



Highland Oaks Middle School's School-Wide Discipline Plan

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Miami-Dade County Public School's Code of Student Conduct (excerpt)

2023-2024

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Acknowledgment of Responsibility

Each parent/guardian of a student and each student enrolled in Miami-Dade County Public Schools must sign and return this page to the student's school to acknowledge receipt of the Code of Student Conduct and Bus Rules. Each school will maintain records of such signed statements.

I acknowledge receipt of the MDCPS Code of Student Conduct and Bus Rules. I have read and discussed both documents with my child.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date

Contact Numbers: _____

I acknowledge receipt of the MDCPS Code of Student Conduct and Bus Rules. I have read and discussed both documents with my child.

Student's Name

Date

Grade

**RETURN TO STUDENT'S SCHOOL
WITHIN THREE DAYS
UPON RECEIPT OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT.**

Highland Oaks Middle School's School-Wide Discipline Plan

Mission Statement:

The Highland Oaks Middle School team is committed to excellence by ensuring that our students develop the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a global society by providing opportunities for lifelong learning.

Purpose:

The primary objective of this document is to assist students, parents, and faculty in following a reasonable and consistent plan for a conducive learning environment that ensures the safety of students and staff. This school-wide plan is aligned with the Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Code of Student Conduct and was developed by the Highland Oaks Middle School Discipline Committee.

In an effort to provide all stakeholders a collaborative approach to school-wide disciplinary procedures, the following guidelines are instituted at Highland Oaks Middle School.

Classroom Guidelines:

- Follow directions provided by the teacher or substitute.
- Report to class on time.
- Come prepared with supplies to all classes.
- Respect the teacher and fellow classmates.
- Raise your hand and wait to be recognized before speaking.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Eating, drinking, or chewing gum is not permitted.
- Grooming in class is not appropriate or allowed. (brushing your hair, putting on make-up)

Cafeteria Guidelines:

- Follow directions given by **ALL** staff.
- Be respectful and courteous.
- Clean up your area.
- Do not litter.
- Use the restrooms located by the cafeteria before you enter.

Spill-out Guidelines:

- Follow directions given by **ALL** staff.
- Horse-playing/play fighting or running is not permitted.
- Clean up after yourself.
- Report to class immediately after Spill-out dismissal, your teacher is waiting for you by the classroom door.

Hallway Guidelines:

- Follow directions given by **ALL** staff members.
- Be respectful of others.
- Walk on the right side of the halls and staircases.
- Be in class on time.
- Running or play fighting/slap boxing is not permitted.
- Any time a student is out of class, they must have a **hall pass**. Students have 5 minutes between each class to use the restroom and drink water. Each class is every other day, so we discourage students from leaving class to run errands or use the restroom unless it is an extreme emergency.
- Purchasing from vending machines, eating, or drinking is not permitted **during** class time.

Arrival, Dismissal & School Bus Guidelines:

- Follow directions given by **ALL** staff. Be respectful of others. Mind your Manners!
- Be safe, watch for traffic. Do **NOT** be on your cell phone while crossing the street.
- Students are not permitted in the teacher's parking lot at any time of day.
- Students who arrive before 8:40 a.m. are unsupervised and are required to be in the school cafeteria sitting at one of the tables. They are NOT to be out front of the school, in the rear of the school, or wandering the hallways.
- From 8:05 -9:00 a.m., breakfast is served daily in the cafeteria.
- From 8:40-9:00 a.m., students will wait in small groups outside in the front of the school building until the bell rings. They are to remain in one location. There will be NO running, playing, screaming/dramatics,

rapping/ranking, etc. This is a great time to quietly and calmly socialize, read a book, play on an electronic device, and relax before the school day begins. **(A Good Morning, Means A Good Day!)**

- Students will not be allowed to go to ANY classroom unless a Specified PASS is given to the security desk by the teacher requesting to see them before school begins.
- On rainy days, students will remain seated in the cafeteria or will be seated in the auditorium until the bell rings to start school. They will follow the directions of **ALL** staff members.
- A reminder that the school bus is like a classroom on wheels and students will be removed from the school bus should they not act appropriately, cause a disruption, or act in an unsafe way. We will implement and follow the student code of conduct. In addition, school bus rules from MDCPS are provided at the end of this document.
- Student **"drop off"** is located at the circle behind the school using the NE 25th Avenue light or NE 24th Avenue drop off loop. Please see map on the last page for a visual aide.
- If you use the NE 24th Ave light, as soon as you turn into the school, you immediately turn right, then go down to the stop sign, turn left, and follow the loop around so you can drop off your child in the front of the building.
- Students are to be picked up by parents behind the school at the **"circle"**. Access to this is at the light at NE 2500 Block. The "circle" is located next to the tennis courts. **Parents must NOT enter at the light of NE 24th Avenue from 3:15 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. This is for faculty and staff only and it is also a faculty exit and bus exit.**
- Parents should **NOT make U-turns on NE 24th Avenue** as it can cause an accident. Children cross this intersection and it poses a danger when making a U-turn.
- Parents should NOT have their child wait at the corner of **NE 24th Avenue and 199th Street** nor should parents pick up their child on **IVES Dairy Road**. This is unsafe and dangerous.
- Parents should **NEVER** allow their child to walk and cross the bridge located on **I-95**. If you need transportation, please contact the school office to inquire about options.
- If a parent needs to come to the office for a meeting, please park in the parking lot.
- **After 4:15 p.m.**, there is **NO adult supervision of students**. All students should be at home doing homework or i-Ready. Any student on campus after this time must wait in designated areas for parent pick-up (this is not a recommended habit). Students who participate in after school clubs or sports **MUST** remain with their coach or sponsor until the activity is over and then wait in the designated areas for parent pick-up. Most activities end by 5:00 p.m. Please communicate with these coaches or sponsors regarding specific pick-up times.

General Guidelines:

- Gum is not permitted at any time on the school grounds.
- Gambling of any kind is not permitted.
- Graffiti (on walls or books) will be considered a serious offense resulting in serious consequences/disciplinary action.
- Please keep our classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, lunchroom, and building clean. Don't be a litter bug!
- School is a place of learning, we encourage your child to bring and utilize their electronic devices (including cell phones) before school, at lunch, and after school. Our teachers will at times ask our students to use their device(s) in class. Unless authorized by the teacher/adult, if a child is using the electronic device and is not focused on the lesson, the adult will confiscate the phone and bring it to one of the administrators in the office. The child and/or parent/guardian and retrieve the phone at the end of the school day. (Thank you for helping us keep your child focused on academics and not texting, Instagram, Tic Tok, or other sites during instructional time. School is not about the phone; it is about learning.)
- Private selling of food or other goods is prohibited. Items will be confiscated, and consequences issued.
- Truancy is a serious violation resulting in immediate disciplinary action. Attendance at school is important! Come everyday! You miss so much if you are absent!
- Profanity/disrespectful gestures will have disciplinary consequences.
- Inappropriate accessories such as pacifiers, baby bottles, hair picks, bandanas, etc. are not permitted. No metal objects (hair picks, belt chains) are to be at school.

Dress Code Guidelines:

- Highland Oaks Middle School is a mandatory uniform school. A school uniform must be worn everyday unless otherwise noted by administration. The dress code is Black, Gold, or White polo shirts with an attached embroidered school logo and Khaki, Grey, or Black pants. Please call the school office at 305-932-3810 if you have any questions. A uniform policy is located at the end of this document.

