

Discovery Academy



Discipline Policy Handbook

2018-19

DISCIPLINE POLICY HANDBOOK

Student Disciplinary Practices and Procedures

What makes Discovery Academy teaching methods and philosophy *different* than most public and private schools? It is simple--we have learned from over three decades of success. We value children as individuals, see each as gifted, and take responsibility to discover a child's unique abilities to help them enhance their special gifts.

It is the appreciation, understanding and the *consistent practice* of our policies and procedures that ensures a philosophy not based on mere words, but on a better way of teaching and living. Discovery Academy strives to ensure that discipline is used to teach and guide students how to recognize and manage emotions, demonstrate care and concern for others, develop positive relationships, make good decisions, and behave ethically, respectfully and responsibly.

Discovery Academy's DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

Discovery Academy Administration and Staff will ensure each child is treated with kindness, respect, and fairness. Our top priority is to keep learning environments healthy and safe for all children.

- **Kindness:** When a child makes a mistake or violates the Discipline Policy Handbook, he or she will be treated with dignity.
- **Respect:** Children will receive fair and impartial consequences for their behaviors.
- **Fairness:** Consequences will be individualized to the needs of each child, with a willingness to assist in repairing the harm. Staff and administration will take into account the seriousness of the offense, the degree of harm caused, whether the act was intentional, the student's prior conduct, and the impact of the incident on the school community.

- **Discipline Responses**

Discovery Academy students are held to high standards. Students are expected to demonstrate respect for themselves and others at all times. When students are disruptive or act inappropriately, school staff and administrators are expected to respond logically, appropriately and consistently.

- The Discovery Academy Discipline Policy describes five types of behavior, increasing in seriousness from a Type 1 behavior to a Type 5 behavior. For example, a dress code violation is a Type 1 behavior, while assault of a student or staff member is a Type 5 behavior.
- When choosing a higher-level response within the range of possible responses, an administrator must consider:
 - » the student's age, health, disability, decision-making ability and prior discipline history
 - » the student's willingness to repair the harm
 - » the seriousness of the act
 - » the harm caused or the potential to cause, including any injuries caused
 - » the extent of actual disruption to the learning environment
 - » whether the act was intentional
- An administrator must clearly document the reasons for using the selected response by citing the factors above in the discipline referral. In each case, Discovery Academy administrators and staff will ensure consequences applied will minimize the amount of instructional time lost. Suspensions and expulsions are measures of last resort.

SPECIFIC BEHAVIORS REQUIRING DISCIPLINARY ACTION

TYPE 1 BEHAVIORS

Tardy to School or Class - Arriving late to school, class or activity.

Noncompliance with a Reasonable Request - Not following the reasonable request of a teacher, administrator or staff member.

Agitating Other Students - Unwanted and/or unreciprocated picking on or bothering of other students.

Unauthorized Possession of Medication - Possession of prescription or non-prescription medication that has not been registered in the school's office.

Dress Code Violation - Wearing clothing that does not comply with the school's Standard School Attire policy or requirements for appropriate dress.

TYPE 2 BEHAVIORS

Repeated Violations of a Pattern of Type 1 Behaviors, that continues after documentation of prior interventions.

Electronic Devices: Improper Use of Cell Phone, Internet or Electronic Devices - Using personal technology (such as a cell phone), electronic devices or the internet, except when used for educational purposes with the permission of the classroom teacher or school administrator, or in violation of school rules.

Profane or Indecent Language - Using profane or indecent language, such as cursing on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.

Cheating- The act of gaining an unfair advantage on graded academic activities by plagiarism, copying notes, or stealing answers on a test.

Disruption of the School Environment - Continuously and intentionally disrupting the school environment to the extent the learning of other students or the normal functioning of the school is significantly impaired. The discipline referral must include evidence demonstrating learning or the normal functioning of the school was significantly impaired.

Cutting Class - Failing to attend a scheduled class or activity without authorization.

TYPE 3 BEHAVIORS

Repeated Violations of a Pattern of Type 2 Behaviors, With Evidence of Implemented Interventions.

Vandalism Under \$500 - Willfully destroying or defacing school or personal property. The damage caused is less than \$500. A child's willingness to repair property damaged or to make restitution will be taken into account in determining the appropriate level of response.

Falsifying School Records - Falsifying or altering school records, including, but not limited to, written, electronic or digital school records. This does not include cheating. Cheating will be dealt with at the instructional level.

Profane or Indecent Language Toward Authority Figure - Directing profane or indecent language toward a teacher, staff member or administrator.

Noncompliance With an Administrative Directive - Refusing to follow administrative directives to comply with assigned disciplinary responses.

Theft Under \$500 - Taking the property of another individual or of the school without permission, with the intent of depriving the owner of the property. The value of the property taken is under \$500. A child's willingness to return or replace an item taken or make restitution will be taken into account in determining the appropriate level of response.

Trespassing on School Grounds - Entering or remaining on school property without authorization. Being present in restricted areas of the school without authorization.

Inappropriate Physical Contact With Other Students - Engaging in minor physical contact with another student such as pushing, bumping or horseplay.

Inappropriate Physical Contact Toward School Staff - Engaging in minor physical contact with staff such as intentional or reckless pushing or bumping or other incidents in which there is contact.

TYPE 4 BEHAVIORS

Repeated Violations of a Pattern of Type 3 Behaviors, With Evidence of Implemented Interventions

Leaving School Grounds - Leaving school grounds without the permission of school officials.

Threats - A written, verbal or electronic threat to cause harm to students, staff or school in which no plan exists to carry out the threat. The threat must be one that would cause a person to reasonably fear bodily injury.

