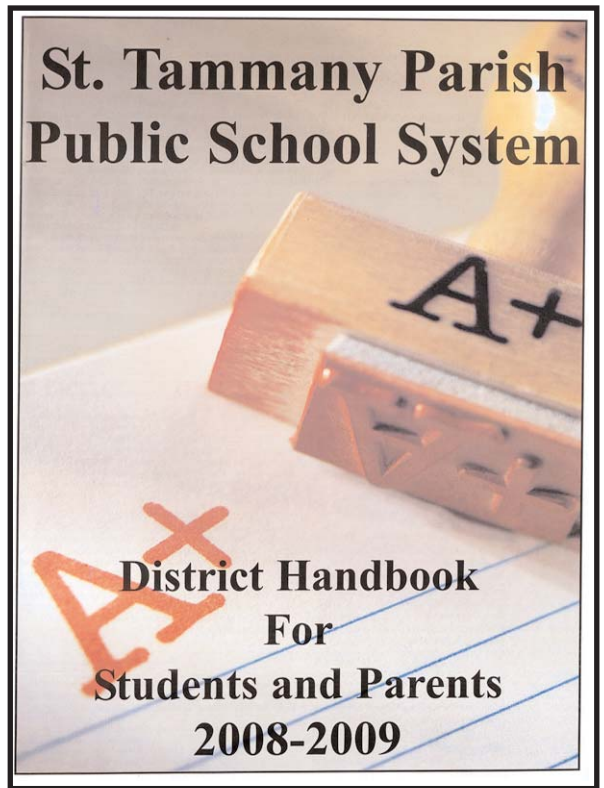


# St. Tammany Parish Public School System



# District Handbook For Students and Parents

2008-2009

**Revisions Effective July 28, 2008**

Each school year students are given a copy of the School Board approved *District Handbook for Students and Parents*, which contains discipline policies approved in the spring before the start of the upcoming school year. Some State legislative action regarding school discipline was passed after publication of the printed 2008-2009 Handbook. Students and parents were asked to add the changes in discipline policy resulting from legislative action to the printed version of the Handbook. The following changes have been incorporated into this Web version of the Handbook.

## **System Contact Information for Parents**

Senate Bill No. 440 includes requirements for providing System contacts and contact information to parents. The following is added under the School-Home Communication on page 3 of the Handbook. Parent complaints should first be addressed to the school principal whose contact information is available in the school directory of our System Web site at [www.stpsb.org/schools\\_directory.php](http://www.stpsb.org/schools_directory.php). The designated supervisor who can assist parents with the complaint process is William Brady who is located at the C. J. Schoen Administrative Complex, 321 N. Theard Street, Covington, LA 70433 and can be reached by telephone at (985)892-2276 or by email at [william.brady@stpsb.org](mailto:william.brady@stpsb.org).

## **Teacher Bill of Rights**

Act 155 makes changes regarding the listed rights of teachers. The name of the listed rights is changed from "Educators' Right to Teach" to "Teacher Bill of Rights". This legislation also adds under the first listed right that teachers have the right to certain immunity and to a legal defense. The following Bill of Rights statement is added under the Classroom Regulations section on page 9 of the Handbook.

### **Teacher Bill of Rights**

Respecting the authority of teachers is essential to creating an environment conducive to learning, effective instruction, and proper administration of schools. To maintain and protect that authority, teachers have the following rights under state law.

1. A teacher has the right to teach free from the fear of frivolous lawsuits, including the right to certain immunity and to a legal defense.
2. A teacher has the right to appropriately discipline students.
3. A teacher has the right to remove any persistently disruptive student from his classroom when the student's behavior prevents the orderly instruction of other students or when the student displays impudent or defiant behavior and to place the student in custody of the principal or his designee.
4. A teacher has the right to have his or her professional judgment and discretion respected by school and district administrators in any disciplinary action taken by the teacher.
5. A teacher has the right to teach in a safe, secure, and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and free from recognized dangers or hazards that are causing or likely causing serious injury.
6. A teacher has the right to be treated with civility and respect.
7. A teacher has the right to communicate with and to request the participation of parents in appropriate student disciplinary decisions.
8. A teacher has the right to be free from excessively burdensome disciplinary paperwork.
9. A beginning teacher has the right to receive leadership and support, including the assignment of a qualified, experienced mentor who commits to helping him become a competent, confident professional in the classroom and offers support and assistance as needed to meet performance standards and professional expectations.

## **Acts of Misconduct**

Act 747 makes wearing or possessing body armor on school property a crime. The offense is added to the Group 5 Acts of Misconduct on page 10 of the Handbook.

## **Disciplinary Action for Drug-Related Offenses**

Act 145 makes a change regarding rehabilitation or counseling requirements for students returning to school following expulsion for drug and weapon related offenses. The following change is made to the policy on disciplinary action for drug-related offenses on page 13 of the Handbook. The sentence that begins on the last line of the first column is changed to read, "State law requires that a student expelled for drug-related offenses must provide written documentation that he or she and a parent or legal guardian have participated in a rehabilitation or counseling program related to the offense leading to the expulsion before readmission to any school program."

Previously, only students were required to participate in a rehabilitation or counseling program. This legislation requires written documentation that a parent or legal guardian also has participated in a rehabilitation or counseling program.

If you have any questions regarding these new laws, you may contact Kevin Marse, Senior Supervisor of Administration at (985) 898-3221. We wish you and your family a successful school year.

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# St. Tammany Parish Public School System District Handbook For Students and Parents

## Foreword

The success of our students and the well-being of all in the St. Tammany Parish Public School System are our utmost concerns. We believe that the high expectations that parents and guardians, the community, and School System personnel have for our students and schools are best accomplished in partnership. This *Handbook* is designed to provide information about school district expectations, policies, and procedures to help students, school officials, and parents work together to ensure opportunities for St. Tammany Parish Public School System students to succeed.

This School System operates with the belief that instruction best occurs in a safe environment that is conducive to learning, free from distractions and disturbances. Our intention always is to provide students a learning climate that is positive and caring, while also orderly and effective in helping students and school personnel work productively toward mutual goals. Family help and cooperation in maintaining this climate are essential to realizing the high standards of achievement we, as a community, have set for students and schools.

Communication between home and school is vital. We encourage parents to talk with teachers and principals about special needs and concerns as they arise and participate as often as possible in student activities and school events. Parent involvement and student success go hand in hand.

We ask that parents and guardians take the opportunity to review the *Handbook* with their children and that they keep it as a reference for questions that may arise during the school year. Parents are encouraged to pursue any questions about the policies and procedures included by contacting their children's school principals. We are here to work with parents in meeting the needs of the students of St. Tammany Parish.

## INTRODUCTION

The *St. Tammany Parish Public School System District Handbook For Students and Parents* is intended to help students, parents and guardians, and school officials work together to ensure students are successful in school and to help realize the mission and vision of this School System. Communication is an important key to this partnership. By providing this written detail of School Board policies and procedures for maintaining safe, effective operation of our schools and for promoting positive conduct of our students, we hope students and parents will have a clear understanding of these policies and procedures.

The *Handbook* covers information about:

- ◆ School System Mission and Vision;
- ◆ School, Student, and Home Partnership Roles and Responsibilities;
- ◆ Operation/Administration Policies, such as Student Records, Directory Information, Public Information Releases, Emergency School Closings, Bus Transportation; and
- ◆ Maintaining a Safe, Effective Learning Environment, including Visitor Authorization, Medication Policy, Attendance, Dress and Personal Grooming, Expectations for Student Conduct, Consequences of Misconduct, Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Action, School Drug Detection and Control Program.

A Glossary at the end of the publication provides a reference for many terms used in the *Handbook*. Please see the Table of Contents for a complete listing of topics.

In addition to this *District Handbook*, students receive a school handbook each year that provides specific school regulations and other important information. We ask that parents, guardians, and students read and discuss both handbooks. Please contact school principals for any clarification of the information in either handbook. This *Handbook* also can be consulted on the St. Tammany Parish Public School System Web site at [www.stpsb.org](http://www.stpsb.org).

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## MISSION

The mission of the St. Tammany Parish Public School System is to provide a high-quality education for all students, resulting in life-long learners who can contribute positively to the society in which they live.

## VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to provide an exemplary school system, widely respected for high standards and first-rate performance and for outstanding student achievement. In this System, public schools are valued and supported and a strong partnership exists between educators, students, families, and the community to help ensure that:

- ◆ students have safe, caring environments for learning;
- ◆ students are positively challenged, enriched, and inspired;
- ◆ students learn to be self-motivated and life-long learners, prepared for life's pursuits; and
- ◆ students learn to be responsible and contributing members of a global society.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY STATEMENT

The St. Tammany Parish School Board, as the governing body for the St. Tammany Parish Public School System, is responsible for establishing policies under which schools operate. To promote responsible student conduct and behavior, the School Board has adopted the Uniform Discipline Code for the School System.

The School System and school administrations are responsible for implementing the policies. The School Board reviews the School System discipline policies annually and adopts revisions as needed. Before the Board review of policies, the Parishwide Discipline Committee, comprised of educators, school administrators, parents, and students from across the System, evaluate current policies and offer input about possible revisions. The committee makes a recommendation to the School System Superintendent about the policies, and the Superintendent presents recommendations to the Board for its consideration.

Consistent with the laws of the State of Louisiana, the Board has established and adheres to the following goals for a Uniform Discipline Code.

- ◆ Develop in concert with administrators, teachers, students, and citizens a systemwide Uniform Discipline Code.
- ◆ Codify the penalties that are applicable systemwide, yet retain administrative flexibility in application.
- ◆ Permit individual schools to adopt additional regulations governing actions not covered by the code of conduct.
- ◆ Disseminate copies of the Uniform Discipline Code to each principal, faculty member, and student so that they may become familiar with its contents.
- ◆ Analyze and review the Uniform Discipline Code on an annual basis.

## **SYSTEMWIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT**

The School System has a District Discipline Plan that was adopted using a model master plan from the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and was designed to promote an effective learning environment in our schools. As part of this parish plan, each school has a discipline plan that includes the expectations of a program known as Positive Behavior Support (PBS). A PBS Team at each school analyzes relevant data to develop effective interventions to help ensure good conduct at school. The overall, systemic goal of PBS is to provide a positive climate within each school and ultimately lower the number of behavior concerns. Improving student conduct means higher student achievement, higher school performance scores, and greater overall success of the students in St. Tammany Parish. PBS includes, but is not limited to:

- ◆ a school disciplinary leadership team;
- ◆ identification of behavior issues in each school improvement plan;
- ◆ BESE-approved behavior forms;
- ◆ a school discipline flow chart;
- ◆ use of monitoring data to evaluate and modify the school master plan;
- ◆ behavioral expectations at the school;
- ◆ a reward/incentive program for positive behavior;
- ◆ defined, consistent consequences for rule violations;
- ◆ district-established discipline policies;
- ◆ appropriate Safe and Drug-free School activities; and
- ◆ a crisis management plan.

