

The Code of Student Conduct 2011 - 2012



Dixie County High School
Achieving Excellence Together

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Part I: Introduction

The Code of Student Conduct is based on the philosophy that instruction should occur in an environment conducive to learning, and that the school atmosphere should be positive and one in which students and school personnel work cooperatively toward common goals. The School Board, administration, faculty, staff, parents and community hold the highest expectations for the conduct of students in Dixie County Schools. Students are expected to be in school and learning every day and are to demonstrate appropriate and responsible behavior at all times. They are expected to refrain from any conduct which interferes with another student's opportunity to learn, and are expected to contribute to a safe and orderly learning environment by respecting themselves and others, their property, and school rules and regulations.

Attendance

Compulsory School Attendance

Florida Statutes state that school attendance is mandatory between the ages of six (6) and eighteen (18) unless the student and his or her parent/guardian file a formal intent to terminate school enrollment with the district School Board. Rules and regulations pertaining to those laws as well as those regarding pupil transfers into and out of the county shall be available to all students and parents.

Number of Absences

A student with six (6) or more absences and a passing grade in any class during any nine week grading period will receive a grade of 59 for that class until a successful appeal is made as outlined below. A student with eighteen (18) or more absences per yearlong course and a passing grade in any class will receive a grade of 59 for that class until a successful appeal is made as outlined below. Any student who has perfect attendance and no unexcused tardies during a nine week grading period will have one additional point added to his/her grade average for each class in which this criteria is met. However, grades cannot exceed 100.

Appeals Process:

- (1) Students with six (6) or more absences and a passing grade will receive a grade of 59 (F) on his/her report card for that class.
- (2) Students/parents will have five (5) school days from the issuance of the nine week report card to submit a letter to the principal requesting an appointment for an appeal.
- (3) Official documentation from a third party is required.
- (4) If an appeal is denied or the student/parent does not set an appointment within the five (5) day deadline, a failing grade of 59 for the class will remain in effect.

Excused/Unexcused Absences

Regular attendance and a cooperative attitude are necessary ingredients in an environment which promotes learning. Parents and guardians are responsible for sending their children to school. Whenever a student is absent from school, the parent or guardian of that student is required by state statutes to contact school officials in order to justify the cause of each absence.

Excused absences/tardies may only be used for the following legitimate, documented reasons:

- (1) Illness or injury of the student
- (2) Death in the family
- (3) Legal reasons
- (4) Religious holidays or services which are mandated for all members of the faith and which cannot be observed outside of the regular school day
- (5) Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent or student as determined and approved by the principal or the principal's designee

Unexcused absences/tardies:

- (1) Truancy
- (2) Missing the bus
- (3) Trips not pre-approved
- (4) Shopping
- (5) Hunting, fishing, attendance of games
- (6) Birthdays or other celebrations
- (7) Gainful employment

Truancy and Driver's License Eligibility

Any student who accumulates 15 unexcused absences within 90 days will be defined as a habitual truant. The Department of Motor vehicles will be automatically notified by computer when a student is truant and this may result in driver's license being suspended. When this occurs, the student must attend for 30 consecutive days without any unexcused absences for a reinstatement request to be issued.

Cell Telephones/Wireless Communication Devices

Personal cell telephones may be brought to school under the following conditions

1. Phones must be turned off and kept out of sight.
2. Violation of this provision shall result in the confiscation of the phone and its return only to the parent or guardian and/or other disciplinary action including Internal Suspension. Subsequent or severe violations may result in further disciplinary action.
3. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen phones.

Check In and Check Out Procedure

- Students arriving late to school must sign in at the front office and then report directly to class.
- Students cannot miss more than ten (10) minutes of the class period or they will be marked absent.
- Students must sign out in the main office when leaving school for any reason during the school day.
- Students may not check out unless the parent/guardian signs their child out in person at the time of check-out or sends a notarized note for each check out stating the time the student is to leave and destination.
- Dixie County High School is a closed campus. Students may not check out to leave campus for lunch.

