

QUAKER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Quaker Valley Elementary Schools
Revised June, 2007

CODE OF CONDUCT

Philosophy

The Quaker Valley Elementary Code of Conduct is designed to help teach young children responsible behavior. Just as students must learn academic skills, they must also acquire the requisite knowledge that will enable them to become ethical, responsible citizens. The Heartwood curriculum is used in classrooms to help children learn the key attributes of ethical behavior. Key attributes emphasized in the Heartwood Program are defined as follows:

COURAGE "...is not simply the mastery of fear through physical strength; it is that quality that springs from a certain type of spirit, honor, and integrity." *de Montaigne*

LOYALTY involves duty, a sense of commitment and community; a knowledge that each of us is a part of something greater than ourselves.

JUSTICE is the quality of being guided by truth, reason, and fairness. Justice encompasses respect and understanding.

RESPECT involves patience, open-mindedness, and regard for traditions, differences, age, race, religion, the earth, the self, and others.

HOPE is linked to faith and aspiration. It elevates one beyond the plane of selfishness to nobility as it reaches out to the future.

HONESTY is the quality of being honorable, is a fundamental condition for friendship and community. "For he who is honest is noble whatever his fortune or birth." *Alice Carey*

LOVE, like compassion, is a virtue of action as well as emotion. Love is the one thing we can continuously give and become increasingly rich in the giving.

A positive school climate is characterized by quality teaching by instructors and effective learning by students. This requires a safe environment for all who work in and attend the schools along with an emphasis on citizenship and adherence to rules applied equitably and fairly to all in the Quaker Valley community. We believe that parents/guardians are essential partners in the educational process and are equally and must be properly involved and accountable for the achievement and behavior of their children.

The elementary disciplinary program makes provision for the school and home to intervene in inappropriate student behavior as soon as possible. This early intervention permits the school to call this conduct to the attention of the student and the parent or guardian, giving parents/guardians and school personnel and the opportunity to closely work together.

Interpretation

Good faith, common sense, and reasonableness are necessary for a proper interpretation of this Code of Conduct. Questions regarding interpretation may be addressed to the building administrators. When appropriate, other district documents such as the Student Handbook and School Board Policy may serve to help in interpreting and clarifying the Code of Conduct.

Goals:

- to communicate the Quaker Valley Code of Conduct to students, parents, staff, and community.
- to enforce school board policy, local, state and federal laws.
- to ensure the rights and personal dignity of students and staff.
- to emphasize the need for acceptance of personal responsibility and self-discipline.
- to assure a fair, reasonable and consistent approach to the enforcement of the Code of Conduct.
- to maintain an effective and safe learning environment.
- to maximize learning and minimize disruptions.
- to protect and maintain school property.
- to identify and remediate students who exhibit inappropriate behavior.
- to refer students to appropriate persons for counseling, examination, remediation or rehabilitation.
- to promote and recognize exemplary student behavior.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Appropriate student behavior is realized when each student develops the desire and the ability to participate as a responsible citizen. Responsibilities outlined by our board policy are as follows:

- A. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students share with the administration and faculty, a responsibility to develop within the school a climate that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.
- B. No student has the right to interfere with the education of fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process. Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner so as not to offend or slander others.
- C. Students responsibilities will include, but not be limited necessarily to the following:
 - Being aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conducting themselves in accord with them.
 - Dressing and grooming themselves so as to meet fair standards of safety and health and so as not to cause substantial disruption of the educational process.
 - Assuming that a rule is in full effect until it is waived, altered, or repealed.
 - Assisting the school staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled therein.
 - Being aware of and complying with state and local laws.
 - Exercising proper care in the use of all school facilities and equipment.

- Attending school daily, except when excused, and being on time for all classes and other school functions.
- Making all necessary arrangements for making up work missed during absence from class or school.
- Pursuing and attempting to complete satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by state and local school authorities.
- ∞ Refraining from abusive language in written, verbal, or other forms of communication.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR POLICIES

The following actions and activities on the part of a student shall be considered offenses and violations of the policies and regulations of the Quaker Valley School District.

In any case where an offense or violation has occurred, the administration shall always have the right to refer the offense or violation to the school board for board hearing and board action. It should be noted by students, parents, and guardians that when an offense or violation is referred to the Quaker Valley School Board for board hearing and action, the student may be suspended or excluded from school for a period exceeding ten (10) consecutive school days or may be permanently expelled from school by action of the board. .

In any case where an offense or violation has occurred, the administration shall always have the right to refer the offense or violation to the civil authorities and police, for appropriate police and civil authority action if the offense or violation constitutes a violation of the law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,

In any case where an offense or violation constitutes a second or subsequent offense or violation for a particular student at any time while he or she is a student in the Quaker Valley School System, the administration may impose penalties in addition to, or as alternatives to, the penalties specifically hereinafter or before listed for various offenses and violations.

