

Rules and Regulations

A basic element of effective prevention of misconduct is the setting of Division wide school rules which are implemented in a consistent manner. When no specific penalty is cited, the principal has the authority to set the appropriate penalty for infractions, which may range from counseling to a recommendation for expulsion, depending on the severity of the infraction. The student's age and grade level, the circumstances surrounding the infraction, and other relevant factors will be considered by the principal when determining the appropriate corrective measure.

The School Board and school staff have policy on weapons, drugs, violence and group assaults, and threats and/or assaults and/or battery against staff. Any student accused of violating this policy shall have a conference with the administrator of the school. If the circumstances of the offense support a violation of this policy, a recommendation by the administrator concerning expulsion or long-term suspension shall be forwarded to the superintendent. In determining whether to forward an expulsion recommendation the superintendent, the level building administrator will take into consideration all relevant factors, including any special circumstances under Virginia Code §22.1-1-277.06(c). The following is a summary of the established standards of conduct for Appomattox County Public Schools:

Accumulated Offenses - General education students may be expelled or placed on long-term suspension for an accumulation of offenses due to repeated violations of the "Code of Conduct" even though any one of those offenses may not warrant such serious corrective action. The procedures for the discipline of special education students are outlined in policy JGDA, "Disciplining Students with Disabilities."

1. Student Dress

A student's dress and appearance shall not be such that it causes disruption, distracts others from the educational process or creates a health or safety problem. Students must comply with specific building dress regulations and of which students will be given prior notice.

2. Unexcused Absence or Tardiness

Students shall not be absent from or report late to class or school without appropriate parental permission, school permission or an otherwise valid excuse. If a student who is under 18 years of age has 10 or more unexcused absences from school on consecutive school days, the principal may notify the juvenile and domestic relations court, which may take action to suspend the student's driver's license.

3. Disruptive Conduct

Students shall not engage in conduct that is or is intended to be disruptive of any school activity, function or process of the school or is dangerous to the health or safety of students or others.

4. Profane, Obscene or Abusive Language

Students shall not use language, a gesture, or engage in conduct that is vulgar, profane, obscene or disrupts the teaching and learning environment.

5. Threats or Intimidation

Students shall not make any verbal, written, or physical threat of bodily injury or use of force directed toward another person for the purpose of extortion or for any other reason.

6. Assault and Battery

A student shall not assault or commit battery upon another person. Voluntary fighting resulting in physical injury to another person shall be considered assault and battery.

Physical Assault includes any physical confrontation that may result in no injury, minor injury, or serious injury that includes, but may not be limited to, kicking, shoving, pushing, hitting and fighting.

7. Bullying

A student, either individually or as a part of a group, shall not harass or bully others either in person or by the use of any communication technology including computer systems, telephones, pagers, or instant messaging systems. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, physical, verbal, or written intimidation, taunting, name-calling, and insults and any combination of prohibited activities. Prohibited conduct includes verbal or written conduct consisting of comments regarding the race, gender, religion, physical abilities or characteristics or associates of the targeted person.

8. Gambling

A student shall not bet money or other things of value, or knowingly play or participate in any game involving such a bet, on school property or during any school related activity.

9. Use and/or Possession of Alcohol, Tobacco, Anabolic Steroids, and Other Drugs

A student shall not possess, use, and/or distribute alcohol, tobacco and/or tobacco products, or other drugs on school property, on school buses, or during school activities, on or off school property. This includes, but may not be limited to, smokeless tobacco, anabolic steroids, look-alike drugs, drug paraphernalia, and any prescription or non-prescription drug not possessed in accordance with Policy JHCD.

A student shall not possess, procure or purchase or attempt to possess, procure, or purchase, or be under the influence of (legal intoxication not required), or use or consume or attempt to use or consume, any of the restricted substances listed in this regulation or what is represented by or to the student to be any of the restricted substances listed in this regulation or what the student believes is any of the restricted substances in this regulation.

This regulation incorporates Policy JFCF.

Restricted Substances include alcoholic drinks, marijuana, synthetic cannabinoids, narcotic drugs, hallucinogens, stimulants, depressants, and anything else covered by the Drug Control Act referenced below, as well as any abusable glue, paint and similar materials, anabolic steroids and both prescription and non-prescription drugs if they are not taken according to the prescription or directions on the package, and includes anything that a student represents to be a restricted substance or which a student believes is a restricted substance.

In addition to any other consequences which may result, a student who is a member of a school athletic team will be ineligible for two school years to compete in interscholastic athletic competition if the school principal and the division superintendent determine that the student used anabolic steroids during the training period immediately preceding or during the sport season of the athletic team, unless such steroid was prescribed by a licensed physician for a medical condition.

10. Distribution or Sale of Illegal Drugs or Possession or Distribution with Intent to Sell

Students shall not manufacture, give, sell, distribute or possess with intent to give, sell or distribute marijuana, synthetic cannabinoids, or other controlled substance as defined in the Drug Control Act, Chapter 15.1 of Title 54 of the Code of Virginia.

11. Vandalism

Students shall not willfully or maliciously damage or deface any school building or other property owned or under the control of the School Board. In addition, students shall not willfully or maliciously damage or deface property belonging to or under the control of any other person at school, on a school bus or at school-sponsored events.

12. Defiance of the Authority of School Personnel

Students shall comply with any oral or written instructions made by school personnel within the scope of their authority as provided by board policies and regulations.

13. Possession or Use of Weapons or Other Dangerous Articles

Students shall not have in their possession any type of unauthorized firearm or other article which may be used as a weapon, regardless of whether it is commonly accepted as such. This regulation incorporates Policy JFCD.