Dress Code

Students' mode of dress and grooming in the school shall meet standards of decency, modesty, personal hygiene, and safety, and be conducive to maintenance of a proper educational environment. Accordingly, extreme hair styles and make-up, excessively revealing clothes, and costumes or accessories which tend to distract fellow students in the pursuit of their educational activities or disrupt the normal activities of the school will be prohibited. State statutes prohibit a student, while on the grounds of a public school during the regular school day, from wearing clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent or vulgar manner or that disrupts the orderly learning environment. Appropriate attire is set by the administration of Dixie County High School and includes, but is not limited by the following:

- Pants, shorts, and skirts worn at natural waistline
- Shorts and skirts worn longer than fingertip length
- Shoulders must measure at least three inches; no tank tops or shoulder straps

Violations of this policy will result in the student being sent to Internal Suspension until such time as student is appropriately attired.

Food and Drinks on Campus

Food and drinks will not be allowed on campus. Exceptions will be made for students who bring a “bag lunch” to be consumed during the assigned lunch period and only in the cafeteria or assigned lunch area.

Hall Passes

During school hours a student must have a written hall pass when out of his/her regularly scheduled class. Each teacher has a receipt book assigned for passes.

Lockers/Storage Spaces

Lockers and/or storage spaces for student use are provided by the School Board of Dixie County. As such, these lockers and storage spaces are the property of the School Board. Any student, who accepts the use of a locker/storage space, accepts it with the understanding that it cannot conceal or hide any such item or material that is illegal or against school policy or regulations. Upon accepting the use of the locker/storage space the student does so knowing the locker/storage space is subject to be searched at any time and for any reason that school officials deem appropriate. School personnel are not responsible for stolen or misplaced property. Lockers are assigned with a lock. If the lock is not left on the locker at the end of the year, a fee will be assessed.

Parking

Parking on DCHS campus is a privilege and subject to the following rules, regulations and the laws of the State of Florida:

1. Students will park in the field on the west side of campus in the parking lot designated for student parking.
2. Exceptions will be made for students who are involved in educational study off campus such as work study, health occupations, and dual enrollment classes.
3. Gates will be locked from 8:00 am – 2:50 pm.
4. Dixie County High School reserves the right to open and inspect any vehicle parked on school premises.

5. Students who park on campus must fill out a parking application and have it approved by the principal or his/her designee. A decal will be issued once approval is granted. Parking decals are required and may be purchased for \$2.00 in the front office. Proof of insurance and operator's driver license are required.
6. Parking permits may be revoked at the discretion of the principal.

Public Affection

Students who continue to engage in public affection after being warned by school personnel shall be referred to school administration for discipline. Inappropriate intimate conduct or behavior may result in disciplinary action up to expulsion.

Supervision of Students

Dixie District Schools extends the supervisory responsibilities of school personnel over students on school property to 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after the student's school day. School personnel will also be responsible for supervision 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after school-sponsored activities (including the time during which the activity occurs). School personnel are not responsible for supervising students beyond that point.

Tardiness to Class

Upon a student's third tardy to class in a nine week grading period the teacher will fill out a tardy notification form; one copy will be sent home with the student, another copy will be sent to an administrator, and the teacher will keep the final copy. Upon the fourth tardy per nine weeks, the teacher will send the student to the office with a discipline referral.

Textbooks and Library Books

Textbooks/library books are the property of the School Board of Dixie County and are loaned to the students of Dixie County. Lost and damaged textbooks and/or library books must be paid for by the students before other books will be issued. All books should be handled with extreme care by the students. Students are held personally responsible for their books, whether lost, stolen, or damaged.

Part II: Behavior and Discipline

These guidelines set the standard for all members of the Dixie County High School.

