless of the reason for the absence. If a student is absent for an extended period due to illness, a written statement of explanation may be required from a physician no later than five days after the student's return to class.

### Responsibility for Nondiscrimination

Students are responsible for respecting the rights of others.

### Responsibility of Free Speech and Expression

Students are responsible for controlling their conduct while exercising their rights to expression. Student expression can neither infringe upon the rights of others nor disrupt classroom or school procedures.

Students are responsible for recognizing the rights of others to have opinions which differ from their own.

### Responsibility for Appearance - Dress Code

Public schools do not regulate the dress and/or appearance of students unless the dress and/or appearance interferes with any aspect of the educational process. Standards for student dress during the school day and during other school-sponsored activities are detailed in Board of Education [Policy 5520](#) and Superintendent's [Rule 5520](#), *Student Dress Code*.

The student dress code is intended to outline acceptable standards for student dress during the school day and during other school-sponsored activities in order to preserve a safe and orderly environment that is conducive to learning. Students will wear attire in a manner that supports a healthy and safe learning environment.

Students will not wear attire that is disruptive to the school environment, that promotes illegal or harmful activities, or that could endanger the health and safety of the student or other students which includes, but is not limited to, that which:

1. Depicts messages that are lewd, vulgar, obscene, plainly offensive, violent, sexually explicit, or that reference items that are illegal in general or illegal specifically for underage students.
2. Promotes use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or other illegal or harmful products.
3. Contains sexually suggestive messages.
4. Depicts gang affiliation.
5. Causes or is likely to cause a substantial or material disruption to school activities or the orderly and safe operation of the school or at school-sponsored activities.
6. Contains rude, disrespectful, or discourteous expressions inconsistent with civil discourse and behavior.
7. Contains language and/or displays images, symbols, materials or other items that promote hatred, racial or ethnic violence, intimidation or harassment, such as, but not limited to swastikas, the confederate flag, and nooses.

The following are not permitted except in individual cases as approved by the principal of the school: bare feet, headwear and face coverings, except when worn for medical reasons or as an expression of a student's religious practice and faith.

## Student Responsible Use of Technology/Internet

Students shall be held responsible for the appropriate use of BCPS technology and will be subject to disciplinary action for any violation of the *Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP)*. Students are required to be safe, secure, and responsible digital citizens when using BCPS electronic devices, networks, and internet. Students must agree to the following:

I am responsible for:

1. My language. I will be polite and use appropriate language in my e-mail messages, online postings, and other digital communications.
2. How I treat others. I will not create or communicate abusive, harassing, bullying, libelous, obscene, offensive, profane, threatening, discriminatory, or illegal messages.
3. Respecting the intellectual property rights of others. I will obey copyright laws. I will use another's work only with proper citation and permission. I will not plagiarize another's work.
4. My student-authorized computer account and all activity conducted through my account(s). I understand that my username and passwords are confidential and shall not be shared with anyone. I understand that it is important to log off the computer at the end of every session so another user cannot use my password.
5. My use of the BCPS network. I will use BCPS resources responsibly and will not search, retrieve, save, circulate, display, upload, post, e-mail, transmit, or otherwise make available any hate-based, offensive, or sexually explicit images, language or the files that generate such images or language.
6. Protecting the security of the BCPS network. I will not attempt to bypass security settings or Internet filters or interfere with the operation of the network by installing or downloading unauthorized software, games, programs, files, electronic media, or stand-alone applications from the Internet or from any other sources.
7. Protecting school property. I understand that vandalism is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, accessing, modifying, or destroying equipment, programs, files, or settings on any computer or technology resource. I understand that I need

authorization from a school administrator or teacher to use personal electronic devices or memory storage devices that I bring to school.

8. My conduct on all online sites. I understand that what I do on social networking websites should not interfere with, negatively affect, or cause disruption to the school learning environment. I will use internet tools such as discussion boards, chat rooms, and instant messaging, for educational purposes only.
9. Following Board Policies, Superintendent's Rules, and school procedures when using BCPS technology and networks and when publishing schoolwork online. I understand that it is unsafe to post any personal information about myself and others including, but not limited to, my address, phone number, or school.
10. I will not post photos or videos of students online without the permission of the parent of the student, or the student if the student is age 18 years or older.

All student users shall be subject to the student technology acceptable use policy and rule; Code of Student Conduct; all local, state, and federal laws; and school procedures when using BCPS technology and networks and in their use of social media. Violations may result in loss of access to BCPS technology and/or networks, disciplinary action, and/or criminal prosecution or restitution. Student violators will be disciplined in accordance with Board [Policy 5550, Student Behavior Code](#).

## Responsibility for Use of Personal Electronic Communication Devices

The Board of Education of Baltimore County recognizes the ever-increasing importance of technology in students' lives and the beneficial role it can play for student education and communication with responsible use. The Board believes, however, that the possession and use of such devices should not interfere with academic instruction, student safety and a positive school climate.

Students may possess their personal electronic communication device (PECD) on school property and during school-sponsored activities; however, students may not use their PECD until the end of the instructional day with the following exceptions:

1. When instructional staff, in Grade 3 and above, has permitted such use for instructional purposes during instructional time.
2. High school students may use their PECD during student lunch periods.
3. Middle school students may use their PECD during student lunch periods, as determined by the school administrator of each individual middle school.

Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, as further provided in Policy 5550.

The Board is not responsible for the theft, damage, loss, unauthorized use, destruction, or data fees of any PECD brought to school by a student. Additional information on the use of PECDs can be found in Board of Education Policy 5552, Use of Personal Electronic Communication Devices by Students.

## Students' Rights

### Right to Privacy of Records

One student record is maintained for each student from enrollment into BCPS through grade 12. The student and parents have the right under federal and state law to inspect and review the student's educational record, have that record maintained confidentially, and have any school record inaccuracies corrected.

The school's principal is responsible for maintaining an accurate and confidential school record for each student and working cooperatively in the reasonable collection of data. A parent or eligible student has the right to inspect and review the student's record. The principal shall comply with requests for access to a student's record within a reasonable period but, in all cases, no more than 45 days after the request is received. The record is to be inspected by a parent or eligible student in the presence of a school official. The school record may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Student's personal data
2. Student's school attendance data
3. Annual performance, Grades Pre-K–8
4. Annual school performance, Grades 9–12
5. State-mandated and local school system testing
6. Disciplinary record

7. Health screening
8. Record of health inventory
9. Immunization data and blood lead certificate
10. Maryland student withdrawal/transfer record
11. Statewide educational interview form
12. Information required for students with disabilities

Unless there is a court order to the contrary, custodial, and non-custodial parents have equal access to school-related information, including the student's record.

Information from a student record may not be disclosed over the phone, except to the receiving school for students in "state-supervised care," to whom BCPS is required to release grade and level of service under IDEA or Section 504.

### Right to Patriotic and Religious Exercises

**Patriotic** - The Board shall provide for the display of the flag of the United States of America on the site of each school and for the display of the flag in each classroom. It shall be the responsibility of the principal of each school to have a program at the beginning of each day of classes providing for appropriate patriotic exercises that include the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Any student or staff member who wishes to be excused from participation in these patriotic exercises shall be excused. Students who wish to be excused from participating may use any form of peaceful protest if such protest does not create a substantial disruption or material interference with school activities.

**Religious** - Students have the right to voluntary prayer or religious texts to the extent that it does not interfere with school activities required of the students. No attempt shall be made to prevent a student from engaging in voluntary prayer or reading religious literature provided it does not interfere with school activities required of the student.

### Right to Student Governance

Students have the right to organize and promote a form of student government that is acceptable to the majority of students in the school. All academically eligible students have the right to seek and hold office and vote in student elections. Such rights shall not be abridged for reasons of race, color, gender, ethnicity, pregnancy, English language-learner status, disability, national origin, religion, socio-economic status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity (including gender expression), or political belief. Students are eligible to seek or hold office if

they have at least a 2.0 grade point average and no more than one failing, incomplete, or medical grade in the marking period prior to seeking or holding office(s). First, second, third, and fourth quarter report cards determine continued eligibility.

Subject to the required procedures and approval by the school principal, school-sponsored student organizations and clubs may conduct activities on school property. Each organization's activities must be open to all students.

Students are responsible for using school facilities safely, responsibly, and in accordance with Board Policy and Superintendent's Rules and school system procedures.

#### **Right to Participate in Extracurricular Activities**

Students have the right to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities. A school organization has the right to establish criteria, including conduct and achievement for membership, provided such criteria are relevant to the purpose and activities of that group.

Student organizations and clubs must be sponsored, approved, conducted, planned, and supervised by school staff. Students who participate in student organizations and clubs shall follow the Code of Student Conduct. Membership on teams, performing groups, publication staffs, and other school-sponsored clubs shall be available without membership charge to students.

#### **Right to Participate in Interscholastic Athletics**

Students have the right to participate in interscholastic athletics at the high school level. School authorities have the right to establish and maintain minimal standards of achievement and conduct for participation in interscholastic athletics in accordance with BCPS Regulations, Procedures, and Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics and the rules of the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA).



Students are academically ineligible to participate if

they have a grade point average lower than 2.0 and more than one failing, incomplete, or medical grade in the preceding quarter. Fall academic eligibility is determined by the fourth quarter grading period from the preceding year.

#### **Right to Personal Property**

Students have the right to maintain personal property at school subject to reasonable searches of students and their possessions on school premises or school-sponsored trips.

Students shall not possess any items prohibited under federal or state laws and regulations and/or BCPS policies and rules. An administrator may conduct a reasonable search of a student on school property and during school-sponsored activities if the administrator has a reasonable belief that the student has an item, the possession of which constitutes a criminal offense under the laws of this State. The search must be made in the presence of an adult third-party; the third-party must be a BCPS employee.

A teacher may be designated by the principal to conduct a reasonable search of a student during a school-sponsored activity if the teacher has reason to believe that the student has an item, the possession of which constitutes a criminal offense under the laws of this State. The teacher must receive training prior to the search. The search must be made in the presence of a third-party (BCPS employee).

A student's refusal to permit a lawful search may result in disciplinary action in accordance with Policy 5550, *Student Behavior Code*.

#### **Notice of Right to Search**

Desks, lockers, and storage spaces, which are provided to students, are the property of BCPS. An administrator may make a search of the physical plant of the school and its appurtenances, including student desks, lockers, and storage spaces at any time. A student who refuses to be searched is subject to disciplinary action and a law enforcement referral.

#### **Right to Nondiscrimination**

Students have the right to be free from discrimination, bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation. Students are responsible for respecting the rights of others.

### Right Concerning Age of Majority Students

The Board of Education of Baltimore County, any of its agencies, or anyone acting on their behalf shall not abridge the rights of adult citizenship granted to students eighteen (18) years of age or older as specified in the *Annotated Code of Maryland*. The rights afforded parents under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (20 U.S.C. § 1232h) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)(20 U.S.C. § 1232g) transfer to the student when the student reaches age 18. This in no way diminishes the right of the principal or the principal's designee to communicate with parents any problem or question pertaining to the education of the student.

### Right of Free Speech and Expression

Students have the right to freedom of speech, religion, and the right to assemble peacefully, but speech and behavior that are disruptive can be prohibited.

Students' right to assemble is subject to school authorities setting reasonable limits regarding the time, place, and way students may assemble.

Under the supervision of a student media advisor, a student journalist is responsible for determining the news, opinion, feature, and advertising content of school sponsored media. ([Policy 5610](#) and [Rule 5610](#)).

Students have the right to symbolic forms of expression to the extent that the symbolic expressions do not substantially disrupt school activities.

### Right to Appeal

Students have the right to a timely response to a proper appeal.

### Right to a Safe Learning Environment

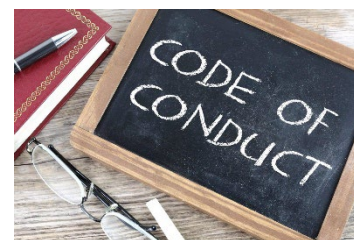
The Board of Education of Baltimore County is committed to ensuring that every student learns in an environment that is safe and secure and conducive to learning. The Board prohibits bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation by any person on Board property, at school-sponsored activities or events, on a school bus, or that substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

Students have the right to participate in all school and classroom activities in environments free from

bullying, harassment, or intimidation. School administrators will annually advise students of [Board Policy 5580](#) and [Rule 5580](#) and of the availability of the [Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reporting Form](#) and of the school system's sexual harassment procedure, as part of the *Student Handbook* presentation by administrators at the beginning of the school year. School staff members are responsible for educating students about bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and intimidation; investigating incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and intimidation; and establishing interventions, supports, and consequences of such behaviors.

## Code of Conduct

BCPS has the authority to intervene in the off-campus conduct of its students when the conduct in question has the potential to negatively impact the safety and well-being of other students, faculty members, or staff.



In accordance with Board of Education Policy 5550, a student enrolled in BCPS may be subject to administrative action that results in a change in educational placement due to behaviors displayed away and apart from the student's school.

