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Supervisor, Threat Assessment
Dr. Dolores Robison

Supervisor, School Age Child Care (SACC)/Next Generation Program
Glynis Taylor
Message from the Superintendent

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the 2020-21 school year. I am proud to begin my 16th year as Superintendent of Schools of such an extraordinary School Division. Our dedicated School Board, outstanding teachers, support staff, and leadership team work hard every day to continue Providing A World-Class Education to an ever-growing student population that now exceeds 91,000 students in 100 schools and centers.

The “Code of Behavior” (COB) includes important information to guide students and adults toward success in our School Division. It is vital for parents and guardians to understand the policies summarized and to emphasize their importance to students. With your help, we can ensure a positive, nurturing, and safe learning environment in all our schools.

I would like to add that this year’s Code of Behavior allows students more flexibility regarding the dress code. I appreciate the many stakeholders, including students, who helped provide input to the School Division regarding the dress code and other important components. Your feedback is appreciated and invaluable.

The Code of Behavior can be found on www.pwcs.edu (print copies are available on request). A parent or guardian for every student must sign and return the emergency card sent home the first week of school to acknowledge your awareness of COB content as required by law under Virginia Code §22 1-279.3.

Working together we will create an environment where everyone is treated with respect and is encouraged to help others. On behalf of everyone at Prince William County Public Schools, I wish you and your student a productive and enjoyable year.

Sincerely,

Steven L. Walts
Superintendent of Schools
Preamble

The Virginia Constitution confers upon a local school board the authority to supervise the operation of the public schools under the school board’s control. This authority includes the power to supervise and discipline students.

The Prince William County School Board seeks to protect the rights of all its students to an education commensurate with their abilities, interests, values, and goals by providing safeguards for the health, safety, and rights of the individual student and school employee, and for the protection of school property.

However, the task of training and educating youth must be shared by all members of the school community - students, faculty, administrators, and parent(s) - who all bear responsibility to equitably support the rules of the school and the integrity of the educational process.

It is the duty of the parent to train the child to assume responsibility in the school environment—responsibility for learning and exhibiting conduct that does not infringe upon the safety and rights of another. (See page 8 for additional information, including legal responsibilities of parents.) The school has the right to expect reasonable and self-disciplined behavior from each student. Since self-discipline cannot be imposed from without, the students must be permitted a degree of freedom of choice and action to develop their individual talents and abilities.

The Virginia Code §22.1-78, states: “A school board may adopt bylaws and regulations including but not limited to the proper discipline of students, including their going to and returning from school.” The School Board’s rules governing student conduct are summarized in the “Code of Behavior” and are also addressed in the Prince William County Public Schools’ (PWCS) policies and regulations.

The provisions of this “Code of Behavior” apply whenever students are involved, such as:

- During regular school attendance and whenever present on school property or virtually;
- At school activities on property owned by the School Board, to include SACC and Next Generation Programs;
- When going to and from school and bus stops;
- On school buses and at bus stops;
- In cases involving off-site, school-sponsored activities such as field trips, sporting events, and club activities; and
- When conduct by a student occurring off school grounds or school property has a material effect on the operation or general welfare of the School Division, impacts the integrity of the educational process, threatens the safety and welfare of students, staff, or school property, occurs when the student is under the school’s authority in loco parentis or otherwise invades the rights of students or staff.

The Superintendent may, for good cause, approve a deviation from the procedures set forth in the “Code of Behavior” in its present form, so long as the basic rights of students, parent(s) the community at large, and/or school personnel are not violated. Good cause means protecting the health, safety, welfare, and educational opportunities of the students in the school system.

* “Parent(s),” as used throughout, means biological parent(s), adoptive parent(s), or legal guardian(s).
Anonymous Reporting Tip Line

703-791-2821

Students, staff, and parents share the responsibility for an orderly and safe school environment. Information about drugs, weapons, or other factors which may be harmful to the school environment should be reported. Any attempt of retaliation for the reporting of “Code of Behavior” violations shall be addressed by corrective action up to and including expulsion. Students who have knowledge of drugs, weapons, violence, or other behaviors which may be harmful to others or to the school environment, may be subject to disciplinary action for failure to report such information to school authorities.

Following are some suggestions for reporting such information:

- Contact the school principal or other administrator.
- **Dial the PWCS anonymous Tip Line at 703-791-2821.**
  
  *Note: This is a recorded message system and should not be used in cases of emergency or when an immediate response may be required.*

- Contact the police in cases of emergency.

- If a student discovers something in his or her possession which is not permitted at school, that student should report to an administrator or other staff member immediately.

- Follow-up action shall take into consideration that the student voluntarily brought this to the attention of staff.

- Students should contact an administrator, teacher, or counselor immediately if they believe that they have been victims of discrimination, harassment, or other acts which violate the “Code of Behavior.”
Responsibilities

Prince William County School Board

The “Code of Behavior” has been established for PWCS. The School Board, acting through the Superintendent, holds all school employees responsible for supervising student behavior while students are legally under the supervision of the schools. The School Board holds all students responsible for appropriate conduct as defined in the policies and regulations of the School Board and as summarized in the PWCS “Code of Behavior.” Policies and regulations governing student behavior and student discipline can be found in the PWCS policies and regulations which are available online at www.pwcs.edu.

All PWCS employees are held to the highest ethical standards and are accountable for their actions. Therefore, all staff must comply with the policies and regulations established by the School Board.

The School Board holds all parents responsible for reading the “Code of Behavior” and any policies or regulations referenced in the “Code of Behavior” for promoting proper student conduct.

Attention

Please be aware that security cameras are located in all buildings and will be used to ensure the safety and security of all PWCS students, staff, and property.

Educational Team

While discipline is ultimately the responsibility of the individual, the implementation of an effective discipline program requires a cooperative team effort. An equitable and preventive approach to discipline shall be taken in an effort to clarify standards of conduct, effectively assess a student’s individual needs, and identify any significant factors which may be contributing to a student’s misconduct. The school principal is the instructional leader responsible for the development of school-based behavior expectations which are consistent with policies and regulations of the School Board and the “Code of Behavior.” Administrators, teachers, and support personnel all work together to ensure the rights of each student in the School Division.

The educational team is responsible for:

• Providing a safe and positive school environment;
• Providing a favorable psychological environment for learning;
• Encouraging self-discipline;
• Providing an atmosphere of mutual respect;
• Treating each student as an individual in accordance with one’s needs;
• Encouraging, monitoring, and evaluating the progress of students;
• Initiating and maintaining open lines of communication with parents;
• Discussing the “Code of Behavior” with students at the beginning of each school year and providing periodic review during the school year;
• Formulating and implementing school rules and regulations in compliance with policies and regulations of the School Board and the “Code of Behavior” throughout the school setting;
• Providing both instruction and access to the “Code of Behavior” to all new students upon registration throughout the school year;
• Developing a plan of action, whenever possible, based on the needs of the student and the school environment as a whole; and
• Maintaining the educational records of individual students to include a record of disciplinary actions involving the student. Such records may contain information on police arrest or court action if the student is involved in unlawful behavior.

Whenever charges are placed with juvenile court authorities, it may be considered an “arrest” even if the student is not physically taken into custody by police (as required under Virginia law).

School administrators (principals and assistant principals) are responsible for appropriate follow-up action whenever students report discrimination, harassment, or other acts which violate the “Code of Behavior.” Teachers, counselors, and other educational support staff are responsible for helping students obtain the assistance they may need from administrators. Staff response to each student complaint should be documented.
As delineated in Policy 747, “Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs,” the Prince William County School Board supports the Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs (OSMAP) to coordinate the School Division’s efforts to provide a safe school environment which is conducive to teaching and learning. The purposes of OSMTP are as follows:

To resolve serious student disciplinary offenses;
- To provide a variety of educational opportunities that address the varied needs of students in grades K-12 and adult learners;
- To promote a safe educational environment conducive to teaching and learning and free from violence, conflict, and unnecessary disruptions;
- To decrease the number of long-term suspensions and expulsions through a process that provides increased nontraditional and alternative education opportunities;
- To oversee and conduct the due process procedures applicable to the long-term suspension, expulsion, exclusion, and readmission of students, and to coordinate any appeals to the School Board; and
- To determine the appropriate educational services, programs, and placements for regular education students who are subject to OSMTP’s disciplinary process.

Parent(s)


It is the duty of the parent to:
- Determine the appropriate educational services, programs, and placements for regular education students who are subject to OSMTP’s disciplinary process.
- Sign the “Code of Behavior” agreement on the back of the emergency information card;
- Teach the student to assume responsibility for learning and for conduct that does not infringe upon the rights of others;
- Ensure the student’s daily attendance in school and notify the school when a student is absent, tardy, or leaving early from school;
- Ensure the student’s arrival at school on time;
- Provide encouragement and discipline aimed at motivating the student toward responsible behavior and participation within the school setting;
- Read and understand the “Code of Behavior;”
- Ensure that the student is appropriately dressed for school as determined by the dress code, which is developed cooperatively at local schools by students, parent(s), and school staff;
- Provide such books, materials, instruments, uniforms, and equipment as are required for effective participation in the school program;
- Know promotion and graduation requirements as published each year for middle and high school students in the “Course Catalog;”
- Provide emergency information, including a local telephone number, to the school to ensure that the school will have immediate contact with the parent in case of an emergency;
- Provide a certified copy of the student’s birth certificate, and/or immigration documentation, physical examination, record of the completed series of immunizations, and social security number, where applicable, as required by the Virginia Code, upon initial entry to school; and
- Understand that drugs and weapons, as described in the “Code of Behavior,” will not be tolerated at school activities on property owned by the School Board, when going to and from school and bus stops, on school buses and at bus stops, in cases involving off-site, school-sponsored activities such as field trips, sporting events, and club activities; and that violators are subject to corrective action up to and including expulsion.
Attention
Under Virginia law, parents have a duty to assist the school in enforcing the standards of student conduct and compulsory school attendance. Parents have a responsibility to know the “Code of Behavior,” promote proper student conduct, assist the school with the discipline of the student, and meet with school officials if requested to discuss matters related to discipline and school attendance. The law also requires that parents sign a statement showing that they know their responsibilities. Such a statement is located on the Emergency Information Card. Parents must complete an annual review of the “Code of Behavior” and other necessary legal acknowledgements immediately prior to the start of school or during the first weeks of the school year. The School Board may ask the court to act against any parents who fail to return the signed card or fail to fulfill their responsibilities. The court may impose a fine or order parents to participate in efforts to improve students’ behavior. A summary of “Parental Responsibility and Involvement Requirements Under Virginia Law” appears on page 43.

Student(s)
Code of Expectations
The student-developed Code of Expectations establishes behaviors, attitudes, and actions that promote responsibility and success in school.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CODE OF EXPECTATIONS

Grades K - Two:
As a caring and responsible student in Prince William County Public Schools, I pledge to:

- Ask for help if I need it;
- Find opportunities to help adults and friends;
- Obey rules and stay out of bad situations;
- Practice, be honest, and take care of property;
- Do my best and complete my schoolwork and homework;
- Be honest and always tell the truth;
- Exercise good judgement when using technology and adhere to the PWCS Responsible Use and Internet Safety Policy;
- Be a good friend and not bully others; and
- Be proud of who I am and not be intimidated by others.

Grades Three - Five:
As a caring and responsible student in Prince William County Public Schools, I pledge to:

- Ask for help if I need it;
- Communicate positively with adults;
- Find opportunities to help adults and friends;
- Become involved in school/community activities;
- Obey rules and stay out of bad situations;
- Exercise good judgement when using technology and adhere to the PWCS Responsible Use and Internet Safety Policy;
- Encourage other students to be good role models;
- Practice, be honest, and take care of property;
- Become active after homework by participating in activities with friends and family;
- Do my best and complete all of my schoolwork and homework;
- Treat adults and other students with respect;
- Be honest and always tell the truth;
- Stand up for myself and others, and be a role model;
- Be a good friend and not bully others;
- Try to understand the feelings of others;
- Be proud of who I am and not be intimidated by others; and
- Be a good influence to younger children.
MIDDLE SCHOOL CODE OF EXPECTATIONS
As a caring and responsible student in Prince William County Public Schools, I pledge to:

- Be respectful and encouraging to others;
- Set good examples for other students in the classroom;
- Communicate openly with parents, teachers, and school staff;
- Encourage other students to make positive decisions;
- Be a role model and promote safe decision-making by other students;
- Serve the community by conducting activities such as food drives, request donations when needed, etc.;
- Follow the boundaries set by my family, school, and community;
- Select friends and role models carefully;
- Strive to do my best and not lower my expectations even if I sometimes fail;
- Participate in school activities and athletic teams;
- Find a distraction-free place to study;
- Use my time wisely; not procrastinate when completing assignments;
- Guide and encourage other students to do well in school;
- Set a good example by ignoring negative influences around me;
- Listen attentively in class and be a good role model for other students;
- Take responsibility for my actions;
- Exercise good judgement when using technology and adhere to the PWCS Responsible Use and Internet Safety Policy;
- Control my behavior and refuse to do what I know is wrong;
- Believe in the equality of all regardless of race, gender, religion, socio-economic background, or disability;
- Respect students who may have backgrounds different from mine;
- Plan ahead to make the right decisions;
- Avoid inappropriate situations;
- Participate in many different activities and motivate others to do so;
- Find adult role models who provide me with support when I need to talk with someone; and
- Believe in myself.

