

FOREWARD

Across the nation, and the state, a rash of serious incidents, accidents and injuries have awakened educators, parents, and law enforcement officials to the need for more emphasis on maintaining order in the schools. The DeSoto County School Board has enacted and intends to enforce a strong Code of Student Conduct designed to teach children and youth to abide by the rules. The basis of the strict code is the concept of **RESPECT** -- respect for others, for property, for authority, and for self.

This latest revision to the district Code of Student Conduct emphasizes personal responsibility. Each STUDENT is responsible for his/her own behavior and for knowing the rules of his/her own school; TEACHERS are expected to handle minor misconduct thus avoiding referral to the principal or the principal's designee; and PARENTS are involved if possible. The offenses listed in this Code of Student Conduct are considered serious and will be enforced by school administrators and the Board as consistently as possible.

Unacceptable behaviors are defined uniformly, but ***the consequences vary depending on the degree of misconduct, the age and record of the student, and the judgment of the principal or the principal's designee.***



PHILOSOPHY

Florida Statutes 1006.07(2) requires each school district to distribute to students, parents, guardians, teachers, and other school personnel a Code of Student Conduct. The DeSoto County Code of Student Conduct is based on Florida Statutes, State Board of Education Rules and Regulations and DeSoto County School Board Policies which will be enforced fairly throughout the district.

This Code of Student Conduct is adopted as official school board policy. The school board, by this Code of Student Conduct, has also adopted a policy of “Zero Tolerance” for violence in all DeSoto County public schools. This means that any student who engages in an act of violence shall be punished according to the rules of this code.

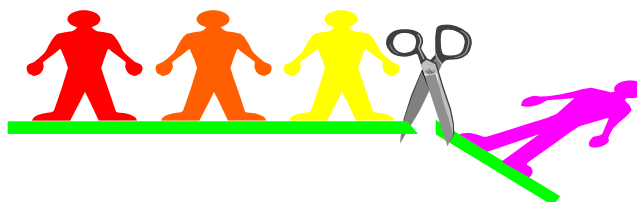
This code and this “Zero Tolerance” policy for violence is in force not only on school grounds and on school buses during regular school hours, but also at other times and places (field trips, athletic functions and other school-sponsored events) or functions where school authorities have jurisdiction over students.

It is the policy of the School Board of DeSoto County not to discriminate against employees or students by either deliberate or inadvertent bias based on race, color, sex, age, national origin, handicap, marital status, or religion. It is further recognized that a passive policy of nondiscrimination will not of itself result in providing opportunities to those individuals who might otherwise be affected adversely. It is for this reason that the school board commits itself to a program of affirmative action designed not to discriminate against anyone.

According to Florida Administrative Code 6A-6.0908(3), “National Origin, minority or limited English proficient students shall not be subjected to any disciplinary action because of their use of a language other than English.”

It is the intent of this code to be a strict disciplinary guide with its “minimum consequences” listed. *Consequences over the “minimum” may be assigned by the principal or the principal’s designee.*

If it has been proven that the violation of the code is gang related, the principal shall impose a more severe discipline/punishment.



NOTICE

TO: All Parents

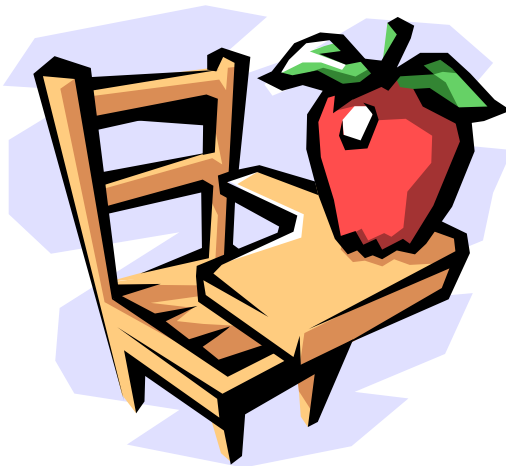
FROM: Adrian H. Cline, Superintendent

An orderly, disciplined environment is fundamental to education. We expect our staff to teach **RESPECT** for authority and for others. We hope you will reinforce this lesson. Pupils shall, during the time they are being transported to or from school at public expense, while attending school, engaging in a school sponsored activity, and when on the school premises, be under the control and direction of the principal or designee, and under the immediate control and direction of the teacher or other member of the staff, bus driver or volunteer (hereafter referred to as school personnel) to whom such responsibility may be assigned by the principal.

You and your child are expected to understand the rules and the consequences of breaking rules. ***Please read this code carefully and become familiar with rules developed by your child's teacher(s) and the individual school.***

Thank you for helping us provide a safe and orderly school setting where your child can achieve success.

Adrian H. Cline



NOTICE OF LIMITED SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY

***THE DUTY OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF DESOTO TO
REASONABLY SUPERVISE STUDENTS IS LIMITED TO:***

- 1. THE TIME THE STUDENT IS BEING TRANSPORTED TO
AND FROM SCHOOL AT PUBLIC EXPENSE;**
- 2. THE TIME THE STUDENT IS ATTENDING SCHOOL;**
- 3. THE TIME THE STUDENT IS ON THE SCHOOL PREMISES
PARTICIPATING WITH AUTHORIZATION IN A SCHOOL-
SPONSORED ACTIVITY;**
- 4. THE TIME THE STUDENT IS ON THE PREMISES AT HIS OR
HER SCHOOL FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, BUT FOR NO
MORE THAN THIRTY (30) MINUTES BEFORE OR AFTER
SCHOOL STARTS OR ENDS; AND**
- 5. THE TIME THE STUDENT IS ON THE PREMISES AT HIS OR
HER SCHOOL FOR AUTHORIZED PARTICIPATION IN A
SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITY, BUT FOR NO MORE
THAN THIRTY (30) MINUTES BEFORE OR AFTER ACTIVITY
STARTS OR ENDS.**

Florida Statutes, Section 1003.31

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS CONCERNING WEAPON SEARCHES

Dear Parents/Guardians:

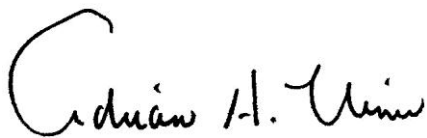
The use of guns in crimes all over the nation, including their use on school property, is causing me great concern. High school and middle school students in our county have brought guns to school and have been expelled. However, the threat of expulsion has not solved the problem. I conducted research concerning the problem and discovered that random searches for weapons have been effective in other school districts.

As Superintendent of DeSoto County Public Schools, I am charged with the responsibility of undertaking all reasonable, necessary, and proper measures provided by law, rules and regulations to safeguard our students, employees and property. Persons, as well as property under their control, who enter onto the property of the DeSoto County School Board may be searched. The search may include, but not be limited to, the use of magnetometers, pat-downs and removal of suspected contraband. If a pat-down becomes necessary, it will be done by a person of the same sex. This method will still not prevent someone from bringing a gun on campus, but it is another step to try to deter those who realize they may be searched at any time.