Guideline 1: Assume Responsibility: Students are responsible for being at school and in the classrooms punctually. Students shall be prepared for class with books and materials as prescribed by the teacher. The full use of allotted time improves education opportunities for everyone.

Guideline 2: Respect the rights of others. Students have a responsibility to learn. Teachers have a responsibility to teach. When students cause disruptions in class or in the corridors, they deprive others of their basic right to learn.

Guideline 3: Strive for excellence. Pride in workmanship is shown when students complete work in a neat, organized and thorough manner.

Disciplinary Consequences:

1. Counseling by Administration
2. Parent Notification/Parent Conference
3. After School Detention
4. Lunch Detention
5. Work Detail
6. Temporary Placement in the Opportunity Class
7. Out of School Suspension
8. Recommendation for Placement at the Second Chance School
9. Recommendation for Expulsion
10. Other Disciplinary Action Assigned by the Principal or Designee

School Bus Conduct

Rights:

Students living two (2) miles or more from the school have the right to transportation by school bus or other school provided transportation. Students have the right to be informed of the transportation rules, regulations and laws regarding the transportation of the students by school bus.

Transportation Rules:

- Students must obey the bus driver
- Students must have no foreign objects in their mouth
- Students must remain in their seat, face forward, keeping hands, feet and other objects to themselves at all times
- No objects will be brought on the bus without permission of the bus driver
- Students must be at the bus stop five (5) minutes before stop time. They should stand 10 feet off the road in an orderly manner. When crossing the street, they must cross 10 feet in front of the bus.
- School conduct rules apply while students are at the bus stop
- Students must be absolutely quiet when the bus is stopped at a railroad crossing
- Students must board and leave the bus in an orderly manner at their regular stop
- Written permission from the parents, signed by the principal or his/her designee, must be provided to leave the bus at any stop other than the regular stop or to ride a bus different from the one regularly scheduled
- Profane language or gestures may not be used on the bus
- Any of the above unacceptable behaviors will be handled by administrative action by the principal or designee with one or more of the following consequences: assigned seating, bus suspension or expulsion, external suspension, internal suspension, lunch detention, parent conference, second chance school, work detail
- Parent and/or guardians are to make transportation arrangements for student suspended or expelled from the bus.

Behaviors Related to Computer/Electronic Use

Computer files, including email are not private. The use of the school's computers and computer networks, computer software, data files, and intellectual property is a privilege and is intended for educational purposes only.

Students may not:

1. Share computer account ID's and passwords, except when authorized.
2. Create, copy, receive, or use data, language or graphics which are obscene, abusive, or otherwise inappropriate at school.
3. Access, change or delete intellectual property belonging to others, including programs or data files not owned by the user, without their expressed permission.
4. Steal or destroy the school's computer hardware or peripheral (printers, mouse, monitors, modems, cables, connectors, etc.).
5. Steal or destroy computer software, data files, or intellectual property owned by the school or other persons.
6. Violate or attempt to violate the security of the computer/network systems.
7. Take unauthorized actions which deny access to, disrupt, or destroy the service of the computer/network systems.
8. Make unauthorized or unlawful installation of personal computer software on the school's computers or the computer networks, including, but not limited to, games, virus programs, and applications software. Student provided software must be used only in accordance with the license agreement and with proper permission of school officials.
9. Use computers, computer networks, computer software, data files or intellectual property in any unauthorized way.