HIGH SCHOOL CODE OF EXPECTATIONS
As a caring and responsible student in Prince William County Public Schools, I pledge to:

- Encourage my parents to be actively involved in my education and school activities;
- Build open and healthy communication with the adults in my life;
- Work to create a caring school environment;
- Help my school and community to be viewed in a positive way by being a respected role model, making good decisions, and upholding responsibilities given to me;
- Serve my school and community by volunteering to support activities which are beneficial and promote a safe school environment;
- Conduct myself in ways which adults view as responsible so they will value my opinion due to my accountability and good reputation;
- Cooperate with my teachers and other adults;
- Cooperate with my family and neighborhood in order to establish clear rules for youth in my community;
- Model positive and inspiring behavior that I see in adults;
- Become involved in an extracurricular activity to provide additional structure in my schedule;
- Develop interests in different activities and expand/broaden my involvement in the community;
- Spread my time equally among different activities (school, home, and extracurricular activities);
- Abide by the rules and regulations in the “Code of Behavior” to further the education of myself and my peers;
- Exercise good judgement when using technology and adhere to the PWCS Responsible Use and Internet Safety Policy;
- Actively engage in school functions and demonstrate that I care about the well-being of my community;
- Improve my education by being committed to completing my assignments and academic responsibilities;
- Promote a more positive attitude that could influence others by equipping me with proper characteristics such as integrity and honesty;
- Honor my positive values not only in a school environment, but in my everyday decisions by stressing the importance of a caring personality and working for equality;
• Appreciate the positive values that influence me to be who I am and incorporate those values within our schools and communities;
• Treat all of my peers equally regardless of their differences and backgrounds;
• Plan ahead and use my knowledge to make positive decisions against negative peer pressure;
• Use my empathy, sympathy, and friendship skills to resolve my conflicts non-violently;
• Know that I have a sense of purpose;
• Know my goals in life and be optimistic about my future; and
• Have a vision for my future and create a plan to achieve it.

Students, staff, and parents share the responsibility for an orderly and safe school environment. Information about drugs, weapons, or other factors which may be harmful to the school environment should be reported. Any attempt of retaliation for the reporting of “Code of Behavior” violations shall be addressed by corrective action up to and including expulsion.

Students who have knowledge of drugs, weapons, violence, or other behaviors which may be harmful to others or to the school environment, may be subject to disciplinary action for failure to report such information to school authorities.

If a student discovers something in his or her possession which is not permitted at school, that student should report to an administrator or other staff member immediately. School staff responsible for initiating follow-up action shall take into consideration that the student voluntarily brought this to the attention of staff. Students should contact an administrator, teacher, counselor, or other trusted adult immediately if they believe that they have been victims of discrimination, harassment, or other acts which violate the “Code of Behavior.”
**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 further disciplinary action (long-term suspension or recommendation for expulsion) by OSMAP, 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 following is a summary of the established standards of conduct for PWCS:

**Assault and Battery** - The threat of a verbal or physical attack (assault) and the use of force upon a person (battery) is expressly forbidden.

**Assault and/or Battery of a School Division Employee** - The assault and battery of any School Division employee, to include substitutes, is strictly prohibited. Students accused of committing these infractions are subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion. In addition, students may be subject to criminal prosecution for such an offense under section 18.2-57 of the Virginia Code, which provides that a conviction for the battery of any School Division employee shall include a sentence of 15 days incarceration with a mandatory minimum period of two days incarceration. If the offense is committed by use of a firearm or other weapons prohibited on school property, the person shall serve a mandatory minimum sentence of incarceration for six months.

**Attendance** - Under Virginia Law, students are responsible for attending school every day that school is in session. Regulation 724-1, “Attendance and Excuses,” contains the specific information related to student attendance as summarized here. Absences, tardies, and/or early dismissals must have documented approval from a parent and/or school personnel. Within five days of the absence from school, the parent shall provide documentation to appropriate school staff to excuse the absence. Classwork for excused absences may be made up according to Regulation 724-1. The student or parent is responsible for obtaining assignments. Students coming in late to school should follow the school’s procedures for checking in.

Types of Excused Absences:

- Personal illness of the student;
- Medical and dental examination and/or treatment of the student when such appointments cannot be scheduled outside school hours;
- Student participation in school-sponsored activities taking place during school hours;
- With prior approval of the principal, seniors may be excused for college admission visitations or to apply for post-graduation jobs;
- Death in the student’s immediate family or household;
- Required court appearance;
- Observation of a religious holiday (students should not be deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award or of the right to take an alternative test or examination, due to such absence);
- Emergency conditions in the student’s home which require special help from the student in caring for the sick or injured; however, repeated use of this excuse or requests for absences for more than five consecutive days must be referred to the Office of Student Services for approval;
- Per Regulation 724-1, preapproved absences are discouraged and will only be granted on a case-by-case basis by the principal or his/her designee. Family trips are encouraged to be scheduled during school holidays and over summer break. Absences for family trips will not be excused unless accompanied by extraordinary circumstances. A determination of whether extraordinary circumstances exist lies in the discretion of the principal, in collaboration with the Office of Student Services. Such factors as the reason for the absence, the educational value of the proposed experience, and the impact of the absence on the student’s academic progress will be given consideration in determining whether a prearranged absence is approved or disapproved;
- Preapproved absence for certain reasons pertaining to a parent’s military deployment;
- Reasons of extenuating circumstances as judged by the principal; and
- Students experiencing homelessness who are awaiting transportation arrangements.

Types of Unexcused Absences:

- All-day truancy;
- Class truancy;
- Missing a ride, or a bus, or car trouble;
- Failure to produce an appropriate explanation or requested documentation for an absence; and
- Prearranged absences without prior approval of the school principal.
Per Virginia Code, the Virginia Department of Education, and PWCS Regulation 724-1, “Attendance and Excuses,” schools will convene attendance intervention meetings and develop attendance improvement plans for students who accumulate five or more unexcused absences. Parents may be required to participate in attendance intervention meetings. Parents(s) of severely truant students may be subject to legal action for not complying with compulsory attendance laws.

Bullying – “Bullying” means any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. Bullying includes cyberbullying. “Bullying” does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict. Unacceptable use of technology includes use of technology off school property which has a material effect on the operation or general welfare of the School Division, impacts the integrity of the educational process, threatens the safety and welfare of students, staff, or school property, occurs when the student is under the school’s authority in loco parentis, or otherwise invades the rights of student or staff. Violators are subject to corrective action up to and including suspension and expulsion. Students should immediately report all incidences of bullying to a teacher, counselor, or administrator using the “Complaint of Bullying” form (page 42), verbally, or through other means of communication. Students should feel free to report bullying incidents without fear of retaliation. Any attempt of retaliation shall be addressed by corrective actions, up to and including expulsion.

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying which involves the transmission, receipt, or display of electronic messages and/or images. Cyberbullying using the PWCS internet, PWCS computers, or other wireless communication devices in schools, on school property, or at school-related activities will not be tolerated. This conduct is a violation of Regulation 295-1, “Computer Systems and Network Services – PWCS Responsible Use and Internet Safety Policy,” and Regulation 733.01-1, “Bullying of Students.”

Cyberbullying which occurs off school grounds and/or does not involve the use of the PWCS internet or computers may also result in disciplinary action if it causes or is likely to cause a material disruption to the operation of the school(s) or the School Division, it threatens the safety or mental/physical well-being of students or staff, or it threatens the safety of school buildings or school property.

Cyberbullying refers to any threats by one student toward another, typically through emails or on websites (e.g. blogs, social networking sites, electronic messages that support deliberate, hostile, hurtful messages intended to harm others, including such things as sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images, posting sensitive, private information about another person, pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad, and using defamatory online personal polling websites.)

Bystanders - Students who, by their presence and/or actions, encourage disruption, fights, or other violations of the “Code of Behavior” are subject to corrective action. This includes, but is not limited to, bystanders who refuse to move or to follow other directions of school staff during disruptions, fights, etc.

Cars and Other Vehicles - Cars and other vehicles may be brought onto school grounds only with permission of the administration and must be operated in a safe manner in compliance with school rules and state and local laws. The owner and/or operator of any car or other vehicle which is located on or operated on school property consents, by virtue of such operation and/or location of the car or vehicle on school property, to the search of such vehicle when reasonable suspicion exists that prohibited items as described in Regulation 737-1, “Searches and Seizures,” may be inside the vehicle. Violators are subject to corrective action at school, which may include loss of driving privileges on school grounds, out-of-school suspension (OSS), further disciplinary action, and applicable legal penalties.

Cheating and Plagiarism - Students are responsible for neither giving nor receiving assistance (written, orally, or otherwise) on tests, examinations, final evaluations, or class assignments that are to be graded as the work of a single individual. Cheating includes the giving or receiving of a computer file, program, part of a program, or other computer-based information without specific teacher direction or approval. Cheating encompasses any violation of rules where the violation involved dishonesty.

The parent will be contacted, and the student will be appropriately disciplined for academic violations. Schools shall incorporate the use of an honor pledge in their efforts to emphasize the importance of honesty. The implementation of this pledge shall be at the discretion of the principal.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Students are responsible for giving due recognition of sources from which material is quoted, summarized or paraphrased, as well as to persons from whom assistance has been received.

Communication Devices (Wireless) – Possession of communication devices by students on school grounds is a privilege, not a right, and any student who brings a communication device on school property consents to these rules and to the School Division’s right to confiscate and/or search such devices as provided in these rules. Any expectation of privacy related to the use of student or staff-owned devices is negated by the failure to comply with relevant School Board policies and regulations. Students may possess wireless
communication devices including, but not limited to cell phones, tablets, and eReaders on school grounds provided that these devices are used only at the times and in the manner specified by PWCS regulations, as implemented by school principals and staff. The use of these devices may be prohibited at specific times and locations to maintain the integrity of an academic environment. Any violation of such prohibitions may result in a disciplinary action. Wireless communication devices may be used on school buses provided that the device does not distract the driver, compromise safety, or violate other school bus rules and regulations. Videotaping, recording, or photographing students or other occupants of the school bus is prohibited, where such activity is used to harass, embarrass, humiliate, or harm others, or where in the judgement of the driver or other staff, such activity is disruptive and/or otherwise diverts the attention of the driver from the operation of the school bus. Violators are subject to confiscation of the communication device and/or other corrective action as listed on page 17. Searches of communication devices may be conducted if the administrator has a reasonable suspicion that it is being used or has been used for conduct that is criminal or a violation of the “Code of Behavior.” School Division staff do not assume responsibility for the security of communication and/or electronic devices that are brought onto school property. While on school property, at any school-related activities or while traveling to and from school or any school-related activities, students shall neither take nor display video graphic or still images of a person who is undressed or partially undressed. Violators may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Under Virginia Code, § 18.2-386.1, this crime is a misdemeanor if the victim is an adult, but a felony if the victim is under 18.

**Cult, Occult and Ritualistic Activities** - Cult, occult and associated ritualistic activities and recruitment for members of these groups will not be tolerated. Actions, speech, gestures, clothing, symbols or other signs of cult membership or activity are prohibited at school and at school-related activities.

**Curfew** - All students should be aware of local laws pertaining to curfew and exceptions to the curfew. As of July 1, 1997, in Prince William County, everyone under the age of 18 who is not accompanied by a responsible adult is subject to a curfew which makes it unlawful to be in public from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. on Sunday through Thursday and from 11:59 p.m. to 5 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. Students may be exempted for attendance at official school functions. The law also allows for other exemptions. All young people have an obligation to know and abide by the provisions of this law. Further information is available at the Prince William County website, www.pwcgov.org.