Positive Reinforcement:

- Clear, immediate and constructive feedback
- Team activities/assemblies
- Honor Roll

- Student of the Month
- Participation in sports and clubs
- Participation in district-wide events
- Parties to celebrate achievements and accomplishments
- Awards Assemblies
- Field Trips Criteria for field trips are A,B,C's in academics & A,B,C's in conduct. Field trips are a reward.

Attendance/ Tardy Policy and Procedures:

It is imperative for students to be in school if they are to receive the maximum benefit of an education. It is understandable that there will be an occasional need for an absence and it is expected that make-up work will be requested by the student and completed; however, this is not as effective as being an active participant in learning. A student who is excessively absent and/or tardy should not expect to complete the course successfully, resulting in a lower academic grade or even failure.

As per Miami Dade County Public Schools, the following absences are considered excused:

- **Illness of the student**
- **Death in the family**
- **Medical or court appointment (schedule after school when possible)**
- **Religious holidays**
- **Previously approved school event**
- **Principal's discretion**
- Ten unexcused absences in an annual course or five in a semester credit course may result in the grade being withheld pending an appeal and review.
- A student is considered tardy to school after 9:10 am. A student is considered tardy to class at the ringing of each bell. Consistent tardiness to class will result in either team or administrative disciplinary action. **All students who are tardy to school are to report to their first class and are to receive a detention unless a note is written for excused tardiness.**
- A student is expected to make-up all class work/assignments after his or her return to school. For every day you are absent, you receive one day for make-up.

A student returning to school after an absence must report to the main office from 8:30-9:00 and submit a note signed by the parent/guardian that contains the following:

- Student's name
- Student's identification number (ID)
- Reason for the absence(s)
- Date(s) of absences
- Phone number where parent can be contacted
- Parent's or Guardian's signature
- No student will receive a duplicate admit during the school day if he or she misplaces his or her admit or forgets to get one in the morning. The **only opportunity** to receive an admit will be between 8:30-9:30 in the main office
- If a note is not produced for reason of absence, the student will receive an unexcused absence from the attendance personnel. Please be sure to bring a note so we can fix the absences. After 10 absences, the parent and child will have a truancy meeting at the school and documents will be on file.
- If an admit is not produced for the teacher, the student will receive an unexcused absence/tardy and will not be allowed to make-up their missed assignments.

The following is an excerpt from the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Code of Student Conduct. For access to the entire document, please visit the parent or student portal and click on the link.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools Code of Student Conduct

Schools are established for the benefit of all students. The educational purposes of the schools are accomplished best in a climate of student behavior that is socially acceptable and conducive to the learning and teaching process. Student behavior that disrupts this process or that infringes upon the rights of other individuals will not be tolerated. The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, endorses a zero-tolerance policy toward school related violent crime. The Board reaffirms its support of the administrative staff and teachers in taking all necessary steps to enforce and implement all

Board rules pertaining to the maintenance of appropriate student behavior. Important among these rules are those in the areas of conduct, corporal punishment, suspensions, expulsions, and climate for learning. (*Excerpt from Board Rule 6Gx13-5D-1.08*)

To enhance its effectiveness, this document addresses not only the role of the parents, the students, and school, but also core values and model student behavior, rights and responsibilities of students, procedures for using corrective strategies, including suspension and expulsion. The District promotes the following beliefs:

- All students are valuable and can make worthy contributions to society.
- All students are responsible and accountable for their choices and decisions.
- In order to grow and thrive, individuals need caring relationships and a nurturing environment.
- Supportive family relationships are the foundation of the community.
- High expectations lead to higher performance that empower individuals and strengthen society.
- Continuous learning is a lifelong process that is essential to a productive and enriched life.

Students, parents, and employees are encouraged to read the Code of Student Conduct and become familiar with its content http://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/policies/90/csc_sec.pdf. Related School Board Rules may be found on the Miami-Dade Public Schools Website at <http://www2.dadeschools.net/schoolboard/rules/>.

Core Values:

With our Manners Matter Initiative at our school we adhere to the following:

Manners Matter: We are reminded to use the following words and phrases at our school. Please, Thank You, Excuse Me, I'm Sorry, Yes/No Ma'am and Sir. We also follow the district core values at Highland Oaks Middle School.

Citizenship Helping to create a society based upon democratic values including rules of law, equality of opportunity, due process, reasoned argument, representative government, checks and balances, rights and responsibilities and democratic decision-making, e.g., ***obeying classroom and school rules.***

Cooperation Working together toward goals as basic as human survival in an increasingly interdependent world, e.g., ***being a member of the team on the athletic field.***

Fairness Treating people impartially, not playing favorites, being open-minded, and maintaining an objective attitude toward those whose actions and ideas are different from our own, e.g., ***treating people the same, regardless of their ethnicity, race, religion, gender, or physical condition.***

Honesty Dealing truthfully with people, being sincere, not deceiving them or stealing from them, not cheating or lying, e.g., ***doing one's own work when taking a test or working on an individual assignment.***

Integrity Standing up for your beliefs about what is right and what is wrong and resisting social pressure to do wrong, e.g., ***expressing one's conviction in a group of peers although it may not be popular with the majority.***

Kindness Being sympathetic, helpful, compassionate, benevolent, agreeable and gentle toward people and other living things, e.g., ***helping a fellow student who has been injured.***

Pursuit of Excellence Doing your best with the talents you have, striving toward a goal and not giving up, e.g., ***putting forth one's best effort when taking an exam or doing homework.***

Respect Showing regard for the worth and dignity of someone or something, being courteous and polite, and judging all people on their merits. Respect takes three major forms: respect for oneself, respect for other people, and respect for all forms of life and the environment, e.g., ***practicing acceptable manners in the school cafeteria.***

Responsibility Thinking before you act and being accountable for your actions, paying attention to others, and responding to their needs. Responsibility emphasizes our positive obligations to care for each other, e.g., ***performing a community service project.***

There are Five Levels of Appropriate and Inappropriate Behavior as listed below:

Level I Behavior affects the orderly operation of the classroom, school functions, extracurricular/co-curricular programs or approved transportation. **Model student behavior** creates a safe learning environment and reduces disruption of the educational process.

Model students:

- Understand and follow school rules, attend school regularly, request permission for authorization to leave, class when needed, attend all classes, are prepared for class each day, use and possess items that are suitable for an educational setting, adhere to the school dress code, and use approved electronic devices responsibly.
- Follow school rules including riding and waiting for the school bus, use conflict management skills to resolve problems peacefully, use respectful and appropriate language, show concern for others, and conduct themselves in a cooperative, friendly and respectful manner to staff members and classmates.

Model students avoid:

- Being in an unauthorized location, cutting class, arriving at school late, failing to comply with class and school rules, possessing items that are inappropriate for the educational setting, using unauthorized electronic devices, and violating the school dress code.
- Initiating or participating in a verbal confrontation with another student or staff member, arriving late to class, displaying affection inappropriately in public, leaving school grounds without permission, using profane or crude language, and displaying or participating in disruptive behavior.

