

**CLIFFSIDE PARK
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
CODE OF STUDENT
CONDUCT**



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Statement of Philosophy

The mission of the Cliffside Park School District is to provide students with a safe, academically focused environment within our culturally diverse community. We will challenge each student to confidently achieve his or her educational and personal goals as well as acquire the work and social skills essential to become a productive member of society.

Introduction

Although the student code of conduct contains a list of infractions, it is clearly intended not to be all inclusive, since no list can be. It should be noted that the administration and/or the Board of Education have the power to administer discipline for any offense which is in violation of what is deemed acceptable conduct for students in the Cliffside Park School District. School is a place where students not only learn about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, but also gain valuable experience in appropriately exercising them. It is important to strike a balance between rights and responsibilities in order to contribute to the maintenance of a school environment which is positive, conducive to learning and safe for all members of the school community. In accordance with this philosophy, all students and staff will be required to wear an ID badge.

This code of conduct has been prepared to specify:

- Acceptable behavior and unacceptable behavior.
- Procedures to determine violations of rules.
- Consequences for such violations.

The school acts "in loco parentis," that is, in the place of the parent with respect to the supervision of a student's education and conduct while he/she is in school. This authority and the code of conduct, extends to school sponsored functions.

Each student is guaranteed the right:

- To be heard.
- To have fair and consistent rules.
- To have access to due process procedures.

These student rights are accompanied by student responsibilities:

- To attend school and classes regularly.
- To respect school property.
- To refrain from conduct that disrupts or threatens to disrupt the learning of other students.

The code of conduct has been developed to address the responsibilities of students to attend school and to attend classes, clearly outlining the possible immediate benefits and/or long-term consequences of excessive absences, truancy, class cuts, and tardiness.

Code of Conduct

The following behaviors will not be accepted and will result in disciplinary or administrative action.

Insubordination: Refusing to follow faculty or staff instructions regarding classroom or school behavior.

Use of vulgar language: Any use of vulgar language is a violation of the code of conduct.

Leaving class without permission: Only authorized faculty passes may be used in the halls.

Failure to clean cafeteria debris: Every student is responsible for his/her debris. Use of the cafeteria is a student privilege which can be revoked at any time.

Fighting: Cliffside Park maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards violence and in most cases, both Parties will be suspended.

Vandalism: Willful destruction or defacing of school property will result in suspension and/or restitution of damaged property.

Stealing: Results in suspension and/or restitution.

Leaving school grounds: Students are prohibited from leaving grounds at any time.

Failure to adhere to the dress code: See dress code policy.

Prohibited personal items: Students are not permitted to bring electronic items such as: iPods, iPads, radios, video games, or laser lights into the building.

Cell Phones: All cell phones are to be kept off and locked in lockers. Cell phone use is not permitted during the school day (8:00 am to 3:00 pm). Students needing to contact home for emergency purposes should ask to use one of our office phones.

Consequences

Disciplinary action may include: detention, out-of-school suspension, in-school suspension, withholding of school privileges and parental conferences.

For students with disabilities, subject to Individualized Education Programs in accordance with 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq., the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act and accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. §§ 794 and 705(20), the Code of Student Conduct shall be implemented in accordance with the components of the applicable plans.

Care of school property

The citizens of the Cliffside Park School District have provided the students of Cliffside Park with safe building and many exceptional educational resources. The students are expected to show their appreciation by taking care of the building, grounds, textbooks and all equipment. Any student who defaces, damages or destroys school property will be required to repair, replace, or pay for the damaged item and may also face: further disciplinary action. Except in cases of unavoidable accidents, students are liable for all damages they may do to school property.

Appeal Process

Oral or written notification of the charges must be provided to the student and parent(s), including specific charges, relevant facts and due process rights. They must be given the opportunity to address the charges at an informal meeting with Principal.

Student Dress Code

The faculty, administration, and students of the Cliffside Park School District agree that certain standards of appearance are necessary to create and maintain an appropriate environment for learning. At the same time, we believe that, within the framework provided by the New Jersey School Laws, school attire is primarily the responsibility of the student and his/her parents. Further, we recognize that styles and fashions change from time to time and that such changes will be reflected in the attire of the student body. Our dress code reflects guidelines for school attire designed to preserve the learning climate, to respect individual student rights of dress and grooming choices, and to allow for changes in customs, styles and fashions.