**Discrimination** - Prince William County Public Schools does not discriminate in employment nor in the provision of educational programs, services, and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, veteran status, disability, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law. Parents or students who have reason to believe they have been discriminated against are encouraged to discuss the matter with the school principal, or they may seek resolution through the regular student appeals process.

**Dishonesty** - Students shall not make false accusations against staff or other students and shall not give false information which may be harmful to others or interfere with duties of staff.

**Disobedience/Disrespect** - No student shall disregard or disobey any reasonable request made by a school staff member. Any student who directs profanity, threats, or other forms of verbal abuse toward a school staff member shall be subject to OSS and considered for expulsion.

**Disruption** - No student while on school property, at a school-sponsored activity, or on school buses, shall behave in a disorderly manner or in any other way interrupt or disturb the orderly operation of the school. Conduct occurring off school grounds which causes disruption to the school, the educational process, or the rights of the students or staff may also result in corrective action at school.

**Drug and Substance Abuse** - No student shall have or use alcohol, drugs, or anything that resembles alcohol or drugs (see page 21).

**Electronic Entertainment Devices** - Students may utilize electronic entertainment devices while traveling to and from school provided that these items are not a distraction to the bus driver and/or do not compromise safety. In addition, the use of these devices should not distract from or disrupt activities. During the school day or at school sponsored events and activities, students may not record audio or video footage intended to be used or distributed to cause harm to other students or adults, or which may cause a disruption to the instructional process. Violators are subject to confiscation of the device and/or other corrective action as listed on page 17. School Division staff do not assume responsibility for the security of communication and/or electronic devices that are brought onto school property. While on school property, at any school-related activities, or while traveling to and from school or any school-related activities, students shall neither take nor display video graphic or still images of a person who is undressed or partially undressed. Violators may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Under Virginia Code, § 18.2-386.1, this crime is a misdemeanor if the victim is an adult, but a felony if the victim is under 18.
Endangering Others - Student conduct which may put others in danger will not be permitted. This includes but is not limited to violations of fire regulations; making false fire reports; lighting matches, lighting any flame not an approved part of classroom instruction, use of incendiary or explosive materials, and threats or attempts to bomb, burn, or destroy, in any manner, school property or the property of school personnel or students.

Failure to Report Violations - In order to maintain safety and security in our schools, students are responsible for reporting serious violations of the “Code of Behavior” to teachers, administrators, other appropriate staff, or the PWCS Tip Line reporting service. Serious violations include conduct or behavior which results, or may result, in injury to the person, health, or welfare of students or staff, or damage to property. Failure to report may result in corrective action. (See also “Students,” pages 9 - 11 and “Weapons Violations,” pages 22.)

Fighting - Students are responsible for settling confrontations that may arise in a peaceful manner and without the use of violence. When students feel that they are unable to settle disagreements in a peaceful manner, they should seek assistance from school personnel, such as a teacher, counselor, principal, social worker, etc. Fighting will result in corrective action which may include suspension or expulsion. Students are also subject to corrective action for behavior which they may not consider to be serious or threatening (“horseplay,” “playing around,” etc.) when that behavior may cause injury, discomfort, or disruption.

Gambling - Gambling on school property is strictly prohibited. Gambling is defined as the betting of money or valuables on the outcome of a game, contest, or event.

Gangs - Gang activity, recruitment, and expressions of gang membership will not be tolerated. Actions, speech, gestures, clothing, symbols or other signs of gang membership or gang activity are prohibited at school and at school-related activities. Any student involved in a gang-related fight or assault shall be considered for expulsion.

Group Assault - Group assault in school, at school-related activities, or on the way to and from school is strictly prohibited. Any student who participates in a group assault which results in disruption or disturbance at school or school-related activities is subject to corrective action up to and including expulsion. Any student who participates in a group assault on other individuals or groups at school or school-related activities may be recommended for expulsion. Any two or more students with the intent of doing harm to persons, property, or the school environment may be considered a group under this rule.

Glass Containers - Students shall not have glass bottles or other such breakable containers on school property or at school-related activities without the express permission of a school staff member.

Harassment - Words, gestures, symbols, actions, or physical contact which offend, intimidate, threaten or persecute others will not be tolerated. This includes such behavior as non-physical intimidation, posturing, or “stare downs.” Harassment of students or staff for any reason is prohibited. In addition, as stated in Regulation 738-3, “Harassment of Students,” harassment is prohibited by law (see pages 34 - 35). Complaint procedures are found on page 35 and in Regulation 738-1, “Complaint Procedures for Student Claims of Discrimination or Harassment.”

Hazing - Students shall not engage in behavior that recklessly or intentionally endangers the health or safety of others or inflicts bodily injury on a student in connection with initiation, affiliation or admission into a club, group organization, or student body. Violators are subject to corrective measures up to and including suspension, expulsion, and possible criminal consequences.

Indecent Material - No student shall possess, wear/display, produce, or distribute indecent (vulgar, obscene, profane, offensive) materials including clothing, posters, written/printed materials, CDs, DVDs, trading cards, and computer-based materials.

Laser Pointers - Students shall not have laser pointers or other laser devices at school, on school buses, or at school-related activities without the permission of a school administrator or faculty member. Violators are subject to corrective measures and may have the pointer/device confiscated.

Littering - Students shall help maintain a clean and healthful school environment by properly disposing of trash while in the cafeteria, classrooms, hallways, and elsewhere in the school and on school grounds, buses, bus stops, and at school-related activities.

Loss of Driving Privilege – Students should be aware of the consequences of certain acts which violate the “Code of Behavior” but also violate the law and may result in the loss of driving privileges. Under Virginia law, a judge may take away your license for certain offenses.

Offenses Off of School Grounds - Actions outside of school which have a negative impact on the school building, programs, students, or staff will not be tolerated. The School Board and PWCS staff are committed to maintaining the schools as safe and healthy places in which to learn, places which are free from the impact of violence, weapons, gang activity, substance abuse, and other
negative influences. Students are subject to corrective measures at school, up to and including expulsion, for offenses which occur in the community or at other locations off of school grounds if those offenses result in disruption to the operation of the school, the educational process, or impact the rights, safety, or welfare of students, staff, or school property. Under Virginia law, a student may be suspended or expelled if found guilty in court of the manufacture, sale, gift, distribution, or possession of drugs even if the offense is not connected with school. Furthermore, Virginia law provides that a student may be reassigned or placed in an alternative educational program (alternative school, night school, online resources, etc.) upon notice that the student has been charged with certain school-reportable offenses, including offenses relating to weapons, alcohol/drugs, intentional injury to another person, or convicted or found not innocent of certain school-reportable offenses, as set forth in Regulation 681-1, “Nontraditional Education Programs.” Conviction or adjudication of certain school-reportable charges may result in reassignment, long-term suspension, or expulsion. Students may also be reassigned, placed in nontraditional educational programs, suspended, or expelled when they have committed a serious offense or repeated offenses in violation of School Board policies.

**Profanity** - No student shall use vulgar, lewd, patently offensive, or indecent language or gestures.

**Search and Seizure** - Students will be held responsible for items which they have at school or at school-related activities. Student desks and lockers are the property of the school, and school officials reserve the right to search them. Lockers or desks may be searched to repossess school property or to locate materials which are not permitted in school. Students, their belongings, and items under their control (including cars) may be searched under certain circumstances as described in Regulation 737-1, “Search and Seizures.” The School Division reserves the right to use trained dogs in searches. The student’s individual right to privacy and freedom from unreasonable search and seizure is balanced by the school’s responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all persons within the school community. Should illegal materials be found during a search, law enforcement officials will be notified. If a student refuses to be searched when the administration has reasonable suspicion that the student possesses or has under his or her control prohibited items as defined in the regulation, parents and/or authorities will be contacted, and the student may be subject to disciplinary action.

**Smoking** - All PWCS schools are smoke-free environments. Smoking and vaping are not permitted in any building in PWCS at any time. Students, regardless of age, are not permitted to smoke or be in possession of tobacco products, nicotine vapor paraphernalia, cigarettes, matches, lighters, or other electronic smoking devices, on school buses, in school buildings, on school property, or at an on-site or off-site school-sponsored activity.

Students involved in the possession or use of tobacco or nicotine vapor products shall receive penalties ranging from OSS to other effective options assigned by the principal as appropriate deterrents for individual students. These options may include OSS, In-school Suspension (ISS), detention, school/community projects, and charges filed with local authorities. Educational programs are available at the middle and high school level to help students better understand the negative health consequences associated with smoking and nicotine use.

**Student Dress and Appearance** – Students are urged to dress for success each school day. Their overall appearance, while on school grounds or virtually, should be appropriate for an environment with a focus on learning for all. It is understood that student dress may reflect outdoor weather conditions throughout the school year, however, students should refrain from wearing any item of clothing which may cause a distraction or disruption to the educational process or to school operations and programs. Students whose appearance disrupts instruction may be asked to change into appropriate clothing.

**Virginia Code §§ 22.1-276.01 and 22.1-279.6 enacted on July 1, 2020 requires the following of local boards with regards to dress and grooming codes:**

Requires the Board of Education to include in its guidelines and model policies for codes of student conduct (i) standards for reducing bias and harassment in the enforcement of any code of student conduct and (ii) standards for dress or grooming codes, which the bill defines as any practice, policy, or portion of a code of student conduct adopted by a school board that governs or restricts the attire of any enrolled student. The bill permits any school board to include in its code of student conduct a dress or grooming code. The bill requires any dress or grooming code included in a school board's code of student conduct or otherwise adopted by a school board to (a) permit any student to wear any religiously and ethnically specific or significant head covering or hairstyle, including hijabs, yarmulkes, headwraps, braids, locs, and cornrows; (b) maintain gender neutrality by subjecting any student to the same set of rules and standards regardless of gender; (c) not have a disparate impact on students of a particular gender; (d) be clear, specific, and objective in defining terms, if used; (e) prohibit any school board employee from enforcing the dress or grooming code by direct physical contact with a student or a student's attire; and (f) prohibit any school board employee from requiring a student to undress in front of any other individual, including the enforcing school board employee, to comply with the dress or grooming code.

The PWCS student dress and appearance guidelines are created to ensure equity in student expression and staff enforcement and are not intended to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age,
disability, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law. Students are permitted to wear any religiously and ethnically specific or significant head covering or hairstyle.

Permitted head coverings and hairstyles include but are not limited to:

- Hijabs;
- Yarmulkes;
- Headwraps;
- Braids;
- Locs; and
- Cornrows

Also consistent with Virginia Code §§ 22.1-276.01 and 22.1-279.6, these dress and appearance guidelines were created to maintain gender neutrality by subjecting any student to the same set of rules and standards regardless of gender and to not have a disparate impact on students of a particular gender.

Prohibited items of clothing include:

Clothing items which:
- Reveal bare skin to the extent that they distract or may foreseeably distract other students or staff;
- Reveal or expose undergarments;
- Fit in a manner as to reveal or expose undergarments;
- Contain vulgar, discriminatory, lewd patently offensive or obscene language or images;
- Contain threats or gang symbols;
-Promotes the use of weapons and violence, or the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs, and/or associated paraphernalia; and
- Cause or may foreseeably cause a disruption to the learning environment.

Headwear which covers one’s entire head or face with the following exceptions:
- Worn as part of one’s religion; or
- Worn for medical reasons; or
- Worn for personal prevention practices as in the case of the spread of infectious diseases; or
- Worn for an approved school event; or
- Worn as an expression of one’s cultural or ethnical background.

Jewelry or other items which could be regarded as or used as a weapon.

Technology Misuse - Computers, computer networks, and other electronic technology shall be used only for valid educational purposes and only with the approval of a school staff member. When using electronic technology in the school, students are required to abide by the “Code of Behavior” and by “Acceptable Use Guidelines” - telecommunications technologies (internet, telnet, desktop video conference, electronic mail, etc.) available upon request from school staff. Students must also adhere to the standards defined by PWCS Policy 295, “Standards for Computer Systems and Network Services,” Regulation 295-1, “Computer Systems and Network Services - PWCS Responsible Use and Internet Safety Policy,” and Regulation 295-2, “Website Development and Implementation.”