CONDUCT PROGRESSION LEVELS

The Quaker Valley School District has approved a Discipline Policy that categorizes offenses into levels of seriousness. However, the administration reserves the right to determine the seriousness of each individual incident and place it in the appropriate level. It is further stipulated that any of the levels could lead to a detention, suspension, or recommendation by the principal for permanent expulsion should that action be deemed necessary.

IN CASES OF SUSPENSION OR EXCLUSION STUDENTS SHALL BE ENTITLED TO DUE PROCESS RIGHTS.

Students should exhibit good conduct and avoid the behaviors listed as examples under each level. Students are advised that their willful and persistent violations at any level of the Code of

Conduct will be considered incorrigible and may result in a recommendation for long-term exclusion from school.

The examples provided in this code of conduct are not to be construed as limiting the behaviors that may require disciplinary action, by school personnel. Any student found in violation of Board Policy or district rules and regulations will receive appropriate disciplinary action.

LEVEL I

Refers to minor misbehavior on the part of the student that disrupts orderly classroom procedures or operation of school. These misbehaviors are usually handled by staff members but may require the intervention of the administration.

Examples (but not limited to):

- Classroom/School disturbance/disruption
- Tardiness to school/class
- Verbal harassment or bullying of others
- Unauthorized or improper use of school property/equipment/facilities
- Littering
- Eating outside designated areas
- Unauthorized presence in halls or unauthorized areas
- ∞ Violation of dress guidelines
- ∞ Inappropriate classroom/school behavior
- ∞ Defiance of rules or authority

Examples of Disciplinary Options:

- Written Warning
- Verbal Warning
- Call Parents
- Counseling
- Social probation (exclusion from co-curricular activities and programs such as after-school clubs or class activities)
- Contract
- ∞ Confiscation
- Detention
- ∞ Designated Assignments
- ∞ Mediation
- ∞ Time Out
- ∞ Restitution of Property
- ∞ Denial of privileges (e.g. recess; special programs/parties, etc.)
- ∞ Removal from Class
- ∞ Suspension from Bus

LEVEL II

Refers to misbehavior with seriousness or frequency that tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school and/or consequences that endanger the health or safety of others in the school.

These infractions, which may result from the continuation of LEVEL I misbehaviors, require the intervention of the administration because the LEVEL I disciplinary options have failed to correct the situation. Also included in this level are misbehaviors that do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others, but whose educational consequences are serious enough to require corrective action by administrative personnel.

Examples (but not limited to)

- ∞ Continuation of or extreme Level I misconduct

- Disorderly bus conduct
- Violation of school attendance policies: continued tardiness, class cuts, truancy, and unexcused absences
- Unauthorized or improper use of school property/equipment/facilities
- Failure to serve detentions as scheduled
- Insubordination, defiance of authority, disrespectful behavior to staff
- Disruptive behavior during school programs/trips
- Theft
- Vandalism/destruction of school property or property of others
- Harassment (e.g. sexual; gender; racial, ethnic, etc.)
- ∞ Harassment by communication
- Possession of lighter, matches, combustible materials
- ∞ Language, writing, drawings or gestures that are disrespectful, abusive, threatening or profane
- ∞ Possession of unauthorized electronic devices (e.g. laser pointers; games; pagers, etc.)
- ∞ Illegal use of technology
- ∞ Abusive, obscene, or disrespectful oral or written language or gestures, swearing.
- ∞ Unauthorized sharing of passwords
- ∞ Hazing
- ∞ Bullying or menacing behavior performed in a threatening manner or with the intent of harm.
- ∞ Plagiarism/cheating

Examples of Disciplinary Options

- Detentions
- Removal from class
- ∞ Designated assignments
- ∞ Counseling
- ∞ Mediation
- ∞ Restitution of Property
- ∞ Denial of Privileges
- ∞ In-school Suspension/Time Out
- Out-of-school suspension
- Referral to police or district magistrate
- Confiscation of unauthorized materials
- ∞ Social probation (exclusion from co-curricular activities and programs such as after-school clubs or class activities)
- ∞ Referral to building-level discipline committee
- ∞ Expulsion

LEVEL III

Refers to acts whose frequency or seriousness disrupt the learning climate of the school or acts directed against persons or property that pose a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others in the school. These acts require administrative action that could result in the immediate removal of the student from school as well as the possible intervention of law enforcement authorities.