I take this opportunity to inform you of this new procedure and to ask for your continued support and cooperation as we work together to keep DeSoto County schools safe, secure, and conducive to the teaching and learning process.

Please help us at home as we must act together to teach that arguments, disagreements or conflicts must not be resolved by fighting or using weapons.

Sincerely,



Superintendent

AHC:mrh

SEARCHES

RANDOM SEARCHES FOR WEAPONS AND DRUGS

Students and their property are also subject to random searches by school officials using any appropriate means (metal detectors, dogs, etc.). At various times throughout the school year, law enforcement may be asked to search the entire school campus, including all buildings and cars in the parking lot, with dogs that are trained to find marijuana and other illegal drugs or paraphernalia. Items that are prohibited by the Code of Student Conduct which are found during these searches will be used as evidence to discipline students according to the appropriate section of the code.

1. VEHICLE SEARCH

- a. Student vehicles could contain items or substances that are not permitted on school property.

All vehicles parked on school board property or at school events are subject to search by administrators or designee, teachers and/or School Resource Deputies, if the School Resource Deputy has probable cause.

Students who are found to possess items prohibited as outlined in the Florida School Search Manual, in vehicles under their control, shall immediately remove said vehicle from school district property (or return from school event), and shall not be permitted to operate or park any vehicles on school district property for the remainder of the school year or for the duration of any period of expulsion.



2. SEARCH OF PERSON, PROPERTY OR SCHOOL LOCKER

- a. The School District of DeSoto County endeavors to ensure a safe environment for students. School administrators and school employees act in place of parents or guardians while students are under their supervision and will conduct searches of students, student lockers, and their personal property if they have reasonable suspicion or probable cause to believe they may possess any item that is prohibited.
- b. Students, either on their person or in their personal property, may improperly be in possession of items or substances that are not permitted on school property, on school-sponsored transportation, or at school-sponsored activities or functions. Students, their personal property, or their school lockers are subject to search by administrators or designee, teachers, or School Resource Deputies, if the Deputy is directed to do so by a school administrator upon reasonable suspicion that a prohibited item may be possessed. The School Resource Deputy will search without orders from the administration if the School Resource Deputy has probable cause.



EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ASSURANCES

SCHOOL BOARD POLICY EPS CODES: AA & JFCL

NON-DISCRIMINATORY MINORITY LANGUAGE EQUITY

“National origin minority or limited English proficient students shall not be subjected to any disciplinary action because of their use of a language other than English.”
[FAC 6A-6.0908(3)].

If you feel you have been unfairly discriminated against and disciplined because of your use of a language other than English in the DeSoto County public schools, please notify the school principal and/or Mr. Daniel Dubbert, Director of Student Services at (863) 993-1333 extension 316).

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION EQUITY

SCHOOL BOARD POLICY EPS CODE: AA

All vocational courses are open to all students without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or disability.

If you feel you have been discriminated against in any one of these areas, please notify your principal and/or Mr. Daniel Dubbert, Director of Student Services at (863) 993-1333 (extension 316).

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

SCHOOL BOARD POLICY EPS CODE: AC

Unlawful Discrimination Prohibited. The DeSoto County School Board subscribes to and will comply with the Florida Educational Equity Act. The school board will ensure implementation of this Act in the following areas: treatment of students, health services, interscholastic, club and intramural athletics, student financial assistance, student employment, educational and work environment, and personnel.

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age or marital status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity except as provided by law.

General Authority 230.22 FS., 228.2001 FS, DOE Rules 6A-19.01, 6A-19.10.

Daniel Dubbert, Director of Student Services
930 E. Cypress
Arcadia, FL 34266
(863) 494-0377

A copy of the Customer Complaint Procedures (EPS Code: AA-R) may be found at the back of this booklet or from the Director.

SECTION 504

The following is a description of the rights granted by federal law to students with disabilities. The intent of the law is to keep you fully informed concerning decisions about your child and to inform you of your rights if you disagree with any of these decisions.

You have the right to:

1. have your child take part in and receive benefits from public education programs without discrimination because of his/her disability;
2. have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law;
3. receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation, or placement of your child;
4. have your child receive a free, appropriate, public education;
5. have your child receive services and be educated in facilities which are comparable to those provided to non-disabled students;
6. have evaluation, educational, and placement decisions made based on a variety of informational sources, and by persons who know the student and who are knowledgeable about the evaluation data and placement options;
7. have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting (if the setting is a program now operated by the district at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if the student were placed in a program operated by the district);
8. have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities offered by the district;
9. examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, and placement;
10. request mediation or an impartial due process hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification evaluation, educational program or placement (you and your child may take part in the hearing and be represented by counsel. Hearing requests must be made to the superintendent.);
11. file a local customer complaint

If you have questions regarding the District's compliance with Section 504, contact the **Director of Exceptional Student Education at (863) 494-4222 (extension 130).**

ATTENDANCE & TRUANCY DEFINITIONS

Compulsory School Attendance: Section 1003.21(1)(a), F.S., requires children 6 to 16 years of age to attend school **regularly** for the entire school term.

Responsibility for school attendance of compulsory age children: “A parent or guardian with a child of compulsory school age is responsible for the child’s school attendance. Circumstances for which the parent or guardian is not to be held responsible for a child’s absence are cases in which an exemption has been granted; permission for the absence is granted by the head of the school; specific cases in which there is no parental knowledge or connivance (in which case the child may be dealt with as a dependent child); certain cases of financial inability; and specific cases of sickness, injury or other insurmountable condition. **An absence due to any circumstances not indicated by the exemptions listed above is considered an unexcused absence.**” [Reference: DOE Technical Assistance Paper #1997-2 / Q&A, September, 1996.]

State Law: 1003.27(2)(b), F.S. Specifically defines a “**habitual truant**” as a student who has 15 unexcused absences within 90 days; intervention activities must begin after 3 and prior to 15 unexcused absences within a 90 day period (the law does not specify 90 school days, rather states “within a 90 day period”). [Reference: TAP #1997-2, September, 1996]. A student with less than 15 unexcused absences within a 90 day period is still a truant, but does not meet the definition of a “habitual” truant.

Can a student who is of compulsory school age (6 to 16 years) and has 15 or more unexcused absences be withdrawn from school? “No. The 15 or more unexcused absences indicated in the definition, refers to the number of unexcused absences within a 90 day period as the basis for determining that a student is a **habitual** truant.” [Reference: TAP#1997-2 / Q&A, September, 1996].