The Board expects all students in BCPS to recognize their individual responsibilities to adhere to the *Code of Student Conduct* while on school property and when participating in school-sponsored activities.

### **CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT – ALL BCPS STUDENTS WILL:**

- A. Attend school daily unless there is a lawful purpose for being absent.
- B. Engage in the learning process.
- C. Bring to school only those approved items and materials that are appropriate for their educational programs.
- D. Demonstrate positive behavior and language and respect the personal, civil, and property rights of others.
- E. Accept responsibility for their actions and education while abiding by

established Board policies, Superintendent's Rules, and procedures.

#### STANDARDS

- A. The *Code of Student Conduct* shall be in effect at all times when students are on school property or participating in school-sponsored activities and while being transported to and from school or school-sponsored activities and events.
- B. A student who violates the *Code of Student Conduct* may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Board [Policy 5550, Student Behavior Code](#).
- C. Each school shall develop and implement an integrated program of character education, social-skill development, behavior management, and relationship building to respond effectively to behaviors that inhibit a student from learning or unduly hinder others from learning. In each instance where employees act to help a student behave appropriately, emphasis shall be placed upon helping the student learn self-discipline and rules.

### Code of Conduct While on School Buses



The goal of having safe and supportive environments extends to BCPS' many school buses. As such, the code of conduct is in force during students' ride to and from school. Transportation services are provided to students as a convenience. Outside of students whose IEPs require the school system to provide transportation, there is no obligation to transport students to or from school.

Students should respect the convenience of transportation services by adhering to the established behavioral expectations. A failure to meet expectations while on a school bus could lead to a loss of transportation privileges for a short time or permanently. To help students have a safe ride, BCPS

administrators have identified behavioral infractions that occur most often on the bus along with corresponding consequences.

The infractions and consequences have been sorted into levels ranging from one to four with level one being comprised of minor infractions and level four being comprised of more serious infractions. As the severity of the infraction increases, so does the severity of the consequence. Students and parents should familiarize themselves with the Office of Transportation's *Bus Discipline Procedures and Consequences* for detailed information on expectations, infractions, and consequences.

School buses are equipped with cameras that capture both video and audio. These digital captures will be used to aid administrators in their investigation of students' conduct.

### Interventions and Supports

#### Interventions and Supports to Prevent Category I Offenses

Listed below are interventions and supports that faculty and staff members can use to prevent students from committing offenses listed under Category I or intervene before behaviors escalate.

#### SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS FOR PREVENTING CATEGORY I OFFENSES:

- a. Use proximity control to keep students on task.
- b. Pre-correct individual student's behavior.
- c. Use nonverbal cues/signaling.
- d. Conduct in-class conference with student.
- e. Determine root causes and functions of student misbehavior and respond appropriately.
- f. Teach, practice, and reinforce positive replacement behaviors.
- g. Provide special work assignment, such as service to the school, research, etc.
- h. Provide movement breaks between low-energy activities for individual students as deemed appropriate.
- i. Use think chair, time-out chair, or reflection area in the classroom.
- j. Require the student to complete a written reflection/apology for misbehavior.
- k. Provide choices for learning activities and behavior.
- l. Use student behavior strategies, progress reports,

- behavior contracts, and/or behavior point sheets.
- m. Use goal setting paired with acknowledgment of improved behavior for individual student.
- n. Assign a student buddy supporter.
- o. Recommend peer mediation support.
- p. Recommend conflict resolution support.
- q. Contact student's parent.
- r. Hold a parent and student conference.
- s. Assign detention (parent contact mandatory).
- t. Provide small group character-building and social skills training.
- u. Refer student to Student Support Services staff for support.
- v. Give student a timeout with adult supervision.
- w. Refer student to Student Support Team (SST).
- x. Develop and implement or review and revise student support plan for eligible student that includes interventions, supports, or strategies designed to help the student to behave appropriately.
- y. Develop and implement or review and revise a 504 Plan for eligible student, including behavioral accommodations as deemed necessary.
- z. Conduct Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and, if student is eligible, develop a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).
- aa. Review and revise a student's existing BIP.
- bb. Refer eligible student to Individual Education Program (IEP) team.
- cc. Develop and implement IEP for eligible student.
- dd. Include behavior interventions, supports, or strategies as supplementary aides and services in the student's IEP if deemed necessary.
- ee. Participation in Restorative Conference
- ff. Use of Restorative Circle to create inclusive expectations for the learning environment.

### Interventions and Supports to Prevent Category II Offenses

Listed below are interventions and supports that faculty and staff members can use to prevent students from committing offenses listed under Category II.

#### **SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS FOR PREVENTING CATEGORY II OFFENSES:**

- a. Use appropriate interventions and supports from **CATEGORY I**.
- b. Contact parent (mandatory).
- c. Hold a parent and student conference.
- d. Require student to return property, pay for property, pay restitution for property damages, or

- assign student to an approved supervised service to school.
- e. Review and revise the 504 Plan for eligible student, including behavioral accommodations as deemed necessary to help improve student's behavior.
- f. Review and revise the Behavior Intervention Plan for student as deemed necessary to help improve student's behavior.
- g. Review and revise the student's IEP as deemed necessary to help improve student's behavior.
- h. Offer student supervised campus clean-up as an alternative to suspension.
- i. Use community partners and interagency partners to provide support and resources to student to help improve behaviors.
- j. Refer two or more students to a community partner for a community conference to resolve a conflict.
- k. Refer student to the school social worker, behavior interventionist, and/or pupil personnel worker for support in changing behavior.
- l. Refer student to Superintendent's Designee for a program review.
- m. Warn student of **CATEGORY III** disciplinary action.

### Interventions and Supports to Prevent Category III Offenses

#### **SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS FOR CATEGORY III OFFENSES:**

- a. Use appropriate interventions from **CATEGORIES I AND II**.
- b. Contact parent (mandatory).
- c. Hold required parent and student conference.
- d. Contact police if a clear violation of the law is committed that is not ordinarily handled by the school administrator.
- e. When student returns to home school from an alternative program assignment, in cooperation with the alternative program staff, administrators must develop and implement the student's transition plan.

## Social and Emotional Learning Competencies

CASEL (*Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning*) defines social emotional learning as “the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.” The BCPS Department of Social-Emotional Support, situated within the Division of Curriculum and Instruction, offers administrators guidance and assistance in addressing students’ social and emotional well-being. The guidance provided to schools focuses on five broad areas in which students are taught life-long skills that align with BCPS’ goal to produce students who are college and career-ready.

**Self-Awareness** is the ability to accurately recognize one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values, and how they influence behavior; the ability to accurately assess one’s strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a “growth mindset.” Competencies associated with self-awareness include:

- Identifying emotions
- Accurate self-perception
- Recognizing strengths
- Self-confidence
- Self-efficacy

**Self-Management** is the ability to successfully regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations—effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself; the ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals. Competencies associated with self-management include:

- Impulse control
- Stress management
- Self-discipline
- Self-motivation
- Goal setting
- Organizational skills

**Relationship Skills** is the ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding personal connections with diverse individuals and groups; the ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed. Competencies associated with building relationships include:

- Communication
- Social engagement
- Teamwork

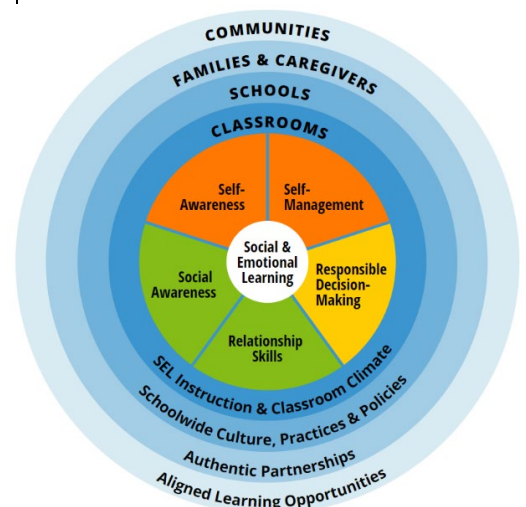
**Social Awareness** is the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures; the ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports. Competencies associated with group relationships include:

- Perspective-taking
- Empathy
- Appreciating diversity
- Respect for others

**Responsible Decision-Making** is the ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms; the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others.

Competencies associated with responsible decision-making include:

- Identifying problems
- Analyzing situations
- Solving problems
- Evaluating
- Reflecting
- Ethical responsibility





## Social Emotional Learning Skills

The skills that BCPS teachers and administrators feel are essential to students' social and emotional health are outlined below in student-friendly behaviors. The chart below is designed to be a reference for students who may be unclear about how to promote their own social emotional growth and well-being.

<b>Social Emotional Student-Friendly Actions</b>	
<i>When it comes to...</i>	<i>I Must Remember to:</i>
<b>Feelings/Emotions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be aware of my emotions and give myself permission to feel the way that I that I do.</li><li>• Allow myself "wait time" before responding to a situation so that I do not respond from a place of emotion.</li><li>• Express my emotions in an acceptable way.</li><li>• Talk about my feelings with a trusted confidante.</li><li>• Remain in control of my emotions and stick to the facts when making my point.</li></ul>
<b>Setting Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Choose a goal that makes me a better person and always work toward achieving it.</li><li>• Establish attainable milestones along the way toward meeting my personal and academic goals.</li><li>• Align my actions with my goals so that I am always making progress.</li><li>• Remain focused on my goals despite surrounding influences and circumstances.</li></ul>
<b>Other People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Imagine myself in someone else's position and how they would feel.</li><li>• Consider putting someone else's feelings ahead of my own and act in their best interest.</li><li>• Treat others as I would want to be treated in a similar situation.</li><li>• Console and encourage someone who is feeling down.</li><li>• Pay it forward and practice random acts of kindness.</li></ul>
<b>Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be respectful to myself and others.</li><li>• Communicate calmly and clearly.</li><li>• Listen to the ideas, opinions, and perspectives of others.</li><li>• Consider that someone else may be right or have a better way of doing something.</li><li>• Be honest and upfront with others about my feelings.</li></ul>
<b>Making Decisions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow the rules; follow the law; follow the code of conduct; and follow the advice of a trusted adult.</li><li>• Educate myself in the area of the decision that I am trying to make.</li><li>• List the pros and cons of each decision and weigh them carefully before acting.</li><li>• Consider the impact of my decision on myself and on others.</li><li>• Align my decisions with long-term and short-term positive goals.</li></ul>

## Phone Numbers for BCPS Resources

DEPARTMENT/OFFICE	PHONE NUMBER
Athletics	(443) 809-2328
Academics	(443) 809-4671
Attendance	(443) 809-0404
College & Career Readiness	(443) 809-4196
Counseling	(443) 809-0291
Discipline	(443) 809-7656
Discrimination Support (Title IX)	(443) 809-9693
Early Childhood Education	(443) 809-4196
Educational Opportunities	(443) 809-2270
Enrollment Assistance	(443) 809-0404
ESOL Services	(443) 809-6756
Food & Nutrition	(443) 809-7855
Gifted & Talented (Advanced Academics)	(443) 809-4196
Health Services	(443) 809-6368
Home & Hospital Instruction	(443) 809-3222
Homelessness	(443) 809-6311
Magnet Programs	(443) 809-4127
Pupil Personnel Services	(443) 809-0404
Parent Engagement	(443) 809-0365
Psychological Services	(443) 809-0303
Residency	(443) 809-0404
School Climate & Culture	(443) 809-7656
School Safety	(443) 809-6487
Social Work Services	(443) 809-0305
Special Education	(443) 809-3660
Student Support Services	(443) 809-0238
Transportation	(443) 809-4321

### Hotlines

*(Anonymous and confidential)*

Available 24/7

#### **Safe Schools Tip Line**

**1 (833) MD-BSAFE**

#### **Text/E-mail**

[hotline@bcps.org](mailto:hotline@bcps.org)