Examples (but not limited to)

- ∞ Continuation of or extreme Level II misconduct
- ∞ Assault and/or battery
- ∞ Threats to others
- ∞ Possession or use of tobacco products

- ∞ Theft
- ∞ Destruction of public/private property
- ∞ Leaving school property without permission (fleeing, running away)
- ∞ Third offense truancy
- ∞ Possession or inappropriate use of prescriptive or over-the-counter medication
- ∞ Verbal or physical threats
- ∞ Minority, ethnic, or racial slurs or intimidation
- ∞ Unauthorized or improper use of school facilities/equipment/property
- ∞ Bomb threat or threatening phone calls
- ∞ Possession/use/transfer of weapons
- ∞ Lighted or ignited objects
- ∞ Possession/sale of stolen property
- ∞ Arson or attempted arson
- ∞ Unauthorized use of fire alarm or equipment
- ∞ Terroristic threats
- ∞ Other violations of federal, state, or local laws
- ∞ Extortion or attempted extortion

Examples of Disciplinary Actions may involve a combination of the following:

- Confiscation
- Temporary Suspension
- Full Suspension
- Denial of privileges/co-curricular activities
- Restitution of property or payment for damage
- Referral to police or district magistrate
- Referral to outside agency
- Expulsion
- ∞ Social probation (exclusion from co-curricular activities and programs such as after-school clubs or class activities)
- ∞ Referral to building level discipline committee
- ∞ Referral to district assault committee or discipline review committee

LEVEL III - Weapons

No person shall possess, handle, or transmit a weapon(s) or a replica of a weapon(s) in school. This includes but is not limited to a knife, razor, ice pick, explosive, loaded cane, sword cane, machete, pistol, gun, rifle, shotgun, pellet gun, metal knuckles, pepper spray or other objects that can reasonably be considered to be a weapon or dangerous instrument capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. No person shall possess, handle, or transmit a weapon(s) or a replica of a weapon(s) in any school building, on any school premises, on any school bus, off school grounds at any school activity, event or function in any school building, on any school premises or on any school bus, or off school grounds at any school activity, event or function.

The principal will suspend a student for a period of not less than three (3) days and not to exceed ten (10) school days. An informal hearing will be provided within the first five (5) days depending on the length of the initial suspension. There will be an automatic referral to the School Board per Section 235.00 of School Board Policy. The police will be notified. The student will be excluded from co-curricular activities.

NOTE: State law requires that students possessing, handling, or transmitting weapons must be expelled from school for one year unless the Superintendent of Schools recommends otherwise.

DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES FOR EXCLUSION OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

A student who breaks school rules may receive a suspension or temporary or full expulsion, depending upon the nature of the offense.

The principal may suspend a student for up to ten (10) days. The school district shall hold an informal hearing within the first five (5) days of the suspension. The principal is required to establish the facts, allow the student to respond to the charges, and notify the parents if the suspension is imposed. The principal will send a written notice to the Superintendent (or designee) and student's parents.

A suspension will be served in the custody and under the control of a student's parents or guardian. Students are permitted to make up exams and work missed while on suspension.

Expulsion is exclusion from school for more than ten consecutive school days; it may be temporary or permanent. Expulsion proceedings require a formal hearing before members of the Quaker Valley Board of School Directors. Appropriate notices and information to which students and parents are entitled will be furnished. Students have the right to legal counsel at a formal hearing before the School Board.

The formal hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing. If the Board rules in a student's favor, all references to the alleged incident shall be removed from the student's record.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

BUILDING-LEVEL DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE: the building principal or designee chairs the building discipline committee. Other members of the committee may be comprised of a guidance counselor, teachers, or another building level administrators. The committee will review the student's discipline record and create a written plan of action to address the student's disciplinary issues. Parents and student are required to be present at this meeting.

DETENTION: requires a student's presence before or after the regular school day for disciplinary reasons.

DISTRICT-LEVEL DISCIPLINE REVIEW COMMITTEE: the assistant superintendent or designee chairs the District-Level Discipline Review Committee. Other members of the committee may be comprised of a secondary principal or designee, guidance counselor, and teachers. An administrator from the student's school will present the case to the Review Board. The student will be given the opportunity to present his/her side of the case. Parents are required to be present during the meeting.

DRUG/MOOD ALTERING SUBSTANCE/ALCOHOL: includes any alcohol or malt beverage, any drug listed by law as a controlled substance, chemical, abused substance or medication for which a prescription is required under the law and/or substance which is intended to alter mood. Examples of the above include, but are not limited to, beer, wine, liquor, anabolic steroids, marijuana, hashish, chemical solvents, glue, look alike substances and any capsules or pills not registered with the nurse annotated within the student's health record and given in accordance with the school district policy for the administration of medication to students in school.

DUE PROCESS: a student's right to be informed of charges and be heard before the designated authority.

EXCUSED ABSENCE: pupil absences due to personal illness, a serious emergency or death in the family, or quarantine.

EXPULSION: exclusion from school, after formal hearing, for an offense for a period exceeding ten (10) school days. This may be permanent expulsion from school rolls.

INFORMAL HEARING: an opportunity for the student to meet with the appropriate school officials to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended. The informal hearing also provides an opportunity to discuss ways future offenses can be avoided.

SUSPENSION: exclusion from school for an offense for a period of one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE: the absence of a pupil due to truancy, parental neglect, or illegal employment.

ASSAULT COMMITTEE: an ad hoc district-wide committee of teachers and school administrators convened to respond to a complaint of threats, threatening behaviors, or verbal/physical threats or actions.