EXCUSED ABSENCE - That absence caused by illness of the student or death within the family.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE - Any absence that does not have the approval of the school, or which is due to disciplinary action against the student.

For the purposes of recording absences due to tardiness or early release, in accordance with DeSoto County Board Policy: [192.06], the following should be enforced:

1. Four (4) unexcused tardies or early releases are equal to one (1) unexcused absence.
2. Four (4) excused tardies or early releases in one quarter are equal to one (1) excused absence.

NOTICE

Attendance Requirements for Minors (from Ages 14-18 to Maintain Their Driving Privilege)

A minor is not eligible for driving privileges unless that minor has complied with or is currently in compliance with regulations, regarding the minor's educational status. If the minor is not eligible for driving privileges under that provision, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, shall take requisite action against a minor's driving privilege and/or driver license upon receipt of notice of non-compliance from the school district as required under Section 1003.27(2)(b), Florida Statutes which follows:

“Each public school principal or the principal’s designee shall notify the district school board of each minor under its jurisdiction who accumulates 15 unexcused absences in a period of 90 calendar days....The superintendent must provide the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles the legal name, sex, date of birth, and social security number of each minor who has been reported under this paragraph and who fails to otherwise satisfy the requirements of s. 322.091. The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles may not issue a driver’s license or learner’s driver’s license to, and shall suspend any previously issued driver’s license or learner’s driver’s license of, any such minor.” 1003.27(2)(b) Florida Statutes.

Notes:

1. The lists to be provided the Department of highway Safety and Motor Vehicles by Florida school districts shall remain confidential as provided by law. However, the driver records created by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles upon receipt of said lists shall be considered public records, and said driver's records shall be produced in compliance with the requirements of Chapter 119, Florida Statutes and Section 322.20, Florida Statutes.
2. The district has established procedures to schedule hardship waiver hearings for minors who have received notice from DHSMV that their driving privilege/driver license will be suspended. The hearing must be conducted by the student's principal within 30 calendar days of the request. If the principal denies the hardship waiver request, an appeal may be made to the superintendent within three school days and the superintendent's decision shall be final. Given that there is a compulsory school attendance law, it should be understood by students and parents that there is little likelihood a hardship waiver would be granted after 15 unexcused absences within a 90 calendar day period.
3. Those students who have actually had their driving privilege/driver's license suspended may submit to DHSMV written verification, on the approved form, of 30 days of attendance without any unexcused absences. It shall be the student's responsibility to seek reinstatement by obtaining the written verification and presenting it to DHSMV.

STUDENT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

1. be informed of all school rules and the consequences of breaking those rules.
2. be shown personal respect by all other students and school personnel.
3. make appropriate use of school facilities, properties, and materials.
4. attend school and benefit from quality educational opportunities.
5. have access to an appropriate education, including instruction and use of materials and tests, at a level which allows an opportunity for success.
6. hear, examine, and express divergent points of view, including freedom of speech, written expression and symbolic expression.
7. know in advance how grades in a class will be determined.
8. enjoy a reasonable degree of personal privacy.
9. participate in extracurricular activities and clubs if they qualify academically. Students may not be excluded on the basis of sex (except as allowed under Title IX), color, race, ethnic origin, religion or handicap.

STUDENTS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:

1. observe all school rules or suffer the consequences of unacceptable behavior. Students will be familiar with the District Code of Student Conduct and the school Student Handbook.
2. show respect to all other students and school personnel.
3. respect and protect school facilities, properties, and materials.
4. attend school and all classes on a regular basis.
5. participate in educational opportunities, completing classroom assignments and homework to the best of their ability.
6. consider and respect the divergent point of view of others. Be sure that personal expressions (speech, written or symbolic) do not infringe on the rights of others.
7. understand the teachers' grading systems, monitoring their own progress in each class.
8. keep their persons and property free of dangerous or illegal objects, materials and substances.
9. abide by the rules of extracurricular activities - display school spirit and good sportsmanship.

STUDENT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES CONTINUED:

STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:	STUDENTS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:
<p>10. choose whether or not to participate in patriotic or religious activities.</p> <p>11. receive personal, academic, and vocational counseling.</p> <p>12. receive due process in all disciplinary actions, including an appeal procedure.</p> <p>13. dress comfortably in a manner appropriate to a school setting.</p> <p>14. assemble peacefully on school grounds.</p> <p>15. participate in school government based on a democratic process.</p> <p>16. remain in the school program if married, if a parent, or if pregnant.</p> <p>17. have access to records and/or transcripts as provided by statute.</p> <p>18. be free from all forms of sexual harassment by any person at school or school-sponsored activities.</p> <p>19. attend a school that is safe and free from unlawful drugs and alcohol.</p> <p>20. attend a school that is safe and free from weapons and weapon look-a-likes.</p>	<p>10. respect the rights of others to participate in patriotic or religious activities.</p> <p>11. seek personal, academic, and vocational counseling.</p> <p>12. cooperate with school personnel in cases involving disciplinary actions, following prescribed steps for an appeal and accepting final decisions.</p> <p>13. dress in a way not offensive to others.</p> <p>14. assemble so as not to disrupt the educational process.</p> <p>15. take an active interest in student government.</p> <p>16. seek regular medical advice regarding school attendance.</p> <p>17. provide the school with all information relevant to making educational decisions.</p> <p>18. avoid making unwelcome and inappropriate verbal, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature.</p> <p>19. not possess or use any unlawful drugs and/or alcohol at school or school-sponsored activities.</p> <p>20. not possess or use weapons or weapon look-a-likes at school or school-sponsored activities.</p>

Electronic Communication and Laser Devices

Electronic or Wireless Communication Devices:

Definition for the purposes of this document: devices which provide communication by text, words, voice or pictures such as cell phones, palm pilots and laptop computers.

STUDENT USE OF CELL PHONES IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED AT ANY TIME DURING THE SCHOOL DAY, DURING SCHOOL FUNCTIONS, OR ON A SCHOOL BUS.

Students may possess electronic communication devices such as cell phones; however, the use of these communication devices is strictly prohibited at any time during the school day, during school functions, or on school buses. All electronic communication devices, (*except noted below*) must be turned off and stored in a locker, backpack, book-bag, purse or other carried container and are not permitted to be worn on the person in any fashion. Violation of this policy will result in confiscation and/or disciplinary action.

NOTE: If the communication device is used in a criminal act while the student is on school property or in attendance at a school function, there is a possibility of disciplinary action by the school and/or criminal penalties.

Electronic and Laser Devices Prohibited:

Any laser device or electronic device, not authorized for use as a learning device, is prohibited on school grounds, at school functions, or on the school buses. Telephone beepers, pagers, and laser pens are specifically prohibited. Prohibited electronic devices are considered contraband, and possession of such devices will result in confiscation and/or disciplinary action.