- Footwear must be worn at all times and it should be appropriate and safe for each activity. Sneakers are the only approved footwear for physical education classes. Consequently, bare feet, unsafe footwear, and footwear intended for the beach. e.g., flip-flops of any type, are not permitted
- Clothing shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times. Clothing such as see-through or fishnet fabrics, halter-tops, tube tops, low-cut tops, and bare midriffs are prohibited. All students' shirts, blouses, and dresses should cover the shoulder top. Dresses, skirts, and shorts must cover to at least mid-- thigh length. Undergarments are not to be worn as outer garments. Torn or ripped garments are not to be worn. Shorts or short-like apparel may be worn until September 30th and after May 1st all attire should be mid-thigh or longer in length. "Short shorts" are not permitted.
- Clothing or jewelry, which displays obscene words or pictures, will be prohibited. Chains or jewelry, which could be used unsafely, are also prohibited.
- Basketball jerseys and tank tops are acceptable only if worn with a t-shirt or appropriate cover-up.
- Hats, bandanas and other headwear are not to be worn in the building.
- Outdoor jackets and coats are not to be worn indoors except when entering or leaving the building or when there is a defect in the heating system.
- Clothing is to be worn as the design was intended. That is, the waistband of pants and shorts should be fastened at the waist.
- Non-prescription sunglasses, glazed and tinted glasses, except as prescribed by the pupil's doctor, are not to be worn indoors.
- Students are prohibited from wearing, while on school property, any type of clothing, apparel, or accessory, which indicates that the pupil has membership in, or affiliation with, any gang or group associated with criminal activities.
- Long t-shirts below mid-thigh are prohibited.
- Body adornments, including but not limited to, body piercing jewelry, which may jeopardize the safety and well-being of the student or others are prohibited during physical education classes.
- Any of the rules regarding the dress code are subject to the interpretation and/or discretion of the school administration. The administration also reserves the right to exclude students who are inappropriately attired from attending class.

Elementary Attendance Policy

All students are entitled to a free and appropriate education. Good attendance, together with active participation and engagement, are the keys to their success. The Cliffside Park elementary schools will be incorporating a “Perfect Attendance” Award Program to recognize those students with perfect attendance for the marking period. However, the faculty and administration of the Cliffside Park School District also recognize the negative effects chronic absenteeism can have on a child’s education. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing at least 10% (18 days) of the school year.

Simply put:

2 absences per month X 9 months = Chronic Absenteeism

It is our goal to decrease absenteeism and tardiness, as students, even as young as preschool, are less likely to succeed in school if they are chronically absent. Therefore, the district will be implementing the following response plan in all our elementary schools:

Absences:

For up to (4) cumulative absences, the principal or designee (i.e. secretary, guidance counselor, nurse) shall notify the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) and possibly request a conference.

For between (5) and (9) cumulative absences, the principal or designee (i.e. secretary, guidance counselor, nurse) shall request a mandatory conference with the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) to determine the cause of the absences and develop an action plan specifying interventions to support the student’s regular attendance.

For (10) or more cumulative absences, the principal shall continue to meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s) through a mandatory conference as this is considered “truancy” under the guidelines of the state of NJ. The student’s absence history will be reported to Bergen County Crisis Intervention. This agency will assign a caseworker to be sent to the home. A determination regarding the need for a court referral will be made at this point.

Please note: The only exception for an absence is for observance of a religious holiday and students must return to school with a note stating such. Medical and dental appointments as well as extended vacations when school is in session are not permitted. Any student who is absent for ten consecutive school days without a doctor’s note must re-register at the Board of Education.

Tardiness:

Tardiness also affects a student’s performance in school. Negative effects of tardiness include anxiety, disorganization, and falling behind in all subject areas. At the discretion of the principal and/or teacher, students with an excessive number of tardies may be assigned disciplinary consequences. Parents will also be notified when students are excessively tardy. Students with tardies will not be considered for perfect attendance.

Hard facts to consider as reported in the U.S. Department of Education’s report “Every Student, Every Day”:

- Students who are chronically absent in preschool, kindergarten, and first grade are much less likely to read at grade level by third grade.
- Students who cannot read at grade level by the end of third grade are four times more likely than proficient readers to drop out of high school.

We are committed to working with you, our parents, to ensure every student gets the most of every day in school.