Copies of these policies and regulations are available on the PWCS website at www.pwcs.edu. Unacceptable uses of technology include, but are not limited to:
- Violating the privacy rights of others;
- Using, producing, distributing, or receiving profanity, obscenity, or material which bullies, harasses, offends, threatens, or degrades others;
- This includes cyberbullying, a form of bullying which involves the transmission, receipt, or display of electronic messages and/or images;
- Producing, transmitting, possessing, and/or sharing images, messages, or other material of a sexual nature using a wireless communication device;
- Copying commercial software in violation of copyright law;
- Using technology for financial gain or commercial or illegal activity;
- Using technology for product advertisement or political endorsement;
- Reposting personal communications without the author’s prior consent;
- Using technology in violation of other rules and regulations of the “Code of Behavior;” and
• Use of technology off of school property which has a material effect on the operation or general welfare of the School Division, impacts the integrity of the educational process, threatens the safety and welfare of students, staff, or school property, occurs when the student is under the school’s authority in loco parentis, or otherwise invades the rights of students or staff.

Violation of this policy and the “Acceptable Use Guidelines” may result in corrective action, loss of technology-use privileges, and penalties under law. Willful irresponsibility may be viewed as malicious and may lead to corrective action or criminal penalties. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt technology system performance will be viewed as criminal activity under applicable state and federal law.

Theft - Taking without permission or attempting to take without permission school property or personal property of others is expressly forbidden. All incidents involving theft or attempted theft of student prescription medications shall be reported to the principal or his designee. Violators are subject to corrective action at school and may be referred to appropriate authorities for legal action.

Threat - A threat is a concerning communication or behavior that indicates that an individual poses a danger to the safety of school staff or students through acts of violence or other behavior that would cause harm to self or others. The threat may be expressed/communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means; and is considered a threat regardless of whether it is observed by or communicated directly to the target of the threat or observed by or communicated to a third party; and regardless of whether the target of the threat is aware of the threat. Each school has a threat assessment team for the assessment of and intervention with individuals whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of school staff or students. PWCS threat assessment procedures are set forth in Regulation 777-1, “Threat Assessment Procedures.”

Trespassing - Students must be in approved areas of the school building and grounds during normal school hours or after hours with the permission of a school staff member. Students are considered to be trespassing if they are present at a school other than the school in which they are enrolled unless they are attending an approved school activity or have the approval of a school staff member. Students serving an OSS are not allowed on school property without the written permission of the principal. Unless the student has written permission from school officials to be on school property, a school bus, or at a school-sponsored event, students whose disciplinary cases are pending a long-term suspension or expulsion decision (with the exception of disciplinary hearings) are prohibited from school property, school buses, and school-sponsored activities. Students who are trespassing on any school property are subject to arrest and corrective action at school. All visitors must report directly to the office.

Truancy - Attendance at school is compulsory until age 18 unless the student has been exempted by law, has graduated, or has completed a GED® program. School attendance officers are authorized to enforce attendance requirements and to refer students and/or parents to the courts for legal action, if necessary.

Vandalism - No student shall maliciously or willfully damage, deface, or destroy school property, or the personal belongings of others. (This includes graffiti, as well as computer and other electronic vandalism.) Students are responsible for reimbursing the School Board for actual breakage or destruction of property, or for the failure to return property owned by or under the control of the School Board. Corrective action may be taken against students who fail to return property owned by or under the control of the School Board. Virginia law authorizes the School Board to take legal action to recover the cost of such damage from the parents of such students.

Violations of School, Sport, Club, and Activity Rules - In addition to the rules and regulations of the “Code of Behavior,” students are expected to comply with rules established by their schools and with the rules of the sports, clubs, and activities in which they participate. Violators are subject to corrective action as described in the “Code of Behavior” or as stated in the school’s handbook. Students may be suspended from participation in sports, clubs, or other school-sponsored activities for violations of the rules of the team or activity, even if the violation occurs off school grounds and outside the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, violations of team training rules related to the use of tobacco, nicotine vapor products, alcohol, and other drugs.

Weapons - Students shall not have weapons, look-alike weapons, or other harmful objects on any school property or during any school events. (See page 22).

Attention
It should be noted that the School Board and PWCS staff strictly prohibit the possession, use, and distribution of drugs and weapons, acts of violence which harm or endanger others, and threats and/or battery against any staff member which could fit the definition of any unwanted touching. Violators are subject to severe consequences up to and including expulsion from PWCS.
Rules and Regulations
School Bus Rules

General
All rules set forth for student behavior in PWCS Policies, Regulations, and this “Code of Behavior,” apply to student behavior on the school bus or any other approved PWCS vehicle used to transport students to and from school and/or school associated events and activities.

Virginia Code, § 22.1-176, permits school boards to provide transportation for pupils, but does not require them to do so. For PWCS, daily bus service will be provided for all in-boundary students living in excess of one mile from school. Students eligible for transportation may be required to walk up to one mile to reach their regular bus stop. Transportation is not provided for students living within a school’s established walking boundary.

Express bus service will be provided for students enrolled in all Specialty Programs. This service will be to and from express bus stops only. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation to/from express bus stops. In many cases, these stops may be two to three miles from the student’s residence.

Wireless communication devices may be used on school buses provided that the device does not distract the driver, compromise safety, or violate other school bus rules and regulations.

Meeting the Bus
State law requires that buses operate on the same routes, as per their schedules, on a daily basis. Parent(s) or their designees are requested to accompany their young child(ren) to and from the bus stop.

Students should:
- Be on time;
- Arrive at their bus stop at least five to 10 minutes before the regular pickup time;
- Stand away from the road. Do not stand on the travel portion of the roadway while waiting for a bus;
- Maintain proper conduct;
- Respect the property of others;
- Wait until the bus has stopped, then walk to the front door. Do not run alongside a moving bus;
- Board the bus in an orderly fashion; and
- Use the bus stop closest to their home. Walking to a friend’s house to catch a bus often causes overcrowding at a given stop.

Students riding the bus should:
- Obey instructions of bus driver and/or bus attendant;
- Be seated immediately;
- Remain seated, facing forward;
- Share seats equally;
- Be courteous;
- Respect property;
- Keep all body parts inside bus;
- Keep aisles clear; and
- Maintain good conduct.

The following infractions are not permitted:
- Igniting fire;
- Fighting;
- Smoking;
- Using profanity;
- Horseplay;
- Eating/drinking;
- Spitting;
- Using obscene gestures;
- Vandalizing;
- Throwing objects from the bus;
• Creating loud noises;
• Having glass objects;
• Transporting large objects;
• Videotaping, recording, or photography, resulting in harassment or harm to others, disruption or distraction of the driver;
• Tampering with equipment;
• Having weapons;
• Using, possessing, or distributing drugs or other substances and related paraphernalia;
• Littering;
• Making threats;
• Endangering others; and
• Other violations of the “Code of Behavior.”

Leaving the Bus

Students must:
• Remain seated until bus comes to a full stop;
• Leave the bus in an orderly manner, students in the front seats first;
• Leave the bus stop area when safety permits as soon as discharged from the bus;
• Not loiter around the bus;
• Cross the street, if necessary to do so, at the front of the bus and at a distance of at least 10 feet in front of the bus; and
• Not cross until the driver has signaled that it is safe to do so. Crossing four or more traffic lanes or a divided roadway is prohibited.

If a disciplinary problem should occur in the afternoon, and the problem is such that in the judgment of the driver, it is unsafe to proceed, the driver may return to the school to seek immediate disciplinary action and/or assistance. Bus drivers are instructed to report any infractions to the school principal/designee.

Changing Buses

Students must have a written request from the parent to go to another stop other than their regular scheduled stop on their regular scheduled bus. This written request is subject to approval of the school principal or designee. Bus drivers must receive notification by the school office when approval is given to a student to change to an alternate stop or bus.

No change will be made in the location of bus stops or bus routing without approval by the Office of Transportation Services.

No change in the bus assigned may be made without the permission of the school principal and the Office of Transportation Services.

Trespassing

Only authorized persons are permitted aboard a school bus (school property). “It shall be unlawful for any person, whether or not a student, to enter upon or remain upon any school property after having been directed to vacate the property by a person authorized to give such direction” (Virginia Code § 18.2-128).

Riding the School Bus is a Privilege*

Should a student be reported to the principal, the principal will be responsible for disciplinary action, which may include the loss of the privilege of bus transportation, until the parent, the bus driver, the principal, and in some instances, an Office of Transportation Services representative can arrive at an understanding which will correct the problem. The parent will be responsible for the transportation of students who have lost school bus transportation privileges.

If you have questions, please refer to Regulation 431-4, “Transportation for Students.”

Oral or written threats to harm others or PWCS property, which are planned or made on a school bus or which are intended to be carried out on a school bus, at a school bus stop, or while going to and coming from school, may result in the loss of transportation for a specific period of time or for the remainder of the school year in addition to other disciplinary action.

A School Bus Video Observation System records activities aboard some buses. Please feel free to contact the school principal or the Office of Transportation Services for help with problems related to the transportation of your child.

*Riding the school bus is a privilege, except as required by law for students with disabilities.
Rules and Regulations
Prohibited Substances

The rules governing those substances prohibited by Prince William County Public Schools are summarized in this section. Please refer to Regulation 735-1, “Prohibited Substances,” for all information pertaining to this subject.

In accordance with Virginia Code § 22.1-277.08, the School Board shall permit, but not require, the expulsion of any student determined to have brought a controlled substance, imitation controlled substance, or marijuana as defined in Virginia Code § 18.2-247, onto school property or to a school-sponsored activity. Students who violate the law shall be referred to local authorities for appropriate action in the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system.

However, the School Board and/or Superintendent or his/her designee (the level associate superintendents, the director of OSMAP, or an OSMAP hearing officer) shall have the authority to modify the type of disciplinary action when special circumstances exist, based on the facts of a particular situation. Special circumstances include, but are not limited to, the statutory criteria set forth at § 22.1-277.06 (C) of the Virginia Code, as described in Regulation 745-1, “Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion of Students.”

The list of prohibited substances and paraphernalia for which a student may be expelled under the rules of PWCS is broader than the list of prohibited substances for which the law mandates expulsion. Even if the prohibited substances or related paraphernalia do not fall within the class of substances prohibited by law, any student shall be subject to expulsion if the student is involved in the possession, use, receipt or attempted receipt, purchase or attempted purchase, or distribution or attempted distribution, of prohibited substances or paraphernalia, unless the Superintendent’s designee (the level associate superintendent, the director of OSMAP, or an OSMAP hearing officer) or the School Board finds that special circumstances justify a lesser disciplinary action, or no action at all, based on the facts of a particular situation. In some cases, there may be a question about whether or not the possession, use, or distribution of a substance or object is a violation. The nature and appearance of the substance or related paraphernalia, its purpose, and how it was used, or intended to be used, shall be considered when making decisions about disciplinary action.

**Duty to Report Prohibited Substances** - All PWCS employees and students are required to notify the principal, assistant principal, any community resource officer, security personnel, teacher, or other school employee immediately if they have reason to believe that there are, or are likely to be, prohibited substances or related paraphernalia in school, on school grounds, on school buses, at bus stops, on the way to or from school, or at any school-related activity. Students who have such knowledge but fail to report the presence or anticipated presence of prohibited substances or related paraphernalia may themselves be subject to disciplinary action. The principal or the principal’s designee shall retain commensurate authority to immediately act within School Division policy to assure the safety and welfare of students and staff. The resources of the School Division and local police department shall be available to assist the principal in this action.

**Consequences of a Prohibited Substance Violation** - Any student accused of committing a prohibited substance violation may be subject to disciplinary action. This may include a five-day suspension with an informal conference with the principal or assistant principal to gather information regarding the incident. Following the informal conference, the school administrator will confer with the appropriate level associate superintendent, and determine if a recommendation to OSMAP for further disciplinary action may be warranted, in which case the procedures set forth in Regulation 745-1, “Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion of Students,” Regulation 745-2, “Discipline of Students with Disabilities,” and Regulation 747-1, “Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs (OSMAP),” shall be followed as appropriate. Principals, or their designated representatives, may offer substance abuse offenders and their parents the opportunity to voluntarily participate in the New Horizons Program at the high school level.

A substance abuse suspension shall also result in an immediate suspension for a minimum of 30 calendar days from participation in all school activities (teams, clubs, and all other school-sponsored activities), including practice. Unless the student has written permission from school officials to be on school property, a school bus, or at a school-sponsored event, students whose disciplinary cases are pending a long-term suspension or expulsion decision (with the exception of disciplinary hearings) are prohibited from school property, school buses, and school-sponsored activities. Whether suspended from school or not, coaches and/or sponsors, with the approval of the school administration, may suspend students from participation in school-sponsored activities for violations of the rules of the team, club, or activity regarding prohibited substances. This includes violation of rules regarding prohibited substances committed off of school grounds and outside the school day. The student may also be subject to disciplinary probation for 90 calendar days during which time principals may require subsequent follow-up with the substance abuse prevention staff.
Rules and Regulations

Weapons and Other Dangerous Articles

The rules governing weapons and other objects prohibited by PWCS are summarized in this section. Please refer to Regulation 775-1, “Weapons and Other Prohibited Objects,” for all information pertaining to this subject.