LEVEL I Disruptive Behaviors

- Unauthorized location
- Confrontation with another student
- Cutting class
- Disruptive behavior (including behavior on the school bus and at the school bus stop)
- Failure to comply with class and/or school rules
- Possession of items or materials that are inappropriate for an educational setting *
- Inappropriate public display of affection
- Repeated use of profane or crude language (general, not directed at someone)
- Unauthorized use of electronic devices
- Violation of dress code

Special Notes: The principal or designee **must** select at least one of the following strategies from **PLAN I**. Principals may authorize use of **PLAN II** for repeated, serious or habitual **Level I** infractions.

PLAN I RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

- Parent/guardian contact **
- Reprimand
- Student, parents/guardians/staff conference
- Peer mediation
- Revocation of the right to participate in social and/or extracurricular activities
- Confiscation of wireless communication devices
- Detention or other Board-approved in-school program
- Temporary assignment from class where the infraction occurred
- Student contract
- School Center for Special Instruction (SCSI) or Alternative to Suspension Program (ASP)
- Replacement or payment for any damaged property (if appropriate)
- Temporary loss of bus privileges (if appropriate)
- Participation in an informal counseling session related to the infraction
- Behavior Plan

Special Notes* See Sexual Offenses (Other), Level IV, for obscene or lewd material. Administrators must contact Miami-Dade Schools Police for any criminal conduct regardless of whether Schools Police Automated Reporting (SPAR) is indicated. If the victim of a crime requests a police report, the principal or designee must report the incident to the Miami-Dade Schools Police. **Special Notes:**** Good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact parent/guardian by telephone. ******* Send written notice to parent/guardian within 24 hours via U.S. mail. ***Refer to the Glossary for an explanation of unfamiliar words used in the Code of Student Conduct.***

Level II Behaviors are more serious than Level I because they significantly interfere with learning and/or the well-being of others. **Model student behavior** creates a safe learning environment and reduces disruption of the educational process.

Model students:

- Speak and act honestly and truthfully, show respect to others in words, actions and deeds, develop good study habits, complete all homework assignments, participate actively in class, and show empathy for others.
- Speak and act respectfully to all school personnel, obey all instructions given by persons in authority, cooperate with administrators, teachers and staff, members, leave school only when given permission, demonstrate behavior that is civil, respectful, polite and courteous, and follow school rules.
- Show respect for the property of others, demonstrate honesty, report all acts of vandalism to the proper authorities, and demonstrate school and community pride.
- Obey instructions, show respect to people in authority, care for the feelings of others, and treat others with respect.

Model students avoid:

- Cheating or misrepresenting the true facts, making false accusations, exhibiting behavior that instigates and provokes a negative reaction from others or encourages others to engage in a negative physical or verbal altercation, and talking about others and spreading rumors.
- Refusing to comply with school rules or directives from school staff members, distributing inappropriate materials, leaving school grounds without permission from a parent or school official, joining clubs or organizations not approved by the Miami-Dade County School Board, using profane or provocative language directed at others, participating in prohibited sales on school grounds, and possessing or using tobacco products.
- Taking or concealing the property of others without permission, destroying or defacing public or private property, and tarnishing the reputation of their school by damaging the property of others.
- Participating in or encouraging a confrontation with a staff member, becoming involved in a minor fighting incident, and harassing others by name-calling, gossiping or using gestures that intimidate others.

Level II Behaviors are more serious than Level I because they significantly interfere with learning and/or the well-being of others.

Seriously Disruptive Behaviors

- Cheating/Misrepresentation
- Confrontation with a staff member
- Defiance of school personnel
- Distribution of items or materials that are inappropriate for an educational setting*
- Failure to comply with previously prescribed corrective strategies
- False accusation
- Fighting (minor)
- Harassment (non-sexual or isolated)
- Instigative behavior
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Joining clubs or groups not approved by the School Board
- Libel
- Petty theft (under \$300.00)
- Use of profane or provocative language directed at someone
- Prohibited sales on school grounds (other than controlled substances)
- Possession and/or use of tobacco products
- Slander
- Vandalism (minor)

The principal or designee **must** select at least one of the following strategies from **PLAN II**. The use of appropriate strategies from previous PLAN may be used in conjunction with this PLAN. Principals may authorize the use of **PLAN III** for repeated, serious or habitual **Level II** infractions.

PLAN II RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

- Parent/guardian contact **
- School-based program that focuses on modifying the student's inappropriate behavior or promotes positive behavior
- Referred to Alternative to Suspension from school for one to five days***

Special Notes: * See Sexual Offenses (Other), Level IV, for obscene or lewd material. Administrators must contact Miami-Dade Schools Police for any criminal conduct regardless of whether Schools Police Automated Reporting (SPAR) is indicated. If the victim of a crime requests a police report, the principal or designee must report the incident to the Miami-Dade Schools Police. **Special Notes:**** Good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact parent/guardian by telephone. *** Send written notice to parent/guardian within 24 hours via U.S. mail. ***Refer to the Glossary for an explanation of unfamiliar words used in the Code of Student Conduct.***

LEVEL III behaviors are more serious than Level II because they endanger health and safety, damage property and/or cause serious disruptions to the learning environment. **Model student behavior** creates a safe learning environment and reduces disruption of the educational process.

Model students:

- Show respect, kindness, friendliness toward others, accept people based on their individual merits, demonstrate school pride by being active participants in protecting and maintaining the school campus, and report all acts of violence, harassment, or threats to the proper authorities.
- Treat others with respect and compassion, seek to resolve issues before they escalate, participate only in clubs and organizations sanctioned by their school, speak to others using positive and respectful language, and report all acts of violence, harassment, or threats to the proper authorities.

- Respect the rights and property of others, respect the laws of society dealing with the possession, use or sale of alcohol and drugs, maintain a healthy and safe lifestyle, and make contributions of time and energy to enrich the school environment.

Model students Avoid:

- Physically hurting or threatening another person, bullying others by using intimidation or teasing, and initiating or being involved in campus disruptions at school-sponsored events.
- Harassing others by using language or gestures that are demeaning to a person's race, gender, religion etc., participating in hazing activities, and using sexually suggestive comments or gestures to intimidate others.
- Entering a building or residence without permission from the owner, removing property from a building or residence without permission from the owner, possessing or selling alcohol, displaying or possessing a fake weapon; and endangering the health and safety of others.

LEVEL III Offensive/Harmful Behaviors

- Assault/Threat against a non-staff member
- Breaking and Entering/Burglary
- Bullying (repeated harassment) *
- Disruption on campus/Disorderly conduct
- Fighting (serious)
- Harassment (Civil Rights) **
- Hazing (misdemeanor)
- Possession or use of alcohol and/or controlled substances
- Possession of simulated weapons
- Sexual harassment**
- Trespassing
- Vandalism (major)

The principal or designee **must** select at least one of the following strategies from **PLAN III**. The use of appropriate strategies from previous PLANS may also be used in conjunction with this PLAN. Principals may authorize the use of **PLAN IV** for repeated, serious, or habitual **Level III** infractions.

PLAN III RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

- Parent/guardian contact***
- Alternative to Suspension from school for one to ten days****
- Permanent removal from class (placement review committee decision required)
- Recommendation for alternative educational setting
- Recommendation for expulsion

Special Notes: All Level III, IV, and V infractions, unless otherwise noted, require **Schools Police Automated Reporting (SPAR)**. Administrators must contact **Miami-Dade Schools Police**.