## **EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Role of the School**

The St. Tammany Parish School Board and its employees in the St. Tammany Parish Public School System are charged with providing high-quality educational opportunities for the students of this parish. The System daily works to address the varied educational needs of students and to provide a safe, productive school environment for learning. Educators and System administrators know that these goals are best accomplished with the cooperation and support of students and their families.

Maintaining open, constructive communication between school and home in a climate of mutual respect is vital to meeting the needs of the students in this School System. School officials will work closely with students and their families to promote student success.

### **Role of the Student**

Students learn best when they set high goals for themselves, work hard to achieve those goals, and conduct themselves responsibly in their school work and actions. Students need to adopt these practices to help ensure their success.

- ◆ Attend all classes daily.

- ◆ Be punctual.
- ◆ Be prepared for class with appropriate working materials and completed homework.
- ◆ Be respectful to all individuals and property.
- ◆ Be clean and neat.
- ◆ Be responsible for their own work.
- ◆ Abide by the rules and regulations of the school and School System.
- ◆ Maintain a positive attitude.
- ◆ Conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner.

### **Role of the Home**

Most agree that "the children's first and best teachers are their parents." The School System recognizes that student achievement is impacted greatly by the level of parent participation in a student's education. The value of a strong partnership between school and home is immeasurable, but sure, and parents or guardians are asked to adopt these basic practices to help school personnel work with students.

- ◆ Maintain regular communications with school teachers and school officials concerning their children's progress and conduct.
- ◆ Ensure their children are in school, on time, every day. Promptly report and explain to school officials any absence or tardiness. Assist and require children to be neat and clean.
- ◆ Notify school officials of any problem or condition that affects their children or others at school.
- ◆ Discuss report cards and school assignments with children.
- ◆ Assist children in assuming responsibilities at school.
- ◆ Maintain for school officials up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers and all other emergency and health information throughout the school year.
- ◆ Send children to school ready to learn.

## **OPERATION/ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOLS**

In addition to policies governing student conduct, this *Handbook* includes information about frequently asked questions concerning the operation of schools. A complete list of School Board policies is available on the System Web site at [www.stpsb.org](http://www.stpsb.org).

### **School-Home Communication**

On-going, open communication among students, parents, and school officials is highly encouraged. Parents and guardians are urged to become actively involved in their children's education. Being available to their children to help ensure good school attendance, good work habits and conduct, and preparation for classes is an important way that parents can partner with schools.

Also, schools have a variety of opportunities for volunteers to make major contributions to schools. Participating in school events and activities brings families closer to their children's schools and helps ensure they are better informed about the schools. At the System level, parental input into such issues and policies as textbooks; discipline, promotion and grading policies; strategic planning; *etc.*, is sought and utilized.

From time-to-time, students and parents may have questions or concerns about some aspect of school. Likewise, teachers and principals may have the need to discuss particular matters in conference with parents and students. Parents are urged to contact their children's teachers with any questions or concerns about their children and to respond to school requests for parent conferences.

If working directly with the teacher does not address concerns satisfactorily, parents are encouraged to contact school principals. School officials are very willing to work with parents to

help ensure that the best interests of the children are served. Although most issues routinely are satisfied at the school level, the Central Office administration is available to discuss matters with parents if necessary.

### **System Contact Information for Parents**

Parent complaints should first be addressed to the school principal whose contact information is available in the school directory of our System Web site at [www.stpsb.org/schools\\_directory.php](http://www.stpsb.org/schools_directory.php). The designated supervisor who can assist parents with the complaint process is William Brady, who is located at the C. J. Schoen Administrative Complex, 321 N. Theard Street, Covington, LA 70433 and can be reached by telephone at (985)892-2276 or by email at [william.brady@stpsb.org](mailto:william.brady@stpsb.org).

### **Student Records**

The maintenance of student records requires special care to ensure the privacy rights of students and compliance with legal requirements governing these records.

**Definitions.** The following terms and definitions apply when discussing student records.

- ◆ "Eligible student" means a student who is 18 years of age.
- ◆ "Education records" means records that are directly related to a student that are maintained by the St. Tammany Parish School Board or by a third party acting for the Board.
- ◆ "Parent" means a student's natural parent, guardian, or individual acting as parent in the absence of a parent or a guardian.

**Rights under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).** According to the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) parents and eligible students have the right to:

- ◆ inspect and review the student's education records;
- ◆ seek amendment of the student's education records that are believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights;
- ◆ consent to the disclosures of personally identifiable information, except to the extent that FERPA and the School Board authorize disclosure without consent; and
- ◆ file with the United States Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by the St. Tammany Parish School Board to comply with FERPA.

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U. S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

**Procedure for Inspection of Records.** To inspect student records, requests must be made in writing to the St. Tammany Parish School Board. Requests should be addressed to Custodian of Student Records; St. Tammany Parish School Board; Post Office Box 940; 212 West 17th Avenue; Covington, Louisiana 70434-0940.

**Amendments to Records.** If, upon inspection of a student's records, a parent or eligible student believes that the education records contain information that is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's rights of privacy, an amendment to the record may be requested by submitting the requested amendment in writing to the School Board Office at the address in the preceding section. Any disagreement or amendment will be resolved informally, if possible, through the Superintendent or her designee. Only the Superintendent or her designee may

authorize an amendment to the education records of a student.

If an amendment is not granted, the parent(s) or eligible student may within 30 days of mailing of notification from the Board, request a hearing. The request must be in writing to the Superintendent, mailed to the School Board Office at the address above. The request must be received by the St. Tammany Parish School Board within 30 days in order to be considered. The 30-day period commences on the day after the date of the notice denying the initial request for amendment.

**Disclosures without Consent.** The Board discloses information from a student's education records without consent when the disclosure meets any of the conditions set forth in FERPA, and in State law.

A school official having access to student records is:

- ◆ a person employed by the Board in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position, including health or medical staff;
- ◆ a person elected to the Board; and/or
- ◆ a person employed by or under contract with the Board to perform a special task for the Board.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest to access student records if the official is:

- ◆ performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or contract agreement;
- ◆ performing a task related to a student's education;
- ◆ providing a service or benefit related to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement, or financial aid;
- ◆ maintaining the safety and security of Board property and school grounds; and/or
- ◆ performing other duties of legitimate educational interest as determined by the Superintendent or her designee on a case-by-case basis.

Disclosures to officials of another school, school system, or institution of post-secondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll will be made without any notification to the parent or eligible student. The transfer of student records will include information on the date of any expulsion and reason(s) for which the student was expelled. Any student who has been expelled from any public or private school must provide to School System officials information on the date of expulsion and the reason(s) for which the student was expelled.

The Board and its employees may disclose education records or information from education records to State and local law enforcement officials and other officials within the juvenile justice system in accordance with law without the consent of a parent or guardian of the student who is the subject of the records.

### **Other Federal Statutes Affecting Educational Records.**

Various other Federal laws have been enacted since the tragedy of September 11, 2001, such as the USA Patriot Act, which revised portions of FERPA. Two additional Federal Acts are the No Child Left Behind Act and the Protection of Pupil Rights Act. The School System complies with all State and Federal privacy and educational records laws. Copies of these Federal statutes, their implementation regulations, and other information concerning parent and student rights under these laws can be obtained from the School Board by written request to:

Supervisor of Administration  
Federal Rights Section  
P. O. Box 940  
Covington, LA 70434

The Protection of Pupil Rights Act (PPRA) 20 USC 1232h, 34 CFR Part 98 provides for the control and limitation of surveys involving pupils to include the provision that parents/guardians may opt out of such surveys.

**Disclosure of Directory Information.** Information designated as "directory information" may be disclosed without consent. The following information is designated as directory information:

- ◆ student's name, address, telephone listing;
- ◆ parents' names and address;
- ◆ student's date and place of birth;
- ◆ student's school and grade level;
- ◆ student's picture and electronic mail address;
- ◆ student's major field of study;
- ◆ participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- ◆ weight and height of members of athletic teams;
- ◆ dates of attendance;
- ◆ degrees and awards received; and
- ◆ previous educational agency or institution attended by the student.

Parents and eligible students have three options for preventing or limiting disclosure of directory information. The first choice is not to release directory information to outside groups or individuals who do not have a direct relation to the school. Examples of these types of requests for student information include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ◆ clothing retailers (such as, evening gowns and tuxedos for proms);
- ◆ dance schools;
- ◆ driving schools;
- ◆ higher education institutions;
- ◆ marketing companies;
- ◆ military;
- ◆ nonprofit organizations (such as, Boys and Girls Scouts, local churches, private athletic programs);
- ◆ Project Graduation;
- ◆ parent organizations (such as PTA, booster clubs, *etc.*);
- ◆ scholarship programs; and
- ◆ summer camps.

The second choice is not to release directory information to outside groups or individuals for requests related to school-sponsored functions. Examples of these types of requests include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ◆ photographers (such as, yearbook, school, and ID photographs); and
- ◆ printing services (programs for graduation, award ceremonies, athletic events, playbills for drama productions).

The third choice is not to release directory information for any of the types of requests listed in choices one or two.

If a parent or eligible student wishes to have the student's directory information excluded from directory data, except as provided by law, he or she must contact the school office and complete a "Disclosure of Directory Information" form. The parent or eligible student must complete and submit this form to the school principal each academic year within the first two (2) weeks after the school session begins in the fall in order to prevent disclosure of directory information pertaining to that student. If a student enrolls during an academic year, the parent or eligible student may prevent the disclosure of directory information pertaining to that student by completing and submitting the form to the school principal within two (2) weeks of enrollment.

The full text of FERPA can be found at 20 U.S.C.1232g. The implementing regulations concerning FERPA can be found at 34C.F.R.99.1 through 99.67.

### **Public Information/Communications Releases**

In order to help keep the public informed about schools and to recognize students and staff for their accomplishments, students are sometimes included in school and/or System information that is distributed to the public. From time to time, newspaper, broadcasting, and System staff interview, videotape, voice record, and/or photograph students for these purposes. The

System Web site and educational television station are used widely to highlight student achievements and activities. To ensure that parents and guardians agree to their children's participation, parents are asked to sign and return to schools a Public Information/ Communications Release form to permit such participation. This permission is sought as an additional measure even if parents have chosen not to limit the release of student directory information (See Disclosure of Directory Information.).

### **Emergency School Closings**

Occasionally, an unforeseeable event or emergency may require the Superintendent to close a school or schools for a short period of time. Notification of emergency closings is given as soon as possible to enable parents and guardians to make arrangements for students to be cared for during the closings. Many considerations are evaluated in making the decision to close schools, the most important being the safety of students, staff, parents, and others in the community.

In cases of inclement weather, the System administration maintains close contact with the U. S. Weather Service, parish government, local law enforcement officials, and emergency preparedness officials to help make decisions about early release of students from school or school closings. Officials make every effort to make the safest possible arrangements for students and may delay the release of students to school buses during exceptionally hazardous driving conditions. In these cases, students may arrive at their bus drop-off sites later than usual.