#### **Baltimore County Crisis**

##### **Hotline**

**(800) 422-0009**

#### **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

**(800) 273-TALK**

**9-8-8 (Instead of dialing 9-1-1)**

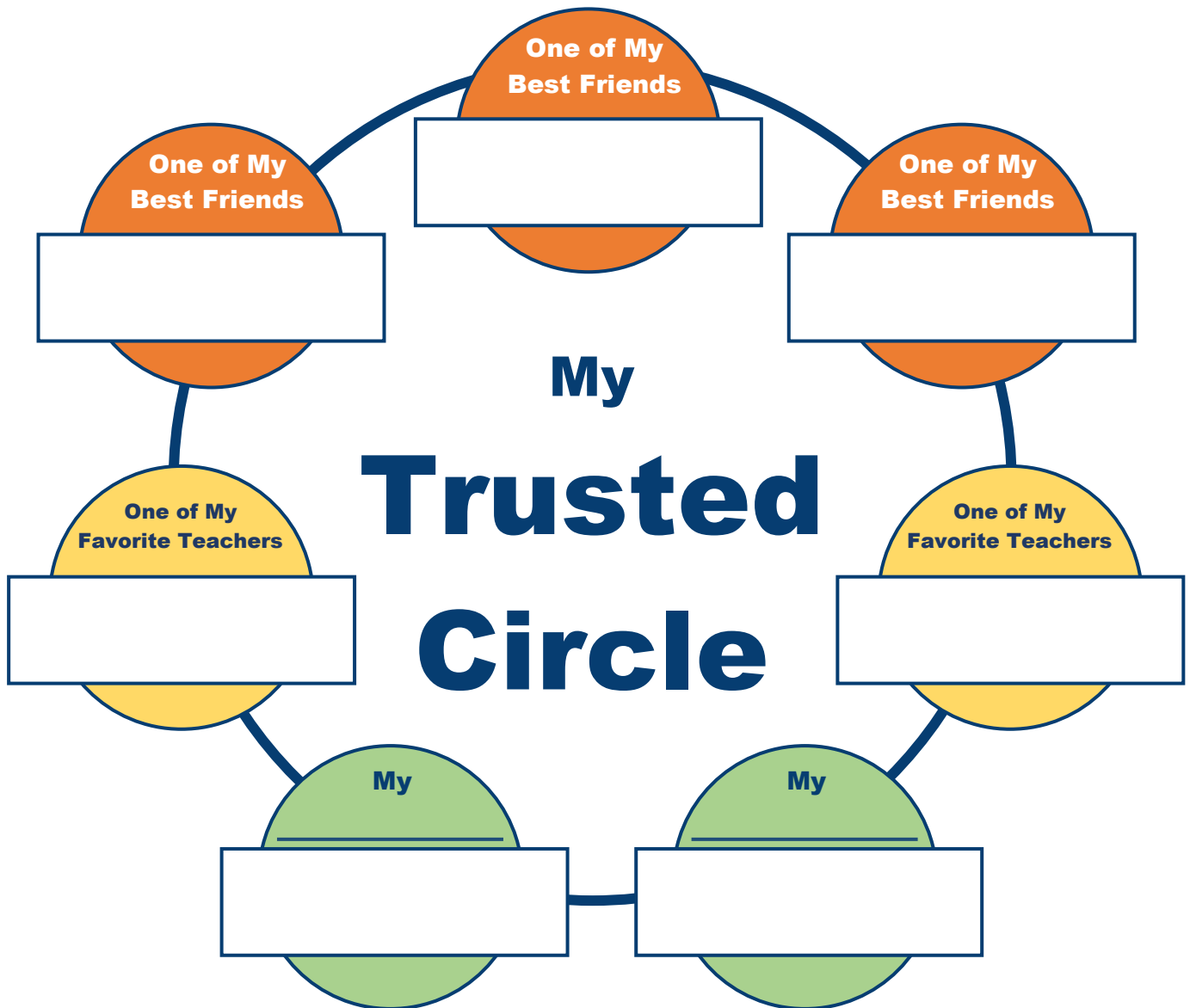
#### **Baltimore County Department of Social Services Reporting Hotline & Homeless Services**

**(410) 887-TIME**

## Student Prevention Resource Form

Student's Last Name		Student's First Name
School	Grade	Homeroom Teacher

Understanding the social emotional competencies and skills can help students prevent academic problems and problems with peers. Having knowledge of social emotional competencies and the skills associated with each competency can also help students better understand themselves. When problems arise, however, students should have trusted people they can turn to for support and guidance. Students should use this resource sheet to identify those people. After completing the circle, turn it in to your teacher.





## LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

The Office of Responsive Student Programming, an office within the Office of School Climate and Culture, is the branch of BCPS responsible for investigating and adjudicating disciplinary cases on behalf of the Superintendent of Schools. Currently, there are three individuals designated by the Superintendent to conduct student hearings and render decisions on recommended disciplinary removals that are greater than ten (10) days. The Student Conduct Hearing Officers, as they are called, are tasked with administering disciplinary removals based on the guidelines set forth by Code of Maryland Regulation 13A.08.01.11 (COMAR).

Central to the disciplinary hearings is a violation of the school system's code of conduct. When behaviors that violate the code of conduct are exhibited, students will be subject to disciplinary action. Administrators have discretion in applying logical consequences in response to violations of the code of conduct.

### Category I Offenses

Listed below are Category I examples of disruptive acts of misconduct that may result in a local suspension or a recommendation for an extended suspension or expulsion. Principals determine when a recommendation for an extended suspension or expulsion is warranted based on the unique circumstances of the situation. Principals are not required to discipline students in a progressive manner when the code of conduct violation is egregious.

These examples are a violation of Board of Education [Policy 5550](#) and Superintendent's [Rule 5550](#), *Student Behavior Code*.

#### ARSON/FIRE/EXPLOSIVES

- a. Possession and/or igniting of matches or lighters (when not a part of the instructional program)

#### ATTACKS/THREATS/FIGHTING

- b. Fighting (minor)

#### ATTENDANCE (IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION ONLY)

- c. Leaving school grounds without permission
- d. Unexcused lateness (class/classes)
- e. Unexcused lateness (school day)

- f. Unexcused absence or truancy (class/classes)
- g. Unexcused absence or truancy (school day)

#### DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

- h. Non-prescription violation (possession of a non-prescription medication)
- i. Use and/or possession of tobacco, cigarette rolling paper, electronic cigarettes, or other tobacco products

#### DISRESPECT/INSUBORDINATION

- j. Failure to follow a direction, such as, but not limited to, failure to report to the office when directed by school staff to do so
- k. Harassment (includes nuisance electronic communications to students or staff members; continued comments or passing of unofficial notes to another individual that he or she does not wish to hear or receive)
- l. Refusing to cooperate with school rules and/or regulations
- m. Refusing to cooperate with school transportation regulations
- n. Refusing to do assigned work
- o. Refusing to serve detention
- p. Using obscene or abusive language or gestures

#### PERSONAL HEALTH

- q. When a student knowingly uses his or her state of health to threaten the health of others

#### OTHER

- r. Academic dishonesty (cheating on tests, copying term papers, or forging signature of teacher and/or parent/guardian)
- s. Gambling
- t. Unauthorized sale or distribution in school of items, goods, or services not related in any way to the school operation (e.g., sale of football pools)
- u. Use of electronic devices for non-educational purposes during regular instructional hours. The ban on the use of electronic devices for non-educational purposes also applies to buses while being transported to and from school and while participating in school-sponsored activities or events.

## Category II Offenses

Listed below are Category II examples of disruptive acts of misconduct that may result in a local suspension or a recommendation for an extended suspension or expulsion. Principals determine when a recommendation for an extended suspension or expulsion is warranted based on the unique circumstances of the situation. Principals are not required to discipline students in a progressive manner when the code of conduct violation is egregious.

These examples are a violation of Board of Education [Policy 5550](#) and Superintendent's [Rule 5550](#), *Student Behavior Code*.

### ARSON/FIRE/EXPLOSIVES

- a. Fire alarm/false fire report
- b. Possession of an incendiary or explosive material or device, including live ammunition (firecracker or greater)

### ATTACKS/THREATS/FIGHTING

- c. Extortion or taking money or possessions from another student by threat or causing fear and intimidation
- d. Fighting (major) or Physical attack(s) on a student
- e. Threat(s) on individual(s)

### DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

- f. Distribution, attempt to distribute, or possession with the intent to distribute a non-controlled substance that is represented as a controlled dangerous substance or any synthetic drugs and substances
- g. Non-prescription violation (misuse of non-prescription medications), including failure to have medications administered by school nurse or delegated personnel
- h. Possession, use, or distribution of drug paraphernalia or synthetic drugs and substances
- i. Prescription violation (possession of prescribed medication)
- j. Purchase of a non-controlled substance that has been represented to be a controlled dangerous substance
- k. Use and/or possession of tobacco products, tobacco related devices, imitation tobacco products, cigarette rolling paper or electronic cigarettes (repeated offense)

### DISRESPECT/INSUBORDINATION

- l. Conspiracy or planning between two or more persons to commit a Category III offense
- m. Disruptive behavior that results in the interference with the normal school program, including repeated Category I or II offenses
- n. Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation for any reason
- o. Interfering with another student's right to attend school or classes
- p. Participating in and/or inciting a school disruption

### SEX OFFENSES

- q. Inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature
- r. Indecent exposure

### WEAPONS

- s. Possession of a look-alike weapon of any kind
- t. Possession of a pocketknife

### OTHER

- u. Destruction and/or vandalism of school property, personal property of students and/or faculty. This includes receipt, sale, possession, or distribution of property stolen from Baltimore County Public Schools. Restitution is required, either monetary or a schoolwork project
- v. Exchange of money for an illegal purpose
- w. Reckless endangerment resulting in injury to a person
- x. Theft and/or knowingly possessing stolen property
- y. Trespassing
- z. Violation of the *Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) for Students*
- aa. Violation of the Board's gang policy

## Category III Offenses

Listed below are Category III examples of disruptive acts of misconduct that may result in a local suspension or a recommendation for an extended suspension or expulsion. Principals determine when a recommendation for an extended suspension or expulsion is warranted based on the unique circumstances of the situation. Principals are not required to discipline students in a progressive manner when the code of conduct violation is egregious.

These examples are a violation of Board of Education [Policy 5550](#) and Superintendent's [Rule 5550](#), *Student Behavior Code*.

#### ARSON/FIRE/EXPLOSIVES

- a. Arson
- b. Bomb threat
- c. Detonation of an incendiary or explosive material or device, including live ammunition (firecracker or greater)

#### ATTACKS/THREATS/FIGHTING

- d. Striking a staff member who is intervening in a fight or other disruptive activity (intentional or unintentional)
- e. Physical attack(s) on a staff member
- f. Violent behavior that creates a substantial danger to persons or property or causes serious bodily injury

#### DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

- g. Distribution and/or sale of alcohol
- h. Distribution and/or sale of controlled dangerous substances (illegal drugs)
- i. Possession of alcohol
- j. Possession of controlled dangerous substances (illegal drugs)
- k. Prescription violation (misuse of prescribed medications), including failure to have medications administered by school nurse or delegated personnel
- l. Use of a controlled dangerous substance (illegal drugs), under the influence of a controlled substance, or showing evidence of having used a controlled substance
- m. Use of alcohol, under the influence of alcohol, or showing evidence of having consumed alcohol
- n. Use of any intoxicants that causes a loss of self-control or inebriation and shall include glue, solvents, or synthetic drugs and substances

#### SEX OFFENSES

- o. Sexual assault

#### WEAPONS

- p. Possession and/or use of a firearm on school property (one-year expulsion)
- q. Possession or use of any other gun or rifle (loaded or unloaded, operable or inoperable), which shall include, but not be limited to, pellet gun, paintball gun, stun gun, BB gun, flare gun, or nail gun\*

- r. Possession or use of a real weapon of any kind, which shall include, but not be limited to, switchblade knife, hunting knife, star knife, razors, tasers, nunchaku, spiked glove, spiked wristband, any mace derivative, tear gas device, or pepper spray product
- s. Use of a look-alike gun or rifle (loaded or unloaded, operable or inoperable) \*
- t. Use of a look-alike weapon of any kind, which shall include, but not be limited to, switchblade knife, hunting knife, star knife, pocketknife, razors (including straight or retractable razor), nunchaku, spiked glove, or spiked wristband
- u. Use of a pocketknife or any object as a weapon

#### OTHER

- v. Robbery

**\*Exemption:** The use of permanently inoperable or wooden look-alike rifles by JROTC or color guard/marching band students shall not be a violation of this policy during instructional time and at any other times when under the direct supervision of JROTC or color guard/marching band instructors.

### Student Disciplinary Process

With any incident of student misbehavior, school administrators must make informed decisions about whether the student's actions constitute a violation of board policy related to its code of conduct. The categories shown on the preceding pages are designed to guide administrators in determining if violations have occurred and in determining the seriousness of the violations. In instances where violations of the code of conduct have occurred, administrators should provide logical consequences—consequences that teach or motivate students to change their behaviors.

If a student's misbehavior is also a violation of the law, as determined by local authorities, there may be legal consequences for the student in addition to the consequences imposed by school administrators. School-based consequences include reassignment, placement in an alternative educational program, or expulsion. Restitution for loss or damages will be required in addition to any other consequences.

The school system disciplinary process is completely separate from the criminal and civil processes employed by the Baltimore County Police Department.

### Responses for Violations of the Code of Conduct

Board of Education [Policy 5550, Student Behavior Code](#), establishes standards for student behavior and disciplinary consequences for violations of those standards. School administrators have the authority to review and assess each individual situation to determine the type and number of interventions and supports to use if any, prior to imposing any disciplinary consequence. The use of an extended suspension or expulsion as a disciplinary consequence shall be used only as a last resort.

Students will be afforded due process when discipline is administered. The student shall: receive oral or written notification of the suspension charge(s); receive an explanation of the evidence supporting the charges; have the opportunity to respond to the charges and provide a version of the incident before discipline is imposed. In accordance with state regulation, a student whose presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons or property may be removed immediately from the school using the disciplinary process.