* Bullying infractions do not necessarily require a SPAR** Harassment Civil Rights and Sexual Harassment do not necessarily require a SPAR, but must be reported to the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Office of Civil Rights Compliance at 305-995-1580. **Special Notes:***** Good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact parent/guardian by telephone. **** Send written notice to parent/guardian within 24 hours via U.S. mail. ***Refer to the Glossary for an explanation of unfamiliar words used in the Code of Student Conduct.***

LEVEL IV behaviors are more serious acts of unacceptable behavior than Level III. They seriously endanger the health and well-being of others and/or damage property. These infractions are crimes requiring police involvement.

Model students:

- Project a positive and cooperative attitude towards staff members and classmates, are respectful, kind, friendly and get along well with others, use conflict management skills to resolve disagreements are obedient, and seek guidance from trusted adults for assistance and direction.
- Speak to others using respectful language, participates only in organizations sanctioned by their school, demonstrate behavior that is civil, respectful, polite, and courteous, and share materials that are educationally appropriate.
- Speak and act honestly and truthfully, follows all laws, show respect for the property of others, support law enforcement agencies and schools to promote the safety of all staff members and students, use school resources to resolve or report issues of concern, and associate only with people who do not use or sell weapons or controlled substances.

Model students avoid:

- Volatile situations that could escalate into violent actions, using violent physical actions or threats directed towards staff members, breaking school rules, and becoming involved with individuals who do not respect or follow the laws of the community.
- Using language or actions that slander others because of their race, gender, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, political beliefs, marital status, age, sexual orientation, language, pregnancy or disability and family background, participating in any form of club initiation or activity that creates the risk of harm to others, and giving, possessing or sharing obscene or lewd materials.
- Taking the property of others without permission, committing grand theft by taking property valued at \$300.00 or more from others, and possessing, using, distributing or selling any object, controlled substance or weapon that could inflict serious harm or place a person in fear of serious harm.

LEVEL IV Dangerous or Violent Behaviors

- Battery against a non-staff member
- Grand theft (over \$300.00)
- Hate crime
- Hazing (felony)
- Motor vehicle theft
- Other major crimes/incidents
- Sale and/or distribution of alcohol and/or controlled substances
- Sex offenses (other) (including possession and/or distribution of obscene or lewd materials)

The principal or designee **must** use the following strategies from **PLAN IV**. The use of appropriate strategies from previous PLANS may also be used in conjunction with this PLAN.

PLAN IV RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

- Parent/guardian contact*
- Alternative to Suspension from school for one to ten days**
- Recommendation for alternative educational setting
- Recommendation for expulsion.

Special Notes: All Level III, IV, and V infractions require Schools Police Automated Reporting (SPAR). Administrators must contact Miami-Dade Schools Police. **Special Notes:*** Good Faith attempt must be made immediately to contact parent/guardian by telephone. ** Send written notice to parent/guardian within 24 hours via U.S. mail. ***Refer to the Glossary for an explanation of unfamiliar words used in the Code of Student Conduct.***

LEVEL V behaviors are the most serious acts of misconduct and violent actions that threaten life. These infractions are crimes requiring police involvement.

Model students:

- Accept responsibility for their own actions, respect life, show pride in their school and community, use adaptive skills for solving problems, maintain their self control at all times, seek assistance from a trusted adult to solve problems or report incidents of concern, and report any acts of aggression or violence between students or students and staff members to a staff member or law enforcement officer.
- Have respect for life, property and the safety of others, participate in programs to support law enforcement efforts to ensure safety for all in school and the community, are law abiding citizens, cooperate with school officials to create a positive learning environment, participate in investigations conducted by school staff or law enforcement agencies, and demonstrate pride in their school and community.

Model students avoid:

- Fighting with other students or staff members, hitting other students or staff members, speaking disrespectfully to students or staff members, engaging in or forcing others to participate in sexual acts, holding people against their will, threatening to take another person's life, using weapons, interrupting the school's learning environment, and withholding information needed to solve a crime.
- Setting a fire, interfering with the orderly learning environment, making a threat to the safety of others, providing false information, withholding information needed to solve a crime, and committing any act that would result in the destruction of property.

LEVEL V Behaviors are the most serious acts of misconduct and violent actions that threaten life.

Most Serious, Dangerous or Violent Behaviors

- Aggravated assault
- Aggravated battery against a non-staff member
- Armed robbery
- Arson
- Assault/Threat against M-DCPS employees or persons conducting official business
- Battery or Aggravated battery against M-DCPS employees or persons conducting official business*
- Homicide
- Kidnapping/Abduction
- Making a false report/threat against the school*
- Sexual battery
- Possession, use, sale, or distribution of firearms, explosives, destructive devices, and other weapons.*

The principal or designee **must** use the following strategies from **PLAN V**. The use of appropriate strategies from previous PLANS may also be used in conjunction with this PLAN.

PLAN V RANGE OF CORRECTIVE STRATEGIES

- Parent/guardian contact **
- Alternative to Suspension from school for ten days ***
- Recommendation for expulsion

Special Notes: All Level III, IV, and V infractions require Schools Police Automated Reporting (SPAR). Administrators must contact Miami-Dade Schools Police. The possession of firearms or other weapons on school property may result in criminal penalties in addition to expulsion. * Mandatory one year expulsion.

Special Notes: ** Good faith attempt must be made immediately to contact parent/guardian by telephone.

*** Send written notice to parent/guardian within 24 hours via U.S. mail. This level of infraction may result in an expulsion requiring School Board action. *Refer to the Glossary for an explanation of unfamiliar words used in the Code of Student Conduct.*

Right to Learn

Philosophical Basis:

All students, in accordance with their age, grade level, and maturity, have the right to be involved in their education. Course selection and participation in school activities are an integral part of learning. Students' opinions concerning course materials, content, and relevance are important and deserve analysis and consideration by educators.

Rights: Responsibilities:

- Students have the right of access to clear curriculum descriptions that will help them make more informed choices.
- Students have the right to participate in challenging, creative, academic programs at all levels in elementary, middle, and senior high schools.
- Students have the right to study all subjects under qualified instructors in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice.
- Secondary students have the right to representation on committees that participate in textbook selection and curriculum planning from individual school councils to district level.
- Students have the right of equal access to any extracurricular activity.
- Students with disabilities may be entitled to special services.
- Students have the responsibility to seek clarification, if necessary, from informed persons in the school.
- Students have the responsibility to strive for academic growth by participating to their utmost ability.
- Students have the responsibility to contribute to the development of a positive climate in the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.
- Students have the responsibility to respect the rights of others who have differing viewpoints, and become informed and knowledgeable about controversial issues.
- Students have the responsibility to involve themselves in committees and enrich their classes through participation in implementation and evaluation.
- Students have the responsibility to request participation in any extracurricular activity.

Knowledge and Observation of Rules of Conduct

Philosophical Basis:

The most effective learning takes place in an atmosphere where students, parents/guardians, and school staff are fully aware of the grounds for corrective strategies and the procedures to be followed for violations of the Code of Student Conduct.

Rights: Responsibilities:

- Students have the right to a clear explanation of the Code of Student Conduct in understandable language. They have the right to know the consequences of their misconduct.

- Students have the responsibility to become familiar with the Code of Student Conduct and to observe all school and classroom rules.