In some cases, school officials are able to notify parents directly about early release or closings. Most often, circumstances do not permit individual calls to parents. Closing information is released to all local media and the School System educational television channel (cable Channel 13) and is posted on the System Web site at [www.stpsb.org](http://www.stpsb.org). Students, parents, and guardians are asked to listen to local radio and television broadcasts and educational cable Channel 13 and consult the System Web site for information about closings and re-openings. Taped telephone messages at the school and School Board Office (985-892-2276 or 985-646-4900) are recorded when possible.

**Parents and guardians are urged to maintain current parent and emergency contact numbers at schools throughout the year so they can be reached if necessary.**

### **School Bus Transportation**

Students living one or more miles from the schools in their attendance boundary areas are eligible to ride School System provided school buses to schools in their attendance areas. Bus routes and times for pick-up and delivery of students are determined by the System Transportation Departments. Routes and times are established before the start of school in the fall. Adjustments sometimes are required after the school year begins, and those changes are made as quickly as possible, usually within the first weeks of the school year.

Bus transportation is provided for the academic school day. Parents and students provide transportation for extracurricular activities outside the academic school day. Field trips during the academic day are arranged by school personnel.

School officials and the Transportation Departments have listings of bus drivers and their routes. Parents and guardians may contact either to get a telephone number for their children's bus drivers. Bus drivers can give parents specific information about bus stop sites and times for pick-up and delivery.

If, as infrequently happens, a school bus is involved in an accident or breakdown, arrangements are made to transport students either by transferring students to another bus or by calling parents to pick up their children at a designated site. To be abundantly cautious, emergency medical arrangements may be utilized. Up-to-date parent contact numbers and emergency contact numbers are important to help school personnel contact parents if needed.

School buses and drivers operate under all Federal and State laws governing the transportation of school children. Drivers are licensed and take part in required safety programs. Buses are inspected regularly for safe operation.

### **Compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

The St. Tammany Parish Public School System follows Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This section of the Act provides that "no otherwise qualified individual with handicaps ... shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity...." Parents suspecting that their children may have disabling conditions, should contact school principals or the St. Tammany Parish Public School System at (985)892-2276 or (985)646-4900. Parents have the right to an appropriate evaluation and are assured procedural safeguards.

## **MAINTAINING A SAFE, EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

The policies and procedures outlined in this *Handbook* are intended to help provide a learning environment for students that is safe, free of disruption, and positive.

### **Visitor Authorization**

School personnel within the School System strive to make schools inviting, welcoming places for parents and others visiting schools. At the same time, the staffs of all schools recognize their important responsibility to help safeguard those at school. Visitors are welcome during appropriate times of day and with permission to be on the school campus.

To help ensure the safety of students and school staff while on school campuses, the System and State of Louisiana have established policies and laws regarding visitors coming onto school campuses. These policies and laws are designed to help school personnel identify those people from outside the school who are on school grounds or inside the school and determine their reasons for being at school. Each school within the School System has written regulations and procedures for permitting specific visitation to approved areas on school grounds or in any school building or other facility during school hours.

Visitor regulations and procedures include, but are not limited to, the following.

- ◆ No person may go on school grounds or in any school building or other facility without permission from the appropriate school official. Visitation may be confined to approved areas.
- ◆ All persons must report to the administrator's office immediately upon arrival at school.
- ◆ All persons must sign in and out as required by the school administrator.
- ◆ All persons must receive an "Official Visitor Identification" as required by the school administrator.
- ◆ All persons must leave the school building, facilities, and grounds upon completion of business.

### **Medication Policy**

Illness and administration of medication among students is taken very seriously. Students who are sick cannot learn well. Proper medical attention and convalescence are important to the long-term health of students, the health of others at school, and student performance. When students must take medication at school, school personnel are very careful to ensure that students are properly treated with medication and that medication is not given to or used by students for whom the medication was not prescribed.

Parents are encouraged to work with physicians to schedule doses of medication that can be given at home for acute illnesses. Long-term illness and use of medication may require administration during school hours. In accordance with State law enacted to address the administration of **all prescription and non-prescription drugs** in schools, the St. Tammany Parish School Board has formulated the following regulations to be followed when a child must receive medication during school hours.

- ◆ **No medication** may be administered to, or self-administered by, any student without an order from a Louisiana or adjacent state's licensed physician or dentist and authorization from the student's parent or guardian.
- ◆ Only oral, pre-measured aerosols for inhalation, topical ointment for diaper rash, and emergency medications may be administered at school by unlicensed, trained personnel who are under the supervision of the certified school nurse.
- ◆ No medication may be administered to, or self-administered by, any student unless the medication is provided to the school in a container that meets acceptable pharmacy standards.
- ◆ Only medications that cannot be administered before or after school hours may be administered at school.
- ◆ The parent or his/her designated adult is held responsible for delivering medication to the school and to the school employee designated to receive it. The parent or designated adult also is responsible for retrieving unused medication from the school.
- ◆ All medication not retrieved by a parent or designated adult will be destroyed one week after the expiration date or at the end of the school year, following notification of the parent.
- ◆ Students may be allowed to self-administer medication such as an asthma inhaler, following a specific order from their personal physicians and written authorization from parents/guardians. Self-administration of medication will be allowed if the certified school nurse verifies the student uses proper procedure and technique.
- ◆ Over-the-counter medications (non-prescription medications) are handled in the same manner as prescription medications. An order from a physician and authorization from the parent/guardian are required. The medication must be brought to school in a container that meets acceptable pharmacy standards.
- ◆ The initial dose of medication must be administered at home and sufficient time must be allowed for observation of adverse reactions before asking school personnel to administer the medication.
- ◆ Students who violate the medication policy and are found to be in possession of prescription drugs or a controlled substance not authorized under this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action found under the Uniform Discipline Code. Students found to be in possession of nonprescription or over the counter medications may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Uniform Discipline Code**

The Uniform Discipline Code of the St. Tammany Parish Public School System is designed to ensure that each classroom will have a climate of order, discipline, control, and learning — a climate that brings out the best qualities in both the teacher and the students and allows for individual growth and differences. Foremost, the Code is a strategic tool to discourage misconduct and, thereby, increase the educational benefits to which all students have rights.

The Code describes inappropriate student behavior, prescribes equitable disciplinary actions for misconduct, and suggests specific actions for correcting prohibited behaviors.

Administrators are to use reasonable judgment when administering the Code. The Code is based on the premise that rules must be consistently enforced. Further, the rules must be fair and effective and comply with the student's constitutional and other legal rights.

Staff implementing the Code will recognize the differences in age and maturity of students, as well as mitigating circumstances that may impact a situation. As students advance in age and maturity, they are expected to assume greater responsibility for their actions. Age and circumstances may require that different types of disciplinary action be used. Assistance is available for students whose misbehavior is related to the use of alcohol or other drugs.

The disciplinary actions listed in the Code indicate the range of consequences for misconduct. Listed below are student conduct rules that are designed to encourage appropriate student behavior. Please consult the Glossary of this publication for definitions of terms related to disciplinary actions and acts of misconduct.

### Attendance

The State of Louisiana requires that all children from their seventh to their eighteenth birthdays must attend a public school or private day school or must participate in an approved home study program. School attendance is imperative, not only to satisfy requirements of law but to help ensure student achievement and success. Every missed day of school is a missed opportunity to learn.

In addition, regular, punctual school attendance instills good work habits from which students can benefit throughout their lives. In St. Tammany Parish, schools are responsible for enforcing the following requirements.

- ◆ **Students are expected to be in attendance every student activity day scheduled by the St. Tammany Parish School Board.**
- ◆ Schools must administer attendance regulations in accordance with State and locally adopted policies.
- ◆ In order to be eligible to receive credit for courses passed, high school students must be in attendance a minimum of 80 days per semester. Elementary students must be in attendance a minimum of 160 days a school year.
- ◆ Students in grades K-8 who miss more than three (3) hours of instructional time during the school day will be considered absent from school.
- ◆ Days of absence for students will include excused absences, unexcused absences, and suspensions.
- ◆ Students will be excused from school for personal illness, serious illness in the family, death in the family (not to exceed one week), or for recognized religious holidays of the student's own faith. Students will be given the opportunity to make up work following excused absences.
- ◆ Students participating in school-approved activities that require their being away from school will be considered present and will be given the opportunity to make up work.
- ◆ Students will not be excused for any absences other than those listed and will be given failing grades in all subjects for those days missed, with no makeup work allowed.
- ◆ Students will not be excused from school to work on any job, including agriculture and domestic service, even in their own homes or for the parents or guardians.
- ◆ Students missing school as a result of any suspension will be counted as absent and will be given failing grades for those days suspended, with no makeup work allowed. Students completing an alternative assignment may be permitted to make up work missed, under the conditions of the program.
- ◆ The only exception to the attendance regulations will be the extenuating circumstances that are verified by the Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance. The

following are those circumstances:

- extended personal, physical, or emotional illnesses as verified by a physician or dentist;
- extended hospital stay as verified by a physician or dentist;
- extended recuperation from an accident as verified by a physician or dentist;
- extended contagious disease within a family as verified by a physician or dentist;
- prior School System approved travel for education;
- death in the family (not to exceed one week); and
- natural catastrophe and/or disaster.

For any other extenuating circumstance, parents must make a formal appeal in accordance with the due process procedure established by the St. Tammany Parish School Board.

- ◆ Students who are granted allowances for extenuating circumstances and who are, therefore, eligible to receive grades will not receive those grades if they are unable to complete makeup work or pass the course.

**Absences Procedures.** The following procedures apply to student absences.

- ◆ Excuses for absences must be presented in writing to the school principal or designee within two (2) days of the day or days missed. The note must include: (1) student's full name; (2) day(s) the student was absent; (3) reason for the absence(s); (4) parent or guardian's signature; (5) date of signature. Failure to send the note will result in the student not being able to make up work. (Zeros will be given.) Excuses will not be accepted after two (2) days of the student's return to school.
- ◆ Upon returning to school, the student is responsible for working out a schedule with teachers for making up work missed during authorized absence(s).
- ◆ For high school students, notification of excused and unexcused school absences will be sent to parents and the Child Welfare and Attendance Office after five (5) days of absences in a semester. Absences will be noted on a class-by-class basis. For elementary through junior high school students, notification of excused and unexcused school absences will be sent to parents and the Child Welfare and Attendance Office after ten (10) days of absences. To further ensure parents are aware of absences, a second notice letter will be sent for high school students after ten (10) days of absences in a semester. For elementary through junior high school students, a second notice letter will be sent after 18 days of absences.
- ◆ At the end of the semester and at the end of the year, parents must verify a student's absences within a period of ten (10) days following the end of the semester or end of the year and make an appeal to the Child Welfare and Attendance Office.
- ◆ Any student above the compulsory attendance age who has excessive absences that are unexcused may be dropped from the rolls for the remainder of the school term, with his or her principal's recommendation.
- ◆ Any juvenile student who is habitually absent from school or is habitually tardy will be reported as a truant child to the Supervisors of Child Welfare and Attendance, the family, or juvenile court (parish or city), according to the provisions of Louisiana Children's Code regarding families in need of services. A student will be considered

habitually absent or habitually tardy when either condition continues after all reasonable efforts by school officials have failed to correct the condition, after the fifth unexcused absence or fifth unexcused occurrence of tardiness within any month, or when a pattern of five (5) absences a month is established. (Ref.: LA, R.S. 17:233).