### Suspension/Expulsion of Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 2 Students

In accordance with state law, a student enrolled in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first grade or second grade may only be:

1. Expelled from school if required by federal law.
2. Suspended for not more than five (5) school days per incident if the school administrator, in consultation with a school psychologist or other mental health professional, determines that there is an imminent threat of serious harm to other students or staff that cannot be reduced or eliminated through interventions and supports.

### In-School Suspension

An in-school suspension is the removal within the school building of a student from the student's current education program for up to but not more than ten (10) school days in a school year for

disciplinary reasons by the principal.

### Short-term and Long-term Suspension

- A **short-term suspension** is the disciplinary removal of a student from school by the principal for up to but not more than three (3) school days.
- A **long-term suspension** is the disciplinary removal of a student from school by the principal for a period of four (4) through ten (10) school days.

The student or the student's parent shall be given a copy of the *Community Resources List for Baltimore County Children and Families*.

A student may not participate in extracurricular activities during the length of the suspension.

The principal's decision to issue a short-term suspensions (1-3 days) or a long-term suspensions (4-10 days) can be appealed to the principal's executive director.

### Extended Suspension and Expulsion

An **extended suspension** is the exclusion of a student from a student's regular program for a time period of 11 to 44 school days as determined by the Student Conduct Hearing Officer. An extended suspension may occur when the Student Conduct Hearing Officer has determined that:

1. The student's return to school prior to the completion of the suspension period would pose *an imminent threat of serious harm* to other students or staff; or
2. The student has engaged in *chronic and extreme disruption of the educational process that has created a substantial barrier to learning for other students across the school day*, and other available and appropriate behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted.

An **expulsion** is the exclusion of a student from the student's regular school program for 45 school days or longer as determined by the Student Conduct Hearing Officer. An expulsion may occur when the Student Conduct Hearing Officer has determined that:

1. The student's return to school prior to the completion of the suspension period would pose an imminent threat of serious harm to other students or staff.



Following a disciplinary infraction, the school principal shall make a thorough investigation of the matter. If after the investigation, the school principal finds that an extended suspension or an expulsion is warranted, the school principal shall promptly arrange a conference for the student and the student's parent with the Student Conduct Hearing Officer. The Student Conduct Hearing Officer shall conduct a conference with the student and the student's parent within ten (10) school days of the date of suspension issued by the principal. The Student Conduct Hearing Officer will notify the student and parent in writing of the:

- Time and place of the conference;
- Offenses the student is accused of committing;
- Policy, rule, or regulation the student violated;
- Recommendation by the principal for a suspension longer than ten (10) school days;
- Student's right to have witnesses and be represented by an attorney;
- Parent/attorney and student's right to request a copy of the suspension packet from the school 24 hours prior to the hearing.

At the conference, the student shall have the right to review all documentary evidence supporting the charges. The Student Conduct Hearing Officer shall notify the student and parent verbally and in writing of the findings and decision. If, upon consideration of all the evidence presented at the hearing, the Student Conduct Hearing Officer concludes that an

extended suspension or expulsion is warranted, the student or the student's parent may file an appeal to the local Board.

The Student Conduct Hearing Officer shall assign a student to an alternative education program if an extended suspension or expulsion is imposed. Every effort will be made to enlist parent support when assigning a student to an alternative education program. However, the Student Conduct Hearing Officer retains the right to assign a student to an alternative education program when the student and/or the parent does not agree to the placement. The parent has the right to appeal the Student Conduct Hearing Officer's decision to assign a student to an alternative educational program.

The Student Conduct Hearing Officer who presides over a disciplinary case is most often determined by a student's home school. However, there may be the occasion when a hearing officer presides over a case that originates from a school other than those schools originally assigned to that officer.

Any student who is suspended or expelled from school shall remain off school premises when school is in session; the student may not participate in school-sponsored activities. The suspended or expelled student may return to the school premises during the prohibited hours only for attendance at a previously scheduled appointment, and, if the student is a minor, only if accompanied by a parent.

The chart below summarizes the disciplinary removals permitted by Maryland law.

DISCIPLINARY REMOVALS					
Category	No. Days	Type	Required Finding	Person Authorized	Decision Appealed to:
Local Suspension	1-3	Short-term	• Violation of Policy/Rule 5550	Principal	Executive Director of School Support
	4-10	Long-term			
Board Suspension	11-44	Extended	• Chronic disruption • Imminent threat	Student Conduct Hearing Officer	Board of Education
	45+	Expulsion	• Imminent threat		

(Summary of disciplinary removals permitted by Code of Maryland Regulation 13A.08.01.11)

### Minimum Educational Services

Students who are suspended and who have not been

placed in an alternative education program shall receive daily classwork and assignments, which shall be reviewed and corrected by teachers on a regular

basis and returned to the student. Each principal shall assign a school staff member to be the liaison between the teachers and various students on out-of-school suspension and to communicate weekly about classwork assignments and school-related issues.

During short-term suspensions, all students will be provided the opportunity to complete the academic work they miss during the suspension period without penalty.

### **Alternative Schools and Other Educational Options**

Students on extended suspension or expulsion will be offered access to educational services via one or more of the following educational options:

- **Alternative Schools**  
Alternative schools serve both middle and high school students who have been placed in them by the Student Conduct Hearing Officer for disciplinary infractions. These full-time programs operate during traditional school hours. Transportation is provided.
- **Home Instruction**  
BCPS elementary school students may be provided instruction at home as administered by the Office of Home and Hospital. BCPS middle and high school students may be provided instruction at home using the services of the BCPS digital school, eLearning, which is administered by the Office of Educational Options. Both Home and Hospital and eLearning have programs available for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to, those who have been administratively reassigned.
- **Extended Day Learning Program (EDLP)**  
Secondary students may be provided instruction at one of five EDLP sites administered by the Office of Educational Options. This part-time program uses a self-paced blended learning model. BCPS does not provide transportation to students placed in the EDLP unless the student has an IEP and needs transportation for access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

Parents and students can get more information about the above programs by visiting [Educational Options](#) or

by calling the office at 443-809-2270.

### **Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans**

Students with 504 plans or IEPs may be disciplined by the school principal for violations of [Board Policy 5550 Student Behavior Code](#). When the disciplinary removal results in removal for more than ten (10) days total in the school year, students are entitled to a meeting to determine if certain conditions were met: 1) if the behavior that caused the suspension is the result of the disability, 2) if the IEP was being implemented at the time of the violation; and 3) if the student's IEP is appropriate.

The discipline of a child with a disability, including suspension, expulsion, or interim alternative placement of the child for disciplinary reasons, shall be conducted in conformance with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Parents should refer to the [Parental Rights Notice](#) provided each year for more information about Maryland procedural safeguards for students with IEPs. In accordance with IDEA, Section 504, and state and federal regulations, students must be provided access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) while removed from school.

## **Appeal of SCHO's Decision**

### **Appeal Process**

A parent/guardian who disagrees with the Student Conduct Hearing Officer's decision may file an appeal of the decision with the Board of Education. Upon appeal, the Board of Education's representative shall have 45 calendar days from the date the appeal was received to hear the appeal and issue a decision. Each party has the opportunity to present witnesses and be represented by counsel. Unless the student or parent requests a public hearing, the hearing shall be conducted out of the presence of all persons except those whose presence is deemed necessary or desirable by the Board. An appeal to the Board does not stay the decision of the Student Conduct Hearing Officer; the decision of the Board is final. (Board of Education [Policy 5560](#) ).

The request for appeal to the Board must be: (1) delivered to the Board of Education office on or before the appeal is due; or (2) deposited in the United States mail, as registered or certified or express mail or priority mail or deposited with a delivery service such as federal express, UPS or DHL, that provides verifiable tracking of the item from the point of origin before the appeal is due. Electronic (e-mail) submissions will not be accepted.

## Reportable Offenses

The school system is required to provide appropriate educational programming for students who have been arrested by a law enforcement agency for a non-school related reportable offense. Although reportable offenses occur off school property, the principal and a team will review the matter to assess the impact of the incident on the safety and security of staff and students within the school. An IEP team or a student support team (SST) meeting must be held when the student involved has an IEP or a 504 Plan.

The principal and the appropriate team will determine whether a student's presence in the home school creates a substantial safety risk that warrants consideration of the student's removal from the home school and placement into an alternative education program. However, notice of the reportable offense charge alone may not be the basis for the removal. The student's presence in the school must be shown to create a safety risk before the student can be removed.

If a student with special needs who commits a reportable offense is being considered for removal for safety reasons, appropriate educational programming, placement, and related services will be determined and provided in accordance with the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), Section 504, and state special education law and regulation (Board of Education [Policy 5561](#) and Superintendent's [Rule 5561](#)).

If a student or a student's parent disagrees with a decision to change a student's placement under this section, the parent or the student may request an appeal of the decision. The request for an appeal must be in writing and filed with the Chief of Schools. The request for an appeal must be deposited in the United States mail, as registered or certified mail or express mail, or deposited with a delivery service

(such as federal express, UPS or DHL) that provides verifiable tracking of the item from the point of origin. Electronic (e-mail) submissions will not be accepted.

The reportable offense designation is reserved for only those unlawful events that occur away and apart from school. If a student commits an act that appears on the list of reportable offenses while in school, the incident is not designated nor processed as a reportable offense. With the incident having happened in school, the incident is handled by school administrators strictly as an in-school discipline matter subject to the BCPS discipline process—even if the student is charged by the school resource officer (SRO).

## Student Sex Offender Learning Options

A reportable offense involving certain sex offenses, for which a student has been adjudicated delinquent or found guilty in court, will be handled in accordance with the procedures outlined in Superintendent's Rule 5562. A delinquent or guilty finding places the student on the sex offender registry. As a registered sex offender, the student will be placed in an alternative program and remain in the alternative program until such time as the student is no longer a sex offender registrant. According to Maryland law, a student sex offender registrant is not permitted on any BCPS school property (elementary or secondary level).

While enrolled in the alternative program, a student sex offender registrant with an IEP or 504 plan will continue to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) that meets their educational needs. Available alternative programs include home and hospital instruction, home tutoring, online learning, and a regional institute program or other non-public placement.

Upon receipt of information that a student is no longer a sex offender registrant, the principal will convene the assessment team to develop a plan for transitioning the student back to a comprehensive school. The student will not return to the home school if the student's victim is attending school there. The principal will consult with the executive director to determine an appropriate school.

## Disciplinary Offense Matrix

The matrix below summarizes the overarching areas where students violate the BCPS Code of Conduct ([Policy 5550](#)). Within each area, Category I, II, and III behavioral offenses are listed on a continuum that ranges from minor to major. Behavior offenses are listed in a manner that also provides guidance on who is best positioned to respond to specific behaviors. **Minor behaviors—on the left end of the continuum—are best handled by the teacher.** Moderate and major behaviors—toward the middle and the right end of the continuum—are best handled by an administrator with potential involvement of the Student Conduct Hearing Officer.

<b>ARSON, FIRE, EXPLOSIVES</b>	Teacher		Administrator		SCHO	
	(Minor Behaviors)		(Moderate Behaviors)		(Major Behaviors)	
	Matches, Lighter, Incendiary		Alarm/Threat	Arson	Explosives	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possession and/or igniting of matches or lighters – <b>(1A)</b></li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire alarm/false fire report - <b>(2A)</b></li> <li>Possession of an incendiary or explosive material or device, including live ammunition – <b>(2B)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arson – <b>(3A)</b></li> <li>Bomb threat - <b>(3B)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detonation of an incendiary or explosive material or device, including live ammunition –<b>(3C)</b></li> </ul>	

<b>ATTACKS, THREATS, FIGHTING</b>	Teacher		Administrator		SCHO
	(Minor Behaviors)		(Moderate Behaviors)		(Major Behaviors)
			Threats		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extortion/taking money/possessions from another by threat or causing fear/intimidation – <b>(2C)</b></li> </ul>	Threats on individual – <b>(2E)</b>	
		Assault, Fighting, Physical Attack			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fighting – <b>(1B)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical attack on a student – <b>(2D)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical attack on a staff member – <b>(3E)</b></li> <li>Violent behavior that creates a substantial danger – <b>(3F)</b></li> </ul>	

ATTENDANCE	Teacher	Administrator	SCHO
	(Minor Behaviors)	(Moderate Behaviors)	(Major Behaviors)
	Lateness/Truancy		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unexcused lateness to class/classes – <b>(1D)</b></li> <li>Unexcused lateness for the school day – <b>(1E)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unexcused absence or truancy from class/classes – <b>(1F)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaving school grounds without permission – <b>(1C)</b></li> <li>Unexcused absence or truancy from school day – <b>(1G)</b></li> </ul>

Despite changes at the state level that allow adults to purchase cannabis legally, it is still a controlled substance that is prohibited on all property owned by BCPS and at all events and activities sponsored by BCPS. BCPS continues to be a drug-free environment. Students who possess, use, and/or distribute cannabis or cannabis-infused products will be disciplined accordingly.

DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES	Teacher	Administrator	SCHO
	(Minor Behaviors)	(Moderate Behaviors)	(Major Behaviors)
	Prescription/Non-prescription Violations		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possession of non-prescription medications – <b>(1H)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Misuse of non-prescription medications – <b>(2G)</b></li> <li>Possession, use, or distribution of drug paraphernalia or synthetic drugs and substances – <b>(2H)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prescription violation (possession of prescribed medication) – <b>(2I)</b></li> <li>Misuse of prescribed medications – <b>(3K)</b></li> </ul>
	Tobacco	Illegal Drugs/Alcohol Violations	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use and/or possession of tobacco, cigarette rolling paper, electronic cigarettes, or other tobacco products – <b>(1I)</b></li> <li>Use and/or possession of tobacco products, tobacco related devices, imitation tobacco products, cigarette rolling paper or electronic cigarettes (repeated offense) – <b>(2K)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attempt to distribute, or possession with the intent to distribute a non-controlled substance – <b>(2F)</b></li> <li>Purchase of non-controlled substance that has been represented to be a controlled dangerous substance – <b>(2J)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribution and/or sale of alcohol – <b>(3G)</b></li> <li>Distribution and/or sale of illegal drugs – <b>(3H)</b></li> <li>Possession of alcohol – <b>(3I)</b></li> <li>Possession of illegal drugs – <b>(3J)</b></li> <li>Use of illegal drugs, under the influence, or showing evidence of having used a substance – <b>(3L)</b></li> <li>Use of alcohol, under the influence of alcohol, or showing evidence of having consumed alcohol – <b>(3M)</b></li> <li>Use of any intoxicants that cause a loss of self-control or – <b>(3N)</b></li> </ul>

<b>DISRESPECT, INSUBORDINATION</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Administrator</b>		<b>SCHO</b>
	(Minor Behaviors)	(Moderate Behaviors)		(Major Behaviors)
	<b>Disrespectful/Disruptive Behavior</b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to follow a direction – <b>(1J)</b></li> <li>• Refusing to cooperate with school rules and/or regulations – <b>(1L)</b></li> <li>• Refusing to do assigned work – <b>(1N)</b></li> <li>• Refusing to serve detention – <b>(1O)</b></li> <li>• Using obscene or abusive language or gestures – <b>(1P)</b></li> <li>• Disruptive behavior that results in the interference with the normal school program – <b>(2M)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conspiracy or planning between two or more persons to commit a Category III offense – <b>(2L)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participating in and/or inciting a school disruption – <b>(2P)</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Bullying, Harassment, Intimidation</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation for any reason – <b>(2N)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment – <b>(1K)</b></li> <li>• Interfering with another student’s right to attend school or classes – <b>(2O)</b></li> </ul>		
<b>Transportation</b>				
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refusing to cooperate with transportation regulations – <b>(1M)</b></li> </ul>	

<b>PERSONAL HEALTH</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Administrator</b>		<b>SCHO</b>
	(Minor Behaviors)	(Moderate Behaviors)		(Major Behaviors)
	<b>Personal Health</b>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When a student knowingly uses his or her state of health to threaten the health of others – <b>(1Q)</b></li> </ul>		

<b>SEX OFFENSES</b>	<b>Teacher</b>		<b>Administrator</b>		<b>SCHO</b>
	(Minor Behaviors)		(Moderate Behaviors)		(Major Behaviors)
	<b>Sexual Misconduct</b>				
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indecent exposure – <b>(2R)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature – <b>(2Q)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sexual assault – <b>(3O)</b></li> </ul>

<b>WEAPONS</b>	<b>Teacher</b>		<b>Administrator</b>		<b>SCHO</b>	
	(Minor Behaviors)		(Moderate Behaviors)		(Major Behaviors)	
			<b>Look-Alike</b>	<b>Possession/Use of a Real Weapon</b>		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possession of a look-alike weapon of any kind – <b>(2S)</b></li> <li>Possession of a pocketknife – <b>(2T)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of a look-alike weapon of any kind – <b>(3T)</b></li> <li>Use of a pocketknife or any object as a weapon – <b>(3U)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possession and/or use of a firearm on school property – <b>(3P)</b></li> <li>Possession or use of any other gun or rifle (loaded or unloaded, operable or inoperable) – <b>(3Q)</b></li> <li>Possession or use of a real weapon of any kind – <b>(3R)</b></li> </ul>	

<b>OTHER</b>	<b>Teacher</b>		<b>Administrator</b>		<b>SCHO</b>
	(Minor Behaviors)		(Moderate Behaviors)		(Major Behaviors)
	<b>Dishonesty</b>		<b>Reckless/Gang Behavior</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic dishonesty – <b>(1R)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reckless endangerment resulting in injury to a person – <b>(2W)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violation of the Board's gang policy – <b>(2AA)</b></li> </ul>		
	<b>Money-Related Violations</b>			<b>Property Loss</b>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unauthorized sale or distribution in school of items, goods, or services not related in any way to the school – <b>(1T)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gambling – <b>(1S)</b></li> <li>Exchange of money for an illegal purpose – <b>(2V)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Destruction and/or vandalism of property – <b>(2U)</b></li> <li>Theft and/or knowingly possessing stolen property – <b>(2X)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robbery – <b>(3V)</b></li> </ul>
	<b>Computer/Electronics Misuse</b>		<b>Trespassing</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of electronic devices for non-educational purposes – <b>(1U)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violation of the <i>Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) for Students</i> – <b>(2Z)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trespassing – <b>(2Y)</b></li> </ul>			

## Teacher-Led & Administrator-Led Disciplinary Responses

This chart outlines the possible teacher-led and administrator-led responses available when intervening in matters of student conduct. Neither teachers nor school administrators are limited to the responses shown.

Examples of Classroom, Support, and Teacher-Led Responses		
<b>Teacher-Led Responses</b>	<p>These responses are designed to teach appropriate behavior, so students are respectful, and can learn and contribute to a safe environment. Teachers are encouraged to try a variety of teaching and classroom management strategies. When appropriate, teachers may engage the student’s support system to ensure successful learning and consistency of responses and change the conditions that contribute to the student’s inappropriate or disruptive behavior. These responses should be used in a graduated fashion.</p>	
	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom-based responses (e.g. verbal correction, written reflection/apology, reminders/redirection, role play, daily progress sheet)</li> <li>• Check in with school counselor/resource specialist</li> <li>• Community circle</li> <li>• Detention</li> </ul> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal and/or preventative school-based mentoring parent outreach (contact parent via telephone, e-mail or text) Referral to appropriate substance abuse counseling service</li> <li>• Referral to health/mental health services</li> <li>• Restorative practices</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom-based responses (e.g. verbal correction, written reflection/apology, reminders/redirection, role play, daily progress sheet)</li> <li>• Check in with school counselor/resource specialist</li> <li>• Community circle</li> <li>• Detention</li> </ul>
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Examples of Classroom, Support, and Removal Responses		
<b>Teacher-Led/ Administrator-Led Responses</b>	<p>These responses are designed to teach appropriate behavior, so students behave respectfully, can learn, and contribute to a safe environment. Many of these responses engage the student’s support system and are designed to alter conditions that contribute to the student’s inappropriate or disruptive behavior. These responses aim to correct behavior by stressing its severity and acknowledging potential implications for future harm, while keeping the student in school. These responses should be used in a graduated fashion.</p>	
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Examples of Support, Removal, and Administrative Responses		
<b>Administrator-Led Responses</b>	<p>These responses engage the student’s support system to ensure successful learning, and to alter conditions that contribute to the student’s inappropriate or disruptive behavior. These responses aim to correct behaviors by stressing their severity and acknowledging potential implications for future harm, while keeping students in school. These responses may involve the short-term removal of a student from the classroom. Such a removal should be limited as much as practicable without undermining its ability to adequately address the behavior. These responses should be used in a graduated fashion.</p>	
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Examples of Support, Removal, Administrative, and Out-of-School Responses		
<b>Administrator-Led Responses with Possible Referral to Student Conduct Hearing Officer</b>	<p>These responses address serious behaviors while keeping students in school, or when necessary due to the nature of the behaviors or potential implications for future harm, remove students from the school environment. They promote safety of the school community by addressing self-destructive and dangerous behaviors and should be used in a graduated fashion.</p>	
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Examples of Long-term, Out-of-School, and Referral Responses	
<b>Administrator-Led Response with <i>Probable</i> Referral to Student Conduct Hearing Officer</b>	These responses remove students from the school environment for an extended period because of the severity of the behavior and potential implications for future harm. They may involve the placement of students in safe environments that provide additional structure and services. These responses promote the safety of the school community by addressing self-destructive and dangerous behaviors and should be used in a graduated fashion.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expulsion</li> <li>• Extended suspension</li> <li>• Long-term suspension</li> <li>• Recommend for further action</li> <li>• Referral to alternative education</li> <li>• Referral to IEP Team (student not currently eligible for special education services)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referral to IEP Team (student currently receiving special education services)</li> <li>• Referral to Student Support Team</li> <li>• Referral to Student Support Team for review of 504 Plan</li> <li>• Restorative practices (classroom-based or specialist-facilitated)</li> </ul>

### Description of Disciplinary Responses

Below is a list of terms used in the discipline matrix and in the teacher-led/administrator-led responses. The definitions are intended to provide clarity around the disciplinary interventions available when responding to student behaviors.

<b>Behavioral Contract</b>	Correcting inappropriate or disruptive student behavior through a formal plan designed by school staff to offer positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports.
<b>Check-in with School Counselor/Resource Specialist</b>	Prompting students to have an informal check-in with a school counselor, resource teacher, school psychologist, school social worker, or coach who has a relationship with the student.
<b>Classroom-Based Responses</b>	Prompting students to reflect on their behaviors using classroom strategies such as time-out, teacher-student conference, reflection chair, redirection (e.g., role play), seat change, call home, loss of classroom privilege, or apology letter.
<b>Community Conferencing</b>	Bringing together students, school staff, and others involved in a conflict to discuss the topic, resolve issues, and propose solutions (e.g., daily rap, morning meetings).
<b>Community Service</b>	Allowing students to participate in activities that serve and benefit the community (e.g., working at a soup kitchen, cleaning up public spaces, or helping at a facility for the aged).
<b>Conflict Resolution</b>	Using strategies to assist students in taking responsibility for peacefully resolving conflicts. During conflict resolution students, parents/guardians, teachers, school staff, and principals engage in activities that promote problem-solving skills and techniques, such as conflict and anger management, active listening, and effective communication.
<b>Detention</b>	Requiring a student to report to a designated classroom before school, during a free period, after school, or on the weekend for a set period.

<p><b>Expulsion</b></p>	<p>The exclusion of a student from the student’s regular school program for 45 school days or longer, which may occur only under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The Superintendent or designated representative has determined that the student’s return to school prior to the completion of the expulsion period would pose an imminent threat of serious harm to other students or staff.</li> <li>b) The Superintendent or designated representative limits the duration of the exclusion to the greatest extent practicable.</li> <li>c) The school system provides the excluded student with comparable educational services and appropriate behavior support services to promote successful return to the student’s regular academic program.</li> </ul> <p>(COMAR) 13A.08.01.11.(B)(2)</p>
<p><b>Functional Behavior Assessment &amp; Behavioral Intervention Plan</b></p>	<p>A Functional Behavior Assessment gathers information about students’ inappropriate or disruptive behaviors and determines approaches that school staff should take to correct or manage those behaviors. The information is used to develop a behavioral intervention plan for the student. A behavioral intervention plan offers positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports designed by school staff to correct inappropriate or disruptive school behaviors.</p>
<p><b>In-School Removal/ Intervention</b></p>	<p>Removing a student within the school building “from the student’s current education program for up to but not more than 10 school days in a school year for disciplinary reasons by the school principal,” COMAR 13A.08.01.11(B)(4), but that is not considered an in-school suspension, because the student is “afforded the opportunity to continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) appropriately progress in the general curriculum;</li> <li>(ii) receive the special education and related services specified on the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP), if the student is a student with a disability in accordance with the law</li> <li>(iii) receive instruction commensurate with the program afforded to the student in the regular classroom; and</li> <li>(iv) participate with peers as they would in their current education program to the extent appropriate.” COMAR 13A.08.01.11(C)(2)(a).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mentoring Program</b></p>	<p>Pairing students with mentors (e.g., school counselor, teacher, fellow student, or community member) who help their personal, academic, and social development.</p>
<p><b>Parent Outreach</b></p>	<p>Informing parents/guardians of their child’s behavior and seeking their assistance in correcting inappropriate or disruptive behavior.</p>
<p><b>Parent/Guardian and Student/Teacher Conference</b></p>	<p>Involving students, parents/guardians, teachers and other school staff, and principals in discussion about the student’s behavior and potential solutions to address social, academic, and personal issues related to the behavior.</p>
<p><b>Peer Mediation</b></p>	<p>Employing a form of conflict resolution in which students serve as mediators and help their peers deal with and develop solutions to conflicts.</p>

# RESTORATION

Occasionally, a student may engage in behaviors that violate the system's code of conduct. The consequence of the violation may lead to the student's suspension from school for a few days or placement in an alternative program for a longer period. Upon the student's return from suspension, the student should engage in activities to restore the relationships damaged by the misbehavior.