Respect for Persons and Property

Philosophical Basis:

Students have an obligation to assume responsibility for their own actions regarding respect for other persons and their property. The school must provide a climate that fosters respect for persons and property.

Rights: Responsibilities:

- Students have the right to be treated with courtesy and respect.
- Students have the right to an environment where public or private property rights are respected.
- Students have the right to expect safe conditions at school, at bus stops, on the school bus and during school-sponsored activities.
- Students have the right to an environment free of harassment.
- Students have the responsibility to show respect and courtesy to fellow students, all School Board personnel and campus visitors.
- Students have the responsibility for neither taking nor damaging the property of fellow students, school personnel or the school.
- Students have the responsibility to respect the privacy and property of persons living in areas surrounding schools and bus stops. Additionally, students have the responsibility to contribute to a safe learning environment by reporting criminal acts and potentially harmful or dangerous situations to an adult.
- Students have the responsibility not to harass other students.

Attendance

Philosophical Basis:

School administrators have an obligation under state law to enforce compulsory school attendance laws.

Students have an obligation to avail themselves of the opportunity for public school education, an education that should help the students develop the skills and knowledge necessary to function in a modern, democratic society.

Rights: Responsibilities:

- Students have the right to information on rules, policies and procedures that clearly define excused absences, unexcused absences, and tardies.
- Students have the right not to be penalized in any way for excused absences. Participation in a school sponsored activity shall be considered an excused absence.
- Students have the right to make up class work within three days of returning to school in the case of an excused absence or absence because of suspension.
- Students have the responsibility to take advantage of their educational opportunity by attending all classes daily and on time, unless circumstances beyond their control prevent them from doing so.
- Students have the responsibility to provide the school an adequate explanation for an absence with appropriate documentation.
- Students have the responsibility to request the makeup assignments from their teachers for excused absences upon their return to school and to complete this work within three days.

Grades

Philosophical Basis:

Grades, at best, are but an indicator of the students' knowledge or skill at any particular time. Grades are not necessarily an accurate gauge as to whether learning has taken place. However, since much emphasis is placed upon grades, students' academic grades should reflect the teacher's most objective assessment of students' academic achievement. Academic grades should not be used as a threat in order to maintain classroom decorum.

Rights: Responsibilities:

- Students have the right to be informed of the teacher's grading criteria, which is consistent with district guidelines, at the beginning of each grading period.
- Students have the right to receive an academic grade that reflects their achievement.
- Students have the right to be notified when they are performing unsatisfactorily.
- Students have the right to receive a conduct and effort grade in each class consistent with their overall behavior and effort.
- Students have the right to achieve academic success based upon their own initiative and ability without interference from others.
- Students have the responsibility to ask teachers in advance of a graded assignment for an explanation of any grading criteria or practice they may question or that needs clarification.

- Students have the responsibility to maintain reasonable standards of academic performance commensurate with their ability.
- Students have the responsibility to make every effort to improve their performance upon receipt or notification of unsatisfactory performance.
- Students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in each class in ways that are conducive to the learning process.
- Students have the responsibility to earn grades based upon their performance while guarding against cheating by other students.

Search and Seizure

Philosophical Basis:

Students possess the right of privacy of person as well as freedom from unreasonable search and seizure of property guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution. That individual's right, however, is balanced by the school's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all its students.

Rights: Responsibilities: • Students have the right to privacy regarding their personal possessions unless the principal has a reasonable suspicion that they are in possession of or concealing materials prohibited by law.

- Students have the right to prior notification of any general search of lockers, except in emergency situations.
- Students have the right to use authorized locks on school-owned lockers.
- Students have the right to notice that they may be subject to search for weapons by metal detectors while on school grounds or at school functions at any time. *
- Students have the responsibility not to carry or conceal any material prohibited by law or by the Code of Student Conduct.
- Students are responsible for the contents of their lockers and on their person/bookbag/purse.
- Students have the responsibility to adhere to policies governing the use of school lockers.

** School personnel and/or members of the Miami-Dade Schools Police Department have the right to search lockers if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the contents include weapons, stolen goods, contraband*, illegal controlled substances or mood modifiers.*

Signs that advise students and visitors that they are subject to search for weapons by metal detectors will be posted in prominent locations at each secondary school and adult vocational site.

ALERT: ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

The School Board enforces the Florida Department of Education Zero Tolerance Policy on school violence, crime, and the use of weapons. As an approach to reducing school violence, the intent of the policy is to provide a safe school climate that is drug-free and protects student health, safety, and civil rights. This policy requires the school district to impose the most severe consequences provided for in the Code of Student Conduct in dealing with students who engage in violent criminal acts, such as

- homicide
- sexual battery
- aggravated battery on non-school personnel
- assault or battery on a teacher or other school personnel
- kidnapping or abduction
- arson
- possession, use, or sale of any firearm and
- possession, use, or sale of any explosive device on school property, on school sponsored transportation, or during school-sponsored activities.

The State of Florida Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1965 requires the School District to link juvenile violent incidents to the action taken by the student's school and the District. The District is required to collect data about violent incidents involving students during each school year and transmit a report to the state. Certain infractions in the Code of Student Conduct may result in criminal penalties as well as utilization of administrative corrective strategies.

ALERT: WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Wireless communication devices include two-way communication devices, such as cellular phones, mobile phones, MP3 players, electronic games, beepers, pagers, portable computers, personal organizers, and similar wireless devices. Possessing a wireless communication device is not a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. However, a student **should not disrupt the educational process or interfere with the safety-to-life issues of students by using a wireless communication device.** The following rules must be followed regarding the possession, use, and display of wireless communication devices:

- Students may possess, display and use wireless communication devices before or after the instructional day.
- Students shall avoid classroom disruptions, by not displaying, using, or activating wireless communication devices during the instructional day unless directed by adult.
- Students must ensure that devices are turned off during the instructional day.

- Students must conceal wireless communication devices in a backpack, pocket, purse or other container during the instructional day.

- The school is not responsible if a student's wireless communication device is lost or stolen.

The sole possession of a cellular telephone is not a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. However, the possession of a cellular telephone that disrupts the educational process, the use of the cellular telephone during school hours, use of a cellular phone to commit a crime, and the possession or use of a cellular telephone that disrupts or interferes with the safety-to-life issue for students being transported on a Miami-Dade County Public Schools bus, are infractions of the Code of Student Conduct.

ALERT: UTILIZATION OF THE INTERNET AND INAPPROPRIATE USE OF COMPUTERS

Over the past few years, computers have become common household devices and popular in our schools and media centers. Students are encouraged to use computers, networks, and online telecommunication such as the Internet and electronic mail (e-mail). While exercising the right to use available technology, students must be aware of their responsibility as users. Advancement of technology has enabled many students with the access and opportunity to commit offenses that violate the Code of Student Conduct. The following are examples of improper uses of technology and are violations of the Code of Student Conduct:

- Using the network to send or receive obscene or lewd material
 - Using the network to make threats against anyone or the school
 - Sending electronic mail that threatens to do bodily harm to another student that might be considered assault or cyber-bullying
 - Downloading pirated software (is comparable to stealing)
 - Willfully and knowingly obtaining an unauthorized access to or "hacking" into the school's computer system (constitutes vandalism);
 - Using, without authorization, school property, a school computer or other electronic device, and damaging a school's computer system or causing the computer to "crash" (constitutes a "computer-related" crime leading to criminal charges).
- These are only a few examples of violations committed through electronic means. The school administration will evaluate and determine the appropriate level infraction under the Code of Student Conduct. Refer to the School Board Rule 6Gx13-6A-1.112 for further explanation.