DUE PROCESS

Due process is a right guaranteed to all by the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments of the Constitution. Individuals must have proper notice, an opportunity to be heard, and the hearing must be conducted fairly. Students must be informed of school rules which have been violated, either orally or in writing by a school official. They shall be given the right to present evidence or witnesses concerning the charges.

The basic ingredients or steps to be followed in guaranteeing due process procedures are:

1. Individuals must have proper notice of the charge or complaint being made against them.
2. Individuals must have the opportunity to know what the specific charges or complaints are and who is making these charges or complaints.
3. Individuals must be given a fair and impartial hearing and have the opportunity to present evidence and/or witnesses on their own behalf at the time of the hearing.
4. Individuals must have had prior opportunity to know that their actions were in violation of established rules and regulations.
5. Individuals must be advised that they have the right to appeal to the next higher authority if not satisfied with the action or decision rendered at their hearing.



195.07 BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY

(A) Purpose

(1) The purpose of this policy is to assist the school district in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior.

(2) A safe and civil learning environment is needed for students to attain high academic achievement and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to educate students in a safe environment. The school district cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of the school district and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of the school district in its normal operations, it is the school district's intent to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented.

(B) General statement of policy

(1) An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school district property or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school district or the safety or welfare of the student, other students, or employees.

(2) No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying.

(3) Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

(4) Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.

(5) False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.

(6) A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline for that act in accordance with school district's policies and procedures. The school district may take into account the following factors:

(a) The developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved;

(b) The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior;

(c) Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;

(d) The relationship between the parties involved; and

(e) The context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Consequences for students who commit prohibited acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge. Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from school district property and events and/or termination of services and/or contracts.

(7) The school district will act to investigate all complaints of bullying and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy.

(C) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section the following definitions shall apply unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.

BULLYING. Any written or verbal expression, physical act or gesture, or pattern thereof, or sending or posting harmful or cruel text messages or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices like cell phones, PDA's, web cams, etc. by a student that is intended to cause or is perceived as causing distress to one or more students and which substantially interferes with another student's or students' educational benefits, opportunities, or performance.

BULLYING includes, but is not limited to; conduct by a student against another student that a reasonable person under the circumstances knows or should know has the effect of:

- (a) Harming a student;
- (b) Damaging a student's property;
- (c) Placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or property; or
- (d) Creating a hostile environment for a student.

IMMEDIATELY. As soon as possible, but in no event, longer than 24 hours.

ON SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPERTY or AT SCHOOL-RELATED FUNCTIONS. All school district buildings, school grounds, and school property or property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school bus stops, school buses, school vehicles, school contracted vehicles, or any other vehicles approved for school district purposes, the area of entrance or departure from school grounds, premises, or events, and all school-related functions, school-sponsored activities, events, or trips. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, the school district does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.

(D) Reporting

(1) Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy. A student may report bullying anonymously. However, the school district's ability to take action against an alleged perpetrator based solely on an anonymous report may be limited.

(2) The school district encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal of each building or available from the school district office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.

(3) The building principal or the principal's designee or the building supervisor is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying at the

building level. Any person may report bullying directly to the school district equity officer or the superintendent.

(4) A teacher, school administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other school employee shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall inform the building principal immediately.

(5) Reports of bullying are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law.

(6) Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades, or work assignments, or educational or work environment.

(7) The school district will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school district's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations.

(E) *School district action*

(1) Upon receipt of a complaint or report of bullying, the school district shall undertake or authorize an investigation by school district officials or a third party designated by the school district.

(2) The school district may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, reporter, students, or others pending completion of an investigation of bullying, consistent with applicable law.

(3) Upon completion of the investigation, the school district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, applicable statutory authority, including school district policies and regulations.

(4) The school district is not authorized to disclose to a victim private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the school district. School officials will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of students involved in a bullying incident and the remedial action taken, to the extent permitted by law, based on a confirmed report.

(F) *Reprisal.* The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged bullying or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment.

(G) *Training and education*

(1) The school district annually will provide information and any applicable training to school district staff regarding this policy.

(2) The school district annually will provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this school district policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying.

(3) The administration of the school district is directed to implement programs and other initiatives to prevent bullying, to respond to bullying in a manner that does not stigmatize the victim, and to make resources or referrals to resources available to victims of bullying.

(H) *Notice.* The school district will give annual notice of this policy to students, parents or guardians, volunteers and staff. A copy of this policy will be printed in the student handbook or disseminated in any other way which school officials deem appropriate.

(SBP, passed 2-13-2007)



192.07 Attendance of Military-Connected Students

Purpose: It is the purpose of this policy to remove barriers to the educational success imposed on children of military families because of frequent moves and deployment of their parents by;

- A) Facilitating the timely enrollment of children of military families and ensuring that they are not placed at a disadvantage due to difficulty in the transfer of education records from the previous school district or variations in entrance or age requirements.**
- B) Facilitating the student placement process through which children of military families are not disadvantaged by variations in attendance requirements, scheduling, sequencing, grading, course content, or assessment.**
- C) Facilitating the qualification and eligibility for enrollment, educational programs, and participation in extracurricular academic, athletic, and social activities.**
- D) Facilitating the on-time graduation of children of military families.**
- E) Providing for the adoption and enforcement of administrative rules implementing this compact.**
- F) Providing for the uniform collection and sharing of information between and among member states, schools, and military families under this compact.**

G) Promoting coordination between this compact and other compacts affecting military children.

H) Promoting flexibility and cooperation between the educational system, parents, and the student in order to achieve educational success for the student.

(F.S. 1000.36 Interstate compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children - Article I)

Policy

It is with the above purpose in mind that the DeSoto County School District may grant up to five days of excused absences for military – connected students whose parents are experiencing deployment. The conditions under which the local schools may approve excused absences are: (1) the absence is preapproved; (2) the student is in good standing; (3) the student has a prior record of good attendance; (4) missed work is completed and turned in within the school’s allotted time period; and (5) the absence is not during standardized testing dates.

PARENT'S ROLE

If the DeSoto County School System is to do its job, the home and the school must cooperate. The school's responsibility is to provide a quality education in a safe environment for all students. The parent's responsibility is to:

1. teach your child self-respect, respect for the law, respect for the authority in the school and respect for the rights and property of others;
2. show a positive attitude toward the school and toward your child's learning progress;
3. make certain your child attends school **all day, every day**, unless the child is ill;
4. know your child's school, its staff, and its curriculum;
5. work closely with school personnel to solve any disciplinary or academic problems;
6. teach your child to dress properly and neatly, and to be clean and well groomed;
7. ***make sure the school has your correct home and work telephone numbers, the home address, and an emergency contact person;***
8. supervise smaller children attending extracurricular school activities, especially athletic events. Although the school will provide law enforcement, crowd control and proper supervision, the care of children attending an event is the responsibility of the parent.