## Defining Restorative Practices

*Restorative practices* refer to a defined set of behaviors used by students, staff, and administrators in an effort to establish, maintain, and rebuild relationships. Establishing positive relationships begins with the teacher creating a sense of community within the classroom. Through a shared sense of community, instances of disruptive behavior are diminished.

When disruptive behaviors occur in the classroom, the result is harm to the classroom community and to individuals. The student responsible for causing the harm should engage in restorative practices in order to return the relationships or the community to their original, positive state.

## Examples of Restorative Practices

Listed below are some of the activities considered restorative in nature:

- **Community Circles** – When faced with an issue, the teacher directs the students to sit in circle formation. While seated in the circle, students share their thoughts, feelings, and ideas about the issue at hand. The teacher facilitates the discussion among the students by posing one question at a time and soliciting responses from the students. The teacher starts the discussion by handing a student a “talking piece.” Students take turns responding to the question, but only when they are in possession of the “talking piece.” The use of a talking piece ensures that the conversation is not dominated by the more vocal students and that all students have an opportunity to be heard on the issue. Students, however, may respectfully choose not to respond when the “talking piece” is

given to them. As students are talking, the teacher takes notes and determines how the information shared during the circle will be used to make the classroom community even stronger.

Community circles can be used to:

- Build consensus on classroom rules/expectations.
  - Make decisions about procedures.
  - Discuss school-wide, neighborhood, community, or national events affecting students.
  - Address academic or curricular topics.
- **Justice Circles** – Justice circles are similar to community circles in format and process. The main difference between a community circle and a justice circle is the topic of discussion. Justice circles are used to get students' input on classroom behaviors, disruptions, and consequences of adverse behavior. While in the circle, students share the impact of misbehavior on them and the classroom community. The goal of students coming together in this format is for the student who is misbehaving to recognize the damage to the community and to take corrective actions.
- Justice circles can include other participants, such as:
- Support personnel (i.e., school counselor, school social worker, school psychologist, pupil personnel worker, behavior interventionist)
  - Other teachers
  - Administrators
- **Restorative Circles** – Restorative circles are similar to community circles and justice circles in format and process. The main difference between a community circle, a justice circle, and a restorative circle is that the restorative circle is used to welcome a student back into the classroom community after a prolonged absence due to a disciplinary removal. The restorative circle is grounded in students' needs and desires to fit in and belong. The goal of restorative

circles is to let students know that they are forgiven and welcome to return to the classroom community. The restorative circle is a first step in repairing the damage caused by the behavior of the student who was removed.

- **Positive Language** – Teachers teach and model a respectful way of verbally correcting unwanted behaviors while urging students to engage in more appropriate behaviors. Early in the year, teachers present students with lists of words that exemplify the character traits and behaviors that will lead to a safe and orderly classroom community. When necessary, a teacher uses one of those words to address a student who is violating the code of conduct. During the same address, the teacher uses a second word from the list to let the student know of a response to correct the behavior. Through the teacher’s consistent use of the structure and positive language, students internalize the process and begin to interact with each other in the same respectful manner.
- **Peer Mediation** – Students can moderate discussions between two or more students who are having problems with each other. Prior to hosting a session between students, the peer mediators receive extensive training from school counselors on how to diffuse and resolve conflict between classmates. The student-led mediation session is effective because of students’ willingness to talk to peers and to receive advice from them.

Restorative practices are not disciplinary actions and should not be considered disciplinary responses to inappropriate behavior. A student who participates in one or more of the restorative practices listed above is still eligible for and should receive a logical consequence. Logical consequences and restorative practices represent a two-pronged approach for creating a classroom community/school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.

## Annual Notifications

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g) and State law afford parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible student”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education record. These rights include:

### Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

The *Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment* (20 U.S.C. § 1232h) affords parents certain rights regarding the administration of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years-old or to an emancipated minor under state law. These include the right to:

1. Consent before students submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the United States Department of Education. These areas are:
  - a) Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.
  - b) Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family.
  - c) Sexual behavior or attitudes.
  - d) Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
  - e) Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships.
  - f) Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
  - g) Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or of the student’s parents.
  - h) Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
2. Receive notice and an opportunity for a student to opt out of:
  - a) Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding.
  - b) Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its

agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health or safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law.

- c) Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

3. Inspect upon request and before the administration or use:

- a) Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by third parties.
- b) Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes.
- c) Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

### Confidentiality

The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

Prior consent for disclosure of a student record is not required, if the disclosure is to:

- 1. School officials with legitimate educational interests. A "school official" is defined as an individual employed by, or a person or company contracted by the school system who has a legitimate educational interest in a student record in order to fulfill professional or job responsibilities, as determined by BCPS. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill a

professional responsibility.

- 2. Upon request, BCPS will disclose, without consent, a student's education record to another school or school system in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.
- 3. To comply with a judicial court order or lawfully issued subpoena if BCPS makes a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student in advance of compliance.
- 4. To the court when BCPS initiates legal action against the parent or student and a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student has been provided.
- 5. To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency.
- 6. To the secretary of agriculture or authorized representatives of the food and nutrition service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions.
- 7. As otherwise permitted by federal or state law and regulations.

### Directory Information

FERPA requires that BCPS, with certain exceptions, obtain a parent's or eligible student's written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education record. However, BCPS may disclose designated "directory information" without written consent, unless the parent or eligible student has advised BCPS to the contrary. Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's or eligible student's prior written consent.

The following information has been designated by BCPS as "directory information" and can be released without parental consent: student's first and last name; dates of school attendance; grade level; school enrollment status; most recent school attended; major field of study; participation in official activities and sports; weight and height of athletic team participants; degrees and awards received; and photographic, video, or electronic images.

Parents or eligible students may opt out of having BCPS release their child's or their directory information in the following ways: in school publications, in BCPS/systemwide publications, in BCPS/systemwide and school communications, to outside news media organizations, and to third parties other than news media organizations.

In order to refuse/decline the release of directory information, the parent or eligible student must log into Focus, click on the Forms Summary tab for each student then click on the privacy preferences checkboxes. The parent may request that BCPS not release their child's directory information by checking the appropriate boxes.

If a parent or eligible student does not have access to the Internet: the parent/eligible student may contact the child's school principal to use a computer terminal to access Focus; or complete the [Student Privacy Options](#) and submit the form electronically.

The student privacy option required under this paragraph must be completed by October 1 each school year or within 30 days of the student's enrollment in school. If the parent wishes to change the child's privacy option after the deadline, the parent must once again complete the [Student Privacy Options](#) and submit a new electronic form. ([Rule 6202](#))

#### **Privacy Options Other Than Directory Information**

BCPS also affords parents or eligible students the right to opt-out of certain activities by completing the electronic privacy preferences in Focus and submitting the form.

#### **Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education**

Federal law requires BCPS to provide, on a request made by a military recruiter or institution of higher education, access to a secondary school student's name, address, and telephone number, unless the parent or eligible student has notified the school principal in writing that this information is not to be disclosed. State law also requires BCPS to provide the same information to official recruiting representatives of the military forces of Maryland and the United States in order to inform students of educational and career opportunities available in the military. Parents may request that their child's name, address, and

telephone listing not be disclosed to military recruiters and institutions of higher education by completing the privacy preferences and submitting the [Student Privacy Options](#) form.

#### **Student Intellectual Property**

BCPS may publish and/or display a student's intellectual property and/or student-created publications and productions created during school-sponsored activities and/or learning experiences. Student-created works may be displayed in schools, at school-sponsored events, or used in BCPS publications or communications through digital and print media including: school newsletters, yearbooks/memory books, brochures, BCPS/school websites, social media sites (e.g., Facebook<sup>™</sup>, Instagram, Twitter<sup>™</sup>, Flickr, blogs, etc.), the school system's cable television channel or by other means. Parents or eligible students may request that their child's intellectual property and publications/productions not be published or displayed completing the privacy preferences in Focus or submitting the [Student Privacy Options](#) to their child's school. ([Rule 6202](#))

BCPS will assume that you have not opted out of the disclosure of your child's information, unless you have completed the [Student Privacy Options](#) preferences in Focus and submitted them no later than October 1 or within 30 days of enrollment in a BCPS school.

#### **Right to Inspect and Review**

Eligible students have the right to inspect and review their education record within 45 days of the school receiving a request. Parents who wish to inspect their child's education records should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the education record they wish to inspect. The school principal or designated school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the student's record may be inspected.

#### **Request to Amend a Student's Record**

Parents and eligible students have the right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend the education records should write to the school

principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing. (Superintendent's [Rule 5230, Student Records](#)).

#### **Right to File a Complaint**

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by BCPS to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920  
Phone: 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327)

#### **Videotaping on School Property, Including Buses**

BCPS possesses the ability to videotape students on school property and to videotape (including audiotape) while on its school buses. At the discretion of the Superintendent or their designee, videotapes may be used for disciplinary purposes.

#### **Visitor Identification System**

Visitors to BCPS schools and offices must register at the visitor sign-in location and present a driver's license or other government-issued photo identification. School or office staff will enter each visitor's information into the identification system. After a visitor is cleared for entry, a visitor's pass will be printed. Visitors are required to display the visitor identification pass on the front of their clothing throughout the visit. Upon conclusion of the visit, visitors must return the pass to the office and sign out before leaving the building.

#### **BCPS Identification**

Students are required to have their BCPS identification badge visible on their person during school hours and while at school-sponsored events as long as wearing the badge does not present a safety concern ([Rule 3710](#)). Identification badges are the property of BCPS. However, students and staff are responsible for maintaining an operable identification badge during enrollment or employment. If the identification badge

is lost or damaged, a fee of \$5 will be assessed for a replacement badge.

#### **Meal Charging/Alternate Meals/Collection Procedures**

The Office of Food and Nutrition Services (OFNS) operates the *Child Nutrition Program*, ensuring that all students have access to healthy meals. Meals are available for purchase at published prices. Subsidized meals are available for those who qualify. Payment for meals is due upon service. Cash, personal checks, or the online credit card pre-payment system may be used. Elementary and middle school students who do not have funds to cover the meal cost may be extended credit for up to \$6. When the \$6 maximum has been reached, students will be offered an alternate meal. Notification shall be sent to parents for collection on the balance owed for unpaid charges. High school students are not extended credit and will only be offered an alternate meal. Additional information regarding charging meals, alternate meals, and collection procedures is available on the [OFNS website](#).

#### **School Health Services**

A full-time registered nurse is assigned to each school. The school nurse provides a comprehensive health services program to students and staff. In addition to the school nurse, each school has at least one staff member with training in CPR and first aid.

Vision and hearing screening programs are conducted by the Baltimore County Department of Health in pre-kindergarten (age 4) or kindergarten, and in grades 1, 4, and 8. Parents who do not want their children to participate in these screenings, should notify the school nurse in writing.

If there is a medical concern that requires a child to carry emergency medications, such as inhalers for asthma or an Epi-Pen®, the school nurse should be contacted.

Allergen-free lunch tables are available for students with food allergies, upon request. Please alert the school nurse if your child requires any accommodations related to a medical concern.



# Policies

The following are summations of policies related to student behavior as of July 1, 2020. The current policies and rules are available at [BCPS Policies and Rules](#).

## Visitors

*Visitors to Schools and Offices* [Policy 1240](#) and [Rule 1240](#) defines a visitor as “any person who is not an employee, or currently registered student of the school.” Classroom visits and conferences by parents and other authorized individuals are encouraged. Such visits and conferences must be arranged in advance with the school principal or with the classroom teacher. Classroom visits and conferences must be conducted in such a manner that the visits and/or conferences do not interfere with the classroom activities of any student in the class.

Prior to initiating any school or school system-related business, visitors to any BCPS school or office are required to:

1. Present a driver’s license or government-issued photo.
2. State the purpose for the visit.
3. Wear a visitor’s pass or BCPS identification badge at all times during the visit.

School system employees and school resource officers may demand identification and the reason for the visit from any person who desires to enter Board property. Any school system employee who observes a visitor without a visitor pass should direct the individual to the main office or designated sign-in location.

## Denial of Access

An authorized employee may deny access to BCPS property to any person who:

1. Is not a bona fide, currently registered student or a BCPS employee assigned to the site and who does not have lawful business to pursue at the site.
2. Is a bona fide, currently registered student at the school and has been suspended or expelled from the site, for the duration of the suspension or expulsion.

3. Is an employee or student who has been denied access to the site as a result of an administrative action.
4. Acts in a manner that disrupts or disturbs the orderly conduct of the activities, administration or classes of the school.
5. Molests or threatens with bodily harm any student, employee, agent, or any other individual who is lawfully on school grounds or in the immediate vicinity of the school, on a school vehicle, at a school-sponsored activity or on any property owned by the school system and is used for administrative or other purposes.
6. Is a registered sex offender, unless permission has been requested and granted prior to visiting a school in accordance with state law.