INDOOR SUSPENSION/ASSIGNMENT TO SCHOOL CENTER FOR SPECIAL INSTRUCTION (SCSI)

As an alternative to outdoor suspension from school, the principal may elect to use any supervised Board-approved alternative. One such option is to assign the student to the School Center for Special Instruction (SCSI). The center should be designed to provide tutorial and guidance services. Parents/guardians may request this action as an alternative to outdoor suspension, but the final decision rests with the principal.

When misconduct in a class results in an assignment to SCSI, the student should be removed from only the class where the misconduct occurred. Continued misconduct can result in removal from all classes if deemed appropriate by the principal.

ASSIGNMENT TO AN ALTERNATIVE INTERVENTION COUNSELING CENTER

As an alternative to suspension from school, the principal may elect to assign a student to the Alternative Intervention Counseling Center. The Alternative Intervention Counseling Center Program is an alternative to suspension that provides individual/group counseling services for students with substance-related and/or other self-defeating behavior. Parents/guardians may request this action as an alternative to outdoor suspension, but the final decision rests with the principal.

PEER MEDIATION The principal may elect to establish a peer mediation program designed to resolve problems addressed in the Code of Student Conduct. The establishment and use of this program rests with the principal.

DENIAL OF BUS PRIVILEGES

Students can be denied the privilege of riding a school bus for persistent or serious violations of the Code of Student Conduct that occur on the bus or at the bus stop. The revocation of a student's bus privilege may or may not impact the student's educational participation. Such action may be taken by the school principal, who subsequently informs the student and parent/guardian of the denial of bus privileges and requests a parent/guardian conference. Such privileges may be restored by the principal following a conference with the parent/guardian and student when there is good reason to believe that the conduct in question will not recur.

ALTERNATIVE to SUSPENSION

A principal may suspend a student from school for one (1) to ten (10) days for persistent disobedience and/or serious misconduct. Principals take this action when they have exhausted informal corrective strategies, or when they have at least considered those alternatives and rejected them as inappropriate in a given situation.

Alternative to Suspension is appropriate under the following conditions:

- The student's presence in school presents a physical danger to the student or others
- A "cooling off" period is needed to relieve tensions and relieve pressure and/or
- Continuous Disruptive Behavior that effects the learning environment

A suspended student has the right to request and obtain make-up assignments for the time he or she was suspended from school. It is the responsibility of the student to request make-up work for assignments missed due a suspension. A suspended student is entitled to be notified of the reason for suspension and an opportunity to be heard. Parents/Guardians must be provided notice within 24 hours by U.S. mail.

ASSIGNMENT TO OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL

A principal may request an administrative placement in an Opportunity School Program. This action is taken only when less severe strategies are deemed inappropriate. If the nature of the student's behavior warrants, the Superintendent's designee will approve the request and assign the student to one of the opportunity schools. This assignment will remain in effect until the appropriate administrator determines that the student is ready to return to the regular school program.

EXPULSION A principal may request that the Superintendent recommend to the School Board that a student be expelled. Principals may take this action when they have exhausted less severe administrative corrective strategies, or when they have considered those alternatives and rejected them as inappropriate in the given situation. If a student who is currently enrolled in an exceptional student education program or who has a Section 504 Plan commits a disruptive act of sufficient severity that warrants a recommendation for expulsion, the student must be referred immediately to the Regional Center Assistant Superintendent and the Regional Center Exceptional Student Placement Committee. Only the School Board can approve an expulsion. The maximum period of time for an expulsion may not exceed the remainder of the term or school year, the summer session, plus one additional school year of attendance. An expelled student is entitled to due process, including a hearing.

BEHAVIORS THAT MAY RESULT IN CRIMINAL PENALTIES

The following behaviors are grounds for corrective strategies by the school and may also result in criminal penalties:

- Illegal use, possession, or sale of controlled substances while on school grounds or attending a school function
- Use of a wireless communication device in the commission of a crime
- Possession of a firearm or weapon while on school grounds or at a school function
- Violence against any district School Board personnel
- Disruptive behavior on a school bus, or at a bus stop, or other violation of the School Board's transportation policy
- Violation of the School Board's sexual harassment policy and
- Making a threat or false report involving destructive devices or explosives directed against a school, school personnel property, school transportation, or school-sponsored activity.

Glossary:

Arson: Willfully, or while committing any felony, causing damage to a building, structure, or dwelling by fire or explosion. The girl was arrested for **arson** and expelled because she started a fire in the restroom.

Assault/Threat: An intentional, unlawful threat by word or act to do violence to another, coupled with the apparent ability to do so, and doing some act, which creates a well-founded fear in the other person that such violence is imminent. The students **assaulted** another girl by sending her notes saying that they would beat her up right after class.

Aggravated assault: An assault with the use of a weapon or with the intent to commit another felony. Using a weapon to attempt harming someone is **aggravated assault**.

Battery: Actually and intentionally touching or striking another against his or her will, or intentionally causing bodily harm to another. *Under Florida law, battery that causes great bodily harm, permanent disfigurement, or permanent disability is called "felony battery."* Under the law, battery, felony battery, and aggravated battery are distinguishable. The student **battered** the teacher by pushing her against the wall. **Assault and/or battery committed against a staff member require a mandatory recommendation for expulsion. Administrators distinguish battery from fighting by reporting an incident as battery only when force or violence is carried out against a person who is not fighting back or is merely attempting to shield his or her body from attack.*

Aggravated battery: Intentionally or knowingly causing great bodily harm, permanent disfigurement, or permanent disability to another, or committing battery against another with the use of a deadly weapon. Injuring someone who is physically disabled to the point where he/she cannot fight back might constitute **aggravated battery**.

Behavior: The way people act or react or the way they conduct themselves. There is certain **behavior** that is acceptable at school and certain **behavior** that is unacceptable at school. This Code of Student Conduct will help you distinguish between them.

Bullying/Harassment: Repeatedly using hostile, intimidating, domineering, or threatening behavior with the intent or purpose of physically or mentally hurting another individual. Bullying occurs within an interpersonal relationship characterized by an imbalance of power (physical or psychological). Unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing acts, by an adult or student that are severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment. Students should report **bullying** to an adult whom they trust so that it can be addressed. **Burglary/Breaking and Entering:** Entering a building, structure, or dwelling with the intent to commit an offense therein, without license or invitation to enter, unless the structure is open to the public, or remaining in a building, structure, or dwelling after permission has been withdrawn, surreptitiously with the intent to commit an offense. The students committed **burglary** by crawling through the unlocked window to steal the school's camera.

Cheating: Using unauthorized answers or sources to receive credit for schoolwork. Some examples are looking at someone else's paper, copying from your notebook when you are supposed to use only your memory, or copying someone else's homework because you did not complete yours. The teacher accused him of **cheating** when she found answers to the test written on his desk.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating when you present another person's words or ideas as your own without giving the originator credit for the information. Some common examples of plagiarism are copying information from a book without using quotation marks and without including a bibliography at the end of the assignment listing the sources used. All information in academic assignments that is not common knowledge must be cited and documented. An example of common knowledge is: Miami is a city in Florida. She **plagiarized** the information in her report by not giving credit to the author for his ideas.