Florida Law - 1996

Florida Statutes 1003.31(2)

For the purpose of limiting the liability of a school, provides that students are considered under the control and supervision of the school when they are on the premises during a reasonable time before and after school and while attending or participating in a school sponsored activity at the school site. Reasonable time is defined as 30 minutes before and after school, or before the school activity is scheduled or actually begins or ends.

CLASSROOM TEACHER'S ROLE

The teacher will inform every student of the classroom and/or team discipline plan to be used in that teacher's room. The plan will be compatible with the school plan and the District Code of Student Conduct.

The classroom and/or team plan will include a series of steps with consequences increasing if the problem persists. The teacher will provide instruction in proper conduct, and explain the consequences for misconduct. This instruction will stress RESPECT.

- ◆ **STEP 1: When a student fails to follow the rules, the teacher will proceed through the steps listed in the discipline plan. Consequences may include withholding a privilege, "time-out," counseling, detention, extra work, task assignment, or parent conference.**
- ◆ **STEP 2: If the misconduct is repeated, the teacher will attempt to contact the parent and record the result of the contact.**
- ◆ **STEP 3: If the classroom behavior problem persists or the misconduct has become disruptive, the teacher will complete the upper section of the adopted School District of DeSoto County Student Referral Form(s) and refer the student to an administrator who will determine the consequences and advise the teacher of the action taken. (For chronic and/or serious misbehavior, see next section which explains a teacher's right to remove a student from class.)**
- ◆ **STEP 4: If the student's problem is non-attendance and truancy, the teacher will refer the case to the school attendance clerk to contact the parents/guardians. If the problem continues, the teacher should refer the case to the school counselor and/or the school social worker.**

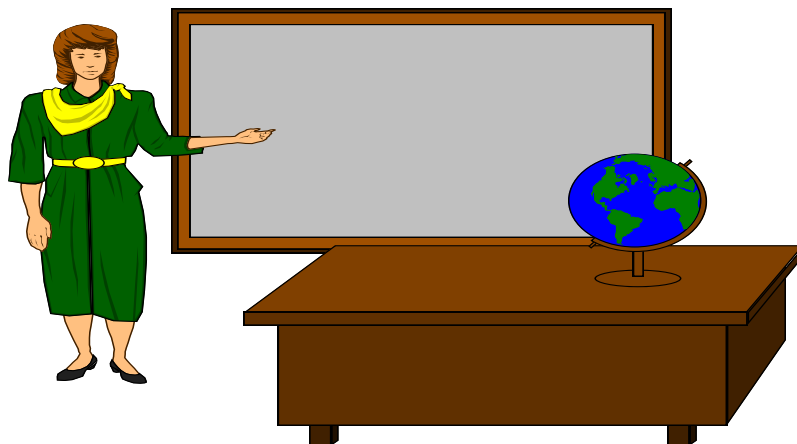
Subject to law and to the rules of the district school board, each teacher or other member of the staff of any school, shall have such authority for the control and discipline of students as may be assigned to him or her by the principal or the principal's designated representative, and shall keep good order in the classroom and in other places in which he or she is assigned to be in charge of students.

Within the framework of this Code of Student Conduct, teachers and other instructional personnel shall have the authority to undertake any of the following alternatives in managing student behavior and ensuring the safety of all students in their classes and school:

1. set and enforce reasonable classroom rules that treat all students equitably;

CLASSROOM TEACHER'S ROLE (CONTINUED)

2. establish and implement consequences designed to change behavior for infractions of classroom rules;
3. have a violent, abusive, uncontrollable, or disruptive student temporarily removed from the classroom for behavioral management intervention (see the following section which explains a teacher's right to remove a student from class);
4. assist in enforcing school rules on school property, on school-sponsored transportation, and during school-sponsored activities;
5. request and receive information as to the disposition of any referrals to the administration for violation of classroom or school rules;
6. request and receive immediate assistance in classroom management if a student becomes uncontrollable or in case of emergency;
7. request and receive training and other assistance to improve skills in classroom management, violence prevention, conflict resolution, and related areas;
8. press charges if a crime has been committed against the teacher or other instructional personnel on school property, on school-sponsored transportation, or during school-sponsored activities;
9. use reasonable force, according to standards recommended by the Education Standards Commission and the Education Practices Commission and adopted by the State Board of Education, to protect himself or herself or others from injury;
10. use corporal punishment. If a teacher feels that corporal punishment is necessary, the guidelines for corporal punishment shall be followed as outlined on **page 29**.



REMOVING A STUDENT FROM CLASS

SCHOOL BOARD POLICY EPS CODE: CB-R

1. A teacher may send a student to the principal's office to maintain effective discipline in the classroom. The principal or the principal's designee shall respond by employing appropriate discipline-management techniques consistent with the Code of Student Conduct under F.S. 230.23.
2. A teacher may remove from class a student:
 - a. who has been documented by the teacher to interfere repeatedly with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn; or
 - b. whose behavior the teacher determines is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn.
3. If a teacher removes a student from class under subsection (2), the principal or the principal's designee may place the student in another appropriate classroom, the intervention room, or an alternative education program, or the principal may recommend the student for out-of-school suspension or expulsion, as appropriate. The student may be prohibited from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related activities. The principal may not return the student to that teacher's class without the teacher's consent unless the committee established under F.S. 1003.32(s) determines that such placement is the best or only available alternative. The teacher and the placement review committee must render decisions within five days of the removal of the student from the classroom.
4. Placement Review Committee, established under F.S. 1003.32 (s)
 - a. Each school shall establish a committee to determine placement of a student when a teacher withholds consent to the return of a student to the teacher's class. Committee membership must include at least the following:
 - (1) two teachers selected by the school's faculty, and
 - (2) one member from the school's staff who is selected by the principal.
 - b. The teacher who withheld consent to readmitting the student may not serve on the committee.
5. Any teacher who removes 25 percent of his or her total class enrollment shall be required to complete professional development training classes to improve classroom management skills.