**Tardiness.** Students who frequently arrive late for school lose valuable instructional time, learn unproductive work habits for the future, and create needless disruption to the school and classroom setting. Every school has a policy for tardiness that is enforced to help ensure the maximum, high-quality instructional time for all students at the school. Parents are urged to support the academic success of students by requiring and assisting students to be on time for school every day.

### **Dress and Personal Grooming**

Providing an effective learning environment for all students includes expectations that students are well-kempt, dressed and groomed in a manner that permits them to actively participate in school and that does not distract the education process. Student dress and grooming are not to adversely affect the student's participation in classes, school programs, or other school-related activities. Extremes in style and fit in student dress and extremes in style of grooming will not be permitted.

School principals maintain the right to determine extremes in styles of dress and grooming and appropriateness and suitability for school wear. Body-piercing ornaments are limited to the ears, if ear-piercing ornaments are approved at the school level. No student may wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, blade, symbols, sign, or other things that are evidence of affiliation in any gang.

Parents are allowed to vote, according to provisions of the School Board School Uniform Policy, whether or not students in their children's schools wear school uniforms. Information about school uniforms is provided at the school. The provisions of the Student Dress Code apply to uniforms. Information on the School System Uniform Policy is available on the System Web site at [www.stpsb.org](http://www.stpsb.org).

A violation of student dress regulations is a Group 2 offense in the Code of Conduct and results in disciplinary action that includes suspension.

Policies regarding dress and grooming stress the importance of reducing distractions that inhibit learning and are addressed as an attempt to enhance the safe learning environment.

**Student Dress Code for Males.** The following requirements apply to appropriate grooming and dress for male students.

- ◆ An acceptable, well-groomed haircut will be required of all male students. Styles never should be such that they represent a collective or individual protest.
  - Hair - The length of hair may not fall below the base of a collared shirt. Any method used to circumvent this hair length rule is not permitted. Afros or teased styles may not exceed three (3) inches in height. Hair arranged in a manner detrimental to the performance of normal educational activities will be prohibited. Hair also must be clean and not unusually colored. Sculptured hair styles that include pictures, symbols, letters, numbers, *etc.*, will not be permitted.
  - Facial Hair - Male students are prohibited from wearing beards or goatees. Sideburns may be worn to the base of the earlobe, but pork chop style is prohibited. Students may wear a neatly trimmed mustache, but handlebar styles are prohibited.
- ◆ Boys are required to wear clothing that is suitable for school and that complies with the following regulation.

- Shirts must be buttoned, except for the collar button. Tank shirts and undershirts may not be worn as outer garments. Any article of clothing with suggestive symbols, words, or advertisements of products or substances prohibited by the St. Tammany Parish School Board is prohibited.
- No see-through or sheer shirts are permitted, and no skin may show between the pants and shirt in any position.
- All caps, hats, and bandannas are banned from school campuses during regular school hours.
- Walking shorts may be worn as long as they meet the length requirement. While standing erect with arms extended down, the length of shorts must come to the tip of fingers or below.
- Lower garments worn by students must be secured at waist level, with no undergarments revealed.
- Flip-flops or backless thong sandals are not permitted.
- Hoods may not be worn on campus during regular school hours except outdoors in inclement weather.
- ◆ Students in grades 9-12 are required to wear student school I. D.'s visible above the waist during regular school hours. If a required school uniform is worn, the administrator may elect not to require I. D.'s.

**Student Dress Code for Females.** The following requirements apply to appropriate grooming and dress for female students.

- ◆ Girls must wear their hair in a conventional style. Hair in rollers or curlers, excessively teased, or arranged in a manner detrimental to the performance of normal educational activities will be prohibited. Hair also must be clean and not unusually colored. Sculptured hair styles that include pictures, symbols, letters, numbers, *etc.*, will not be permitted.
- ◆ Girls are required to wear clothing that is suitable for school and that complies with the following regulations.
  - No see-through, sheer shirts, or lace-like clothing are permitted, and no skin may show between the lower garment and shirt in any position.
  - Culottes, split skirts, and walking shorts are acceptable providing they meet the dress length requirement stipulated below.
  - All caps, hats, and bandannas are banned from school campuses during regular school hours.
  - Any article of clothing with suggestive symbols, words, or advertisements of products or substances prohibited by the St. Tammany Parish School Board is prohibited.
  - Tank shirts and undershirts may not be worn as outer garments.
  - Lower garments worn by students must be secured at waist level, with no undergarments revealed.
  - Flip-flops or backless thong sandals are not permitted.
  - The minimum length of dresses, culottes, skirts, and shorts must be at the fingertip or below when standing erect with arms extended down the sides or not more than 5" above the knee.
  - Hoods may not be worn on campus during regular school hours except outdoors in inclement weather.
- ◆ Students in grades 9-12 are required to wear student school I. D.'s visible above the waist during regular school hours. If a required school uniform is worn, the administrator may elect not to require I. D.'s.

### **Expectations and Rules of Conduct**

The Uniform Discipline Code requires the following conduct of all students.

- ◆ Comply with all policies of the St. Tammany Parish School Board.
- ◆ Recognize the authority of all teachers and school personnel.
- ◆ Abstain from
  - gambling
  - immorality
  - profanity
  - harassing
  - fighting
  - extortion
  - using or possessing
    - a. tobacco
    - b. narcotics
    - c. intoxicating liquors
  - selling items without administrative permission.
- ◆ Refrain from willfully damaging, defacing, or destroying school property or illegally entering school buildings.
- ◆ Abide by policies set by the school concerning travel to and from school while on school buses and using and operating private vehicles on the school grounds. Automobiles must be vacated immediately upon arrival and may be reentered only at the time of authorized departure.
- ◆ Comply with rules and regulations of the St. Tammany Parish School Board while attending any activities sponsored by the school.
- ◆ Public display of affection in any form, including necking, petting, and body contact, must be avoided on school premises.
- ◆ When speaking to any School System employee while on school property or at a school-sponsored event, address and respond to such employees by using respectful terms such as, "Yes, Ma'am", "No, Ma'am", *etc.* \*

\*As stated in RS 17:416.12, this requirement shall begin with the 1999-2000 school year and thereafter for students in kindergarten through grade five. This requirement is to apply to sixth grade students beginning with the 2000-2001 school year, seventh grade students beginning with the 2001-2002 school year, and so on, ending with twelfth grade students in the 2006-2007 school year.

- ◆ Annually sign a statement of compliance committing to attend school daily, arrive at school on time, demonstrate significant effort toward completing all required home work, and follow school and classroom rules.\*\*

\*\*As required by RS 17:235.2, this shall apply to students in grades four through twelve. Also required by RS 17:235.2, parents or guardians of such students are required to sign statements of compliance, committing to ensure that their children attend school daily, arrive at school on time, complete all required homework, and commit to attend all required parent/teacher/principal conferences.

### Responsibilities for Conduct

The school shares the responsibility with parents to educate, guide, and discipline children at school and school-related activities. Discipline is expected to be handled in a fair, consistent, and impartial manner to help ensure that a proper climate for learning exists. All student disciplinary decisions are confidential and are not shared with other students or parents of other students.

State and Parish laws and guidelines hold the staff of each school responsible for the maintenance of discipline at the school and school functions. All school personnel also are responsible daily to see that the learning environment is free from disruptions that affect the learning process. Ultimately, however, the primary responsibility for student conduct rests with students and their parents or guardians. Cooperation and support among school personnel, students, and parents in helping students conduct themselves with respect and good character are keys to student success and effective schools.

Louisiana Revised Statute 17:416 requires the following

standards for maintaining well-disciplined schools.

- ◆ Every teacher shall endeavor to hold every pupil to a strict accountability for any disorderly conduct in school or on the playgrounds of the school, on the street or road while going to or returning from school, or during intermission or recess.
- ◆ School principals may suspend from school any pupil who:
  - is guilty of willful disobedience;
  - treats, with intentional disrespect, a teacher, principal, superintendent, member or employee of the local school board;
  - makes an unfounded charge against any one of them;
  - uses unchaste or profane language;
  - is guilty of immoral or vicious practices or of conduct or habits injurious to his/her associates;
  - uses tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or any controlled dangerous substance governed by the Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substance Law in any form in school buildings, on school grounds, or on school buses owned by, contracted to, or jointly owned by any city or parish school board;
  - disturbs the school and habitually violates any rule;
  - cuts, defaces, or injures any part of public school buildings, any property belonging to the buildings, or any school buses owned by, contracted to, or jointly owned by any city or parish school board;
  - writes any profane or obscene language or draws obscene pictures in or on any school material or any public school premises, or on any fence, pole, sidewalk, or building on the way to or from school;
  - is found carrying firearms, knives, or other implements which can be used as weapons, the careless use of which might inflict harm or injury;
  - throws missiles on the school grounds liable to injure other pupils;
  - instigates or participates in fights while under school supervision;
  - violates traffic and safety regulations;
  - leaves the school premises without permission;
  - leaves his/her classroom during class hours or detention without permission;
  - is habitually tardy or absent; or
  - commits any other serious offense.

### Classroom Regulations

Teachers use a variety of means to keep students interested and on-task and to maintain order in their classrooms, but if students choose to break classroom or school rules, teachers are expected to address the situations for the good of the classrooms. Each teacher may take disciplinary action to correct a pupil who disrupts normal classroom activities, disrespects a teacher, willfully disobeys a teacher, uses abusive or foul language directed at a teacher or another pupil, violates school rules, or interferes with an orderly educational process.

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to:

- ◆ oral or written reprimand;
- ◆ referral for counseling session;
- ◆ written notification to parents of disruptive or unacceptable behavior;
- ◆ immediate removal of the student from the classroom and placement with the principal or his designee (Note: Upon the third removal from the same classroom, a conference between the teacher or other appropriate school employee and the pupil's parent or legal guardian will be required prior to the pupil being readmitted.); and/or
- ◆ other disciplinary measures approved by the principal and faculty of the school and in compliance with School Board policy.

## Teacher Bill of Rights

Respecting the authority of teachers is essential to creating an environment conducive to learning, effective instruction, and proper administration of schools. To maintain and protect that authority, teachers have the following rights under state law.