Confrontation: An argument or squabble. The student was disrespectful for causing a **confrontation** with the custodian when asked not to walk on the wet floor.

Controlled substances (Drugs): Mind-altering or mood-altering drugs, including but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, heroin, various pills, etc. Possession, use, sale, and/or distribution of controlled substances will result in corrective strategies at school and may lead to arrest and criminal penalties. Use of **controlled substances** can be deadly. * *Chapter 893, Florida Statutes (Drug Abuse Prevention and Control) provides a more extensive list of controlled substances.*

Cutting class: Not going to class when you are supposed to be in class. The girls who tried to sign in to school after first period were caught and assigned detention for **cutting class**.

Defiance: Refusing to follow the directions of authority figures within the school, such as administrators, teachers, office workers, custodians, volunteer parents/guardians, cafeteria workers, and others. He received detention for **defying** the cafeteria manager by refusing to pick up his lunch tray when she told him to do so.

Destructive device: Any bomb, grenade, mine, rocket, missile, pipebomb, or similar device containing an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas and includes any frangible container filled with an explosive, incendiary, explosive gas, or expanding gas, which is designed or so constructed as to explode by such filler and is capable of causing bodily harm or property damage; any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled; any device declared a destructive device by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; any type of weapon which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of any explosive and which has a barrel with a bore of one-half inch or more in diameter; and ammunition for such destructive devices, but not including shotgun shells or any other ammunition designed for use in a firearm other than a destructive device. Students shall be expelled for bringing **destructive devices** to school.

Detention: A corrective strategy wherein a student must spend time at school, either before or after the regular school day or on a Saturday.

The student served **detention** for one week after school for breaking a window.

Disciplinary Actions: Methods or steps used to help students learn how to follow school rules and to protect the safety of everyone at school. The student consequences for **disciplinary actions** according to the Code of Student Conduct are designed to assist students in improving their behavior.

Disruption: Behavior that disturbs the learning and/or safety of others in class, on the school bus and at the bus stop. The math class could not focus on preparing for FCAT because the girls' constant chatting was **disruptive**.

Disruption on campus/ Disorderly conduct: Behavior that seriously interferes with an orderly learning environment or poses a threat to the safety of others, including but not limited to making a false fire alarm. Initiating or participating in a brawl at a school event is a **disruption on campus** that can lead to serious disciplinary consequences.

Distribution: Giving out, sharing, dispensing to others. She was expelled for **distributing** pills to other students.

Drugs: Mind-altering or mood-altering beverages or substances, including but not limited to alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, pills, etc. Possession, use, sale, or distribution of controlled substances that results in corrective actions at school may lead to arrest and criminal penalties. **Drugs** are sometimes deadly, especially for young people.

Electronic devices: Any device that is powered by electricity or a battery, which is not required by the curriculum and includes items such as but not limited to compact disc players, MP3 players, headphones, cellular phones, PDAs, and cameras. Unauthorized use of **electronic devices** can disrupt the learning process.

Expulsion: A corrective actions that means that you are no longer allowed to attend your current school. The student was **expelled** for carrying a knife.

False report/Bomb threat: Any action that causes people to believe that the school is under a serious threat, including but not limited to explosives and weapons of mass destruction. Students who make an illegal **false bomb report** could be expelled and receive serious criminal penalties. *Chapter 790.162 and 790.163, Florida Statutes (Weapons and Firearms), further define the making of a false threat or report. *Making a false report requires a mandatory recommendation for expulsion for not less than one year and may lead to arrest and criminal penalties.*

Felony: A serious crime, often punishable by imprisonment exceeding one year. Many of the infractions in the Code of Student Conduct are also **felonies** under criminal law and are punishable as such.

Fighting: Two or more students trying to physically hurt each other. Fighting often begins with a disagreement between students that can be solved without fighting. (See Fighting Minor and Fighting Serious)

Fighting (minor): Occurs when two or more students engage in physical force against each other and

• they stop when an authority figure gives them a verbal command to stop, **AND** there are no injuries that require medical attention as a result of the fight. The students began to engage in a **minor fighting incident**, but they calmed down when the teacher told them to stop.

Fighting (serious): Occurs when two or more students engage in physical force or violence against each other and • they become so enraged that they do not stop when given a verbal command to do so, **OR** physical restraint is required, **AND/OR** someone is injured to an extent that requires immediate first aid or medical attention. Serious fighting must be reported to school police. Any serious **fighting incident** that causes injury or requires medical attention would result in a suspension. *If the principal or designee determines that one student or a group of students attacked someone who did not fight back, the aggressors should receive punishment for battery, aggravated battery, and/or bullying, depending on the facts, and will likely be arrested. Otherwise, administrators will report all other incidents involving mutual participation as **Fighting (Serious)** without regard to who was the original aggressor.*

Firearms: Any weapon (including a starter gun) which 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 such firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device; or any machine gun. Students shall be expelled for bringing **firearms** to school.

Forgery (written misrepresentation): Making, altering, or signing a document with the intent to defraud or signing another person's signature without the person's consent. The student was not permitted to go on the field trip because she **forged** her mother's name on the permission slip.

Gambling: Participating in games of chance for money and/or other things of value. Throwing dice for money is **gambling**.

Harassment: Conduct directed at a person that causes him/her to feel intimidated or verbally, mentally, or emotionally abused, or that causes him/her substantial emotional distress. What some people think is "just joking around" might constitute **harassment** if the person at whom it is directed is distressed by it. Repeated harassment is **bullying**.

Harassment (Civil Rights): Harassment directed at someone because of his or her gender, race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, political beliefs, marital status, age, sexual orientation, social and family background, language, pregnancy, or disability. Telling someone that he is stupid because he is from a different country is **harassment** based on a characteristic concerning his **civil rights**.

Hate crime: A crime committed against someone that is motivated by hatred of his/her personal characteristics or perceived characteristics, such as religion, color, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ancestry, and/or national origin. Hate crimes are similar to harassment (civil rights), but they involve other serious crimes committed against someone. See "Other Major Crimes/Incidents." The students committed a **hate crime** when they beat up a student because of his religious beliefs.

Hazing: Pressuring or coercing another student into violating laws. Any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug, or other substance, or other forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the student. **OR** Any activity that would subject another student to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment, or other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the student. Any act of hazing that causes risk of serious bodily injury or death is a misdemeanor. Any act of hazing that results in serious bodily injury or death is a felony. **Hazing** is not allowed in school. **Hazing (felony):** Any act of hazing that results in serious bodily injury or death. **Hazing (misdemeanor):** Any act of hazing that causes risk of serious bodily injury or death.

Inappropriate items: Items unsuitable for school because they tend to disrupt the learning environment. Magazines that feature violent video games are **inappropriate items** for school.

Inappropriate public display of affection: Engaging in unsuitable, intimate, sexually-suggestive behavior (like kissing and touching), in agreement with someone else, in places where others are likely to be present, such as hallways, stairwells, classrooms, school buses, etc. Kissing in the hallway and stairwells is an example of an **inappropriate public display of affection**. Engaging in this type of behavior in hidden places is also inappropriate, and depending on the circumstances, may constitute a more serious infraction. See **Sexual Offenses**.