Unacceptable Behavior: Level 1

The following offenses, on campus, school bus, school bus stop or at a school-sponsored function or whenever the student is under the control of school officials, are serious breaches of conduct that shall mandate strong positive disciplinary action that may include corporal punishment, suspension and the confiscation of prohibited articles or substances. Expulsion may be imposed for such conduct which involves willful disobedience, open defiance of authority, violence, or which substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of the school:

1. Cheating
2. Fighting
3. Flagrant or continued violation of dress code
4. Forgery
5. Gambling

6. Causing personal injury to another
7. Open defiance
8. Other law violations
9. Parking lot loitering
10. Displaying and unacceptable contact of a sexual nature, including petting, kissing, fondling, etc.
11. Possession or use of tobacco or tobacco products
12. Repeated misconduct in class
13. Stealing (minor offense)
14. Tardiness to school or class
15. Insubordination
16. Truancy, skipping class
17. Using profanity
18. Violations of check-out procedures for students leaving campus during the day
19. Violations of published local school regulations, school board policy or state laws pertaining to schools
20. Tape/Record/CD Players, Beepers, Pagers, Video Games, iPod's or other communication devices are not permitted on campus during the school day without permission from the administration
21. Cell phones may be brought on campus but may not be visible during the student day.
22. Violation of the district Internet Use Policy
23. Inappropriate clothing or any item(s) depicting or associated with discrimination on the basis of color, handicap, national origin, race, religion or picturing gangs, gang like materials, nudity, vulgarity, tobacco products, alcohol or drugs are prohibited on school grounds, bus or sponsored events
24. Inciting fighting or physical contact.
25. Tripping or setting of an alarm
26. Laser lights and lighters are banned
27. Trespassing is prohibited. Trespassing is the act of a person who enters or remains on school system property after the administrator/designee has directed such person to leave. Any visitor, who is caught on school property, without having checked in at the front office and having received a pass, will be considered as trespassing. Trespassing also includes being in any school building or on any school property or attending any school-sponsored activity while suspended or expelled, without properly secured authorization.

Unacceptable Behavior: Level 2

The following offenses, whether on campus, school bus, or school sponsored function or whenever the student is under the control of school officials, are very serious breaches of conduct, which may result in suspension, and/or confiscation of prohibited articles or substances, expulsion and arrest. A student suspected of being in possession of any item listed below may be searched by the principal or his/her designee. Failure to consent to be searched will be deemed insubordination and may result in suspension or expulsion. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Assault or battery on student, teacher, bus driver, or other school board personnel.
2. Giving or selling, possession, transporting, or consumption of alcohol beverages.
3. Giving or selling, possession, transporting, or use of any drug prohibited by Florida Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act or any substitute for or imitation of such drug. This includes pseudo drugs and drug paraphernalia.
4. Any weapons found in the area of the school grounds, building, school buses, or vehicles on the school grounds, or at any school sponsored function, shall be confiscated and any student, while on the school grounds, building, school bus, in a vehicle on school grounds, or at any school sponsored function, found possessing, transporting, displaying or using a weapon, is subject to suspension and may be expelled from school. This rule shall not prohibit the use of appropriate tools by students under the attention of a teacher. Weapons shall be defined as follows:
 - a. Firearms – any kind of gun (whether operable or inoperable loaded or unloaded) including but not limited to hand, zip, pistol, rifle, shotgun, BB gun, starter explosive propellant, laser, or destructive device.
 - b. Knives – any kind of knives, including but not limited to pen, switchblade, or hunting knife.
 - c. Chains – any chain, being used for any purpose for which it was not intended, capable of harming an individual is prohibited. Chains are not to be worn on wallets, attached to pants, etc.
 - d. Pipe: any length of metal being used for any purpose for which it was not intended.
 - e. Razor blades of any kind or similar instruments with a sharp cutting edge including box cutter.
 - f. Ice picks, dirks, other pointed instruments.
 - g. Nunchakus, brass knuckles, Chinese stars, Billy clubs
 - h. Tear gas gun (chemical weapon or device/Mace).
 - i. Electrical weapon or device (stun gun).
 - j. Any other weapon or firearm defined in 790.001, F.S.
 - k. Any instrument (or object) deliberately used or intended for use to inflict harm on another person; or used to intimidate any person, e.g., pencil, pen, rock, stick, bottle, etc.