1. A teacher has the right to teach free from the fear of frivolous lawsuits, including the right to certain immunity and to a legal defense.
2. A teacher has the right to appropriately discipline students.
3. A teacher has the right to remove any persistently disruptive student from his classroom when the student's behavior prevents the orderly instruction of other students or when the student displays impudent or defiant behavior and to place the student in custody of the principal or his designee.
4. A teacher has the right to have his or her professional judgment and discretion respected by school and district administrators in any disciplinary action taken by the teacher.
5. A teacher has the right to teach in a safe, secure, and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and free from recognized dangers or hazards that are causing or likely causing serious injury.
6. A teacher has the right to be treated with civility and respect.
7. A teacher has the right to communicate with and to request the participation of parents in appropriate student disciplinary decisions.
8. A teacher has the right to be free from excessively burdensome disciplinary paperwork.
9. A beginning teacher has the right to receive leadership and support, including the assignment of a qualified, experienced mentor who commits to helping him become a competent, confident professional in the classroom and offers support and assistance as needed to meet performance standards and professional expectations.

## Consequences of Student Misconduct

This section of the *Handbook* describes a broad range of acts of misconduct that are prohibited in school. The following charts do not include all types of misconduct, and students who commit acts of misconduct not listed on the charts will be subject to the discretionary authority of the classroom teacher and the principal or his/her designee. The seriousness of the offense, academic placement, attitude, age, pattern of misconduct, and degree of cooperation of the student, and any other aggravating or mitigating circumstances will be considered in determining which actions should be taken. The process is intended to be instructional and corrective, not punitive.

The policies and administrative procedures apply to actions of students during school hours, before and after school, while on school property, while traveling in vehicles operated on behalf of the School Board, at all school-sponsored events and otherwise when the actions affect the goals or operations of the St. Tammany Parish Public School System. The principal is expected to report serious, disruptive, or criminal actions to law enforcement officials.

Disciplinary actions for misconduct may include a conference between the teacher or principal and the student followed by notification of the parent(s) or guardian(s). Any student, parent(s), or guardian(s) who believes that the disciplinary action taken is unwarranted has the right to appeal to the principal. When parents or guardians refuse to participate in conferences, principals or their designees may impose the maximum disciplinary action within the appropriate discipline group.

Incorrigible children who, through no fault of their parents,

guardians, or other persons having charge of them, regularly disrupt the orderly processes of the school will be considered as delinquents and may be reported by a Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance to the juvenile court of the Parish to be dealt with in the manner prescribed by law. Unless otherwise provided by R.S. 17:416, any student who exhibits disruptive behavior, an incorrigible attitude, or any other discipline problems in general may be recommended by the principal for expulsion, assignment to an appropriate alternative educational program, or transfer to adult education if such student is:

- 17 years of age or older with less than 5 units of credit toward graduation;
- 18 years of age or older with less than 10 units of credit toward graduation; or
- 19 years of age or older with less than 15 units of credit toward graduation.

## Acts of Misconduct/Possible Disciplinary Actions

The Uniform Discipline Code established for all students in the St. Tammany Parish Public School System is expected to be followed and enforced in the same spirit and manner throughout the School System. Staff members will ensure due process for each student and will consider all mitigating circumstances prior to disciplinary action as possible. Mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to, the following factors:

- age, maturity, and class placement of student
- prior conduct
- attitude of student
- support of parents
- willingness to make restitution
- seriousness of offense(s)
- willingness to enroll in a student intervention program

Possible disciplinary actions are not listed in priority order under each group of **Acts of Misconduct**. (See NOTES after GROUP 5 Possible Disciplinary Actions.)

### GROUP 1

These acts of misconduct include inappropriate student behaviors such as the following:

#### Acts of Misconduct

- 1-1 Cheating and/or copying work of another student<sup>5</sup>
- 1-2 Displaying any behavior that is disruptive
- 1-3 Littering
- 1-4 Loitering
- 1-5 Persistent tardiness to school or class
- 1-6 Running and/or making excessive noise in the hall or building

#### Possible Disciplinary Actions

- Teacher-Student-Parent-Administrator Conference
- Detention
- Exclusion
- In-School Suspension
- Suspension (1-3 days)

### GROUP 2

These acts of misconduct include those student behaviors that disrupt the orderly educational process such as the following:

#### Acts of Misconduct

- 2-1 Defying (disobeying) the authority of school personnel
- 2-2 Disruptive behavior on the school bus<sup>6</sup>
- 2-3 Exhibiting any hostile or unacceptable physical actions<sup>9</sup>
- 2-4 Failing to abide by school rules and regulations
- 2-5 Failing to attend class without a valid excuse
- 2-6 Failure to provide proper identification
- 2-7 Initiating any unacceptable physical contact
- 2-8 Leaving a classroom without permission
- 2-9 Leaving the school grounds without permission
- 2-10 Lying to school personnel
- 2-11 Misconduct at school-sponsored events
- 2-12 Possession of laser lights/pointers

- 2-13 Possession of pagers, cell phones, CD players, radios, and other disruptive electronic devices
- 2-14 Possession or use of tobacco products or paraphernalia
- 2-15 Posting or distributing unauthorized or other written materials on school grounds
- 2-16 Using or writing profane, obscene, indecent, immoral, libelous, or offensive language, including racial slurs, and/or gestures
- 2-17 Violation of the Dress Code<sup>4</sup>

#### Possible Disciplinary Actions

- Teacher-Student-Parent-Administrator Conference
- In-School Suspension
- Detention
- Exclusion
- Suspension (1-3 days)
- Disciplinary Reassignment

#### GROUP 3

These acts of misconduct include those student behaviors that seriously disrupt the orderly educational process such as the following:

#### Acts of Misconduct

- 3-1 Any behavior, on or off campus, that is seriously disruptive, including the use/creation of electronic media
- 3-2 Bullying
- 3-3 Fighting - two (2) people<sup>9</sup>
- 3-4 Gambling
- 3-5 Habitual violation of rules
- 3-6 Unauthorized use of a computer or Web site
- 3-7 Using profane, obscene, indecent, or immoral or seriously offensive language, including racial slurs, and/or making profane, obscene, indecent or immoral gestures, propositions, or exhibitions
- 3-8 Violating safety or traffic regulations
- 3-9 Violations of the school technology agreement, *etc.*

#### Possible Disciplinary Actions

- Teacher-Student-Parent- Administrator Conference
- In-School Suspension
- Detention
- Suspension (1-5 days)
- Disciplinary Reassignment
- Expulsion

#### GROUP 4

These acts of misconduct include those student behaviors that very seriously disrupt the orderly educational process. In most cases, these behaviors also are illegal, such as the following:

#### Acts of Misconduct

- 4-1 Assault<sup>8</sup>
- 4-2 Extortion
- 4-3 Fighting - more than two (2) people<sup>9</sup>
- 4-4 Inciting or participation in a riot
- 4-5 Intentional disrespect
- 4-6 Persisting in serious acts of disobedience or misconduct
- 4-7 Possession, use, or delivery of fireworks
- 4-8 Sexual harassment<sup>7</sup>
- 4-9 Theft or possession of stolen property<sup>2</sup>
- 4-10 Threatening faculty member or school personnel and students<sup>8</sup>
- 4-11 Use of intimidation, coercion, or force
- 4-12 Vandalism/criminal damage to property<sup>2</sup>

#### Possible Disciplinary Actions

- Teacher-Student-Parent-Administrator Conference and/or
- Suspension (3-10 days)
- Disciplinary Reassignment
- Police Notification
- Expulsion

#### GROUP 5

These acts of misconduct include those illegal or criminal student behaviors that most seriously disrupt the orderly educational process such as the following:

#### Acts of Misconduct

- 5-1 Aggravated assault<sup>8</sup>
- 5-2 Aggravated battery<sup>9</sup>
- 5-3 Arson
- 5-4 Battery<sup>9</sup>
- 5-5 Bomb threat<sup>10</sup>
- 5-6 Burglary<sup>2</sup>
- 5-7 Delivery or distribution of any controlled dangerous substance<sup>1</sup>
- 5-8 Disorderly conduct
- 5-9 Engaging in any other illegal behavior
- 5-10 False activation of fire alarm
- 5-11 Possession or under the influence of alcohol, look-a-like substance, or mood-altering chemical or drug<sup>1</sup>
- 5-12 Possession or under the influence of any controlled dangerous substance<sup>1</sup>
- 5-13 Robbery<sup>2</sup>
- 5-14 Sex violations
- 5-15 Trespassing
- 5-16 Use, possession, and/or concealing of a weapon or look-alike firearm<sup>3</sup>
- 5-17 Wearing or possessing body armor on school property
- 5-18 Vandalism/criminal damage of personal property of school personnel or school property<sup>2</sup>

#### Possible Disciplinary Actions

- Suspension (5-10 days)
- Disciplinary Reassignment
- Police Notification
- Expulsion

#### NOTES

1. Refer to section on School Drug Detection and Control Program.
2. Restitution for stolen or damaged property must be made before return to school.
3. Students found using, possessing and/or concealing a knife, a firearm, a weapon that may discharge a projectile, or other dangerous instruments that may cause bodily harm will be suspended immediately and recommended for expulsion. Police notification will be made immediately. Students using, possessing, and/or concealing any look-alike object that may have the appearance of a weapon or dangerous instrument will be suspended immediately from school and recommended for expulsion. In the case of a student in preschool through grade 3 who is found carrying or possessing a knife, the principal may, but will not be required to, recommend the student's expulsion. Upon the recommendation for expulsion, a hearing will be conducted by the Superintendent or her designee. Upon the conclusion of the hearing, the Superintendent or her designee will determine whether the student will be expelled from the School System or whether other corrective or disciplinary action will be taken. Students in grades six or higher who are found guilty of using, possessing, and/or concealing a firearm or other weapon that may discharge a projectile, when on school property, on a school bus, or in their actual possession at a school-sponsored event, following a hearing, will be expelled for a minimum of four complete semesters. The student also will be referred to the District Attorney for appropriate action. Students in kindergarten through grade 5 found guilty of being in possession of a firearm on school property, on a school bus, or in their actual possession at a school-sponsored event, following a hearing, will be expelled for a minimum of two complete semesters. The student also will be referred to the District Attorney for appropriate action. No student who has been expelled for possession of a weapon will be readmitted

to any school until the student has enrolled and participated in an appropriate rehabilitation or counseling program related to the reason, or reasons, for the student's expulsion.

This policy does not apply to a student carrying or possessing a firearm or knife for purposes of involvement in a school-approved curricular or extracurricular activity.

