

I. Policy Statement

The Board of Education of Howard County is committed to modelling and fostering an environment of mutual respect and civility between and among all stakeholders including members of the Board of Education, students, school system employees, parents, service providers, and each member of the community. The Board recognizes a culture of civility is critical to the success and well-being of students employees, and community members and is a necessary first step to establishing and maintaining relationships and a culture that recognizes the worth and dignity of the individual.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set clear expectations for civil behavior between and among all Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) stakeholders to promote safe, engaging and supportive environments.

III. Definitions

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Civility – Mutual respect and consideration reflected in language, attitudes, behaviors, and verbal, nonverbal, written and digital communications.
- B. Parent – Any one of the following, recognized as the adult(s) legally responsible for the student:
 - 1. Biological Parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated.
 - 2. Adoptive Parent – A parent who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated.
 - 3. Custodian – A person or an agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
 - 4. Guardian – A person who has been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
 - 5. Caregiver – An adult resident of Howard County who exercises care, custody or control over the student, but who is neither the biological parent nor legal guardian

as long as the person satisfies the requirements of the Education Article §7-101(c) (Informal Kinship Care).

6. Foster Parent – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in their home by a state agency or a licensed child placement agency as provided by the Family Law Article, §5-507.
- C. School Property – Any property owned or leased by the (HCPSS) or used by HCPSS for school-related activities. The concept of property extends to school activities such as field trips, use of parks and recreation facilities, proms at hotels, etc. School buses, bus stops, and facilities scheduled by the school system for student use are considered an extension of school property.
 - D. School-Related Activity – Any school system activity, on or off school property, in which a student directly participates (e.g. field trip, athletic event, or class/graduation activity), or an activity in which the student does not directly participate, but represents the school or student body simply by being present (e.g. spectator at a school event).
 - E. Service Providers – Individuals who provide services to the HCPSS, either through contract, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or volunteer service, when those services involve access to students and employees, such as substitute teachers, mentors, chaperones, bus drivers, and individuals who participate in committees, advisory groups, and partnership programs.

IV. Standards

- A. The HCPSS school and workplace environments will reflect the expected behaviors of civility while communicating and interacting among stakeholders. These behaviors include but are not limited to:
 1. Respect and courtesy in language, demeanor, and actions
 2. Respectful and appropriate tone and volume of voice
 3. Respectful and active listening
 4. Respectful acknowledgment of individual differences
 5. Respectful acknowledgement of diversity
 6. Respect for the personal, civil, and property rights of others
 7. Respectful and courteous use of phone, public address systems, two-way radios, and any other verbal communication devices
 8. Respectful and courteous written and digital communication, including but not limited to notes, letters, email, text messages, and social media.
- B. The HCPSS school and workplace environments will be free from unacceptable behaviors including but not limited to:
 1. Rude, insulting, or demeaning language and/or actions
 2. Persistently unreasonable demands

3. Repeatedly interruptive behavior
 4. Displays of temper
 5. Threatening and/or abusive gestures and behavior.
- C. All individuals in HCPSS schools and workplaces will follow procedures for resolution as outlined in the implementation procedures.

V. Responsibilities

- A. All individuals will behave in a civil manner while communicating and interacting with all HCPSS stakeholders.
- B. All individuals will behave in a civil manner and cooperate in resolving incidents of uncivil behavior.
- C. If individuals are unable to resolve incidents of uncivil behavior, the principal/supervisor or designee will facilitate a resolution.
- D. The Superintendent/Designee will determine whether an incident occurring on school property violates an existing Board of Education policy. The Superintendent/Designee will respond appropriately and in a timely manner to all parties.
- E. The Superintendent/Designee will provide for annual notification of this policy to students, employees, parents, and community members.

VI. Delegation of Authority

The Superintendent is authorized to develop appropriate procedures for the implementation of this policy.

VII. References

- A. Legal
The Annotated Code of Maryland, Criminal Law Article, §3-805 – Misuse of electronic communication or interactive computer service (“Grace’s Law”)
The Annotated Code of Maryland, Criminal Law Article, §6-409, Trespass
The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, §26-101 and §26-102, School Security
- B. Other Board Policies
Policy 1010 Anti-Discrimination
Policy 1020 Sexual Discrimination
Policy 1040 Safe and Supportive Schools
Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation
Policy 2030 Ombudsman
Policy 2040 Public Participation in Meetings of the Board

Policy 2070 Ethics
Policy 3020 Trespassing or Willful Disturbance
Policy 7030 Employee Conduct and Discipline
Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology and Social Media
Policy 9020 Students' Rights and Responsibilities
Policy 9200 Student Discipline
Policy 9270 Student Assault and/or Battery on Staff
Policy 10000 Parent, Family, and Community Involvement
Policy 10020 Use of School Facilities