In order to assure the safety and welfare of students, staff, and other persons on school property or at school activities and to protect school property, weapons and other prohibited items shall not be permitted on any school property, on school buses, going to or from school, or at any school-related activity, regardless of where that activity takes place. School property means any real property owned or leased by the School Board or any vehicle owned, leased, or operated by or on behalf of the School Board. Students may also be subject to disciplinary action for weapons offenses which occur off school grounds, if the offense results in material disruption to the operation of the school, if the offense is planned in school or at school activities, if the offense occurs when the student is under the school’s authority in loco parentis, if the offense threatens the safety and welfare of students, staff, or school property, or if the offense is otherwise connected to the school.

Mandatory Expulsion for Certain Weapon/Firearm Offenses - In accordance with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act and Virginia law, the School Board must expel from school attendance for not less than one year (365 days) any student who is determined to have possessed a firearm, destructive device, firearm muffler, firearm silencer, or pneumatic gun on any school property, on a school bus, or at any school-related activity. However, the School Board and/or Superintendent or his/her designee (the level associate superintendents, the director of OSMAP, or an OSMAP hearing officer), shall have the authority to modify the term of expulsion for such offenses, or the type of disciplinary action when special circumstances exist based on the facts of a particular situation. Special circumstances include, but are not limited to, the statutory criteria set forth at § 22.1-277.06 (C) of the Virginia Code, as described in Regulation 745-1, “Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion of Students.” Students who violate this law shall be referred to local authorities for appropriate action in the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system.

The list of weapons and prohibited objects for which a student may be expelled under the rules of PWCS is broader than the list of weapons for which the law mandates expulsion. Even if the weapon does not fall within the class of weapons prohibited by law, students shall be recommended for expulsion for the possession, use, receipt or attempted receipt, purchase or attempted purchase, distribution or attempted distribution, of all weapons or prohibited objects on school property or at school-related activities or otherwise connected to the school, unless the Superintendent’s designee (the principal in conjunction with the level associate superintendent, the director of OSMAP, or an OSMAP hearing officer) finds that special circumstances justify a lesser disciplinary action or no action at all. In some cases, there may be a question about whether or not the possession, use, and distribution of an object is a violation. The type of object, its purpose, and how it was used or intended to be used shall be considered when making decisions about disciplinary action.

Duty to Report Weapons and Prohibited Objects - All PWCS employees and students are required to notify the principal, assistant principal, any community resource officer, security personnel, teacher or school employee immediately if they have reason to believe that there is, or is likely to be, a weapon in school, on school grounds, on school buses, at bus stops, or at any school-related activity. Students who have such knowledge but fail to report the presence or anticipated presence of a weapon may themselves be subject to disciplinary action. The principal or the principal’s designee shall retain commensurate authority to immediately act within School Division policy to assure the safety and welfare of students and staff. Resources of the School Division and local police department shall be available to assist in this action. If a student discovers that he or she is in possession of an object that may be considered a “weapon,” that student should report to an administrator or other staff member immediately. Follow-up action will take into consideration that the student voluntarily brought this to the attention of the staff.

Consequences of a Weapons Violation - Any student accused of an offense involving a weapon or other prohibited object(s), shall have an informal conference with the principal or assistant principal of the school. Following the conference and review with the level associate superintendent, a recommendation for expulsion or other disciplinary action shall be made, in which case the procedures set forth in Regulation 745-1, “Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion of Students,” Regulation 747-1, “Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs (OSMAP),” or Regulation 745-2, “Discipline of Students with Disabilities,” shall be followed as appropriate.
Summary of Discipline Code

The philosophy of PWCS is directed toward a preventative and restorative approach to unwanted behavior, which aligns with Virginia Department of Education’s *Model Guidance for Positive and Preventative Code of Student Conduct Policy and Alternatives to Suspension*. If students are denied their opportunity to learn as a result of unwanted behavior, the teacher, the principal, and/or other appropriate educational staff members shall determine the proper corrective measure utilizing a graduated response system which incorporates instructional, restorative, and age-appropriate responses. When a student’s behavior is unresponsive to interventions and increases in frequency, intensity and duration, the level of response may increase in severity.

The following student behavior categories, as defined by the Virginia Department of Education, were designed to assist with recognizing the impact the behavior has on the school learning environment and to encourage responses that promote social-emotional learning competencies.

- **Behaviors that Impede Academic Progress (BAP):**
  These behaviors impede academic progress of the student or of students. They are typically indicative of the student’s lack of self-management or self-awareness. Sometimes, the student may need help in understanding how the behavior impacts others so training in social awareness may also be indicated.

- **Behaviors Related to School Operations (BSO):**
  These behaviors interfere with the daily operation of school procedures. Students exhibiting these behaviors may need to develop self-management, self-awareness, or social awareness skills.

- **Relationship Behaviors (RB):**
  These behaviors create a negative relationship between two or more people that does not result in physical harm. Relationship behaviors affect the whole school community in that the school climate is often a reflection of how people treat one another. Students who exhibit difficulty with relationship behaviors may also have difficulty with the other social-emotional competencies.

- **Behaviors that Present a Safety Concern (BSC):**
  These behaviors create unsafe conditions for students, staff, and visitors to the school. The underlying reasons for this type of behavior may lie in any of the social-emotional competencies so the administrator should investigate the underlying motivation for the student’s behavior. Training in social awareness and decision-making are usually indicated in any behavior that creates a safety concern.

- **Behaviors that Endanger Self or Others (BESO):**
  These behaviors endanger the health, safety, or welfare of either the student or others in the school community. Behaviors that rise to this level of severity are often complex. While they are indicative of poor decision-making skills, students who exhibit these behaviors may also have developmental needs in the other social-emotional competencies.

The rules and regulations of the “Code of Behavior” are intended to guide students’ behavior in the school buildings, on school buses, to and from school, and during participation in any activity sponsored by PWCS. As set forth in the “Code of Behavior,” conduct currently viewed as just cause for disciplinary action shall include, but not be limited to, any one of the violations listed below. These behaviors may result in administrative responses ranging from Level 1 to Level 5B as shown in the following table.
### Student Behavior Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior Category</th>
<th>Behavior Description</th>
<th>Possible Administrative Response (Administrative responses may vary in Level)</th>
<th>Possible Tiers of Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CATEGORY A</strong></td>
<td><strong>BEHAVIORS THAT IMPEDE ACADEMIC PROGRESS (BAP)</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary schools:</td>
<td>Talking and excessive noise in the classroom</td>
<td>Level 1: Classroom supports, interventions, or minor consequences</td>
<td>TIER I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Off-task; out of seat</td>
<td></td>
<td>TIER II</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Possessing items that distract learning in the classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td>TIER III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Excessive noise in the hallway</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Interrupting other classes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Cheating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Unexcused tardiness to class or to school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle and high schools:</td>
<td>Interfering with learning in the classroom</td>
<td>Level 2: Minor consequences up to suspension for a maximum of three days</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Interfering with learning outside the classroom</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Academic dishonesty</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Chronic failure to be prepared for class</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Unexcused tardiness to class or to school</td>
<td>Level 3: Suspension between four and five days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **CATEGORY B**    | **BEHAVIORS RELATED TO SCHOOL OPERATIONS (BSO)** | | |
| Elementary, middle, and high schools: | Altering an official document | Level 1: Classroom supports, interventions, or minor consequences | TIER I |
| | · Bringing/allowing unauthorized persons on to school grounds | | TIER II |
| | · Dishonesty/giving false information to staff | | TIER III |
| | · Failure to report to assigned classes or disciplinary setting while on school grounds | | |
| | · Gambling | | |
| | · Horseplay | | |
| | · Inappropriate student dress | | |
| | · Misuse of communication devices | | |
| | · Unauthorized use of school electronic equipment | | |
| | · Inappropriate use of technology/internet policy | | |
| | · Vandalism, graffiti, or damage to school or personal property | | |

<p>| <strong>CATEGORY C</strong>    | <strong>RELATIONSHIP BEHAVIORS (RB)</strong> | | |
| Elementary, middle and high schools: | Bullying/cyberbullying | Level 1: Classroom supports, interventions, or minor consequences | TIER I |
| | · Failure to respond to requests by staff | | TIER II |
| | · Inappropriate physical contact that is sexual in nature | | TIER III |
| | · Posting, distributing, displaying, or sharing material or literature, including electronically | | |
| | · Saying or writing either directly or electronically sexually suggestive comments, propositions, or other remarks | | |
| | · Sexual harassment or misconduct | | |
| | · Speaking to another in an uncivil, discourteous manner | | |
| | · Teasing, taunting, engaging in a verbal confrontation, verbally inciting a fight | | |
| | · Using profane or vulgar language or gestures (swearing, cursing, hate speech, gang signs, or gestures) | | |
| | · Using slurs based upon the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, weight, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability | | |
| | | Level 2: Minor consequences up to suspension for a maximum of three days | |
| | | Level 3: Suspension between four and five days | |
| | | Level 4: Suspension between six and 10 days | |
| | | Level 5A: Suspension for more than 10 consecutive days, but less than 365 consecutive days (OSMAP hearing required) | |
| | | Level 5B: Recommendation for expulsion (OSMAP hearing required) | |</p>
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<td><strong>CATEGORY D</strong></td>
<td>BEHAVIORS OF A SAFETY CONCERN (BSC)</td>
<td>Elementary, middle and high schools:</td>
<td>TIER II TIER III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(These behaviors that create unsafe conditions for students, staff, and visitors to the school include, but are not limited to, the following.)</td>
<td>• Possessing, using, or distributing&lt;br&gt;• Any threat of physical injury or attempt to bomb or destroy property or buildings&lt;br&gt;• Bullying/cyberbullying: Continuous after interventions&lt;br&gt;• Bus: Distracting the driver, endangering the safety of others on the bus&lt;br&gt;• Drugs: Possessing drug paraphernalia, over-the-counter medication, or look-alike drugs&lt;br&gt;• Engaging in reckless behavior creating risk of injury to self or others, which includes behaviors that intentionally endanger the health, safety, and welfare of others&lt;br&gt;• Exposing body parts: lewd or indecent&lt;br&gt;• Falsely activating fire alarm&lt;br&gt;• Fire related: Possessing items that could be used to set or cause a fire or produce large amounts of smoke&lt;br&gt;• Harassment or intimidation, including sexual misconduct and harassment&lt;br&gt;• Inciting/causing a substantial disturbance to the operation of school or the safety of staff and/or students&lt;br&gt;• Leaving school grounds without permission&lt;br&gt;• Physical contact of a sexual nature: Patting body parts, pinching, tugging clothing&lt;br&gt;• Physical sexual aggression and/or forcing another to engage in sexual activity&lt;br&gt;• Shoving, pushing, striking a student with no visible injury&lt;br&gt;• Stealing money or property: Without or using physical force or using weapons&lt;br&gt;• Throwing an object that has the potential to cause a disturbance, injury, or property damage&lt;br&gt;• Tobacco: Possessing/using tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, vaping equipment&lt;br&gt;• Trespassing&lt;br&gt;• Weapon: Possessing or selling any weapon (not including firearms)</td>
<td>Level 1: Classroom supports, interventions, or minor consequences&lt;br&gt;Level 2: Minor consequences up to suspension for a maximum of three days&lt;br&gt;Level 3: Suspension between four and five days&lt;br&gt;Level 4: Suspension between six and 10 days&lt;br&gt;Level 5A: Suspension for more than 10 consecutive days, but less than 365 consecutive days (OSMAP hearing required)&lt;br&gt;Level 5B: Recommendation for expulsion (OSMAP hearing required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CATEGORY E</strong></td>
<td>BEHAVIORS THAT ENDANGER SELF OR OTHERS (BESO)</td>
<td>Elementary, middle and high schools:</td>
<td>TIER III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(These behaviors that endanger the health, safety, and welfare of either the student or others in the school community include, but are not limited to, the following.)</td>
<td>• Assault: Intending to cause physical injury to another person&lt;br&gt;• Assault and Battery: Causing physical injury to another person&lt;br&gt;• Bomb threat: Making a bomb threat&lt;br&gt;• Drugs: Possession/being under the influence/using/distributing (controlled substances, illegal drugs, synthetic hallucinogens, or unauthorized prescription medications)&lt;br&gt;• Fighting/riot: Use of physical violence between students or another person with no injury&lt;br&gt;• Fire: Attempting to set, aiding in setting, or setting a fire&lt;br&gt;• Gang-Related: Engaging in threatening or dangerous behavior&lt;br&gt;• Hazing&lt;br&gt;• Physical sexual aggression and/or forcing another to engage in sexual activity&lt;br&gt;• Possession, distribution or use of weapons or lookalikes&lt;br&gt;• Striking Staff: The use of force against a staff member when no injury is caused&lt;br&gt;• Threatening or instigating violence, injury, or harm to another student or staff member, to include behaviors that intentionally endanger the health, safety, and welfare of others&lt;br&gt;• Weapon: Possession of a firearm or destructive device&lt;br&gt;• Weapon: Using any weapon to threaten or attempt to injure school personnel, students, or others</td>
<td>Level 1: Classroom supports, interventions, or minor consequences&lt;br&gt;Level 2: Minor consequences up to suspension for a maximum of three days&lt;br&gt;Level 3: Suspension between four and five days&lt;br&gt;Level 4: Suspension between six and 10 days&lt;br&gt;Level 5A: Suspension for more than 10 consecutive days, but less than 365 consecutive days (OSMAP hearing required)&lt;br&gt;Level 5B: Recommendation for expulsion (OSMAP hearing required)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Examples of Tiered Responses to Student Behavior