4. On the first offense, students will be informed of the specific violation and given a period of time to comply with the Dress Code. During this time, parental contact will be made, and the student will be allowed to remain in school unless the violation is disruptive. A student who does not comply with the Code as directed will be suspended until compliance is reached. Subsequent violations will result in more serious consequences.
5. Students will receive a grade of zero (0) for assignments.
6. Suspension of bus privileges may be a form of disciplinary action.
7. Refer to School Board Policy on Sexual Harassment.
8. Acts of assault and aggravated assault, including verbal threats, are considered serious, violent acts that are not tolerated. Following a thorough investigation of allegations, the offender may be required to participate in a threat assessment program prior to reentering a school program. Serious disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, also may be taken. A student could face disciplinary action for failing to report to a teacher or administrator knowledge of plans or actions of another person when those plans or actions, if carried out, could result in harm to another.
9. Battery or physically aggressive behavior are considered serious, violent acts that are not tolerated. Following an investigation of an incident, the offender may be required to enroll and participate in, or agree to participate in, an anger management or conflict resolution counseling program.
10. Refer to Bomb Threat Section Below
11. False activation of a fire alarm is considered serious, dangerous, and extremely disruptive; is not tolerated; and violates the law. Serious disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and expulsion from school, may be taken, and the appropriate law enforcement authorities will be involved, and the Board will support prosecution of violators to the fullest extent of the law.

### **Bomb Threat**

Communication of false information of a planned bombing on school property, at a school-sponsored function, or in a firearm-free zone are considered serious, violent, and extremely disruptive acts that are not tolerated and violate the law. Serious disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and expulsion from school, may be taken, and the appropriate law enforcement authorities will be involved. The Board will support prosecution of violators to the fullest extent of the law. As stated in Louisiana Revised Statute 14:54.6, the communicating of false information of a bombing threat on school property, at a school-sponsored function, or in a firearm-free zone, whether or not such threat involves fake explosive devices is the intentional impartation of conveyance, or causing the impartation or conveyance by the use of the mail, telephone, telegraph, word of mouth, or other means of communication, of any such threat or false information knowing the same to be false. Whoever commits the crime of communicating false information of a planned bombing on school property, at a school-sponsored function, or in a firearm-free zone, shall be imprisoned with or without hard labor for not more than twenty years. Upon commitment to the Department of Public Safety and Corrections after conviction of a crime committed on school property, at a school-sponsored function, or in a firearm-free zone, the department shall have the offender evaluated through appropriate examinations or tests conducted under the supervision of the department. Such evaluation shall be made within thirty days of the order of commitment. "At a school-sponsored function" means the specific designated area of the function, including, but not limited to, athletic competitions, dances, parties, or any extracurricular activity.

### **Possession and Use of Electronic Communication (Wireless Devices)**

The St. Tammany Parish School Board desires to promote an environment that is conducive to instruction and learning. Wireless devices used by students to communicate with others inhibit the creation of such an environment and is disruptive to the learning process. The Board also desires to protect students' personal privacy, while on school property and at school events. The emergence of camera wireless device technology has created a new set of privacy and data protection challenges for school officials. Thus, the use of any type of photographic equipment to tape images or sound recordings that are in violation of law or otherwise invade the privacy of other individuals is prohibited and will result in discipline according to policy. Any exception to the prohibition of wireless devices requires the advance permission of the school principal. This prohibition shall be strictly construed in favor of protecting the privacy of all individuals.

Under this policy, the term "wireless devices" includes, but is not limited to, cellular phones (whether analog or digital), camera phones, beepers, pagers, text messaging devices and PDA's that are used as telecommunication devices or to transmit text messages, as well as any other wireless electronic telecommunication devices.

Louisiana Law Revised Statute 17:239 prohibits any student, unless authorized by the school principal or his/her designee, from using or operating any electronic telecommunication device, including any facsimile system, radio paging service, mobile telephone service, intercom, or electro-mechanical paging system, in any public school building or school grounds or in any school bus. The St. Tammany Parish School Board's practice will comply with the above Revised Statute. Any student in possession of a "wireless device" while on school property on a normal school day and on the school bus will have that device confiscated by the principal/designee and have disciplinary consequences. Wireless devices will only be returned to the parent/guardian. The Board reserves the right to examine the contents of any wireless device found.

Progressive consequences will be followed as outlined below:

- Possession
  - Warning
  - Administrative Detention
  - Saturday Detention and/or In School Suspension
- Use or Related Disruption
  - Administrative Detention and/or Saturday Detention/In School Suspension
  - Saturday Detention/In School Suspension and/or Suspension

\*Habitual offenses may cause more severe disciplinary action.

### **Off-Campus Activities**

All rules and regulations in this *Handbook* apply to field trips and all other school-sponsored functions. Also, school officials may hold students accountable for their behavior off the school campus if that behavior has an adverse effect on the learning environment of the school. In keeping with State of Louisiana laws, the St. Tammany Parish School System takes a strong stand against behavior that may adversely affect the learning environment of schools. In no way, however, does this disciplinary position imply that the St. Tammany Parish School System takes the responsibility for supervising and taking disciplinary action for all off-campus behavior.

### **Conduct On the School Bus**

In order to establish and maintain a safe atmosphere for all persons on the bus, as well as those on the roads of our Parish, students are expected to adhere to these requirements of conduct on buses.

- ◆ Be completely seated facing the front of the bus.
- ◆ Keep their hands and feet to themselves.
- ◆ Talk in a low (normal) tone of voice.

The bus driver, together with the principal, assumes full responsibility for discipline of students riding buses. Any disciplinary problems will be reported by the driver to the principal of the school. The principal is responsible for determining necessary disciplinary action. If actions are sufficiently serious, the principal may suspend bus privileges to the student. Any parent of a student suspended from riding a school bus has the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The Superintendent or her designee will conduct a hearing on the merits of the bus suspension.

A student damaging a school bus will be subject to suspension from school. Any student suspended for damage to a school bus will not be readmitted to school or allowed to ride any school bus until payment in full has been made for such damage or until readmittance is directed by the Superintendent or her designee.

If the conduct of a student becomes such that removal from the bus becomes essential, the driver will discharge the student at the student's regular stop. A student riding a school bus will never be unloaded for disciplinary purposes anywhere except at his/her designated stop, unless he/she is endangering the lives of others on the bus. Under normal circumstances, students must have written parental permission, authorized by the principal, to get off at a bus stop other than the student's assigned stop.

### **Sexual Harassment**

The St. Tammany Parish School Board is committed to providing a safe and stable climate free from sexual harassment by students, Board Members, Superintendent, administrators, teachers, and other employees who contract with or provide services for the Board or any other personnel associated with the Board and over whom the Board can exercise influence.

Sexual harassment is a violation of the law and School Board policy and will not be tolerated, condoned, or overlooked. The Board requests and encourages persons associated with the School System who believe that they have been sexually harassed as a result of their association with the School System to report such harassment to specified Sexual Harassment Investigating Officers or school principals.

The Board through its designee(s) will promptly, thoroughly, and fairly investigate reports of sexual harassment and take appropriate action that is consistent with the results of the investigation and the legal requirements afforded by law.

The School System and Board will not tolerate retaliation by anyone associated with the School System against one who files a complaint of sexual harassment. Inappropriate behavior by students will be handled according to their school's discipline procedures.

Some acts of sexual misconduct are considered criminal and are subject to prosecution. The Board and School System will fully cooperate with law enforcement agencies and the District Attorney in investigating and prosecuting such criminal offenses.

Reporting of incidents involving student-to-student harassment should be made to the principal at the child's school. If an employee is involved as an alleged harasser, the report should be made to a Central Office Sexual Harassment Investigating Officer.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is a form of aggression, and it occurs when a person(s) willfully subjects another person (victim), to an intentional, unwanted and unprovoked, hurtful verbal and/or physical action(s) at any school site or school-sponsored activity or event. Bullying may also occur as various forms of hazing, including initiation rites perpetrated against a student or a member of a team. Examples of types of bullying may include, but are not limited to, the following examples.

- ◆ Physical bullying includes, but is not limited to, punching, shoving, poking, strangling, hair pulling, beating, teasing, kicking, punching, or excessive tickling.
- ◆ Verbal bullying includes, but is not limited to, such acts as malicious name calling, teasing, or gossip.
- ◆ Emotional (psychological) bullying includes, but is not limited to, rejecting, wronging, extorting, defaming, humiliating, black-mailing, diminishing personal characteristics (such as race, disability, ethnicity or perceived sexual orientation), manipulating friendships, isolating, or ostracizing.
- ◆ Sexual bullying includes, but is not limited to, many of the actions preceding as well as exhibitionism, voyeurism, sexual propositioning, abuse involving actual physical contact, or sexual assault.
- ◆ Cyberbullying includes web-based bullying or bullying using any form of electronic media.

Personnel at all levels are responsible for taking corrective action to prevent bullying at any school sites or activities.

Allegations of bullying will be promptly investigated, giving due regard to the need for confidentiality and the safety of the alleged victim and/or any individual(s) who report incident(s) of bullying. An individual has the right to report an incident(s) of bullying without fear of reprisal or retaliation at any time. Retaliation is defined as meaning "to pay back (an injury) in kind." When a person is accused of having behaved in an inappropriate fashion, especially bullying, the common reaction of that person is to be angry and want to pay the "alleged victim" back (retaliate). Retaliation must not occur and will not be tolerated.

Proven allegations of bullying can have serious consequences for the person deemed guilty, including verbal or written reprimand, in-school or out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment, and/or expulsion.

Victims of bullying have responsibilities. Victims should clearly tell the bullies to stop. If bullying persists, victims should not ignore the incident(s) but should report immediately the incident to someone at school. Students should tell their parent(s). If the bullying continues after having clearly told the bullies to stop, students should make a written record of the incident including dates, times, witness or witnesses, and parties involved in the incident. The incident should be reported immediately to an adult who has authority over the bullies, for example, a teacher, guidance counselor, assistant principal, or principal. Victims should avoid being alone with the person(s) who attempted to bully them in the past. Victims of bullying who feel uncomfortable reporting this fact to adult personnel at school should contact another appropriate adult or friend who will report on their behalf.

To minimize the risk of being accused of bullying, students should keep their hands to themselves, remember that no one has the right to harm another person in any way, think before speaking, immediately apologize for accidentally saying or doing anything that has made another person feel oppressed, and report all incidents of bullying behavior they have witnessed to appropriate school personnel. Students should not touch anyone without his or her permission. Students should not interact with a person after that person has perceived their behavior toward them as "inappropriate" and has clearly told them to "stop". Nor should they make remarks that may cause another person to feel "oppressed" (stressful, scared, intimidated).

### **Drug Detection and Control Program**

The School System has strong policies and programs intended to educate students about the dangers of drug abuse and to prohibit their presence or use at school. Applicable Federal and State laws and School Board policy are followed diligently. An ongoing phase of the program consists of providing students demonstrations about the drug detection process at school and

other drug education activities in conjunction with the Drug-Free Schools Program.

Another phase of the Drug Detection and Control Program consists of unannounced, periodic drug searches of the schools by local law enforcement. Guidance programs and actual searches by school officials, when suspicion of illegal drugs is present, are key elements of the Drug Detection and Control Program.