Any school or office visitor who refuses to follow procedures for visitation or who refuses to leave after being asked to do so may be denied access to the building and the school grounds. Similarly, a student who leaves school without prior authorization may be denied re-entry into the school building as a safety precaution. Students who let unauthorized students and/or unauthorized visitors into the building may be disciplined for creating an unsafe environment.

While serving a suspension, students are not permitted on school property. At no time should students visit another school without prior authorization. Students who visit BCPS property without authorization are guilty of trespassing and may be charged by the Baltimore County Police Department as well as face disciplinary consequences.

The school principal or building administrator is responsible for investigating instances of alleged violations and issuing a no trespass letter in accordance with established school system procedures.

## Nondiscrimination Statement of Current or Prospective Students

It is the policy of the state of Maryland that all public and publicly funded schools and school programs operate in compliance with:

1. Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of

1964; and

2. Title 26, subtitle 7 of the Education Article of the Maryland Code, which states that public and publicly funded schools and programs may not:

- Discriminate against a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability;
- Refuse enrollment of a prospective student, expel a current student, or withhold privileges from a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student because of an individual's race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability; or
- Discipline, invoke a penalty against, or take any other retaliatory action against a student or parent or guardian of a student who files a complaint alleging that the program or school discriminated against the student, regardless of the outcome of the complaint.

#### **Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation**

The Board of Education prohibits bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation by any person on Board property, at a school-sponsored activity or event, on a school bus or that substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school. (Board of Education [Policy 5580](#) and Superintendent's [Rule 5580](#)).

- **Bullying** is unwanted, demeaning behavior among students that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or is highly likely to be repeated, over time. To be considered bullying, the behavior must be intentional and include:

1. An imbalance or perceived imbalance of

power (students who bully use their physical, emotional, social or academic power to control, exclude or harm others); and

2. Repetition (bullying behaviors happen more than once or are highly likely to be repeated based on evidence gathered).

- **Cyberbullying** is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through texting, apps or online via social media, forums or gaming where people can view, participate in or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting or sharing negative, harmful, false or hurtful content about another student. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation.

Cyberbullying includes airdropping content that causes disruption, embarrassment, or humiliation.

- **Harassment** includes actual or perceived negative actions that offend, ridicule or demean another student with regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, family/parental or marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability or disability.
- **Intimidation** is any communication or action directed against another student that threatens or induces a sense of fear and/or inferiority. Retaliation may be considered a form of intimidation.
- **Sexual harassment** is defined as any deliberate and/or repeated unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature, whether it is verbal, nonverbal or physical.

Students who engage in behaviors that constitute bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation, make false accusations, and/or commit acts of reprisal or retaliation related to bullying, cyberbullying, or intimidation will be disciplined in accordance with Board Policy and [Superintendent's Rule 5550](#), Student Behavior Code. Students may report bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation without fear of harmful consequences.

A student who is a target of or witness to bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation should report the incident to an administrator or staff member or report the incident using the [Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form](#). *Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reporting Forms* may also be submitted to the school administrator by a student, parent or guardian, or others on a student's behalf. Once submitted, this report goes directly to the e-mail of the principal of the victim's/target's school.

### **Nondiscrimination Against Pregnant and Parenting Students**

The Board of Education of Baltimore County prohibits gender discrimination of any type, including bias against pregnant and parenting students. A parenting student is defined as a BCPS student who is the mother, father, or legal guardian of a child. Pregnant and parenting students are allowed to participate in all aspects of the educational program, including all academic, physical, and social components without fear of bullying, harassment, or intimidation.

Acts of bullying, harassment or intimidation shall be reported in accordance with Board of Education Policy and Superintendent's Rule 5580. Consequences and remedial actions for persons committing acts of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation will be imposed. More information on the rights of parenting students can be found in BCPS Policy 5480 and Superintendent's Rule 5480.

### **Sex-Based Discrimination/Sexual Harassment on BCPS Property and at School-Sponsored Events**

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 is a federal law that prohibits sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment, for educational institutions that receive federal funding. BCPS is responsible for complying with Title IX regulations and addressing all allegations of sexual harassment that have occurred within an educational program or activity over which BCPS has substantial control.

All BCPS employees are mandated to report any type of sexual harassment. Students are encouraged to report as well. Upon receiving a report of sexual harassment, the BCPS Title IX Coordinator will contact

the complainant to discuss the allegation(s), explain the process for the filing of a formal complaint which initiates the grievance process, and inform both the complainant and respondent of the availability of supportive measures.

The grievance process ensures equitable treatment of both parties, requires the obtaining and evaluating of all relevant evidence, and provides remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to education programs or activities. BCPS will ensure the prompt resolution of the formal complaint, following the timelines stated in the Title IX grievance procedures.

At the conclusion of the grievance process, a written determination regarding responsibility will be provided to each party simultaneously. Each party has the right to file an appeal on specific bases identified in the Title IX regulations. Upon conclusion of the appeal or ten calendar days after the written determination has been issued, the complaint is concluded for both parties and BCPS.

### **Gangs, Gang Activity, and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior**

The Board of Education prohibits gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior on school property, on school buses, and at school-sponsored activities. The Board of Education further prohibits reprisal or retaliation against an individual who reports gang activity or similar destructive or illegal group behavior or who is a victim, or witness to, an act of gang activity.

Therefore, students shall not engage in any act furthering the interest of any gang, gang activity or similar destructive or illegal group behavior, including, but not limited to, the following: soliciting, with or without coercion; membership in or affiliation with any gang; painting, writing, or otherwise inscribing gang-related graffiti, messages, symbols, or signs on school property; engaging in violence, extortion, or any other illegal act or other violation of school discipline policies in furtherance of gang activity; soliciting any person to engage in physical violence against another person in furtherance of gang activity; and/or using social media to further the interest of any gang, gang activity, or similar destructive or illegal group behavior.

Students who violate Board of Education [Policy 5551](#) and Superintendent's [Rule 5551](#) shall be disciplined in accordance with Board of Education

Policy and Superintendent's Rule 5550, as well as any applicable criminal or civil penalties.

Incidents of suspected gang activity or similar illegal group behavior should be reported to an administrator or staff member or individuals may report the gang activity using the [Gang-Related Incident Reporting Form](#). The form may be obtained from the principal, the principal's designee, or the BCPS website.

#### **Student Use and Possession of Tobacco Products**

The school buildings and grounds of BCPS are tobacco-free and smoke-free. The sale, use, or possession of tobacco products, tobacco-related devices, imitation tobacco products, lighters, vaporizers, electronic cigarettes, and other electronic nicotine delivery systems is prohibited on school property and at any school-sponsored activities. As described in Board of Education [Policy 5530](#) and Superintendent's [Rule 5530](#), administrators will process violations.

#### **Medication: Prescription and Non-Prescription**

Students who require medication during the school day must provide the school nurse with an order from a licensed health care provider and deliver the medication to the school nurse in the original prescription container labeled with the student's name, dose/strength, and specific administration directions. All medication must be administered by the school nurse or a trained staff person. Written permission from the school nurse, parent, and health care provider is required before a student may carry or self-administer any specialized medical treatments including, but not limited to, use of EpiPen, inhalers and insulin. School nurses may administer certain nonprescription medications for certain conditions (e.g., headache) with parent permission. Please see [Policy 5540](#) and [Rule 5540](#).

#### **Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs**

Students are prohibited from possessing, distributing and/or using alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, drug paraphernalia, or inhalants in any quantity on school property and at any school-sponsored activity. Students are also prohibited from possessing, distributing, and/or consuming foods infused with drugs (*edibles*). Students who possess, distribute, or consume an edible form of a drug will be disciplined as if a purer form of the drug is involved.

Students who violate the provisions of Board of Education [Policy 5540](#), *Alcoholic Beverages*,

*Controlled Substances, Inhalants and, Prescription and Nonprescription Drugs*, may be disciplined in accordance with Board Policy and Superintendent's Rule 5550, *Student Behavior Code*. Definitions for alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, inhalants, and drug paraphernalia are found in the Board of Education [Policy 5540](#).

The school administrator shall report any instances of the possession, use, and distribution of alcohol and other drugs to the Baltimore County Police Department (BCoPD). As required by law, if suspected illegal drugs are found and/or confiscated by school personnel, the administrator must report the incident to the BCoPD by informing the school resource officer in the secondary school or by dialing 9-911 to request a police officer to take possession of the suspected illegal drug.

#### **Voluntary Admission of Drug Use**

A student who is neither under the influence nor in possession of drugs and voluntarily seeks information from a teacher, school counselor, principal or other professional educator employed by BCPS to overcome any form of drug use, will be provided with support and resources to assist the student with the concern. A statement made by the student concerning drug use under these circumstances is not admissible against the student in any disciplinary proceeding. ([Rule 5540](#))

#### **Encouraged Counseling and Education**

All students found guilty of being under the influence, possessing, or distributing alcohol or other drugs, are encouraged to:

1. Participate in an alcohol/other drug screening process conducted by the Baltimore County Bureau of Behavioral Health.
2. Attend and participate in a counseling and drug education program prior to readmission to the regular day school program as recommended by the Baltimore County Bureau of Behavioral Health.

#### **Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

Baltimore County Protective Services for Children provides assistance to families to ensure the safety and well-being of children. Concerns about a child's safety related to potential child abuse must be reported. Reporting is confidential and should be made by calling 410-887-TIME / (410-887-8463).

# The Virtual Classroom

## Safe Learning Environment

The Board of Education of Baltimore County is committed to ensuring that every student learns in an environment that is safe and secure and conducive to receiving a quality education. That safe and secure environment extends to students who are learning in virtual classrooms.

Administrators and teachers understand the importance of providing a safe, predictable, and positive virtual classroom for students. Some practices used in the physical classroom can be adapted to virtual classroom experience.

In the virtual classroom environment, however, communicating with teachers is essential to a positive online experience. Students should communicate regularly with their teachers about their academic performance and any situations that may hinder their academic progress. Teachers play an integral role in establishing and maintaining safe and supportive learning environments.

## Virtual Classroom Management

Understanding how each virtual classroom operates is important for students to participate positively. During the opening of school, students should become aware of each teacher's expectations for managing their virtual classroom.

## Managing the Virtual Classroom

In preparation for online instruction, students should follow their teachers' direction regarding the following aspects of the virtual classroom environment:

- Background scenery
- Audio
- Video/camera
- Chat box
- Hand raising
- Student-to-student interaction

Teachers will inform students how to proceed with these features of the virtual classroom. Following the lead of the teacher can significantly increase the efficiency with which virtual classrooms operate and prevent disruptions to the learning.

## Synchronous Instruction

*Synchronous* instruction refers to instruction that occurs in real-time, where the teacher and the students are present at the same time and can interact with each other as a class. Synchronous instruction is as close to traditional in-school instruction as possible in a remote learning experience.

Like in-person instruction, the teacher begins the class with an opening activity. The opening activity is generally followed by the teacher identifying the objective of the lesson and engaging the students in an instructional sequence that consists of:

- **Direct instruction** – the teacher demonstrates for students what they should know and be able to do by the end of the lesson.
- **Modeling** – the teacher breaks down the intended learning in small steps so that students begin to process the intended learning.
- **Guided practice** – the teacher walks students through the learning process as students practice the process at the same time.
- **Independent practice** – the students work by themselves to process and practice the learning introduced by the teacher.
- **Assessment** – the teacher reviews the students' work and provides feedback that will assist the student in learning what was intended.

## Asynchronous Instruction

*Asynchronous* instruction refers to instruction that is undertaken independently as students log in at different times and work individually to complete assignments that have been posted ahead of time by the teacher. During asynchronous instruction, real-time one-on-one interactions may be possible between the teacher and individual students.

For asynchronous learning, students will log in to Schoology at their convenience and engage in pre-planned learning activities, such as:

- Completing an individual assignment
- Meeting one-on-one with the teacher
- Working with classmates on a group assignment
- Viewing a previously recorded lesson

- Watching an instructional video
- Taking a test or a quiz

Students' success with synchronous and asynchronous instruction in the virtual classroom is dependent upon student's appropriate use of the technology available. BCPS has provided guidelines for students to follow when using hardware and software.

## Attendance in the Virtual Classroom

### Student Responsibility for Attendance

Students with consistent school attendance often have higher academic performance. In the virtual classroom, consistent attendance is even more crucial to high academic performance. During the period of virtual instruction:

1. Students are responsible for establishing a daily online presence in order to be marked present each day for school.
2. Students are responsible for logging in to all virtual classes on synchronous instructional days. During asynchronous times, students are responsible for logging in to document their attendance.
3. Students are responsible for logging in to both learning platforms during the established school hours.

Teachers will record daily attendance in SIS. The daily attendance information contained in SIS will be the official record of attendance and printed on students' report cards each marking period.

### Daily Attendance in the Synchronous Classroom

Daily attendance in the *synchronous* virtual classroom begins with each student logging into a designated virtual period. Teachers will take attendance during that class period and record each student as present or absent.