TIER I
EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL/CLASSROOM INTERVENTIONS AND RESPONSES
- Admonition
- Assigned tasks
- Class meeting
- Conferences (administration/parent)
- Confiscation of disruptive communication and entertainment devices
- Focus on Tobacco
- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Reflection
- Restorative circles
- School counseling
- “Time-out” situation

TIER II
EXAMPLES OF ADMINISTRATIVE INTERVENTIONS AND RESPONSES
- Clubs/organizations/skills workshops
- Detention/after-school program
- In-school suspension
- Local school probation
- Mediation
- Mentoring
- Referral to New Horizons Therapist or other school-based support staff
- Saturday suspension
- School-community service projects
- Short-term out-of-school suspension
- Small group counseling/restorative conferencing
- Student check-in/check-out

TIER III
EXAMPLES OF EXTENDED SUSPENSION AND RESPONSES
- Conduct Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan
- Further disciplinary action (long-term suspension or a recommendation for expulsion) by OSMAP
- Non-participation in school-sponsored activities
- Nontraditional education placement
- No-trespassing order
- Out-of-school suspension (OSS)
- Police/court action
- Referral to appropriate community-based agency, mental health service, substance abuse counseling services, etc.
- Restitution

These interventions and responses aim to teach appropriate and alternative behavior, so students can learn and demonstrate safe and respectful behavior. The examples above are not all-inclusive nor required to be exhausted. In every case, the staff should consider revisions to plans supporting students with special needs (response to intervention, child study, IEP, or 504).

School Conference

Whenever students or parents feel that the best interests of the individual or of the group have been disregarded, a conference with the teacher, sponsor, coach, counselor, or other school personnel should be arranged. If a routine agreement cannot be reached among student(s) and school personnel, then the student has the right to:
- Arrange a meeting with the principal or the designated assistant principal to discuss such conditions or decisions judged by the student(s) to be detrimental.
- Request a conference of the parent, student, and principal if not satisfied with initial meetings.
Teacher Removal of Students from Class

Teachers may remove disruptive students from class in accordance with Prince William County School Board Policy 702, “Teacher Removal of Students from Class,” as stated below.

The Virginia Code, § 22.1-276.2, provides for the initial authority of a teacher to remove a student from class for disruptive behavior. Further, the Virginia Code defines disruptive behavior as a “violation of school board regulations governing student conduct that interrupts or obstructs the learning environment.”

Suspension Procedures

The rules governing out-of-school suspension are summarized in this section. A principal or assistant principal may suspend a student from school for misconduct which includes, but is not limited to, violations of the “Code of Behavior.” Please refer to Regulation 744-1, “Short-Term Suspension of Students,” and Regulation 745-1, “Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion of Students,” for the rules governing short- and long-term suspensions. The suspension of students receiving special education services shall be in accordance with Regulation 745-2, “Discipline of Students with Disabilities.” Whenever a suspension is imposed, the principal/designee will make all reasonable efforts to contact the parent(s) to advise them of the impending suspension and to make appropriate arrangements for the student to be returned to the student’s home.

Except as provided in Virginia Code § 22.1-277.07 or § 22.1-277.08, no student in preschool through grade three shall be suspended for more than three school days or expelled from attendance at school, unless (i) the offense involves physical harm or credible threat of physical harm to others or (ii) the School Board or the Superintendent or designee finds that aggravating circumstances exist, as determined by the appropriate level associate superintendent (six to 10 days) or OSMAP (over 10 school days), acting as the Superintendent’s designee. A student in preschool through grade three may be suspended or expelled from school upon the School Division’s receipt of a report pursuant to Virginia Code § 16.1-305.1 of an adjudication of delinquency or a conviction for an offense listed in subsection G of Virginia Code § 16.1-260.

Suspensions are considered as unexcused absences. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain and complete all assignments missed during the period of suspension. These assignments must be completed within a time frame established by the school. However, the principal has the latitude to provide other assignments or make-up options which would be more effective in changing the behavior of given students. Students who are suspended from school are prohibited from school property (including school buses) and school-related activities for the duration of their suspension and may be arrested for trespassing. Unless the student has written permission from school officials to be on school property, a school bus, or at a school-sponsored event, students whose disciplinary cases are pending a long-term suspension or expulsion decision (with the exception of disciplinary hearings) are prohibited from school property, school buses, and school-sponsored activities. Students who are suspended from school shall also be suspended from participation in all school activities (teams, clubs, and all other school-sponsored activities) including practice. In cases where the parent or adult student notifies the principal at the time of the suspension that there will be an appeal, the student shall be allowed to attend school until the case is heard and a final decision has been rendered, unless the principal considers that the presence of the student creates a present and continuing threat to the health, safety and/or welfare of persons or property in the school or may pose a disruption to the educational process.

Long-Term Suspension - In the event of a serious breach of conduct which may merit a suspension greater than 10 school days but less than 45 school days, the principal shall suspend the student for five school days and provide the student and the student’s parent(s) with written notice of the proposed action and the reasons therefore. A long-term suspension may extend beyond a 45-school-day period but shall not exceed 364 calendar days if (i) the offense is one described in § 22.1-277.07 or § 22.1-277.08 of the Virginia Code or involves serious bodily injury; or (ii) the School Board or Superintendent or designee finds that aggravating circumstances exist as defined by the Virginia Department of Education. A hearing will be conducted by OSMAP pursuant to those procedures explained in Regulation 745-1, “Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion of Students,” and Regulation 747-1, “Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs (OSMAP).” Any further appeal shall be in accordance with Regulation 731-1, “Appeal of Student Matters,” Regulation 745-6, “Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion Appeals to the School Board,” and Regulation 745-2, “Discipline of Students with Disabilities.”

Short-Term Suspension - In the event that the principal or principal’s designee intends to suspend a student for 10 school days or less, the student shall be given: oral or written notice of the charges against them, and, if the student denies them, the student shall be given an explanation of the facts known to school personnel and an opportunity to present the student’s version of the events. The procedures regarding the short-term suspension of a student are outlined in Regulation 744-1, “Short-Term Suspension of Students.”
Expulsion Procedures

The rules governing expulsion, readmission, and exclusion are summarized in this section. Please refer to Regulation 745-1, “Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion of Students,” Regulation 745-5, “Readmissions and Exclusions/Admissions,” Regulation 745-6, “Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion Appeals to the School Board,” and Regulation 747-1, “Office of Student Management and Alternative Programs (OSMAP),” for all information pertaining to this subject. Please refer to Regulation 745-2, ‘Discipline of Students with Disabilities,” for information regarding the expulsion of students receiving special education services.

The Prince William County School Board may expel students for sufficient cause. A student may be denied the right to attend any school in Prince William County when:

- The student is a potential or continuing danger to the health, welfare, or safety of others; or
- The student’s conduct is disruptive to the educational mission or the orderly operation of the school; or
- The student has engaged in conduct which violates the School Division’s policies and regulations or the “Code of Behavior,” or in other conduct which threatens the safety or security of the school or is otherwise connected to the school; or
- The student has obtained an accumulation of offenses for which expulsion is merited (general education students only); or
- Other circumstances demonstrate that the expulsion of the student is in the best interest of the local school or the School Division.

Except as provided in Virginia Code § 22.1-277.07 or § 22.1-277.08, no student in preschool through grade three shall be suspended for more than three school days or expelled from attendance at school, unless (i) the offense involves physical harm or credible threat of physical harm to others or (ii) the School Board or the Superintendent or designee finds that aggravating circumstances exist, as defined by the Virginia Department of Education. A student in preschool through grade three may be suspended or expelled from school upon the School Division’s receipt of a report pursuant to Virginia Code § 16.1-305.1 of an adjudication of delinquency or a conviction for an offense listed in subsection G of Virginia Code § 16.1-260.

Any student conduct occurring on or off school property which creates a threat to the safety or security of students or staff, which results in material disruption to the operation of the school, which is planned in school or at school activities, which occurs when the student is under the school’s authority in loco parentis, or is otherwise connected to the school, may be grounds for expulsion.

**Students may be recommended for expulsion as a result of the following:**

- The possession, use, or distribution of prohibited substances as set forth in Regulation 735-1, “Prohibited Substances;”
- Possession of Weapons, as set forth in Regulation 775-1, “Weapons and Other Prohibited Objects;”
- Physical assaults on a school staff member, as set forth in Regulation 745-1, “Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion of Students,” and
- Group assaults, as set forth in Regulation 745-1, “Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion of Students.”
 Appeal Procedures

One of the goals of site-based management is to resolve issues at the school level. The information in this section summarizes the appeal procedures. Regulation 731-1, “Appeal of Student Matters,” provides details about this subject.

Summary of Procedures and Timelines for Appeals

Academic Appeals - Grade placement; class assignment; grades and/or assignments, exams and exam grades; promotion/retention; honor rolls; and placement in site-specific programs.

- First Appeal – Written appeal to the principal (or a committee designated by the principal to make recommendations) within three business days of notification of action, stating reason for appeal and the relief being sought. Principal or committee shall respond in writing within five business days or as soon as otherwise practicable.
- Final Appeal – Written appeal to appropriate level associate superintendent or designee within three business days of notification of the principal’s decision. Level associate superintendent shall respond in writing within five business days or as soon as otherwise practicable.

Activities Appeals - Athletic and academic eligibility; membership in clubs and organizations.

- First Appeal – Written appeal to the principal within three business days of notification of action, stating reason for the appeal and the relief being sought. Principal shall respond in writing within five business days or as soon as otherwise practicable.
- Final Appeal – Written appeal to the supervisor of Student Activities, or designee within three business days of notification of the principal’s decision. Supervisor shall respond in writing within five business days, or as soon as otherwise practicable.

Graduation Appeals - The procedure and timeline must be expedient due to the time sensitive nature of these appeals.

- First Appeal – Informal conference with principal.
- Final Appeal – Written appeal to appropriate level associate superintendent or designee.

Transfer Appeals - The procedure and timeline must be in accordance with the provisions set forth in Regulation 721-1, “Student Transfers - Kindergarten/Elementary/Middle School” and Regulation 721-2, “Student Transfers - High School.”

  Kindergarten/Elementary School Appeals:

- Final Appeal – Supervisor of elementary counseling and related services, in consultation with the director of the Office of Student Services, will review each case and approve or deny the transfer appeal request. This decision is final.

  Middle/High School Appeals:

- Final Appeal – Supervisor of secondary counseling and student support services, in consultation with the director of the Office of Student Services will review each case and approve or deny the transfer appeal request. This decision is final.

Appeal of Decision Involving Student Claims of Discrimination or Harassment

- Students who have filed a discrimination or harassment complaint under Regulation 738-1, “Complaint Procedures for Student Claims of Discrimination or Harassment,” shall follow the appeal procedures and timelines set forth in that regulation.
- First and Final Appeal – Written complaint filed with the level associate superintendent within five school days of the determination of the principal.