PRINCIPAL'S ROLE

1. The administrators at each school will, with the assistance of faculty and staff, develop an approved School Discipline Plan based on this code, the age of the student body, and the school's philosophy. Emphasis will be placed on teaching **RESPECT**.
2. Principals have statutory powers which permit their determining disciplinary action appropriate to student misconduct. Principals must protect the student's rights of due process and appeal.
3. The principal, or the principal's designee, shall give strong consideration to the recommendation for discipline made by a teacher, other member of the instructional staff, or a bus driver when making a decision regarding a student referral for discipline.
4. The principal, or the principal's designee, may recommend to the superintendent the expulsion of any student who has committed a serious breach of conduct, including, but not limited to, willful disobedience, open defiance of authority of a member of his or her staff, violence against persons or property, or any other act which substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of the school. Any recommendation of expulsion shall include a detailed report by the principal, or the principal's designated representative, on the alternative measures taken prior to the recommendation of expulsion.
5. Principals, or the principal's designee, will make a **reasonable** attempt to contact student's parents or guardians to involve them in the investigation of cases that may lead to a recommendation of **expulsion** for their child.
6. The principal, or the principal's designee, shall make a **good faith effort** immediately to inform a student's parent or guardian by telephone of a student's suspension and the reasons for the suspension.
7. Principals, or the principal's designee, will make a **reasonable** effort to contact the parent or guardian of a student who may be placed in personal or legal jeopardy due to interrogation by a law officer. ***This does not include questions concerning any other matter pertaining to school or a school-related activity or event.***
8. Principals, or the principal's designee, must release a student to law enforcement officers when a warrant is presented for the student's arrest. In this case, the principal should, but is not required to, make a reasonable attempt to contact the parent or guardian.
9. It is understood that disciplinary decisions are based on the judgment of the individual administrator according to the details of each specific case.

PRINCIPAL'S ROLE (CONTINUED)

10. This code defines minimum punishments to be assigned for certain serious violations of the rules, but ***the punishment is determined by the principal or his designee. The principal, or designee, may assign more than the minimums indicated in this code.***
11. The student's record ***may*** be considered. Punishment will be increasingly severe if rules are broken repeatedly or habitually. Repeated disruptive behavior may constitute "defiance of authority."
12. ***The principal is required to report certain infractions to law enforcement authorities and may press charges with the State's Attorney if the violation warrants such action.***

***"It's better to build children
than to repair men."***

-Anna Lee Carlton



DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOLS STUDENT EXPECTATION

1. Students are expected to be seated and prepared for class **BEFORE** the tardy bell.
2. Students are expected to **WALK** and may talk **QUIETLY** during class changes.
3. Students are expected to do what is **RIGHT!**
4. Students are expected to do their **BEST!**
5. Students are expected to **TREAT OTHERS** as they want to **BE TREATED!**
6. Students are expected to adhere to their Student handbook expectations.

GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE OF E.S.E. STUDENTS

All E.S.E. students are expected to abide by the rules outlined in this code.

As part of the screening, identification, and placement of exceptional students in special programs (SLD, TMH, EMH, EH, PH, Speech/Hearing, Vision, SED), parents will be fully informed of discipline policies and procedures. The consequences of a violation of the Code of Student Conduct by an ESE student will be determined by the principal in consultation with appropriate staff members, and in consideration of the handicap or special conditions that apply in the specific case.

When E.S.E. students are functioning in the “general” school program, they will behave according to standards expected of all students unless their misconduct is clearly the result of the identified handicap. Each case will be fully reviewed by staff, parents, and administrators.

Students who are classified as gifted are considered exceptional, but they receive the same disciplinary process as students in the “general” school program.



FORMAL DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

TIME-OUT

Students are assigned short periods of Time-out to give them an opportunity to regain their academic focus.

INTERVENTION ROOM

The IR or Intervention Room is provided as an alternative learning environment for students who have difficulty in meeting the behavioral expectations of DeSoto schools. The goal of the IR is to help the student understand the incorrect behavioral choice that has been made and to help the student be successful in the classroom. The IR is a quiet environment, monitored by the administration and a teacher's aide, where students receive class assignments to complete during their stay in IR.

As in any class, there are behavioral expectations for students, who have chosen by their behavior, to be in the IR. Students are expected to be in the IR by the tardy bell, or beginning of the assigned class period, and to bring appropriate supplies (pen, pencil, paper and textbooks). Students are expected to follow directions the first time they are given. Disruption of the IR may result in additional intervention time or an out-of-school suspension as outlined in the school's discipline code.

Students are not permitted to participate in normal school functions for the time they are assigned to the IR. They will not change classes with their peers until their IR time is over. Lunch will be available and served in the IR at the normal student price.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is defined as "the moderate use of physical force or physical contact by a principal, or his/her designated representative, as may be necessary to maintain discipline or to enforce school rules."

Corporal punishment may be administered in DeSoto County in accordance with Florida Statute 1003.32(1)(k).



GUIDELINES FOR CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

IN ACCORDANCE WITH RECENT STATE LEGISLATION,
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT REMAINS AN OPTION IN THIS CODE

In accordance with Florida Statute 1003.32 and School Board Policy (EPS Code: JGA):

1. corporal punishment shall be administered by the principal or the associate principal or the teacher as authorized by the principal or designee;
2. whether administered by teacher, principal or assistant principal, corporal punishment shall be witnessed by at least one teacher or another responsible professional school employee;
3. paddling shall be administered and shall not exceed five (5) swats;
4. the person who administered the punishment shall, upon request, provide the pupil's parent or guardian with a written explanation of the reason for the punishment and the name of the other adult who was present.

LIP (Limited In-School Placement) **Middle School Only

Limited In-School Placement is the temporary removal of a student's regular school program to the Intervention Room. Students will be assigned to LIP by class period.

OSS (Out-Of-School Suspension)

Out-of-School Suspension is the temporary removal of a student from his/her regular school program for a period not to exceed ten (10) days.

A principal, according to Florida Statutes, State Board of Education Rules & Regulations and DeSoto County School Board policies, may suspend a pupil from school or bus transportation for not more than ten (10) days because of misconduct.

When a student is suspended from school, a reasonable effort will be made to notify the parents, by telephone, with the reason for the suspension and the length of the suspension. In addition, the Notice of Suspension letter is to be mailed on the same day the suspension is imposed, which also states the reason for the suspension and the length of the suspension. A hearing may be scheduled by the administrator upon the request of the parents or guardians. The parents and students will be given an opportunity to present witnesses and other such facts or reasons (orally or in writing) which relate to the suspension.

No student who is required by law to attend school shall be suspended for unexcused absences or truancy. The principal, or his designated representative, may suspend any student transported to or from school at public expense from the privilege of riding on a school bus, giving notice in writing to the student's parents or guardian and to the superintendent within twenty-four (24) hours.

GUIDELINES FOR SUSPENSION

The principal or his designee may suspend a student for up to ten (10) school days ***provided that each suspension and the reasons for it are reported immediately by telephone and in writing, and delivered personally, or by mail, to the parents and to the superintendent. The length and conditions of the suspension may vary depending on the seriousness of the misconduct and the student's record. While suspended, a student may not participate in, or attend, any school-sponsored activity.***

EXPULSION

Expulsion is the removal of the right and obligation of a student to attend a public school for a period of time as set by the school board. The school board shall be the only body to order an expulsion from school.