When a student is unable to log into the first virtual class of the day, but logs into a later class, the later log-in will count toward determining the student's daily attendance. Students must log in during regular school hours to be counted present. If a student is unable to log in and meet the established guidelines for being present, the student will be considered absent for the day.

### Daily Attendance in the Asynchronous Classroom

Daily attendance in the *asynchronous* virtual classroom requires each student to log into Schoology any time between 12 AM and 11:59 PM. Designated teachers will use log-in data from Schoology to record each student as present or absent for the day. A student who does not log in at all will be marked absent.

### Period-by-Period Attendance

In addition to logging in and being counted present for the day (daily attendance), secondary students should log in to all virtual classes scheduled for the day. Logging in to all classes will allow attendance information to be collected on a period-by-period basis. This period-by-period attendance may be used to establish daily attendance in cases where students are not able to log in during first period. Inconsistent period-by-period attendance will be reconciled and used to inform daily attendance.

Elementary school teachers will take attendance at the beginning of the school day and at the end. Taking attendance twice per day will allow teachers to mark present any students who may have logged in to class after the initial attendance was taken.

## Participation in the Virtual Classroom

Closely related to students' attendance is the concept of *student participation*. Students' academic success in the virtual classroom is dependent upon not only attending for the day, but how often students log on to each class and actively participate.

### Student Participation

Whereas daily attendance seeks to capture students' availability for learning, participation is defined as the frequency with which students log on to all classes and interact throughout the school day. Google Meet and Schoology can be used for measuring student participation.

## Engagement in the Virtual Classroom

Attendance and participation are both indicators of student engagement. Students who attend and actively participate are more likely to be engaged in promoting their own academic success. Whereas attendance and participation measure the frequency of logging in, engagement is a measure of the integrity of those log-ins.

### Student Engagement

Engagement in the virtual classroom is defined as the process of measuring the quality and quantity of work

uploaded by a student to the learning management system over a specified period. Engagement is measured in terms of assignment completion and the grades earned on graded assignments.

## Virtual Classroom Code of Conduct

### The Code of Conduct

The Board expects all students in BCPS to recognize their individual responsibilities to adhere to the *Code of Student Conduct* while on school property and when participating in the virtual learning program.

### Implementing the Code of Student Conduct

In the virtual classroom, teachers are primarily responsible for helping students abide by the code of student conduct. In addressing student conduct, however, a tiered system of support that leverages teachers, resource personnel, and administrators allows for shared accountability and responsibility for the online environment.

## Discipline in the Virtual Classroom

With any incident of student misbehavior, school administrators must make informed decisions about whether a student's actions constitute a violation serious enough to pursue beyond the teacher and school level.

If a student's misbehavior is also a violation of the law, as determined by local authorities, there may be legal consequences for the student. The school system's disciplinary process is separate from the criminal and civil processes employed by the Baltimore County Police Department.

## External Agency Involvement

Certain behaviors seen on camera, including but not limited to, child abuse, pornography, serious threats, weapons, and drugs may result in BCPS contact with partner agencies such as the Department of Social Services and the Baltimore County Police Department. Once notice is made to these partners, the partner agency will take the lead in investigations and next steps.

## Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation

Students should familiarize themselves with the expectations for computer use outlined in *Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP)*. Computers and other electronic devices should not be used as a means for

cyberbullying, planning, airdropping, or video recording a fight or other disruptive activity.

## Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation

The Board of Education prohibits bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and intimidation—even in the virtual classroom. With students' time on computers increased, the virtual classroom becomes a platform conducive to cyberbullying.

- **Cyberbullying** is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through texting, apps or online via social media, forums or gaming where people can view, participate in or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting or sharing negative, harmful, false or hurtful content about another student. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation.

Students who engage in behaviors that constitute bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation, make false accusations, and/or commit acts of reprisal or retaliation related to bullying, cyberbullying, or intimidation will be disciplined.

## Reporting Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation in the Virtual Classroom

Students may report bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation without fear of harmful consequences. A student who is a target of or witness to bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation should report the incident to an online staff member or report the incident using the [Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form](#). Teachers who witness bullying or receive information about bullying need to complete a report.

*Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reporting Forms* may also be submitted to the school administrator via email by a student, parent or guardian, or others on a student's behalf.

The paper version of the [Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form](#) can be downloaded from the BCPS' website. Completed forms should be emailed to the principal of the school or the principal's designee.

## Dress Code

Participating in online instruction from the comfort of one's home may lead some students to be less formal about their attire and manner of dress. Although students are not expected to dress as if they are leaving their homes to attend school, they still should dress in a way that is appropriate for the school environment.

### Responsibility for Appearance - Dress Code

In the virtual classroom, students are expected to dress in a way that is conducive to learning. Meeting this expectation requires that students be appropriately clothed. Teachers should not address attire they cannot see. Students should avoid dressing in a way that:

1. Depicts messages that are lewd, vulgar, obscene, plainly offensive, violent, sexually explicit, or that reference items that are illegal in general or illegal specifically for underage students.
2. Promotes use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or other illegal or harmful products.
3. Contains sexually suggestive messages;
4. Depicts gang affiliation.
5. Causes or is likely to cause a substantial or material disruption to school activities or the orderly and safe operation of the school or at school-sponsored activities.
6. Contains rude, disrespectful, or discourteous expressions inconsistent with civil discourse and behavior.
7. Contains language and/or displays images, symbols, materials or other items that promote hatred, racial or ethnic violence, intimidation or harassment, such as but not limited to swastikas, the confederate flag and nooses.

## Healthy Routines During Virtual Learning

During virtual learning, students should pay attention to habits that support their physical and emotional health. Students and their families are encouraged to:

- **Remain active.** Daily physical activity improves the health of the heart. It also helps students deal with stress. Taking a 30- minute walk each day improves physical and emotional wellbeing.

When sitting at the computer, students should take frequent breaks – standing up, stretching. This will help avoid muscle fatigue and stiffness.

- **Talk with friends and family.** Students need to grow their relationship skills, too. This requires learning how to express themselves and how to listen. Students should have conversations (not only texts) each day, with family or friends.
- **Get outdoors daily, if possible.** Outside play for 20 minutes each day will protect vision. Too much close-up work can cause near-sightedness.
- **Protect the ears.** When using headphones, students should be sure that the volume is as low as possible. If sounds can be heard by people standing nearby, the volume is too loud. Students should limit the noise in the room where learning is taking place so that an increased volume is not necessary.
- **Get enough sleep.** Sleep is essential for students' physical health. Sleep benefits the immune system and mood. A lack of sleep can make an individual irritable, cause anxiety, and worsen feelings of depression. Students' emotional health. Where sleep is concerned, students should:
  - Pick a time each night to go to bed.
  - Turn off lights and allow time to relax before bed.
  - Turn off electronic devices.
  - Stretch or meditate to allow the mind and body to slow down.
  - Get up at the same time each morning.
  - Allow enough time for sleep.
    - Children between ages 6 and 12 need 9-12 hours of sleep.
    - Teenagers between 13 and 18 need 8-10 hours of sleep.



## Student Handbook Acknowledgement Page

Please print clearly.

Student's Last Name		Student's First Name
School	Grade	Homeroom Teacher

The success of our school system is dependent upon our stakeholder groups being informed at all levels and working collaboratively to achieve shared goals. Students represent our most significant stakeholder group. As such, keeping students informed about policies, rules, procedures, and expectations is the main purpose of this student handbook.

To keep students, parents, and other stakeholder groups informed about behavioral expectations for students within Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS), this handbook has outlined important information related to:



**Prevention**  
**Logical Consequences**  
**Restoration**

I have received a copy of the BCPS Student Handbook. The handbook was explained, and I was given an opportunity to ask questions about the code of student conduct, the disciplinary process, the scope of authority, and my responsibilities and rights. I was informed that I may meet individually with my assistant principal to discuss the handbook in more detail. With my signature, I am indicating my full understanding of the policies and procedures outlined in the student handbook as they relate to:

- **The BCPS code of conduct.**
- **The disciplinary process including Category I, II, and III offenses.**
- **The scope of authority of my administrators to intervene in issues affecting the school.**
- **My responsibilities and rights as a student of BCPS.**

Student's Signature	Date

I have discussed the *2023-2024 Student Handbook* with my child, and we are aware of the student code of conduct, the disciplinary process, the system's scope of authority, and the students' responsibilities and rights.

Parent's Signature	Date

*This signed form is valid until September 30, 2024, or until it is replaced by a new form of acknowledgement.*



## **UNITED STATES CODE**

17 U.S.C. §§ 106, *et seq.*, Copyright Act  
18 U.S.C. §§2510-2522, *Electronic Communications Privacy Act*  
20 U.S.C. § 794D, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973  
20 U.S.C. §§ 1681, *et seq.*, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972  
20 U.S.C. § 1232g, *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*  
20 U.S.C. § 1232h, *Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)*  
20 U.S.C. §§ 1400, *et seq.*, *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*  
20 U.S.C. §§ 7101, *et seq.*, *Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act*  
20 U.S.C. § 7151, *Gun-Free Schools Act*  
20 U.S.C. § 7908, *Armed Forces Recruiter Access to Students and Student Recruiting Information*  
29 U.S.C. 794, *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*  
41 U.S.C. §8104, *et. seq.*, *Drug-free Workplace Act*  
47 U.S.C. §254(h), *Children’s Internet Protection Act*

## **ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND**

Crim. Law Art. §3-805, *Misuse of Electronic Mail*  
Crim. Law Art. §4-124, *Designation of Drug-free School Zones*  
Crim. Law Art. §§5-101, *et seq.*, *Controlled Dangerous Substances, Prescriptions, and Other Substances*  
Crim. Law Art. §10-107, *Distribution of Tobacco Product to Minor*  
Crim. Law Art. §10-108, *Possession of Tobacco Product by Minor; Use of False Identification*  
Crim. Law Art. §11-203, *Sale or Display of Obscene Item to Minor*  
Educ. Art. §7-111, *Access to Military Recruiters*  
Educ. Art. §§7-301 to -311, *Attendance and Discipline of Students*  
Educ. Art. §§7-401 to -435, *Health and Safety of Students*  
Educ. Art. §§26-101 to -104, *School Security*  
Gen. Prov. Art. §4-313, *Student Records*  
Health Gen. Art. §§24-501 to -511, *Clean Indoor Air Act*

## **CODE OF MARYLAND REGULATIONS**

13A.01.04.03, *School Safety*  
13A.02.04, *Tobacco-Free School Environment*  
13A.05.01, *Provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education*  
13A.05.02, *Administration of Services for Students with Disabilities*  
13A.08, *Students*

## **BALTIMORE COUNTY CODE**

Miscellaneous Provisions and Offenses Article §17-1-118, *Synthetic Cannabinoid*

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES AND SUPERINTENDENT’S RULES [\(See BCPS BoardDocs\)](#)**

Policy 0100, *Equity*  
Policy and Rule 1240, *Visitors to Schools and Offices*  
Policy and Rule 3532, *Restitution for Vandalism*  
Policy 5100, *Compulsory Attendance*  
Policy and Rule 5200, *Promotion and Retention*  
Policy and Rule 5480, *Pregnant and Parenting Students*  
Policy and Rule 5500, *Code of Student Conduct*  
Policy and Rule 5550, *Student Behavior Code*  
Policy and Rule 5552, *Use of Personal Electronic Communication Devices by Students*  
Policy and Rule 5560, *Suspensions and Expulsions*  
Policy and Rule 5561, *Criminal Reportable Offenses*  
Policy and Rule 5562, *Student Registered Sex Offender Learning Options – Off School Property*  
Policy and Rule 5570, *Searches*  
Policy and Rule 5580, *Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation*  
Policy and Rule 5600, *Students’ Responsibilities and Rights*  
Policy and Rule 5610, *School-Sponsored Media/Student Journalists*  
Policy and Rule 6202, *Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) for Students*  
Policy and Rule 6702, *Extracurricular Activities*  
Policy and Rule 6800, *Field Trips and Foreign Travel Study Programs*

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

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POLICE EMERGENCY  
911

SAFE SCHOOLS TIP HOTLINE  
1-833-MD-BSAFE

TEXT/E-MAIL  
hotline@bcps.org

BALTIMORE COUNTY CRISIS HOTLINE  
1-800-422-0009

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE  
1-800-273-TALK

BALTIMORE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES REPORTING  
HOTLINE & HOMELESS SERVICES  
410-887-TIME

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#### NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Board of Education of Baltimore County does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry/national origin, color, disability, gender identity/expression, marital status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, genetic information, or veteran status in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For inquiries related to the Board's nondiscrimination policy, please contact:

**EEO Officer, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity,**

Baltimore County Public Schools,  
6901 N. Charles Street, Building B, Towson, Maryland 21204 (443-809-8937).

There is a compliance officer responsible for identifying, preventing, and remedying prohibited harassment concerning students. Complaints of harassment should be directed to:

Title IX Coordinator  
Baltimore County Public Schools  
6901 N. Charles Street  
Towson, MD 21204  
Email address - [tittenine@bcps.org](mailto:tittenine@bcps.org)  
Telephone number - (443) 809-7619