5. Extortion or intimidation.
6. Willful or malicious destruction of personal property or school property; vandalism.
7. Refusal to follow instructions given by appropriate school personnel
8. Lying to a staff member
9. Stealing (major or repeated offenses).
10. Disrespect to any school official.
11. Refusal to identify himself/herself on request of any teacher, principal, superintendent, bus driver, school security officer, or other school personnel.
12. Failure to obey speed limits or other recklessness with vehicles on campus.
13. When any behavior is found to be disruptive in any manner by the use of force, coercion, intimidation, passive resistance or any other conduct that could cause a disruption of the school day, it may result in an immediate suspension.
14. Bomb threat (students involved in initiating or calling in a bomb threat).
15. Possession of pornographic materials on campus.
16. Students charged with a felony – the principal has the authority to suspend a student who is formally charged with a felony which allegedly occurred on other than school property, if the incident is shown to have an adverse impact on the educational program, discipline or welfare in the school where the student is enrolled.
17. Calling 911 from school phone without a clear, immediate emergency.
18. Sexual harassment - Sexual harassment is illegal and has no place in our school. Sexual harassment may be verbal, physical, written, etc. Pulling down another's pants shall be classified as sexual harassment.
19. Bullying: unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing acts that are severe or persuasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment, to cause discomfort or humiliation, or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation.

Zero Tolerance Crimes

On September 13, 1994, the Florida State Board of Education adopted a new rule “Zero Tolerance for School Related Violent Crime.” The rule requires each school district to ensure that students or adults found to have committed the following offenses on school property, school sponsored transportation, or during a school sponsored activity shall receive the most severe consequence provided by law and School Board Policy:

- Homicide
- Sexual battery
- Armed robbery
- Aggravated battery
- Battery on school personnel
- Kidnapping
- Arson
- Possession, use or sale of any firearm or weapon(s)
- Possession, use or sale of any drugs, paraphernalia, pseudo drugs

Random Drug Testing

Consent: Each competitive student or driving student and his or her parent are required to sign a written notarized consent form for drug testing prior to being allowed to participate in interscholastic, competitive, extracurricular programs and activities, or receiving driving/parking privileges.

Sample Collection Procedures: Those students who are selected for drug testing shall be required to produce a urine sample under the supervision of the laboratory technician and a designated school official in a manner which will minimize intrusiveness and embarrassment to the student while also insuring that there is no tampering with the urine sample by the student or others.

Consequences include, but are not limited to: suspension from extracurricular activities and parking privileges, reoccurring drug testing, and completion of a designated assessment program.

A more detailed explanation of the Random Drug Testing Policy is available on the Dixie District website or in written form upon request.

Part III: DUE PROCESS

Due Process is another name for fairness of process. Fairness of procedure is due process in the primary sense. Due process is a right guaranteed to all by the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments of the Constitution. Policies and procedures for discipline of a disabled student will be provided to the parent or guardian during the initial eligibility staffing.

Individuals must have proper notice and an opportunity to be heard, and the hearing conducted fairly. Students must be informed either orally or in writing, of the rules violated. The basic ingredients of due process procedures are as follows:

- Individuals must have prior opportunity to know that their actions would be in violation of established rules and regulations.
- Individuals must have the opportunity to know the specific charges or complaints being made against them.
- Individuals must be given a fair and impartial hearing.

Student Grievance Procedure

A grievance is defined as an alleged violation of the School Board of Dixie County policies or unlawful discrimination or harassment. The grievance process is available to all students and applicants for admission. Throughout the student grievance process the claimant, accused, and all others involved in the investigation are guaranteed confidentiality and protection from retaliation. Such grievances may be filed in the following manner:

Step One: If an individual public school student believes that an action by the school, by another student or by a school representative has violated his/her rights under School Board Policies, the student shall seek within sixty (60) school days of the alleged occurrence a resolution through informal discussion with a teacher, guidance counselor, dean of students, or assistant principal of the school who shall in turn mediate on the students' behalf with the individuals alleged to have committed the violation.

