



Gwendolyn J. Mason, Ed.D.
Chief, Division Special Education and Student Services

August 23, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Principals

FROM: Gwendolyn J. Mason, Ed.D.
Chief, Division of Special Education and Student Services

RE: Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook

As we begin the 2019-2020 school year, the Department of Student Services has finalized changes and updates to the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook (SRRH). The handbook is available only in an electronic version and can be found on the Prince George's County Public Schools' website and Staff Portal. It is strongly recommended that the Acknowledgment of Review of the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook form be copied and sent home for students' and parents'/guardians' signature. A signed copy should be returned to school and placed in the student's cumulative folder.

[Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook](#)

For your information, the attached summary highlights key changes to the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. Please note that four infractions (false alarm, gambling, tobacco use, and disrespect) have a reduced response level. These changes are one of many strategies we will make as part of our restorative approaches to discipline. It is imperative that as a school district we adhere to the use of appropriate interventions, strategies, and disciplinary procedures to ensure the use of in-school and out-of-school suspensions adheres to the guidance in this handbook.

If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Jacqueline Naves, Supervisor for the Office of Pupil Personnel Services, at 301-780-5910 or jnaves@pgcps.org. Thank you for your continued support.

Attachment

c: Helen Coley, Ed.D.
Kara Miley-Libby, Ed.D.
Wesley Watts, Jr. Ed.D.
Associate Superintendents
Instructional Directors
Ms. Elizabeth Faison
Ms. Trinell Bowman
Ms. Jacqueline Naves

Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook Changes/Updates Summary SY 2019 - 2020

ADDED:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawful Absence: If student's absence reaches 6 days, a physician's certificate will be required. If needed, access to health services is available at Prince George's County Public Schools Wellness Center
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Responsibilities: Update contact information annually
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying: How Do I Report Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report of bullying, harassment, or intimidation may be made directly to a teacher, counselor, or administrator. Reporting is not tattling or snitching. Reporting is providing information to an adult to address behavior that must be stopped. Effective November 1, 2019, an online reporting process will replace the paper version for reporting bullying. Reports of bullying will be made via an online app exclusively.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response Levels: Extended Suspensions are removed from Level 4 to Level 5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level 5 responses are responses that involve the removal of a student from the school environment for over 10 days because of the severity of the behavior. A student may be removed and/or referred to a Disciplinary Alternative Program or transferred to another Prince George's County Public School for behavior that seriously disrupts the educational environment in school, or the bus, or at a school activity that affects the safety of others.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-K – 2nd Grade Discipline Response: Maryland Law restricts suspension and expulsion of students in Pre-K through 2nd grade. Principals/designees must consult with a school psychologist or other mental health professional to determine if there is an imminent threat of serious harm to other students or staff that cannot be reduced or eliminated through other intervention or supports. If all measures have been exhausted, the child's suspension cannot exceed 5 (five) school days. Expulsion of students in grades Pre-K through 2nd grade are limited to circumstances required by Federal law.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline Response Levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chart changed to include Grades 3-12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced Response Levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bullying/Harassment including Cyberbullying Levels 1 & 2 only ▪ Disruption - Levels 1 & 2 only ▪ Destruction of Property – (Property valued below \$500) - Levels 1 & 2 only ▪ Disrespect – Levels 1 & 2 only & add 1-3 days in school suspension

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unauthorized Use/possession of prescription drugs - Levels 2, 3, & 4 only: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use/possession of illegal drugs or paraphernalia including imitation or prescription drugs – Level 3 & 4 only ▪ False Alarm – Levels 1, 2 & 3 only ▪ Gambling – Levels 1 & 2 only and in school suspension ▪ Internet/Computer Misuse – (Grades 6-12) - Levels 2 & 3 only ▪ Theft below \$500 – (Grades 6-12) - Level 2 only ▪ Tobacco Use - Levels 1 & 2 only ▪ Trespassing - Level 2 (in school suspension)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Violation: Unauthorized Departure from School – (Grades 6-12) - Levels 1, 2, & 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Threat of Mass Violence – (Grades 3-5) - Levels 2 & 3 ▪ Threat of Mass Violence – (Grades 6-12) - Levels 4 & 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examples of weapons (knives, pepper spray) ▪ Examples of explosives (firecrackers, smoke bombs, does not include small fireworks) ▪ Possession or distribution of Alcohol or Other Drugs – Third Offense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Definitions added to Glossary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Discipline Response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group fight causing material disruption to school day – (Grades 6-12) - Levels 3, 4, & 5 ▪ Possessing a loaded operable non-firearm gun (e.g. pellet guns, BB guns, air soft gun) – (Grades 6-12) - Levels 3, 4, & 5