

SUBJECT: **STUDENT VIOLENCE**

Supersedes: None; new
Effective: January 8, 2009
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Approved by: Detroit Board of Education

1.0 Policy

The Detroit Public Schools are concerned about increased violence by students in schools throughout the United States. It is the intention of the District to provide as safe and non-violent learning environment for its employees, students, parents, and visitors as is possible. To this end, the District strives to maintain an environment free of threats, harassment, intimidation, physical and verbal abuse, and coercion. This policy will define inappropriate conduct by students and will establish a framework for crisis intervention and the investigation of complaints.

1.1 ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE

It is the policy of the Detroit Public Schools to expressly prohibit any acts or threats of violence by any student against any other student, employee or other person in or about its facilities or premises at any time. The District will not condone any acts or threats of violence against its employees, students, parents, or visitors by any DPS student while on District premises.

1.2 THE DISTRICT'S COMMITMENT

In keeping with the spirit and intent of this policy and to ensure the District's objectives are attained the district is committed to the following:

- a. providing a safe and healthful work environment, in accordance with DPS policies on safety and health;
- b. taking prompt corrective action up to and including termination against any student who engages in any threatening behavior or acts of violence or who uses any obscene, abusive, or threatening language or gestures;
- c. taking appropriate action when dealing with students who engage in such behavior. Such action may include discipline up to and including expulsion and/or notifying the police or other law enforcement personnel and prosecuting violators of this policy to the maximum extent of the law;
- d. prohibiting students from bringing unauthorized firearms or other weapons onto Detroit Public Schools' premises; and

- e. establishing viable security measures to ensure that district facilities are safe and secure to the maximum extent possible and for properly dealing with access to DPS facilities by students outside of school hours.

1.3 EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

In order to minimize the risk of violent or threatening incidents, District staff, including all persons having supervisory responsibility, have a responsibility to be educated and aware of potential signs and signals of violent or threatening behavior in students.

1.4 CONSEQUENCES OF PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Any student who displays a tendency or propensity to engage in violent, abusive, or threatening behavior as defined herein, or who otherwise engages in behavior that DPS deems offensive or inappropriate will be referred to counseling or other appropriate treatment. Such students will also be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion. **See also Student Code of Conduct.**

1.5 DUTY TO REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY OR THREATS

In furtherance of this policy, all District staff have a duty to report to their building administrator (i.e., Principal, Director, or other high-ranking building administrator) and building security any suspicious activity, threatening or violent situations or incidents that they observe or know of that involve students or former students. If a principal, assistant principal, supervisor, manager or any other person learns of a staff member's suspicions or knowledge of such a situation, that person too has the responsibility to report the information to building security and the District's Department of Public Safety. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Staff reports made pursuant to this policy will be held in confidence, to the maximum extent possible. The Detroit Public Schools will not condone any form of retaliation against any employee who, in good faith, makes a report under this policy.

1.6 INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS AND DPS' RESPONSE

Complaints of violent and/or threatening behavior will be promptly investigated and if found to be valid, immediate and appropriate action will be taken. Threats and violence are serious offenses. Any student who is found to be responsible for any threatening and/or conduct will be subject to immediate and appropriate disciplinary action, up to an including expulsion and the filing of a criminal complaint.

1.7 PHYSICAL HOSTILE ACTIONS

A physical hostile action is an action that places a person in reasonable apprehension of harmful contact. Any physical hostile actions made by or against an employee, student, parent, guardian, or visitor on District property should be responded to immediately by calling on-site security. If a physical hostile action is made by or against an employee or student off-premises where an employee or student is working or learning off-site, local law enforcement authority of 911 emergency shall be contacted immediately

1.8 THREATS/VIOLENCE BY STUDENTS

Confrontational threats while at school should be dealt with by the principal and building security through an immediate meeting with the individuals involved. Depending on the seriousness of the conduct, actions may be taken against the student making the threat, including but not limited to, in-school suspension, suspension pending investigation, or expulsion.

For any such student suspended or expelled, security must be notified, the student's identification badge retrieved and made inoperable, and the student escorted out of the building.

The use of the Security Department or local law enforcement personnel should be considered at all times as appropriate and necessary.

1.9 THREATS AGAINST STUDENTS RECEIVED BY DPS

If the Detroit Public Schools becomes aware of a threat made to or against one of its students, the District, in an effort to provide protection to the student receiving the threat, will take all reasonable measures to facilitate the protection of the student while on District premises. The District will inform the student, his or her teachers and principal and building security of the threat. Additionally, the Public Safety Department will make a crisis assessment. This crisis assessment will assist DPS in determining the type of response required. Factors to consider are:

- a. the nature of the threat;
- b. the need for immediate action;
- c. the circumstances preceding the threat;
- d. the assurance that the individual making the threat will not be able to enter the facility;
- e. the nature of ongoing communications with the individual making the threat;
- f. notification of law enforcement authorities; and
- g. possible legal action.

1.10 DOCUMENTATION

In all situations and in all circumstances a complete and detailed log of events will be maintained by the principal or other building administrator, building security, and District's Public Safety Department and reviewed on an ongoing and as-needed basis.

1.11 APPEALS

Disciplinary action and expulsion decisions made as a result of violations of this policy may or may not be appealable through the appeal procedure in the Student Code of Conduct. See the Student Code of Conduct for more information.

Attachments to Policy 7.59: None

Legal References: 20 USC § 7151

Labor Contract References: None