14. Theft

A student shall not intentionally take the personal property of another person without consent under duress, threat or otherwise.

15. Behavior on School Bus

Students shall not behave in a disruptive manner or otherwise violate these Standards of Conduct while waiting for a school bus, while on a school bus or after being discharged from a school bus.

16. Cheating

Students shall not cheat, plagiarize or knowingly make false statements with respect to any assigned school work or tests.

17. Trespass

The student shall not trespass on school property or use school facilities without proper authority or permission, or during a period of suspension or expulsion.

18. Gang Activity

A student shall not engage in gang activities as defined in Policy JFCE, incorporated by reference.

Virginia Law Street Gangs

The Appomattox County School Board recognizes the existence of gangs in the community and the threat they pose to the educational environment. Therefore, students shall not engage in gang activity on school grounds, on school buses or on any school sponsored activity. In addition, students shall not engage in gang activity using the School Division computer system at any time.

A gang is defined as any group of three or more persons whose purpose includes:

- commission of illegal acts
- participation in activities that threaten the safety of persons or property
- disruption of the school environment
- creation of an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.

Students are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Policy and Regulation JFC for participating in gang activity. Gang activity is defined as:

- wearing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other thing that is evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang;
- committing any act or omission, or using any speech, either verbal or non-verbal (such as gestures or hand-shakes) showing membership or affiliation in a gang;
- using any speech or committing any act or omission in furtherance of the interests of any gang, including: (a) soliciting, hazing and initiating others for membership in any gang, (b) requesting any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person, (c) committing any other illegal act or other violation of school policy and inciting other students to act with physical violence;
- inappropriate congregating, bullying, cyber bullying, harassment, intimidation, degradation, disgrace and/or related activities which are likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or mental harm to students, employees or visitors.

The superintendent shall, in cooperation with local law enforcement and/or juvenile agencies, develop a regulation listing known gang clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, signs, gestures, handshakes and symbols. The list shall be updated regularly.

The superintendent shall provide in-service training in gang behavior and characteristics to facilitate staff identification of students at-risk of gang involvement and promote membership in authorized school groups and/or activities as an alternative.

19. Harassment

A student shall not harass another student or any school employee, volunteer, student teacher or any other person present in school facilities or at school functions in violation of Policy JFHA/GBA Sexual Harassment/Harassment Based on Race, National Origin, Disability and Religion.

20. Possession of Beepers, Cellular Telephones, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), or Similar Devices

Students may possess a beeper, cellular telephone, Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or other communications device on school property, including school buses, provided that the device must remain off and out of sight during instructional time. If a student possesses such a device other than as permitted in this policy, in addition to other disciplinary sanctions which may be imposed, the device may be confiscated from the student and returned only to the student's parent.

21. Reports of Conviction or Adjudication of Delinquency

Any student for whom the superintendent has received a report pursuant to Va. Code § 16.1-305.1 of an adjudication of delinquency or a conviction for an offense listed in subsection G of Va. Code § 16.1-260 may be suspended or expelled.

22. Laser Pointers

Students shall not have in their possession laser pointers.

23. Acceptable Use of the Internet

Students shall abide by the Appomattox County School Division's Acceptable Computer Use Policy and Regulation.

24. Felony Charges

Students charged with any offense, wherever committed, that would be a felony if committed by an adult may be disciplined and/or required to participate in prevention/ intervention activities.

25. Bomb Threats

Students shall not engage in any illegal conduct involving firebombs, explosive or incendiary materials or devices or hoax explosive devices or chemical bombs as defined in the Code of Virginia. Moreover, students shall not make any threats or false threats to bomb school personnel or school property.

26. Hazing

Students shall not engage in hazing.

Hazing means to recklessly or intentionally endanger the health or safety of a student or students or to inflict bodily harm on a student or students in connection with or for the purpose of initiation, admission into or affiliation with or as a condition for continued membership in a club, organization, association, fraternity, sorority, or student body regardless of whether the student or students so endangered or injured participated voluntarily in the relevant activity.

The principal of any school at which hazing which causes bodily injury occurs shall report the hazing to the local Commonwealth Attorney. Hazing, as defined above, is a Class 1 misdemeanor which may be punished by confinement in jail for up to 12 months and a fine of up to \$2,500, or both, in addition to any disciplinary consequences which may be imposed under this policy. In addition, any person receiving bodily injury by hazing has a right to sue, civilly, the person or persons guilty thereof, whether adults or infants. See Va. Code 18.2-56.

27. Other Conduct

In addition to these specific standards, students shall not engage in any conduct which materially and substantially disrupts the ongoing educational process or which is otherwise a violation of federal, state or local law.

Refer to your child's school for specific cell phone rules.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

The following corrective actions are among those available to the school administration for violation of the Student Code of Conduct. Each offense shall be considered fully in determining reasonable corrective actions.

1. Counseling
2. Admonition
3. Reprimand
4. Loss of privileges, including access to the School Division's computer system
5. Parental conferences
6. Tasks or restrictions assigned by the principal or his designee
7. Detention after school or before school
8. Suspension from school-sponsored activities or events prior to, during, or after the regular school day
9. In-school suspension
10. Out-of-school suspension
11. Referral to an alternative education program
12. Notification of legal authority where appropriate
13. Recommendation for expulsion
14. Mandatory expulsion for bringing a firearm onto school property or to a school-sponsored activity or use or possession of a controlled substance, imitation controlled substance or marijuana, as defined in Chapter 34 of Title 54.1 and §18.2-247 of the Code of Virginia, synthetic cannabinoids, on school property or at a school sponsored activity
15. Evaluation for alcohol or drug abuse
16. Participation in a drug, alcohol or violence intervention, prevention or treatment program