Bullying (Expellable if bullying is repeated over time and persists after administrative intervention) - any intentional act that is severe, persistent or pervasive and substantially interferes with a student's education, opportunities or performance, and has the effect of:

1. Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property
2. Knowingly placing the student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to the student's property
3. Causing emotional distress to a student or students
4. Creating a hostile educational environment

Bullying may involve, but is not limited to, the following: unwanted teasing, threatening, intimidating behavior, cyberbullying, physical bullying, hazing, theft, sexual, religious or racial harassment and public humiliation.

Cyberbullying (Expellable if bullying is repeated over time and persists after administrative intervention) - Using information and communication technologies, including, but not limited to email, cell phones, voicemails, texts, still photographs or video messages, instant messaging, defamatory websites, social networking sites, etc to bully another student.

Harassment Based on Race, Color or National Origin, Gender, Gender-Identity or Sexual Orientation, Religion or Creed, or Disability

Extreme Disruption of the School Environment (*Expellable if actual risk of harm to other students*) - Intentionally disrupting the school environment to the extent that the safety of other students is at risk.

Group Fighting (*Expellable depending on severity*) - Three or more students engaging in a physical altercation. The altercation may include more students against a few students or multiple one on one fights.

Reckless Endangerment - An intentional action in which the behavior causes injury or may potentially cause injury to students or staff.

Vandalism Over \$500 - Willfully destroying or defacing school or personal property. The damage caused is over \$500. A child's willingness to repair the damage or make restitution will be taken into account in determining the appropriate level of response.

TYPE 5 BEHAVIORS - These behaviors will result in immediate, mandatory, permanent EXPULSION

Possession or Use of Illegal Drugs, Alcohol, or Tobacco - Possession or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products of any kind will result in

Possession of Weapons (see below for complete description)

Possessing or transmitting:

- » A knife, switchblade, razor blade, box cutter or other similar instrument utilizing a razor blade

- » Ammunition, chains, nun-chucks, brass knuckles or Billy clubs

- » An electric weapon or device, such as a Taser

- » Capsicum (Pepper spray)

- » Weapons similar to those listed above capable of causing serious bodily injury

Any weapons found on school grounds or at school functions will be confiscated and turned over to the appropriate authorities. Immediate expulsion will result as a direct consequence.

Fighting: Repeated - A student who participates in two or more fights in a school year may receive a minimum of five days of out- of-school suspension up to a calendar year expulsion. The disciplinary response should be based on the severity and the extent of actual disruption to the learning environment.

Theft From an Individual or of School Property (Over \$500) -

Taking the property of another individual or of the school without permission with the intent of depriving the owner of the property. The value of the property is over \$500. A child's willingness to return or replace an item taken or make restitution will be taken into account in determining the appropriate level of response.

Threat by Electronic Transmission- A student who transmits by an electronic device a credible threat to cause bodily injury or death to another student or school employee and creates actual disruptive activity at the school that requires administrative intervention.

Inappropriate Sexual Behavior or Harassment - Behaviors that constitute sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to: unwelcome sexually suggestive remarks or advances; pictures, gesturing or exposure; verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature; messaging of a harassing, abusive or sexual nature sent by e-mail or other electronic medium. Sexual

harassment may be directed against a particular person or persons or group whether of the opposite sex or same sex.

Assault of a Student - Intentionally, knowingly or recklessly committing an unprovoked physical attack on another student. Minor physical contact, such as pushing or shoving, does not constitute assault. Students may not receive the same disciplinary consequence for their involvement in an altercation if the school administrator determines they acted in self-defense to protect themselves from physical harm. To constitute expulsion, evidence documenting the incident's severity and any resulting injuries must be listed in the discipline referral.

Assault of Teacher or Staff - An intentional or reckless act that causes or has the potential to cause physical injury to a teacher or school staff on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity.

Interventions and Responses to Student Behavior

By utilizing the natural consequences that result from student behavior and implementing interventions, Discovery Academy will help improve student behavior and keep our school a safe, positive place. Below are possible responses to student behavior.

LEVEL A RESPONSE – TEACHER/STUDENT/ PARENT/SCHOOL STAFF

1. Student tells his/her side of the story.
2. Teacher or designated staff member counsels with student.
3. Teacher or designated staff member determines whether to involve parents and administration for a phone or personal conference based on severity/repetition.

LEVEL B RESPONSE – ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL REFERRAL/SUSPENSION

1. Based on severity of offense, a student referral is issued by the teacher detailing disciplinary offense.
2. Each student tells his/her side of the story and has an opportunity to write a statement.
3. Administrator will hold phone/personal conference with parent or guardian and determines if further action needs to be taken depending on seriousness of incident.
4. If warranted based on severity of offense, immediate out of school suspension of up to five days may be utilized at discretion of the school administrator to restore order, to further investigate the misconduct and/or to protect individuals on school grounds. Note: If the suspension is for a full week (five days), the administrator will develop a student behavior improvement signed by the parent and student prior to re-entry of school.

LEVEL C RESPONSE – EXPULSION OPTION

1. Expulsion is a measure of last resort. Prior to expulsion, all of the following factors must be considered: the seriousness of the act, harm or injury caused, the student's willingness to repair the harm, the extent of disruption to the learning environment, intentionality, the student's age, health, disability, decision-making ability and the student's prior discipline history.
2. Expulsion Documentation: The school administrator will investigate a student's alleged misconduct and previous behavior and determine whether expulsion is required. All interventions utilized prior to expulsion must be clearly documented in the Student's file.

I have thoroughly read and agree to abide by the policies and procedures detailed in the Discovery Discipline Policy Handbook.

I understand that failure to comply with the standards set forth by Discovery Academy may lead to the accumulation of student referrals, temporary suspension, and/or permanent expulsion from Discovery Academy.

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature (Grades 4-8)

Date