Infraction: The breaking of a school rule; a violation; an infringement. Every **infraction** in the Code of Student Conduct has a range of corrective responses.

Instigative behavior: Behavior that incites or urges others to do something wrong. The student **instigated** his classmates by daring them to fight.

Intimidate: To make another person afraid. **Intimidation** can sometimes be considered harassment or bullying.

Lewd: Vulgar, indecent, improper, or naughty and of a sexual nature. The student called her friend a derogatory word that was considered **lewd**.

Libel: A writing (including computer-typed), picture, sign, or any other form of print that is false and capable of injuring another person's reputation through publication and/or distribution. Passing around an untrue note about someone might constitute **libel**, and if so, is actionable in civil court.

Obscene material: Material that is indecent, lewd, and improper for school. Students should not bring **obscene materials**, like adult magazines, to school.

Other major crimes/incidents: Major incidents not otherwise defined in this glossary. Serious or harmful incidents resulting in the need for law enforcement intervention. Students may be disciplined for off-campus felony offenses in certain circumstances. Commission of crimes that results in corrective actions at school may lead to arrest and criminal penalties. (e.g., gambling, if incident requires police involvement) Knowingly using counterfeit money in the school cafeteria is an example of an **other major crime/incident**.

Possession: Having control or ownership. The drugs in his **possession** were confiscated before his arrest.

Profane: Vulgar, crude, indecent. Cuss words are considered **profanity**.

Provocative: Disrespectful conduct or words that tend to cause anger, rage, or humiliation in the person at whom they are directed. The student's **provocative** words "I hate you" upset the teacher.

Reprimand: An explanation of how a behavior is inappropriate and a warning of the future consequence for doing it again. The assistant principal **reprimanded** the student for using profane language.

Responsibility: An expectation, duty, or obligation to behave a certain way. As a student, I have a **responsibility** to respect the property of others.

Robbery: The taking of money or property from another through use of force, violence, assault, or putting in fear. The gang surrounded the boy in a circle and **robbed** him of his electronic game.

Aggravated robbery: The taking of money or property from another through force or fear and causing serious injury during the robbery. The man was arrested for **aggravated robbery** when the old lady had a heart attack after he robbed her.

Armed robbery: The taking of money or property from another through use of force, violence, assault, or putting in fear and while having a weapon. The **armed robber** told the cashier that he would use the gun in his pocket unless she gave him all of the money.

Sexual battery: Using force or the threat of force to touch, feel, or hurt someone in a sexual way against his or her will, or to use force to attempt to do so. Touching another person's private body parts without his/her consent is **sexual battery**.

Sexual harassment: Displaying unwanted and repeated conduct of a sexual nature that substantially interferes with a student's academic performance and/or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment, or causes discomfort or humiliation for that student. The student was suspended for **sexual harassment** because he repeatedly talked about a female student's private parts, making her feel uncomfortable.

Sexual offenses (Other): Sexual contact in a lewd manner. A variety of actions can be characterized as sexual offenses at school. Examples include, but are not limited to possessing and/or distributing obscene or lewd materials at school, exposing or touching private body parts in a lewd manner, touching someone else's body in a lewd manner, voyeurism (e.g., secretly looking at someone in the restroom or locker room without his/her knowledge), consensual sexual activity on school grounds between students who are 16-years old or older, any type of sexual contact with a student who is under age 16 years old. **Under Florida law, students who are under 16 years of age cannot legally consent to sex.*

Smoking: Holding a lighted cigarette (cigar, etc.), drawing in and exhaling the smoke of tobacco, or use of any tobacco product. **Smoking** cigarettes is unhealthy. (this includes e-cigarettes/devices)

Stealing/Theft: Knowingly obtaining or using the property of another with the intent to temporarily or permanently deprive the owner of its use or benefit. He **stole** the library book when he slipped it into his backpack and left the library.

Suspension: A corrective response to serious behavior to avoid where the student is not permitted to attend the regular school program. Serious behavioral infractions at school result in **suspension**.

Petty theft: Knowingly obtaining or using the property of another under \$300.00 in value with the intent to temporarily or permanently deprive the owner of its use or benefit. The principal called school police to report a **petty theft** of a student's purse.

Threat/Assault: An intentional, unlawful threat by word or act to do violence to another, coupled with the apparent ability to do so, and doing some act, which creates a well-founded fear in the other person that such violence is imminent. The student was suspended for making a **threat** to slap the teacher.

Trespassing: Entering and/or remaining upon a school campus, school transportation, or at school sponsored events off campus or other School Board property without authorization or invitation to enter or remain, including students who are suspended or expelled. The student was **trespassing** when he entered the school after being warned by the principal that the school was closed.

Vandalism: The intentional destruction, damage, or defacement of public or private property without consent of the owner or the person having custody or control of it. **Major:** resulting in damages over \$1,000.00. **Minor:** resulting in damages under \$1,000.00. The student committed **vandalism** when he spray painted graffiti on the school.

Violation/Infraction: The breaking of a school rule; an infringement. For every behavior **violation** there is a recommended corrective strategy.

Violence: Physical force used to injure, damage, or destroy. We try to keep our schools free of **violence**.

Weapons: Any instrument that can be used to inflict serious harm on another person or that places another person in fear of serious harm. Examples include but are not limited to all types of firearms (weapons used to shoot with, such as guns), dart-guns, stun guns, dirks (daggers), knives*, metallic knuckles, clubs, tear gas guns, chemical weapons or devices, bombs, aerosols, and other destructive devices (any item that can explode or cause destruction, such as grenades, mines, rockets, or missiles). This definition excludes simulated weapons. **Although common pocket knives are not classified as weapons under the Florida criminal code, M-DCPS students are prohibited from carrying pocket knives on*

school property. School Operations/Alternative Education will determine the appropriate disciplinary action to apply based on the item that is confiscated. Everyday objects can become **weapons** if they are used to seriously harm or attempt to seriously harm someone. **Chapter 790.001, Florida Statutes (Weapons and Firearms), provides a further definition of weapons.* **Simulated weapons:** Any instrument that looks like a weapon but is not a weapon. Toy guns are **simulated weapons**. **Weapons possession, use, sale, or distribution:** Having, using, selling, or distributing any instrument or object that can inflict serious harm or place a person in reasonable fear of serious harm. See “weapons” above. **Under Florida’s **Zero Tolerance** law, no person, unless part of one’s law enforcement responsibilities, shall bring upon school property or have in his or her possession, while on school property, any firearms, weapons or other destructive devices as defined in Florida Statute 790.001. Pursuant to Florida State Statute 790.115(2)(a)3, this prohibition shall include any firearm or weapon securely encased in a vehicle or other private conveyance on a campus. Possession, use, sale, or distribution of firearms that results in disciplinary action at school may lead to arrest and criminal penalties.* Possession, use, sale, and/or distribution of weapons that results in disciplinary action at school may lead to arrest and criminal penalties. **Weapons** are prohibited to provide a safe environment for all students.

Zero Tolerance: A principle that violence will not be tolerated at school, during school activities, on school property, or on school-sponsored transportation. The **zero tolerance** policy will help keep our schools a safe place for students.

For a full copy of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Code of Student Conduct, please visit:

<https://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/policies/90/Secondary-COSC-English.pdf>