

Buffalo Public Schools

Standards for Community-Wide Conduct

and Interventions Supports

2022-2025

Student Code of Conduct



Dr. Tonja M. Williams
Superintendent of Schools
www.buffaloschools.org

Why have a Code of Conduct?

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to set clear expectations for behavior that will promote safety and order on school property. This is necessary so that students can have the best learning environment possible.

Courtesy, good manners and caring for others, together with self-discipline and a proper respect for authority are needed to make schools caring learning communities.

What role do students have in helping to enforce the Code of Conduct?

Students play a very important role in maintaining safety and order in school and in enforcing the Code of Conduct. The school is your place of learning, and your help is needed to keep it a safe and productive place.

Students are expected to promptly report violations of the Code of Conduct to a teacher, principal, or other school staff member. This includes students who observe others possessing weapons, alcohol, or illegal substances on school property (including school buses) or at school functions.

What are the expectations for students?

All students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the safety and welfare of others.

According to the Code of Conduct, as a student you are expected to:

- Work to the best of your ability and strive for the highest levels of achievement.
- Attend school daily, be in class on time and prepared to learn.
- Follow the rules for appropriate student conduct, including the student dress code and electronics use code.
- Seek help from school staff in solving problems that might lead to disciplinary action (school counselor, social worker, Say Yes staff).
- Treat teachers, administrators, other school personnel, and your classmates in a respectful, positive manner.
- Accept responsibility for your actions.
- Report to school officials any information that may help prevent danger or injury to others.
- Contribute to a safe and orderly school environment and show respect toward others.
- Complete all classwork as assigned.
- Listen to the requests of school administrators, staff, and faculty.
- Respect school property.
- Use appropriate language.

What to do before a Code of Conduct violation arises:

- Talk to your teacher
- Ask to go to the Student Support Team's (SST) office
- Count to 10
- Take a deep breath
- Ask a school staff member for help
- Build a plan with your teacher that will help you in times of trouble
- Be prepared for class
- Be on time and ready to work in class
- Be in your assigned area at all times
- Talk to your parents, grandparents, or other family members

What are my Rights and Responsibilities as a Student?

Students have the right to:

- Attend school in the district in which one's legal care giver or legal guardian resided and receive a free and appropriate public education from age 5 to 21, as provided by law.
- Expect that school will be a safe, orderly, and purposeful place for all students to gain an education and to be treated fairly.
- Be respected as an individual and treated courteously, fairly and respectfully by other students and school staff.
- Express one's opinions verbally or in writing.
- Dress in such a way as to express one's personality.

- Afforded equal and appropriate educational opportunities.
- Take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, religion, religious practices, sex, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, ethnic group, political affiliation, age marital status, or disability.
- Have access to relevant and objective information concerning drug and alcohol abuse, as well as access to individuals or agencies capable of providing direct assistance to students with serious personal problems.
- Be protected from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, or religious practice, sex, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability, by employees or students on school property or at a school sponsored event, function, or activity.

Students have the responsibility to:

1. To attend school daily, regularly and on time, perform assignments, strive to do the highest quality work possible, be prepared to learn, and be granted the opportunity to receive a good education.
2. To be aware of all rules and expectations regulating student's behavior and conduct themselves in accordance with these guidelines.
3. To respect everyone in the school community and to treat others in the manner that one would want to be treated.
4. To express opinions and ideas in a respectful manner so as not to offend, slander, or restrict the rights and privileges of others.
5. To dress appropriately in accordance with the dress code, so as not to endanger physical health, safety, limit participation in school activities or be unduly distracting.
6. To be aware of available educational programs in order to use and develop one's capabilities to their maximum.

7. To work to the best of one's ability in all academic and extracurricular activities, as well as being fair and supportive of others.
8. To be aware of information and services and to seek assistance in dealing with personal problems, when appropriate.
9. To respect one another and treat others fairly in accordance with the District Code of Conduct and the provisions of the Dignity Act.
10. To conduct themselves in a manner that fosters an environment that is free from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination.
11. To report and encourage others, to report any incidents of intimidation, harassment, or discrimination.