Appeal of Placement/Reassignment for Certain School Reportable Offenses to a Nontraditional Education Program (excluding Special Education)

Referral by base school to a nontraditional education program:

- First Appeal – Within three school days of receipt of the written decision of the principal or his/her designee, the student may submit to OSMAP a written request for a hearing before an OSMAP hearing officer.
- Final Appeal – Written appeal to the School Board to be submitted through the OSMAP Office within 10 calendar days of the date of the OSMAP decision letter. The School Board shall review the petition and the record of the OSMAP hearing as soon as practicable. The School Board’s decision shall be final.

Parent appeal of denial of placement in nontraditional education program:

- Appeal – Written request for appeal to be submitted to the appropriate level associate superintendent within three school days of receipt of the denial decision. The decision of the level associate superintendent shall be final.
Reassignment/placement by OSMAP for certain criminal or other offenses under Virginia Code §§ 22.1-209.1:2 or 22.1:277.2:1:

Final Appeal – If the student, parent, or guardian is not in agreement with the outcome of the OSMAP hearing, the student, parent, or guardian may appeal the OSMAP decision to the School Board. Such appeal must be submitted through the OSMAP Office within 10 calendar days of the date of the OSMAP decision letter. The School Board shall review the petition and the record of the OSMAP hearing as soon as practicable. The School Board’s decision shall be final.

Placement by OSMAP upon return to school from long-term suspension or expulsion:

Final Appeal – If a student is recommended for long-term suspension or expulsion, the hearing and appeal procedures set forth in Regulation 745-1, “Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion of Students,” and Regulation 745-6, “Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion Appeals to the School Board,” shall apply. During or following a long-term suspension or expulsion, a student may be required to attend a nontraditional education program.

**Short-Term Suspension Appeals:** Refer to Regulation 744-1, “Short-Term Suspension of Students.”

- Appeal of short-term suspensions (one to five school days):
  - Students whose short-term suspension is under appeal may attend school during the pendency of the appeal, unless they pose a safety risk or present a threat of ongoing disruption.
  - School level appeal: The student and/or parent(s) shall submit a written appeal to the principal within three school days of notice of the suspension. The parent(s) shall be notified in writing of the status of the principal’s decision within five school days of having received the written appeal.
  - Level associate superintendent appeal: If the principal’s decision is appealed, a written request appealing the decision must be received by the appropriate level associate superintendent within three business days of the parent(s) having been notified of the principal’s decision. The appeal must include the student’s account of the incident and the reasons for believing the suspension is unjustified. Written notification of the decision of the level associate superintendent shall be provided in writing to the parent(s) within five business days of receipt of the written appeal of the principal’s decision. The decision of the level associate superintendent is final.

- Appeal of short-term suspensions (six to 10 school days):
  - Any decision by a principal (or designee) to impose a suspension of six to 10 school days is subject to an automatic appeal to the appropriate level associate superintendent and requires no action by the parent(s). The level associate superintendent will conduct a review of the action of the principal (or designee) and of the record of the student’s behavior and shall consult with the principal (or designee) following the principal’s informal conference prior to making a decision on the appeal.

**Long-Term Suspension Appeals:** Refer to Regulation 745-6, “Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion Appeals to the School Board.”

- The parent(s) or student may file a written appeal to a three-member Disciplinary Committee of the School Board of the decision of the OSMAP hearing officer to suspend a student more than 10 days, and/or decision to reassign the student to an alternative education placement. OSMAP’s decision regarding any other placement or the educational services to be provided to the student during his/her suspension is final and may not be appealed. An appeal to the School Board Disciplinary Committee (SBDC) of OSMAP’s decision must be received by OSMAP, in writing, within 10 calendar days of the date of the OSMAP decision letter. The SBDC shall review the written appeal of the OSMAP hearing officer’s decision in closed session and shall decide the appeal within 30 calendar days of the filing of the request for appeal. Neither school staff, OSMAP staff, the student, the parent(s), or any representative of the student or parent(s) shall be present during the closed session of the SBDC. The SBDC shall consider only that evidence presented during the OSMAP hearing, with the exception of the letter of appeal, which shall be provided to the SBDC. In the event that the letter of appeal raises issues or facts not raised in the OSMAP hearing, the OSMAP hearing officer may submit a letter or exhibits addressing only those new issues or facts, a copy of which shall be provided to the parent(s)/student. The SBDC has the authority to request further information from OSMAP staff regarding procedural issues only and/or the availability or suitability of alternative placement or educational services. No other documentation or evidence shall be considered by the SBDC. If the SBDC upholds the long-term suspension of a student with disabilities, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team shall convene to determine the continuation of appropriate educational services.

- Upon appeal, the SBDC may uphold, deny, or amend the decision of the OSMAP hearing officer, or may determine that other disciplinary action is merited, including expulsion. The SBDC’s decision shall be final unless the decision is not unanimous, in which case the student may, within seven business days of the SBDC’s decision, notify OSMAP in writing that he/she intends to appeal the SBDC’s decision to the full School Board, which shall review the appeal based solely on the administrative record presented to the SBDC and shall render a decision within 30 calendar days of receipt of the appeal.

- In the event that the SBDC determines that expulsion may be merited, the student shall be notified by OSMAP in writing of the right to request a due process hearing before a Disciplinary Committee of the School Board in accordance with the procedures for expulsion set forth in Regulation 745-6, “Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion Appeals to the School
Board.” In the event that the student does not request such a hearing, or a hearing is requested, and the student fails to appear, the Disciplinary Committee of the School Board shall render a decision based upon the written record.

**Expulsion Appeals:** Refer to Regulation 745-6, “Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion Appeals to the School Board.” If a student is recommended for expulsion by OSMAP, the parent(s) and student may appeal the disciplinary recommendation of the OSMAP hearing officer to a SBDC. Any decision by OSMAP to place the student in an alternative education program upon readmission may also be appealed. However, any other placement decision by OSMAP is final and may not be appealed. A written request for a hearing before a SBDC must be received by OSMAP within 10 calendar days of the date of the decision letter.

**Readmissions** - The procedures, timeline, and appeal process for the readmission to school of students who have previously been expelled from Prince William County Public Schools are set forth in Regulation 745-5, “Readmissions and Exclusions/Admissions.” For those cases that are appealed, the School Board shall conduct a review of the record in closed session and vote on the readmission decision in open session. Only those documents submitted to OSMAP for consideration for readmission shall be considered by the School Board. No additional documents, other than the letter of appeal, shall be submitted for consideration. The student and parent(s) shall be notified in writing of the School Board’s decision.

**Exclusions from School** - The procedures and appeal process for students who have previously been expelled or suspended from attendance at school by another school division or private school and are requesting admission to Prince William County Public Schools are set forth in Regulation 745-5, “Readmissions and Exclusions/Admissions.” For those cases that are appealed, the School Board shall meet in closed session to conduct a review of the documentation considered in the OSMAP admission hearing and the parent’s letter of appeal and shall then vote on the exclusion recommendation in open session. The student and parent(s) shall be notified in writing within 30 days of the School Board’s decision in the case of an expulsion or withdrawal of admission, and within 15 days in the case of a suspension of more than 30 days. The School Board may require an excluded student to attend a nontraditional education program provided by the School Board for the term of any exclusion from a base school.

**Authority to Modify Disciplinary Actions** - At each level of the procedure for all disciplinary appeals, the appeal may be granted or denied and the related consequences (corrective measures) may be increased, decreased, or allowed to remain the same. If in the appeal of a long-term suspension the School Board determines that expulsion may be appropriate, the student shall be notified by OSMAP of the right to request a due process hearing before a committee of the School Board. In the event that the student does not request such a hearing or a hearing, is requested, and the student fails to appear, a committee of the School Board will render a decision based upon the written record. In the event that the decision of the School Board committee is not unanimous, the student may submit a written appeal to the full School Board.
Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment of Students is Not Permitted

Sexual harassment, including harassment based on gender identity or sexual orientation, is illegal and will not be permitted at school or at school-related activities. (Harassment based upon race, color, national origin, pregnancy, religion, or disability is also unlawful, prohibited conduct.) The following questions and answers will help students understand what sexual harassment is and what may be done to protect them from it.

1. Q: What is sexual harassment?
   A: Sexual harassment is an illegal form of discrimination based on a person’s sex even if the victim and harasser are the same sex. It occurs when a student is treated unfairly because of his or her sex, or when a student feels hurt or uncomfortable because of what is said or done by another person (student or adult). Words (spoken or written), actions, or bodily contact may be considered sexual harassment if they are connected in some way with a person’s sex, and if they are considered to be unwanted or harmful by the student, and if they create a hostile or offensive learning environment.

2. Q: How do I know if I have been sexually harassed?
   A: Sometimes it is not easy to know if you have been sexually harassed. If you are singled out, left out, teased, embarrassed, or harmed in some other way because of your sex, gender identity or sexual orientation, it may be sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes conduct as simple as a dirty joke which makes you feel uncomfortable, or as serious as somebody touching you when or where you do not want to be touched. It may only happen once or it may be repeated. If it is connected to gender, if you do not like it, and if it is serious or repeated, it may be considered sexual harassment.

3. Q: What should I do if I have been sexually harassed?
   A: If you believe that you have been sexually harassed, tell your teacher, counselor, assistant principal, principal, or parents immediately. These people will listen to you, give you the help that you need, and see that the harassment stops. You have the right to complain any time you believe that you have been harassed, discriminated against, or treated unfairly in any way. The complaint procedures are found in Regulation 738-1, “Complaint Procedures for Student Claims of Discrimination or Harassment.”

4. Q: How will sexual harassment complaints be handled by the school administration?
   A: All complaints of sexual harassment will be handled according to the policies and regulations of PWCS. The person accused of sexual harassment will be told about the complaint and given a chance to explain. Parents of the students involved will be informed. Witnesses to the alleged harassment will be interviewed. All such information will be considered when investigating and resolving a complaint. The PWCS title IX and student equity officer will support schools as necessary.

5. Q: What will happen to those who engage in sexual harassment?
   A: If the person is found to have engaged in sexual harassment, the consequences will be determined by the nature of the harassment and circumstances of the case. For students, the consequences will be based on the “Corrective Actions” described in the “Code of Behavior,” and may range from a warning or counseling to suspension or expulsion. Student disciplinary measures are confidential by law and cannot be shared. If an adult staff member engages in sexual harassment, that person will face serious consequences up to and including dismissal depending on the seriousness of the harassment. In addition, the police will be contacted when any laws may have been broken.

6. Q: What happens to me if I complain about sexual harassment?
   A: Students should feel free to report harassment so that the problem can be corrected. Those who engage in sexual harassment will be warned that there may be more serious consequences if they attempt to retaliate against the person who reported them, or if they continue the harassment. Every effort will be made to protect the student from retaliation or continued harassment, and to see that the student receives whatever help is needed. All students should understand, however, that complaints will be taken seriously, and that corrective action may be taken against a student for making a complaint of harassment which is not true.
7. Q: What if sexual harassment is not handled in a satisfactory way at the school?
A: The parent of either student (accuser or accused) may appeal to the level associate superintendent if dissatisfied with the way the school has handled a sexual harassment complaint. Appeals should be delivered in writing to the level associate superintendent within five school days as explained on pages 29 of the “Code of Behavior.”

8. Q: What can students do to stop sexual harassment?
A: Students can help to stop sexual harassment by:
   ▪ Letting others know when their behavior is unacceptable;
   ▪ Telling the harasser very firmly to stop, and doing so at the first sign of harassment;
   ▪ Keeping notes of dates, times, places, witness names, etc.;
   ▪ Asking for the help of a teacher or counselor; and
   ▪ Reporting harassment to the principal or assistant principal.

Any student or parent who would like help in dealing with sexual harassment should talk with the principal, counselor, or teacher at the school, or contact the PWCS title IX and student equity officer at scanladm@pwcs.edu. A copy of the policy and regulation on sexual harassment is available at www.pwcs.edu or upon request.
Discrimination and Harassment of Students

Prince William County Public Schools is committed to a school environment in which students are free from discrimination and harassment by other students, employees, or third parties. The school administration will take appropriate steps to prevent discrimination and will deal promptly and decisively with reported incidents of harassment or discrimination. Regulation 738-1, “Complaint Procedures for Student Claims of Discrimination or Harassment,” and Regulation 738-3, “Harassment of Students,” provide detailed information about sexual harassment and other discriminatory harassment and are available at www.pwcs.edu or upon request by contacting the title IX and student equity officer at scanladm@pwcs.edu for claims based on sex or the supervisor of compliance for claims based on disability at MallorAV@pwcs.edu. Following is a summary of information from those regulations. Harassment is a course of conduct which annoys, threatens, intimidates, alarms, or puts a person in fear of his/her safety. Harassment is unwanted, unwelcomed, and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens, or offends the victim and results in a hostile environment for the victim and bystanders.