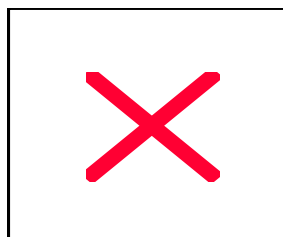
A principal, in recommending a pupil's expulsion, shall address written recommendation to the superintendent. The principal shall also suspend the pupil for ten (10) days and give notice to the proper individuals that expulsion is being recommended. Further, the principal may include in the request for expulsion, documented information concerning the student's conduct, scholastic record, measures taken by the administration and teachers to help the child, the attendance and suspension record, the number of contacts with parents or guardian, and the reason for expulsion.

In those instances in which identified handicapped students are involved, a staffing committee will meet to determine whether the misconduct bears a relation to his/her handicap. However, the student will not be denied the right to an education.

If expulsion is recommended, the superintendent shall follow the procedures for administrative hearings, shall notify the parents or guardian by certified mail of his recommendation and include the notice of the hearing.

The superintendent has the authority to extend the principal's ten-day suspension if such suspension period expires before the next regular or special meeting of the school board.

Following the action of the school board recommending student expulsion, the parents or guardian shall be notified in writing by the superintendent.



GUIDELINES FOR EXPULSION

Florida Statutes and school board policy define expulsion as the removal of the right and obligation of a student to attend school for a period of time not to exceed the remainder of that term or school year and one additional year of attendance [Florida Statute 1006.07(2)(k), and School Board Policy JGE]. Students may not be readmitted through other state agencies.

Expulsion or dismissal procedures are as follows. A written statement of charges shall be delivered personally or by certified mail, to the parent(s) within five business days. Notification shall be complete at the time of personal service or at the time of mailing, if certified mail is utilized. ***It shall be the absolute responsibility of the parent to accept delivery of certified mail.***

An expulsion hearing with the school board, or its appointed hearing officer, will be scheduled at the earliest possible date, and parents will be notified as to the place and time of the hearing. The student and school officials shall present evidence and call witnesses to clarify the facts. The student may also use the services of legal counsel at no expense to the school board. The school board will review the finding and then will adopt an order. The order will be delivered in writing to the parent or guardian. ***The student's identity will remain confidential within the provisions of statute, unless the student's parent or guardian requests a public hearing.***

Expulsion hearings are conducted under Section 1006.07(1)(a) Florida Statutes. Except for good cause, factual matters alleged in the recommendation for expulsion, but not denied in the request for hearing, shall be presumed admitted. Failure to raise a particular defense in writing will be considered a waiver of such defense. The Model Rules of Procedure, Florida Administrative Code, Chapter 28-5, shall govern such proceedings.

All parties shall have an opportunity to present evidence and argument on all issues, to conduct cross-examination, to submit rebuttal evidence, and to be represented by an attorney.

The school board shall accurately and completely preserve all testimony in the proceeding by tape recording. At the request of any party, the school board shall make a full or partial transcript available at actual cost. If either party desires a court reporter, he shall make arrangements for such court reporter and bear the expense.

A party who is adversely affected by final school board action is entitled to judicial review. All proceedings for review shall be instituted by filing a petition in the Third District Court of Appeal, and the review proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with the Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure.



CUSTOMER COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

(Revised: 2/02)

This customer complaint procedure is established to provide our customers with a formal process to file a complaint with the Administration of the School District of DeSoto County and to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Anyone wishing to file a complaint alleging sexual harassment, discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, marital status or religion, shall do so in writing. The procedure listed below may be used by all customers served by the School District of DeSoto County including, but not limited to, employees, students, parents, or job applicants or applicants for admission.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected as specified by law or by the Policies of the School Board of DeSoto County. No person shall be subject to adverse action in retaliation for having filed a complaint or for having testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing conducted under the authority of this regulation.

STEP I

Within 60 working/school days of the alleged incident the complainant shall file the complaint, in writing, on the "Customer Complaint Step I Grievance Form" which is page 28 of this document.

The complaint shall include the complainant's name, address, and phone number and a detailed description of the alleged incident, including date, persons involved, and location. (Alternate means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint, will be made available upon request.)

The complaint shall be submitted to one of the following respondents:

- A. The principal, the school/location equity contact, or his/her designee as appropriate
- B. Immediate supervisor
- C. Direct administrator

If one of these respondents is the alleged, offending person, the complaint shall be submitted to the next highest level of administration or supervision.

The selected respondent shall meet with the complainant within 3 working/school days from the date the complaint is received, to attempt to resolve the issue. The results of the meeting shall be transcribed and sent to all concerned parties within 10 working/school

days after the meeting. If the complaint is still unresolved after Step I, the complainant may proceed to the next level(s).

STEP II

The completed Step I Grievance Form shall be submitted to:

Daniel Dubbert, Equity Coordinator
930 East Cypress Street
Arcadia, FL 34266
Telephone: (863) 494-0377
FAX Number: (863) 494-0151

If the nature of the complaint concerns the Americans with Disabilities Act, Mr. Dubbert will involve the ADA Coordinator, Adrian H. Cline.

The complainant shall submit the written Step I complaint and findings to the Equity Coordinator or other appropriate official with copies to the superintendent, Supervisor-in-charge, and/or Step I respondent, within 5 working/school days of receiving the respondent's Step I findings.

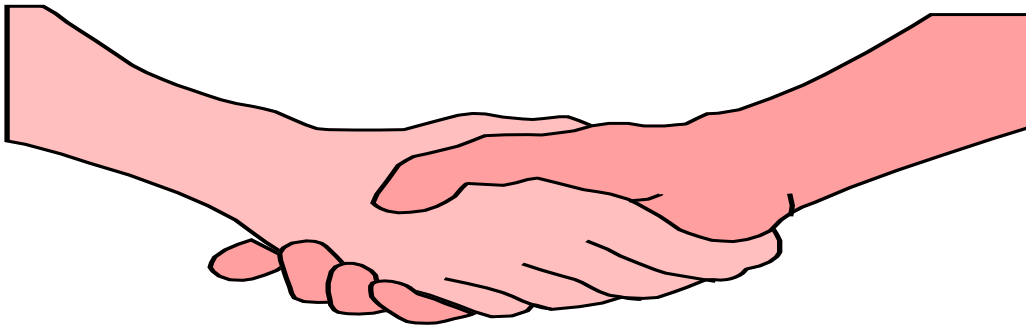
The Equity Coordinator shall investigate and file a written report of his findings within 10 days after receiving the Step I documents. The Equity Coordinator's findings and recommendations shall be sent to the complainant, the superintendent, the Supervisor-in-charge, and/or Step I respondent.