What is the Dress Code I should follow?

When on school property or at a school function, dress code is very important. When getting ready to go to school be aware that you should dress appropriately so as to not disrupt or interfere with the educational process, and to respect the professional learning environment. For example:

- No clothing (including all pants, skirts, shorts, and tops) that is see-through, excessively tight, or excessively short.
- Cover all undergarments with appropriate outer garments, including wearing of pants at waist level.
- Wear safe and appropriate footwear. Inappropriate footwear includes, but is not limited to, backless shoes (i.e., flip flops, bedroom slippers). Exceptions will only apply to documented medical conditions.
- Only wear headwear that is required for medical or religious reasons.
- No clothing that is lewd, vulgar, obscene, and libelous or denigrate others, or cause a disruption to the school that impedes the educational program.
- No clothing that promotes and/or endorses the use of alcohol, tobacco, or other illegal drugs and/or encourages other illegal or violent activities.

- Sweatshirts with hoods (or “hoodies”) can be worn, but hoods must always remain down inside of buildings.
- Do not wear jewelry that may be deemed a weapon. Belts must be buckled.
- Do not wear clothing that is associated with or identifiable as a symbol of gang membership.

*****Note--Students who violate the dress code will be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item, and if necessary and/or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so may be subject to discipline in accordance with these Standards for Community-wide Conduct and Intervention Supports. Dress code violations should not lead to disparities in educational opportunities by gender.**

What are the rules regarding the use of Electronic Devices?

When a cell phone is confiscated from a student, staff will immediately notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student so other arrangements (means of communication) can be made with their child. The confiscation provisions in this Buffalo Public Schools Code of Conduct require staff to immediately communicate with the parents/guardians.

- The decision to bring a personal electronic communication device (such as Cellular Phones, iPods, iPads, Laptops, Tablets, etc.) or electronic game devices (X-Box, PlayStation, etc.) is a decision of the student and/or the student's parent/guardian.
- Students, parents, and guardians should be aware that the District will not be responsible for any damage, destruction, theft, or loss of such devices on school property.
- Upon entering the school all cell phones must be stored in the student's locker. The cell phone must be stored "OFF" or in non-operational mode.
- Students may not carry or operate cell phones in school buildings and on school busses.
- Any students carrying or operating a cell phone in a school building will be subject to having that item confiscated by School District Administrative or Safety/Security Staff.
- When these devices are confiscated at the building, Parent/Guardian must meet with building administrator to recover the item.

- Should a student be found to repeatedly violate this policy, the device shall be confiscated and delivered to the District Safety/Security Office. The Parent/Guardian must make arrangements to pick up the item. Students may be subject to discipline in accordance with the Buffalo Public Schools Code of Conduct.
- The taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer (wireless communication devices) or otherwise (commonly called texting, sexting, emailing, etc.) may constitute a CRIME under State and/or Federal law. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs will be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the school district and reported to law enforcement and/or other appropriate state and federal agencies, which may result in arrest, criminal prosecution, and LIFETIME inclusion on sexual offender registries.
- Police, Law/Enforcement Officials of a Government Agency, School Safety/Security and School Administrative Staff have authorization to possess and operate communication equipment for the conduct of appropriate business.

Authorization for the use of electronic devices will only be granted by the school principal.

Levels of Intervention and Response

When students violate the expectations of behavior outlined in the Buffalo Public Schools Code of Conduct school staff and principals respond sensibly, appropriately, and consistently.

Included in the Code of Conduct are 4 levels of possible response to Code of Conduct violations. Each violation is assigned to one of more of these levels of intervention and response. Principals and school staff should use **only the levels suggested** for each behavior.

If the inappropriate or disruptive behavior is assigned to two or more levels, then, wherever possible, the lowest level of intervention and disciplinary response should be used first.

For example, if a student refuses to follow directions, school staff and principals should first use intervention strategies and responses in Level 1 before moving to Level 2.