When illegal substances are found, the following procedures will be adhered to by the school administration.

1. Proper law enforcement authorities, parent(s) or guardian(s), and the Central Office will be notified immediately when suspected illegal substances are confiscated or found on a campus. The authorities will analyze the material as soon as possible, report their findings to the principal, and file a report with the Office of the District Attorney. The confiscated material will remain property of the authorities.
2. The authorities will be given the name, address, and telephone number of the student in possession of the illegal substance.
3. If the authorities indicate that charges will be filed, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of that student will be notified. If the student is removed from school by the officers, the student and the parent(s) or guardian(s) must arrange an appointment with the principal before returning to the campus. This appointment should be made as soon as possible after the student is released by the authorities.
4. If the authorities indicate that charges will not be filed, the principal will follow the disciplinary policy for drug-related offenses as indicated in this *Handbook*.

### **School Disciplinary Action for Drug-related Offenses**

A goal of the School System is to convey to students that the use, possession, or distribution of any drug, chemical, or other substance without proper authority and permission is wrong and harmful. The seriousness of substance abuse among young people has resulted in legal action at the State and Federal levels. In recognition of the potential life-altering affects that substance abuse can have, the State has passed legislation aimed at helping school officials discourage such abuse.

Also, several Acts of Congress and State statutes have been enacted resulting in mandated drug-related and controlled dangerous substance expulsions from school, programs of drug prevention, and identification of Drug Free Zones as an area inclusive of any property used for school purposes by any school, within 1000 feet of any such property, and school buses. Violators of the laws concerning Drug Free Zones will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Louisiana law requires that any student 16 years of age or older found guilty of possession of, knowledge and intentional distribution of, or possession with intent to distribute any illegal narcotic drug, or other controlled substance on school property, on school bus, or at a school event, following a hearing by the Superintendent or her designee, will be expelled from school for a minimum of four complete semesters.

Any student who is younger than 16 years of age found guilty of these drug offenses, following a hearing, will be expelled from school for a minimum of two complete semesters. Any case involving a student in kindergarten through grade five found guilty of possession of, or knowledge of and intentional distribution of or possession with intent to distribute any drug or controlled substance on school property, on a school bus, or at a school event shall be referred to the local school board through a recommendation for action from the superintendent or designee.

School principals or their designees will refer any student arrested for these drug offenses for testing or screening by a qualified medical professional for evidence of abuse of alcohol, drugs, or other controlled dangerous substances. State law

requires that a student expelled for drug-related offenses must provide written documentation that he or she and a parent or legal guardian have participated in a rehabilitation or counseling program related to the offense leading to the expulsion before readmission to any school program. A meeting with the central office supervisor is required prior to return to the school campus following any such period of expulsion.

Students found guilty of using; being in possession of; consuming; or being under the influence of alcohol, look-alike alcohol or look-alike drugs, over the counter inhalants, or deliriant - on school property, on a school bus, or at a school event -- will receive a minimum 5 day suspension or possible expulsion. The student will be required to complete a drug-use assessment, followed by participation in a School System approved prevention and/or intervention program for families and students. These acts of misconduct are not to be confused with incidents of using, being in possession of, consuming or being under the influence of an illegal narcotic drug or a controlled dangerous substance which results in expulsion. Verification of an appointment for an assessment and agreement to enroll in the approved program is required before reentry into school following the period of suspension or expulsion.

Students found guilty of possession of drug paraphernalia (anything that can be associated with drugs or controlled dangerous substances in the sense of use, possession, or distribution of them) on school property, on a school bus or at a school event will receive a minimum 3 day suspension. Subsequent offenses may result in expulsion.

### **Suspension Procedure**

The following procedure is followed if suspension of a student is required.

1. Prior to any suspension, the school principal or his/her designee will advise the pupil in question of the particular misconduct of which he/she is accused and will state the basis for such accusation.
2. The student will be given an opportunity at the time to explain his/her version of the facts to the school principal or his/her designee. Any student whose presence poses a continued danger to persons or property or represents an ongoing threat of disruption may be removed immediately from the school premises without benefit of the above-described procedure. The necessary procedure should follow as soon as practical after the student has been removed from school.
3. Written notice of the suspension, including the reasons for the suspension, will be mailed to the parent(s) of the suspended student.
4. Any parent or legal guardian of the suspended student who believes that the disciplinary action taken is unwarranted has the right to appeal to the principal. The next level of appeal is the Superintendent or her designee.
5. A student suspended for damages to any property belonging to the School System or school personnel will not be readmitted to school until payment in full has been made or until the student is directed to return to school by the Superintendent.
6. Students missing school as a result of any suspension will be counted absent and will be given failing grades for those days suspended, with no makeup work allowed. Even so, students are encouraged to keep up with academic work during the period of suspension.
7. During a suspension, students are forbidden to come on school grounds or to attend or participate in any School System or school-sponsored event to include, but not limited to, athletic events without advanced written

permission from the Superintendent or her designee. Any student who violates this ban will be subject to legal sanctions for trespassing.

8. When a student is suspended, the following procedure will be used for re-admitting the student to school.
  - 1st Suspension — The parent must bring the student to school for a conference with the principal before the student can be admitted back to school.
  - 2nd Suspension — The parent must bring the student to the School Board Annex for a conference with the Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance before the student will be admitted back to school.
  - 3rd Suspension — The parent must bring the student to the School Board Office for a conference with the appropriate Administrative Supervisor before the student will be admitted back to school.
9. The school principal or his/her designee will have the option of using an alternative to suspension program in lieu of out-of-school suspension for offenses that are covered in the program, provided funding for the program is available.
10. All procedures, rules, and regulations established for disciplinary programs for suspended students must be adhered to by students and parents or guardians. Students and guardians or parents will be informed by written notice of the procedures, rules, and regulations of disciplinary programs.

### **Expulsion Procedure**

Students who are suspended from school three (3) times during the same school year who commit a fourth offense will be expelled from the School System until the next school year begins in the fall, subject to the review and approval of the School Board. Expulsion will be recommended immediately for certain major offenses. Each expulsion case will be reviewed prior to the beginning of the next school year for possible reinstatement into the St. Tammany Parish School System. Serious offenses committed by students may subject the student to expulsion beyond the beginning of the next school session.

The expulsion procedure will include the following steps.

1. The principal will recommend the expulsion of the student.
2. A hearing will be conducted by the Superintendent or her designee.
3. Upon concluding the hearing, the Superintendent or her designee will determine whether or not the student will be expelled from the School System or whether or not other corrective or disciplinary action should be taken.
4. At the hearing, the principal/teacher may be represented by any person of his/her choice.
5. The student may be represented by any person of his/her choice.
6. The student will remain suspended from school until the hearing takes place.
7. Within five (5) days after the decision is rendered, the parent(s) or guardian(s) may request that the St. Tammany Parish School Board review the findings of the Superintendent or her designee at a time set by the School Board.
8. The School Board, after reviewing the findings, may affirm, modify, or reverse the action previously taken.
9. The parent or guardian of the pupil may, within ten (10) days, appeal to the district court for the Parish an

adverse ruling by the School Board in upholding the action of the Superintendent or her designee.

10. A felony conviction of any student or incarceration of any student in a juvenile institution for committing any act that would be deemed a felony if committed by an adult will be cause for expulsion of the student for a period of time determined by the Board. Such expulsion takes a two-thirds (2/3) vote by the elected Members of the Board.

### **Additional Disciplinary Authority: Suspension of Driver's License**

Principals will notify the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, Office of Motor Vehicles, of any student between the ages of 14 and 18 who has been suspended or expelled from school for ten (10) or more consecutive school days or has been assigned to an alternative educational setting for ten (10) or more consecutive days for:

- ◆ infractions involving the sale or possession of drugs, alcohol, or any other illegal substance;
- ◆ the possession of a firearm; or
- ◆ an infraction involving assault or battery on a member of the school faculty or staff.

The Office of Motor Vehicles will suspend for one year the drivers' licenses of such students who are between the ages of 15 and 18, in accordance with the provision of State law. The term "license" or "driver's license" includes a class "E" learner's license and intermediate license.

### **Individuals with Disabilities Placement in Alternative Educational Settings**

Refer to Individuals with Disabilities Placement in Alternative Educational (IDEA) Regulations and Louisiana Bulletin 1706 found at each school site.

### **Search and Seizure**

As a security measure used to protect students and staffs, school officials must sometimes, if deemed a necessary or precautionary step, initiate or help law enforcement officials conduct a search of school for dangerous, illegal, or prohibited items. The policies and practices followed in the search and seizure process are based on Federal and State law. The practice is carried out judiciously and with the rights of all in mind.

According to State law, the School System is the exclusive owner of all public school buildings, all desks and lockers within the building assigned to any student, and any other area of any public school building or grounds set aside specifically for the personal use of the students. Any teacher, principal, school security guard, or administrator may search any building, desk, locker, area, or grounds for evidence that the law, a school rule, or School Board policy has been violated. The teacher, principal, school security guard, or administrator may search the person of a student or his personal effects when, based upon the attendant circumstances at the time of the search, reasonable grounds exist to suspect that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated the law, a school rule, or a School Board policy.

Such a search will be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to the purpose of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age or sex of the student(s) and the nature of the suspected offense. Any search of a student will, if possible and reasonable under the circumstances, be done by a teacher, administrator, or other School System representative of the same sex, with at least one adult witness present throughout the search. Classroom searches, with multiple students present, will be conducted in a manner that is reasonable under the particular facts and circumstances leading to any such search but shall not require more than two adult persons to be present for any such search.

Documentation will be made of all searches of a student's person. The student will be given a receipt for all items impounded. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student will be notified in writing of all searches of the student's person. Random searches of students or their personal effects with a metal detector may be conducted at any time, in accordance with law.

The search of a person will, unless circumstances dictate otherwise, be limited to directing the student to remove all items from his or her pockets, directing the student to remove footwear, coats or other outerwear necessary under the circumstances, and directing the student to open and remove all items from any container he or she may be carrying. A pat down of the person is permitted when the person is reasonably believed to possess a weapon or when circumstances exist that indicate the necessity of a pat down search. Under no circumstances will a strip search or body cavity search be conducted by any school personnel.

If the person refuses to comply with the directions to be searched, and there is a belief that a law has been violated, then, to the extent practicable, the person will be detained, and the appropriate law enforcement authorities will be contacted. If school officials know from the outset that a law has been violated, the appropriate law enforcement authorities will be contacted as soon as possible, and the decision to search the person will be made by the law enforcement personnel. If no violation of the law is suspected but reason exists to search a student who refuses to be searched, that student will be dealt with according to school disciplinary procedures. Refusal to comply with directions to be searched is grounds for discipline.