STEP III

- A. If the complaint is not resolved in Step II, the complainant may, within 3 working/school days of receipt of the "Equity Coordinator" or other appropriate official's answer, appeal to the superintendent or his designee.
- B. The superintendent or the designee shall hear the complaint within 3 working/school days after receipt of the appeal. No new facts shall be entered that were not previously considered in Steps I and II.
- C. The complainant shall be afforded an opportunity to present evidence relevant to the facts and to the issues.
- D. The superintendent or designee shall render the decision by certified mail, with return receipt, within 10 working/school days after such hearing.

STEP IV

If the complaint is still unresolved after Step III, the complainant shall be given 5 working/school days after the date of mailing, the decision from the superintendent, sent by certified mail, to request a hearing with the school board. This request shall be in writing to the superintendent. After receiving such written request, the superintendent shall arrange a hearing with the school board. The complainant and respondent may have legal representation for this hearing. Within 10 working/school days following the hearing, the Chairman of the Board or designee shall notify, by certified mail, the complainant and respondent at their last known addresses, of the board's decision.





School District of DeSoto County Transportation Department Bus Incident Plan

DeSoto County School Bus Drivers shall take appropriate action in ensuring the safety of all students who ride their buses. When the safety of others is in question, drivers will use the following plan of action. Exceptions to this plan are more serious offenses consisting of, but not limited to, the following: fighting, alcohol, drugs or tobacco products, weapons or vandalism. If a more serious offense should occur the driver will go directly to Step 3. The three steps below will explain the action that will be taken if a student does not follow the school bus rules.

RULES FOR RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS

- No fighting, abusive or profane language.
- No standing or moving while the bus is in motion or pushing and tripping while loading or unloading.
- No throwing objects from bus window.
- No animals (dead or alive), glass, sharp objects, bats, batons, basketballs, balloons, or large flags allowed on the bus.
- No hands, arms or head outside the bus window.
- All talking should be kept at a low tone and **NO TALKING** at railroad crossings.
- A student who must cross the road, should walk up to the front of the bus and wait for the driver to instruct them to cross.
- Each student is required to stay seated and face the front of the bus.
- If you are a passenger in a bus equipped with seat belts, you must wear the seat belt at all times.
- A new student or any student with a change in their bus schedule should get a bus pass from the school office.

CONSEQUENCES:

LEVEL I

Step 1 - VERBAL WARNING: If inappropriate behavior should be displayed on the bus, the driver will respond with verbal warning to the student. Upon being given the verbal warning, the student should correct his/her behavior and follow the rules. If inappropriate behavior should persist, the driver will proceed to step 2.

Step 2 - PARENT CONTACT: If the student's behavior is not corrected after the verbal warning, the driver or the Operations Specialist will contact the parent to seek help in changing the student's behavior.

LEVEL II

Step 3 - ADMINISTRATIVE REFERRAL: The discipline report will be sent to the school administrator and disciplinary action will be taken.

DeSoto County School District

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Annual Public Notice

The School District of DeSoto County policies on student educational records are published in the Student Records Policies and Procedure manual. This manual is available at all school sites, the ESE Department, the Student Services Department, and the Student Records Department. These policies and procedures are in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Florida Statutes.

In accordance with FERPA and Section 1002.22(3), F.S. the Desoto County School District must provide notification to parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") of their rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights include:

- (1) The right of access to inspect and review the student's education records within 30 days of the day the school/district receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students must submit to the appropriate school principal or designee a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. Within 10 days of receiving the written request, the school principal or designee will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. Upon written request, parents or eligible students will be provided with a copy of the requested student education record at no charge.

- (2) The right to waive the right of access to confidential letters or statements.

Parents or eligible students who want to waive their right of access to confidential letters or statements of recommendation or evaluation should submit a written, signed, and dated statement to the appropriate school principal, superintendent, or designee. If the right of access is waived, a parent or eligible student will be notified, upon written request, of the names of all persons submitting confidential recommendations or statements. Such recommendations must be used solely for the purpose for which they were specifically intended to retain their confidentiality.

- (3) The right to challenge and hearing - Parents or eligible students may challenge any content or request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of their privacy.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the appropriate school principal or designee a written statement that clearly identifies the part of the record they want to challenge or change and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of their privacy. If the school/district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school/district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- (4) The right of privacy.

Parents or eligible students must provide the school principal or designee at which the student is enrolled, or the Superintendent or district office designee a signed and dated written consent before a school/district designee may disclose records. However, the following are exceptions from FERPA and Florida Statute 1002.22 allowing the schools/districts the right to disclose personal identifiable records of a student without consent:

- a. Permits disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests.

A school official is a person employed by the school/district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the

school/district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

- b. Permits disclosure if a student is seeking or intending to enroll in another school.
- c. Permits disclosure to state or local educational authorities auditing or evaluating Federal or State supported education programs or enforcing Federal laws which relate to those programs.
- d. Permits disclosure to lawfully issued court order or subpoenas.
- e. Permits disclosure to appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.
- f. Permits disclosure to accrediting organizations, in order to carry out their accrediting functions.
- g. Permits disclosure to organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school district.
- h. Permits disclosure to appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student.
- i. Permits disclosure to state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.
- j. Permits the District to reserve the right to release the following directory information without prior permission of the parent/guardian or eligible student:

Pupil's name, address, telephone listing, date, and place of birth, a major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, most recent educational institution attended by student, photographs in the school yearbook and similar information.

Military Recruiters, on request, may receive directory information consisting of names, addresses, and telephone listings.

Parents or eligible students who do not want the School District of DeSoto to disclose of any or all of the above categories of directory information should notify the appropriate school principal or designee in writing within the first 10 days of receiving this notification.

Lists of pupils' directory information will not be released to any profit organization.

- (5) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the *school district* to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

Note: The District will presume that either parent of the student has authority to inspect and review the education records of the student, unless the District has been provided evidence that there is a legally binding instrument or court order which provides to the contrary.

Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)-
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of -
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use -
 1. Protected information surveys of students;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

The DeSoto County School District will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The DeSoto County School District will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The DeSoto County School District will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. The DeSoto County School District will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

PPRA Notice and Consent/Opt-Out for Specific Activities

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232h, requires the DeSoto County School District to notify you and obtain consent or allow you to opt your child out of participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight areas (“protected information surveys”):

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure or use of student information for marketing purposes (“marketing surveys”), and certain physical exams and screenings.

PARENT CONSENT FORM SAMPLE

ABC School
No Name Street
Arcadia, FL 34266

Date:

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Date: On or about (date)

Grades: grade, grade, and grade

Activity: ABC survey of _____ behaviors

Summary: This is an anonymous survey that asks questions about (the school with list information the students will be questioned about).

Parent or Guardian permission:

I give permission for my son/daughter _____ to participate in the ABC survey.

Signature, Parent or Guardian

If you have any questions concerning the survey, please do not hesitate in contact the school.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Brown
Principal