When principals and school staff respond to student behavior, they are expected to consider numerous factors. The following pages provide additional information regarding Interventions and Levels of response.

INAPPROPRIATE AND DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS AND LEVELS OF RESPONSE

KEY: USE LOWEST LEVEL INDICATED FIRST

Level 1. Classroom Support and Student Support Team: May be appropriate when student has no prior incidents and interventions have not been put in place	Level 2. Appropriate Administration: May be appropriate when supports have been put in place in the classroom to address behavior but the behavior has continued to negatively affect the learning of the students and others	Level 3. Short Term Suspension: May be appropriate when interventions and supports have been put in place but the behavior is repeated and escalating	Level 4. Request for Long Term Suspension: May be appropriate when student's behavior seriously affects the safety of others in the school		
INAPPROPRIATE OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	MAY BE REFERRED TO POLICE/ APPROPRIATE AGENCY
#1. ABSENCES					
● Unexcused absence from school	●				
● Persistent or excessive absence from school	●	●			
● Habitual truancy (i.e., unlawfully absent from school for a number of days in excess of 20 percent of any marking period, quarter, or year)	●	●			
#2. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY					
● Cheating or Plagiarism (PreK-8)	●	●			
● Cheating or Plagiarism (9-12)	●	●	●		
#3. ALCOHOL					
● Under the influence		●	●	●	●
● Using or possessing		●	●	●	●
● Distributing or selling				●	●
#4. ATTACK ON STUDENT (including hitting, kicking, or punching another student without warning or provocation)					
● No injury (no visual, physical injuries; includes incidents of domestic violence or relationship disputes)		●	●		
● Bodily injury for PreK to grade 4		●	●	●	
● Bodily injury for grades 5 to 12			●	●	●
#5. BOMB THREAT					
● PreK to grade 4		●	●	●	●
● Grades 5 to 12				●	●
#6. BULLYING (including cyber-bullying and gang-related incidents)					
● Intentional conduct (including verbal, physical, or written conduct) or electronic communication that is threatening or seriously intimidating and substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school	●	●	●		
● Serious bullying (i.e., repeatedly over time engaging in intentional negative behaviors that adversely affect another student's ability to participate in or benefit from a school's education or extra-curricular programs)		●	●	●	●

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INAPPROPRIATE OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	MAY BE REFERRED TO POLICE/ APPROPRIATE AGENCY
#7. BUS VIOLATION					
● Minor disruption on the bus (including eating, drinking, being too loud, standing)	●	●			
● Serious disruption on the bus (including fighting, throwing objects, distracting the bus driver, opening emergency exits)		●	●	●	●
#8. CLASS CUTTING					
● Repeated, intentional failure to appear or attend a scheduled class	●	●			
#9. CLASSROOM DISRUPTION					
● Talking out in class or talking out of turn; throwing objects; picking-on; bothering or teasing other students; and other behavior that distracts from student learning	●	●			
#10. DEFIANCE OF AUTHORITY AND/OR INSUBORDINATION					
● Failure to follow directions	●	●			
● Failure to follow and respond to school staff questions or requests	●	●			
● Failure to follow directions that leads to a potential threat or harm to self or another person	●	●	●		
● Failure to follow directions that directly leads to the harm of self or others	●	●	●		

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INAPPROPRIATE OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	MAY BE REFERRED TO POLICE/COMMUNITY AGENCY
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#11. DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR

● Making inappropriate gestures, symbols, or comments, or using profane or offensive language	●	●			
● Using verbal insults or put-downs, or lying to, misleading, or giving false information to school staff	●	●	●		
● Using verbal insults or put-downs, or lying to, misleading, or giving false information to school staff that leads to emotional or physical harm to another person	●	●	●	●	●

#12. DRESS CODE

● Refer to dress code standards on page 35	●	●			
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#13. DRUGS OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE(S) (at school, school sponsored activities or when involved in incidents affecting the safety or welfare of the school community)