Under the same circumstances, if the person is a non-student, he or she will be directed to leave campus and, if the person refuses, the appropriate law enforcement authorities will be called to remove the person from school. Unless otherwise prohibited by law, any school principal, administrator, or school security guard may search the person, handbag, briefcase, purse, or other object possessed by any person who is not a student enrolled at the school, or a school employee, while in any school building or on school grounds, either by conducting a random search with a metal detector or when reasonable suspicion exists that such person has any weapons, illegal drugs, alcohol, stolen goods, or other materials or objects, the possession of which is a violation of the law, a school rule, or a School Board policy.

Upon the seizure of any firearm, bomb, knife, or other implement or device that can be used as a weapon or the careless use of which might inflict harm or injury or upon the seizure of any controlled dangerous substance as defined by State law, the principal or his/her designated administrator will report the confiscation to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The principal or his/her designated administrator may report the confiscation of any other implement, device, or material to law enforcement officials.

Any implement, device, or material required to be reported to law enforcement officials will be retained and secured by the school principal in such a manner as to prevent its destruction, alteration, or disappearance until the law enforcement authority either takes custody of the implement or material or provides notice that it need no longer be retained. The confiscated item(s) will be retained in a uniform, envelope-type container that has printed instructions regarding the information to be supplied to law enforcement concerning the confiscation. Items that need not be retained for law enforcement officials will be placed in the custody of the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student following the hearing process and following disciplinary action, if applicable.

In order to ensure that items seized are properly secured, they will be placed in a safe, locked cabinet or locked desk to which only the principal or assistant principal will have access. The

report to the appropriate law enforcement authority required by law will be in writing, signed by the principal or his/her designated administrator, and delivered to the appropriate law enforcement authority within 24 hours of the seizure. While a principal may designate another to prepare the above report, the principal will instruct the designee to keep a copy of the report and provide another copy to the principal at the time the reports are made. Copies of the reports will be maintained in a secure place for no less than two (2) years after the incident.

Failure of any principal or designated administrator to report to law enforcement officials the confiscation of any controlled dangerous substance or any firearm, bomb, knife, or other implement or device that can be used as a weapon is cause for disciplinary action for violation of policy and law. Likewise, failure of any principal or designated administrator to retain and secure such material or implement or device is grounds for disciplinary action for violation of policy and law.

### **Corporal Punishment**

The St. Tammany Parish Public School System does not allow corporal punishment in the School System. Complaints concerning instances of impermissible corporal punishment should be reported to the school principal or superintendent for investigation.

### **Crimestoppers**

To help maintain a safe and productive environment for learning in our schools, the School System has established a partnership with the Crimestoppers organization. The partnership provides an additional security measure that encourages students, parents, and others to report information about potential or actual criminal activity at school. The Crimestoppers program allows us to utilize a reporting system called the Safe School Hotline in all our junior high and high schools.

The local Crimestoppers organization encourages citizens to help solve and prevent crime through anonymous calls to a special telephone number maintained by the organization. The information is forwarded to appropriate law enforcement agencies and a special fund is available to pay a reward for tips that lead to an arrest. The Safe School Hotline operates in the same way to help solve crimes and prevent potential safety concerns on and/or around school campuses, school buses, and school events. The Crimestoppers Safe School Hotline system protects the caller's identity by assigning a code number to each caller.

The Safe School Hotline number is 1-877-903-7867. Students and parents who have information about a serious or potentially serious school safety concern are urged to call the school principal or the Crimestoppers Safe School Hotline.

## **COMPLIANCE NOTICE**

The St. Tammany Parish School Board adheres to the equal opportunity provisions of the Federal Civil Rights laws and regulations that are applicable to this agency. Therefore, no one will be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972); disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) in attaining educational goals and objectives and in the administration of personnel policies and procedures. Anyone with questions regarding this policy may contact Kevin J. Marse, Supervisor at 985-898-3221, St. Tammany Parish School Board.

# GLOSSARY

**Aggravated assault** - Any threat of bodily harm done with a deadly weapon or done by a person who conceals his/her identity. Any threat of bodily harm against school personnel on school grounds or during a school-sponsored activity.

**Aggravated battery** - Any unlawful injury to another that either causes great harm, is done with a deadly weapon, or is done by a person who conceals his/her identity. Any intentional bodily harm against school personnel on school grounds or during a school-sponsored activity.

**Analyzed** - A reasonable in-field identification, by any means, of a controlled dangerous substance by an officer with reasonable expertise through experience and training in the area of drug detection and control.

**Arson** - The act of knowingly, by means of fire or explosives, damaging a building and/or the personal property of others.

**Assault** - Intentionally engaging in conduct (without physical contact) that places another in reasonable apprehension of bodily harm, including threats and verbal assaults.

**Battery** - Intentionally causing bodily harm to another.

**Base of a shirt** - The point at which the collar and the shirt are joined, sometimes referred to as the neckline. The base of a collarless shirt is the top of the shirt where it attaches to the band, if applicable.

**Bullying** - A form of aggression that occurs when a person(s) willfully subjects another person (victim) to an intentional, unwanted, unprovoked, hurtful verbal and/or physical action(s) at any school site or School Board sponsored activity or event. Bullying also may occur as various forms of hazing, including initiation rites perpetrated against a new student or a new member of a team.

**Burglary** - Knowingly and without authority entering or remaining within a building or vehicle with intent to commit a felony or theft.

**Collar** - An attached or separate band that varies in shape and size and serves to finish or decorate the neckline of a garment.

**Controlled Dangerous Substance** - Any substance defined as, enumerated, or included in federal or state statute or regulations, 21 USC 812 as amended and 21 CFR § 1308, *et seq.* as amended or Louisiana Revised Statute 40:964, *et seq.* as amended, or any substance which may hereafter be designated as a controlled dangerous substance by amendment of supplementation of such regulations or statute. The term shall not include distilled spirits, wine, malt beverages, or tobacco.

**Cyberbullying** - the use of any electronic communication device to convey a message in any form (text, image, audio, or video) that defames, intimidates, harasses, or is otherwise intended to harm, insult, or humiliate another, in a deliberate, repeated, or hostile and unwanted manner, under a person's true or false identity.

**Delirants** - Any chemical that gives off fumes or vapors that, when inhaled, produces symptoms similar to intoxication, *i.e.*, sniffing glue, gasoline, lighter fluid, paint thinner, varnish, shellac, nail polish remover, aerosol-packaged products, Freon, rush, *etc.*

**Delivery** - The act of selling or distributing fireworks, alcohol, illegal drugs, narcotics, controlled substances, or contraband to others.

**Detention** - A period of detainment before or after school hours or during regular release time for students.

**Disciplinary Reassignment** - Transfer to another room, school, or alternative school placement for a specified period of time. The action is recorded in the student's folder.

**Drug Free & Firearm-Free Zones** - An area inclusive of any school campus and within 1,000 feet of any such school campus and within a school bus or within 1,000 feet of a bus stop.

"Drug" includes, without limitation:

- (a) Articles recognized in the official United States Pharmacopoeia, official Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States, or official National Formulary, or any supplement to any of them.
- (b) Articles intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease in man or other animals.
- (c) Articles other than food intended to affect the structure of any function of the body or man or other animals.
- (d) Articles intended for use as a component of any article specified in Subparagraph (a), (b) or (c) of this Paragraph, but does not include devices or their components, parts or accessories.

**Due process** - The notification to the student and the parent(s) or guardian(s) concerning an alleged act(s) of misconduct, the right to appeal, the opportunity to answer the charge(s), and reason the disciplinary action is necessary.

**Exclusion** - Attendance privileges are withheld from the student until a Teacher-Student-Parent-Administrator Conference is held. Students are allowed to make up school work during the period of removal of attendance privileges.

**Expulsion** - The removal of a student from school for eleven (11) days or more.

**Extortion** - The obtaining of money or information from another by coercion or intimidation.

**Fighting** - Physical conflict between two (2) or more individuals when conflict is not determined to be assault.

**Firearm** - The term "firearm" means:

- any weapon (including a starter gun) that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
- the frame or receiver of any such weapon;
- any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or
- any "destructive device".

Such term does not include an antique firearm.

**Forgery** - The false and fraudulent making or altering of a document or the use of such a document.

**Gambling** - Participation in games of chance or skill for money and/or things of value.

**Gang** - Any group of two (2) or more persons whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts.

**Indecent proposition** - An unsolicited sexual proposal.

**In-School Expulsion** - Temporary removal of a student from his or her usual classroom and placement in an alternative setting for a period of time specified by the School System, without interruption of instruction services. This placement is made by the Superintendent or her designee, following an expulsion hearing.

**In-School Suspension** - Temporary removal of a student from his or her regular class(es) to a restricted setting in school. All privileges are suspended; classes are not attended. The action is recorded in the student's folder. If resources are not available to initiate this provision, the school may exclude the student until such time as the parent(s) returns the student to school and participates in a formal conference with the principal or her designee. This exclusion does not exceed three (3) days.

**Intimidation** - Engaging in behavior that prevents or discourages another student from exercising his/her right to an education, for example, preventing a student from attending classes or authorized school activities. Such prohibited behavior includes the use of threats, coercion, or force to prevent another student from attending school or to recruit another student for membership in any organization or group not authorized by the principal. This act also includes the wearing of gang clothing or paraphernalia and the use of gang signs and signals.

**Leaving the school grounds without permission** - Leaving the school and the school property adjacent to the building without prior approval.

**Loitering** - Occupying an unauthorized place in the school or on school grounds.

**Police Notification** - Filing an incident report with the police department or other local law enforcement agencies. The action is recorded in the student's folder. Law enforcement authorities determine whether or not an arrest is warranted. The principal or administrator has the discretion whether or not to sign a complaint for offenses that do not warrant arrest. When law enforcement officers come onto the campus, they will serve as agents of the school.

**Possession** - The mere fact of physical control of real or personal property, such as clothing, lockers, or bags.

**Robbery** - The taking of personal property in the possession of another by the use of force or by threatening the imminent use of force.

**Sexual Harassment** - Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Sex violations** - Offenses such as public indecency, deviant sexual contact, rape, indecent liberties with a child, and contributing to the sexual delinquency of a child.

**Student intervention program** - A comprehensive and integrated program to provide students with prevention, intervention, referral, and support services for amelioration of alcohol and other drug-related problems. The patterns of student behaviors that may lead to scheduling of a conference may or may not involve acts of misconduct.

**Suspension** - The involuntary removal of a student from class or school attendance for ten (10) days or less. The student is not allowed to attend school for the period of the suspension and may be considered as trespassing if present on school grounds during the period of suspension.

**Teacher-Student Conference** - A conference in which the teacher talks to the student and they mutually agree upon expected student behavior. A record of this meeting is maintained in the teacher's file.

**Teacher-Student-Parent-Administrator Conference** - A formal conference in which to plan for corrective counseling, referral to outside agencies, or other appropriate actions. A record of the action taken is maintained in the administrator's file.

**Theft** - Obtaining or exerting unauthorized control over the personal property of another.

**Vandalism** - The willful or malicious destruction or defacing of school property or property of others.