Step Two: If informal discussion does not resolve the issue, the aggrieved student will submit a written statement of the grievance to the school principal or the district Equity Coordinator within ten (10) school days after the informal discussion of the alleged occurrence. The statement shall include a description of the specific rule/regulation allegedly violated, the date of the violation, the resolution sought and the signature of the student and parent or guardian.

Step Three: Within ten (10) school days of the receipt of the written grievance, the principal or the district Equity Coordinator shall render a written response to the aggrieved student and parent or guardian, which shall uphold, modify, or deny the resolution sought.

Step Four: If the student is not satisfied with the response to step three, the student may within ten (10) school days of the response submit in writing the alleged grievance to the District School Superintendent.

Step Four: Within ten (10) school days, the Superintendent shall issue a written response to the aggrieved student and parent or guardian. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.

Student Records

Philosophical Basis:

A well-developed student record file contains information needed for making appropriate educational decisions for the student. Student records are to be treated confidentially and should contain information that is relevant, accurate, and appropriate.

Access to Student Records:

In general, a student's records are available to parents of the minor students (under age 18) and to students who have reached age 18 or are attending a post secondary education institution (eligible student). In addition, federal and state statutes allow student records to be made available to others who have a bona fide need of information. Copies of the District's policies regarding student records are available at each school and the School Board office. These policies will always be in compliance with state and federal regulations concerning student records. Eligible students and parents of minor students have the right to inspect and review permanent education records of the student. The parent or eligible student may request access to the records through the school principal. The principal will make records available for review within thirty (30) days of such request. Information regarding the cost is also available from the school. Information in the records may be challenged by a parent or eligible student. A parent may refuse to permit the designation of any or all categories of directory information with respect to his child by notifying the principal in writing ten (10) calendar days of the beginning of school. Unless there is specific written request in the cumulative folder, directory information on the student may be released. Parents or eligible students will be provided a list of types of directory information included in student records, upon written request to the office of the Superintendent. Purging, transferring and copying of

student records are done in accordance with federal and state statutes and federal, state and local procedures.

Responsibilities of Student, Parents and Guardians:

- To inform the school of any information that may be useful in making appropriate educational decisions.
- To authorize release of pertinent information to those individuals or agencies who are working actively and constructively for the benefit of the student. Release of records of students 17 years of age or younger who attend an elementary or secondary school requires the signature of the parent or guardian.

Rights of Students, Parents and Guardians:

- To inspect, review, and challenge the information contained in records directly relating to the student.
- To be protected by legal provisions which prohibit the release of personal identifiable information to other than legally authorized persons without the consent of the parent, guardian, or eligible student. (Eligible students are those 18 years of age or over and/or those attending a post-secondary institution.)

Educational Equity Act

The School Board of Dixie County is committed to the principal and practice of equal opportunity and affirmative action. The School Board of Dixie County complies with the letter and spirit of federal, state and local laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and/or harassment based on race, color, religion, political affiliation, national origin, sex, disability, age, marital status or social and family background. Employment and educational opportunities for students, employees and applicants are provided under the principles, equal opportunity and affirmative action.

Limited English Proficient

Limited English Proficient (LEP) students who meet program eligibility criteria shall have equal access to all programs. No national origin minority or limited English proficient student shall be subjected to any disciplinary action because of their use of a language other than English. Disciplinary actions for LEP students are common to non-LEP students.

Exceptional Student Education and 504 students

- Disciplinary consequences for ESE students are common to non-ESE students.
- It is the policy of the Dixie County Board of Education to provide a free and appropriate public education to each disabled student within its jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability.
- It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 receive appropriate educational services. Aids and services will be provided which include adaptation of equipment, testing accommodations and academic adjustments for disabled students in the regular classroom. Students may be disabled under this policy even though they do not require services pursuant to the individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Due process rights of disabled students and their parents under Section 504 will be enforced.