● Under the influence		●	●	●	●
● Using or possessing		●	●	●	●
● Distributing or selling				●	●

#14. ELOPEMENT

● Leaving school grounds or wandering through school hallways, etc. without permission	●	●			
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#15. EXTORTION/COERCION (i.e., taking or attempting to take from another (money or property) by threat of force, expressed or implied)

● PreK to grade 4		●	●		
● Grades 5 to 12			●	●	●

#16. FALSE ACTIVATION OF A FIRE ALARM

● PreK to grade 4		●	●	●	●
● Grades 5 to 12		●	●	●	●

#17. FIGHTING

● Physical aggression with another student (i.e., shoving or pushing)	●	●			
● Minor fighting (may include incidents resulting in minor injuries)	●	●	●		

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#18. FIRE SETTING/ARSON									
• Deliberately starting fire; destruction of property as a result of starting a fire			•	•					•
#19. GAMBLING									
• Requiring the use of money or exchangeable goods	•	•	•						
#20. HALLWAY MISBEHAVIOR									
• Running, making excessive noise, or loitering	•	•							
#21. HARASSMENT BASED ON RACE, ETHNICITY, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, DISABILITY, OR RELIGION (including cyber-harassment against member of the school community)									
• Minor harassment	•	•							
• Serious harassment (i.e., persistent, or long-term harassment)		•	•	•					•
#22. HATE CRIME									
• A criminal offense against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by an offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation, including hate speech		•	•	•					•
#23. INCITING OR PARTICIPATING IN DISTURBANCE									
• Causing a large disruption to the atmosphere of order and discipline in the school that is necessary for effective learning, outside of general classroom disruption (cafeteria, hallway, library, bus stop, etc.)		•	•	•					•
• Using a personal communication device to attract others to initiate a disturbance		•	•	•					•

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INAPPROPRIATE OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	MAY BE REFERRED TO POLICE/COMMUNITY AGENCY
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#24. INHALANTS

• Under the influence – medical personnel must be immediately notified if a student is found to be under the influence or using an inhalant		•	•	•	•
• Using or possessing		•	•	•	•
• Distributing or selling				•	•

#25. PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL/NON-BPS ADULT (Including school visitors, community partners, before or after school providers)

• Unintentional incidental physical contact with school personnel	•	•			
• Attack against school personnel; physically attacking an employee of the Buffalo Public Schools or other adult, including striking a staff member who is intervening in a fight or other disruptive activity			•	•	•

#26. PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES

• Use of cell phones, PDAs, iPods, electronic game devices at unauthorized times. On the first infraction, students must only be given a warning. Only after the first infraction can the student be subject to Level 1 responses. On the second infraction, a parent notification must occur. School Leadership may implement practices which encourage safety in the school: to create systems to collect cell phones from students upon entering schools and then returning them to students at the end of the school day.	•	•			
• Use of electronic devices for which it is determined that such use leads to or directly causes physical or emotional harm to another person		•	•	•	•

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MAY BE REFERRED TO POLICE/COMMUNITY AGENCY				
#27. PROPERTY DAMAGE, INCLUDING GRAFFITI				
• Minor or accidental damage (less than \$50)	•	•		
• Damage to another person's or school property		•	•	•
#28. SCHOOL EQUIPMENT USE WITHOUT PERMISSION				
• Use of computers, fax machine, phones etc.	•	•		
#29. SERIOUS BODILY INJURY				
• Causing substantial risk of death or causing permanent or serious disfigurement, loss of function of any part of the body or impairment of the function of any part of the body			•	•
#30. SEXUAL ASSAULT OR OFFENSE				
• Forced sexual act- School staff is required to contact Buffalo Police immediately for any sexual assault			•	•
#31. SEXUALLY BASED INFRACTION				
• Sexual harassment (i.e., unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors; other inappropriate verbal, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature)		•	•	•
• Sexual activity or sexual misconduct (i.e., indecent exposure, engaging in sexual activity, etc.) (PreK to gr 4)	•	•	•	•
• Sexual activity or sexual misconduct (gr 5 to 12)		•	•	•
#32. TARDINESS				
• Persistent or excessive tardiness to class or school	•	•		
#33. TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY VIOLATION				
• Refer to page 9 of these <i>Standards</i> for details	•	•		
#34. THREAT AGAINST SCHOOL PERSONNEL (Physical Gesturing, Written Threat, or Verbal Threat)				
• PreK to grade 4	•	•	•	•
• Grades 5 to 12		•	•	•