C. Relevant Data Sources

D. Other

Formal Parent Concern Form
HCPSS Ethics Regulations
HCPSS Student Code of Conduct
Master Agreement between the Board of Education of Howard County and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees
Master Agreement between the Board of Education of Howard County and the Howard County Administrators Association
Master Agreement between the Board of Education of Howard County and the Howard County Education Association
Master Agreement between the Board of Education of Howard County and the Howard County Education Association-Educational Support Professionals
Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of Education of Howard County and the Howard County School Food Service Association
Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of Education of Howard County and the Howard County Home and Hospital Teachers Association

VIII. History

ADOPTED: September 7, 2006

REVIEWED:

MODIFIED: August 14, 2014

REVISED: May 3, 2018

EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2018

I. Dissemination of Information

- A. The Superintendent/Designee will establish a process to communicate expectations for civil behavior outlined in the policy to all school administrators and central office/supervisory personnel.
- B. The principal/supervisor or designee will establish a process to communicate expectations of civil behavior annually to their employees, all students, parents, service providers, and community groups.

II. Addressing Concerns and Issues

A. Resolution through Mutual Agreement

Individuals who feel they have been subjected to uncivil conduct are first encouraged to respectfully resolve the concern/issue with the person or persons directly involved, in a manner that reflects a restorative approach.

B. General Steps when Resolution is not Reached through Mutual Agreement

- 1. Either party may cite this policy and notify the other party that they are ending the conversation or the interaction and remove themselves from the situation (for instance, ending a phone call, walking out of the room, or requesting the other individual leave the room).
- 2. If the issue/situation is not addressed in another policy or procedure (see Section II.C.) or if resolution is not achieved through mutual agreement, either party may notify the appropriate principal/supervisor or designee. The principal/supervisor or designee will assist the individuals in reaching a resolution. The means to a resolution will be intentional about valuing the worth and dignity of all parties through collaborative dialogues, a focus on equity, and the building of a more positive relationship.
- 3. If uncivil behavior continues, the principal/supervisor or designee may implement further remedies including but not limited to a request for a cessation of communications, the issuance of a Letter of No Trespassing, and/or referral to the Office of Safety and Security.

C. References to Appropriate Policies and Procedures

Below are HCPSS policies and procedures that cover specific circumstances or general behaviors that exceed the scope of this policy.

1. Issues between Students

a. Policies

Policy 1010 Anti-Discrimination
Policy 1020 Sexual Discrimination
Policy 1040 Safe and Supportive Schools
Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation
Policy 3020 Trespassing or Willful Disturbance
Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology and Social Media
Policy 9020 Students' Rights and Responsibilities
Policy 9200 Student Discipline

b. Other

Formal Parent Concern Form
HCPSS Student Code of Conduct
Student and Parent Handbook

2. Issues between Students and Employees

a. Policies

Policy 1010 Anti-Discrimination
Policy 1020 Sexual Discrimination
Policy 1040 Safe and Supportive Schools
Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation
Policy 2030 Ombudsman
Policy 2070 Ethics
Policy 3020 Trespassing or Willful Disturbance
Policy 7030 Employee Conduct and Discipline
Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology and Social Media
Policy 9020 Students' Rights and Responsibilities
Policy 9200 Student Discipline
Policy 9270 Student Assault and/or Battery on Staff

b. Other

Formal Parent Concern Form
HCPSS Student Code of Conduct
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
HCPSS Ethics Regulations
Student and Parent Handbook

3. Issues between Employees

- a. Policies
 - Policy 1010 Anti-Discrimination
 - Policy 1020 Sexual Discrimination
 - Policy 1040 Safe and Supportive Schools
 - Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation
 - Policy 2030 Ombudsman
 - Policy 2070 Ethics
 - Policy 7030 Employee Conduct and Discipline
 - Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology and Social Media
 - b. Other
 - Appropriate Master Agreements
 - Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 4.205 (Appeals)
 - Equity Assurance Office procedures
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
 - HCPSS Ethics Regulations
4. Issues between Employees and Parent/Community Members
- a. Policies
 - Policy 1010 Anti-Discrimination
 - Policy 1020 Sexual Discrimination
 - Policy 1040 Safe and Supportive Schools
 - Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation
 - Policy 2030 Ombudsman
 - Policy 2040 Public Participation in Meetings of the Board
 - Policy 2070 Ethics
 - Policy 3020 Trespassing or Willful Disturbance
 - Policy 7030 Employee Conduct and Discipline
 - Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology and Social Media
 - Policy 10000 Parent, Family, and Community Involvement
 - Policy 10020 Use of School Facilities
 - b. Other
 - Appropriate Master Agreements
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
 - Formal Parent Concern Form
 - HCPSS Ethics Regulations

III. History

ADOPTED: September 7, 2006
REVIEWED:
MODIFIED:
REVISED: May 3, 2018
EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2018