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INAPPROPRIATE OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	MAY BE REFERRED TO POLICE/COMMUNITY AGENCY
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#35. THEFT

● Less than \$500		●	●		
● Greater than \$500 (it is recommended that police not be contacted for students in PreK or Kindergarten)			●	●	●

#36. TOBACCO POSSESSION OR USE

● School staff is requested to refer students to appropriate substance abuse counseling	●	●			
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#37. TRESPASSING

● Being on school property without permission, including while suspended or expelled; includes breaking and entering		●	●	●	●
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#38. UNAUTHORIZED SALE OR DISTRIBUTION (i.e., unauthorized or unapproved selling or distributing of goods not otherwise included in this code)

● Items with little monetary value (under \$50)	●	●			
● Items with significant monetary value		●	●		

#39. Verbal or Physical Threat to Student

● Threatening or aggressive language or gestures directed toward another student	●	●	●		
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INAPPROPRIATE OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR		LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	MAY BE REFERRED TO POLICE/COMMUNITY AGENCY
#40. Weapons, Firearms and Explosives						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explosives (possession, sale, distribution, detonation, or threat of detonation of any incendiary or explosive material or device including firecrackers, smoke bombs. Flares or any combustible or explosive substances or combination of substance or articles, other than a firearm) 				•	•	• MUST be Referred to Police
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firearms (possession of a firearm as defined in 18 USC 921 of the federal code – i.e., handguns, rifles, shotguns, and bombs) 					•	• MUST be Referred to Police
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other guns (possession of any gun, of any kind, loaded or unloaded, operable or inoperable, including any object that is a look-alike of a gun, other than a firearm—i.e., bb guns, pellet guns, water guns, etc.) 				•	•	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other weapons (possession of any implement which could cause bodily harm, other firearm, or other gun). Expulsion for no less than one calendar year is mandated by state law for firearms violation, but can be modified on a case-by-case basis by Buffalo Public Schools 				•	•	• MUST be Referred to Police
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explosives (possession, sale, distribution, detonation, or threat of detonation of any incendiary or explosive material or device including firecrackers, smoke bombs. Flares or any combustible or explosive substances or combination of substance or articles, other than a firearm) 				•	•	• MUST be Referred to Police

If a student or caregiver needs assistance or services beyond the school, the following offices may be helpful:

Please call your child's school to arrange alternate instruction

District Alternate Instruction (General Questions)	816-3133
Attendance Supports	816-3593
Guidance and Counseling	816-3702
Medical Leave Home Instruction	816-3133
Home Schooling Office	816-3106
Homeless Education Program	816-3717
Neglected and Delinquent At-Risk Youth Program	816-3172
Pupil Personnel/Suspension Hearings	816-3547
Student Placement/Registration	816-3717
Buffalo Public Schools Switchboard Operator	816-3500
Multilingual Education	816-3577
Office of Parent Advocacy	816-4678
Office of Parent and Family Engagement	816-3170
Security	816-3707
Special Education	816-3060
(Including: Pre-School, Student Placement & Parent Services)	
Superintendent's Office	816-3575

If your child is participating in Alternate Instruction, you should call their school for the teacher assignments

2022-2023

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2022-2023

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The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, creed, disability, marital status, national origin, race, color, gender or sexual orientation in its educational programs, services, and activities.

Inquiries regarding this non-discrimination policy may be directed to Tami Hollie-McGee, Chief of Human Resources, 720 City Hall, Buffalo, NY 14202 or by calling 716-816-3500.



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