Harassment Based on Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation
Consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct, or communication of a sexual nature, which may include use of cell phones or the internet, when:

- Submission to the conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining or retaining education;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual’s education; or
- That conduct or communication substantially or unreasonably interferes with an individual’s education, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive, educational environment (i.e., the conduct is sufficiently serious to limit a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program).

A “hostile environment” is created when acts of a sexual nature are sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive as to deny the benefits of the school to the student. Examples of conduct which may constitute harassment based on sex, if it meets the immediately preceding definition, include:

- Unwelcome sexual physical contact;
- Unwelcome ongoing or repeated sexual flirtation or propositions, or remarks;
- Sexual slurs, leering, epithets, threats, verbal abuse, derogatory comments or sexually degrading descriptions;
- Graphic comments about an individual’s body;
- Sexual jokes, notes, stories, drawings, gestures or pictures;
- Spreading sexual rumors;
- Touching an individual’s body or clothes in a sexual way;
- Displaying sexual objects, pictures, cartoon, or posters;
- Impeding or blocking movement in a sexually intimidating manner;
- Sexual violence;
- Display of written materials, pictures, or electronic images; or,
- Unwelcome acts of verbal, nonverbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct based on sex or sex stereotyping.

Harassment Based on Race, Color, National Origin, Disability, or Religion
Consists of physical or verbal conduct, which may include use of cell phones or the internet, relating to an individual’s race, color, national origin, disability, or religion when the conduct:

- Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Substantially or unreasonably interferes with an individual’s education; or
- Otherwise is sufficiently serious to limit a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the education program.

Examples of conduct which may constitute harassment based on race, color, national origin, disability or religion, if it meets the immediately preceding definition, include:

- Graffiti containing racially offensive language;
- Name calling, jokes, or rumors;
- Physical acts of aggression against a person or his property because of that person’s race, national origin, disability, or religion;
- Hostile acts which are based on another’s race, national origin, religion, or disability; or
- Written or graphic material which is posted or circulated, and which intimidates or threatens individuals based on their race, national origin, disability, or religion.
**Complaint Procedure**

All students or parents acting on their behalf, have a right to file a complaint to report and seek resolution of any discrimination or harassment. Any student or parent can file a complaint by talking to an administrator and completing a complaint form, which is Attachment I to Regulation 738-1, and is also available in the school’s office. The complaint form should be provided to an assistant principal or principal as soon as possible and may also be filed directly with the PWCS title IX and student equity officer in the OSMAP office. All teachers, counselors, and educational support staff should be informed of the right of students to file a complaint and should be able to help as appropriate and will provide assurance of corrective action and protection against retaliation. School administrators will respond to complaints of harassment according to guidelines in Regulation 738-1, “Complaint Procedures for Student Claims of Discrimination or Harassment.” Complaints will be investigated in a prompt and impartial manner by the principal or designee, or in some cases by the PWCS Office of Risk Management and Security Services, who will interview the accused as well as witnesses, and consider all relevant information/evidence. The accused and the parents of both parties shall be informed of the allegations; otherwise, confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible. The principal or designee will advise the complainant of counseling services or other sources of help as appropriate. To the extent permitted by federal privacy law, the complainant and accused will be provided with notice of the outcome of any investigation, measures taken to prevent a recurrence, and protection against retaliation.

**Corrective Action**

Anyone accused of harassment will be informed of the specific complaint and given the opportunity to provide an explanation in defense. If a student has engaged in sexual or other discriminatory harassment, corrective action will be taken in accordance with established disciplinary procedures. Corrective action may range from admonition and counseling, to suspension or expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the incident and the need to protect other students from future harassing conduct or discrimination. If an employee has engaged in prohibited harassment, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including dismissal, depending on the seriousness of the offense. In addition, students, employees, and third parties may be reported to authorities for appropriate legal action. NOTE: Any student who knowingly files a false complaint of harassment may also be subject to corrective action.

**Protection Against Retaliation**

Students should feel free to report harassment without fear of retaliation from the accused or others. Any attempt of retaliation will be addressed by appropriate corrective action up to and including expulsion for students. School Division employees who make any attempt to retaliate as a result of a harassment or discrimination charge will also face disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal from their job.

**Appeal Procedure**

If there is disagreement with the resolution of the complaint, an appeal of the principal’s decision may be submitted within five days of receipt of determination. A student may appeal the decision of the school administration in any harassment case. Appeals must be stated in writing by the parent or emancipated student and forwarded to the appropriate level associate superintendent according to the procedures found in Regulation 738-1, “Complaint Procedures for Student Claims of Discrimination or Harassment.”

**Preventive Measures**

The school will act to prevent all harassment as described in Regulation 738-3, “Harassment of Students.” Students can help to prevent or stop harassment if they:

- Let the harasser know very clearly that such actions are not wanted;
- Tell the harasser very firmly to stop;
- Keep written notes of dates, times, places, witness names, and other information about actual occurrences of harassment;
- Keep notes, letters, and other evidence of harassment; and
- Talk with a counselor or administrator and, if appropriate, file a complaint.

**Sources of Help**

Any student or parent who needs help in understanding the sexual or discriminatory harassment regulation or in knowing how to deal with concerns about harassment should talk with the principal, assistant principal, or counselor at school or call the Office of Student Services at 703-791-7257.
Complaint of Discrimination or Harassment

Prince William County Public Schools “Code of Behavior” states, “Words, gestures, symbols, actions, or physical contact which offend, intimidate, threaten, or persecute others will not be tolerated.” The principal and staff of this school are committed to enforcement of the “Code of Behavior” and will respond promptly and appropriately to complaints of harassment or discrimination. Any student can file a complaint by talking to an administrator and/or completing this form and returning it to an assistant principal or principal.

PART I: COMPLAINANT

Name__________________________________________________________

Student’s Race/National Origin ___________________________ Student’s Sex______ Grade Level_______

Address ______________________________________________________

Parent(s) Name________________________________________________

Parent(s) Address, if different from student’s______________________________

Telephone_______________________________________________________

Parent’s Work  Home  Cell

School___________________________________________________________

Teacher or Administrator’s Name______________________________________

PART II: JURISDICTION

Check below why you believe you were harassed or discriminated against based on your membership in a protected category. Check all that apply.

1. Is this complaint based on sexual harassment? If YES, skip to Part III

   ___ YES
   ___ NO

2. Basis of Complaint:

   ___ Race          ___ Disability
   ___ Color         ___ Marital Status
   ___ National Origin ___ Religion
   ___ Sex           ___ Retaliation
   ___ Pregnancy     ___ Other

(If more space is required for any of the following items, please add additional paper and attach to this form. Do not write on the back or in the margins.)
PART III: ALLEGED DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT

1. List the name(s) of person(s) you are accusing of violating the School Division’s nondiscrimination and harassment policies.

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<th>School or Location</th>
<th>Position</th>
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2. Describe what happened – include date, time, and location for each incident whenever possible.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

If additional space is needed, please add additional paper and attach to form.

3. What actions, comments, etc., led you to believe that the discrimination or harassment occurred because of your membership in a protected category as you indicated in Part II of this form?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

If additional space is needed, please add additional paper and attach to form.

4. If applicable, please provide the name(s) or any similarly situated student(s) or employee(s) who you believe behaved in the same manner as you but received different treatment.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

If additional space is needed, please add additional pages and attach to this form.
5. List all witnesses or people who can verify your charges.

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If additional space is needed, please add additional pages and attach to this form.

PART IV: RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINT

What actions do you think should be taken to resolve your complaint?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

I attest that the information in this complaint is true and accurate to the best of my recollection. I agree to fully comply with the investigative process.

Student Signature ___________________________ Date __________

Parent’s Signature ___________________________ Date __________

Mail or fax to:

Level Associate Superintendent

c/o Office of the Superintendent
Prince William County Public Schools
P.O. Box 389
Manassas, Virginia 20108

Facsimile: 703-791-7309
Appeal Form for Complaints of Harassment or Discrimination

Level Associate Superintendent
Prince William County Public Schools
P.O. Box 389
Manassas, Virginia 20108

PLEASE PRINT

Name of Student or Parent filing this appeal:________________________________________

School:_____________________________________________________________________

Name(s) of Person(s) accused of harassment or discrimination:______________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Description of Complaint (use specific dates, times, witness names, etc. if possible):

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Initial Resolution/Remedy of the Complaint:

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Basis of Appeal:

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________
Requested Relief:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Signature of Student or Parent completing this form:______________________________

Date:________________________

NOTE: All complaints will be followed by an investigation. Those accused, as well as the parents of students involved, will be informed of complaints, witnesses will be interviewed, and all information will remain confidential except for that which must be shared as part of the investigation or as otherwise provided by law.
Bullying
Bullying of Students is Not Permitted
Each school is committed to creating an environment in which students are free from bullying. Students are strongly encouraged to report incidents to the school administration. The school administrator will take appropriate steps to respond quickly and decisively to student reports of bullying. Students may use the form on page 42 to report incidents of bullying. The Bullying Complaint Form is also located in the counseling department or main office.

Q: What is bullying?
A: “Bullying” means any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. “Bullying” includes cyberbullying. “Bullying” does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

Q: What behaviors are considered to be bullying behaviors?
A: Some examples of bullying behaviors include purposely not including people, taunts, threats, gestures, insults, gossip, humiliation, teasing, cyberbullying, pushing, tripping, hitting, stealing or destroying property, cursing, and laughing at others based on their appearance, academic or athletic ability, or any other reason. There are many different ways that bullying happens. Sometimes it’s just people making other people feel left out. Other times it’s hitting, teasing, or threatening to hurt someone. Stealing or bothering someone’s lunch or books is bullying, too, and so is laughing at someone because they wear glasses or different kinds of clothes, or because they aren’t good at sports. Using the internet or computers to harm people is another form of bullying. Other harmful behaviors can be bullying, too.

Q: How can I report bullying?
A: Any student can report bullying by talking to an administrator or staff member or completing the Bullying Complaint Form on page 42. Staff members must report your complaint to the school administration. This information should also be shared with your parent(s).

Q: What should I do if the bullying continues?
A: Report this to a school administrator or staff member immediately. It is also important to tell your parent(s) that the bullying is continuing. Administrators will take disciplinary action up to and including expulsion if the student accused of bullying attempts to get back at the victim for reporting his/her bullying behavior.

Q: Are there immediate actions that I can take if I am bullied?
A: Yes. These actions include:
- Telling the bully very firmly to stop;
- Keep written notes of dates, times, places, witness names and other information about any incident of bullying; and
- Talking with a staff member, counselor, administrator, or parent about the incident immediately.
Complaint of Bullying

The Prince William County Public Schools “Code of Behavior” states, “Any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. Bullying also includes cyberbullying, which involves the transmission, receipt, or display of electronic messages and/or images.” Bullying does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict. The principal and staff of this school are committed to enforcement of the “Code of Behavior” and will respond promptly and appropriately to complaints of bullying. Any student can file a complaint by talking to an administrator and/or completing this form and returning it to an assistant principal or principal. _Any staff member may also complete this form on behalf of a student or parent who reports bullying._

PLEASE PRINT

Name of Complainant: ____________________________________________

School: _________________________________________________________

Name(s) of Person(s) accused of bullying: ____________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Description of Complaint (use specific dates, times, witness names, etc., if possible):

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Signature of Complainant: ___________________________ Date: _________________________

NOTE: All complaints will be followed by an investigation. Those accused, as well as the parent(s) of students involved, will be informed of complaints, witnesses will be interviewed, and all information will remain confidential except for that which must be shared as part of the investigation.
Legal Notices to Students and Parents

This section of the “Code of Behavior” contains legal notices pertaining to student rights under federal and/or state law. You are responsible for reading these notices and your signature on the student’s Emergency Information Card acknowledges that you have read and understand these notices.

Notification of Parental Responsibility and Involvement Requirements Under § 22.1-279.3 of the Virginia Code

§22.1-279.3 of the Virginia Code contains provisions addressing parental responsibility and involvement that are intended to promote proper student conduct and ensure school attendance. This law states that “Each parent of a student enrolled in a public school has a duty to assist the school in enforcing standards of student conduct and compulsory school attendance in order that education may be conducted in an atmosphere free of disruption and threat to persons or property, and supportive of individual rights.” Therefore, parents must work in partnership with school administrators to maintain a safe and orderly school environment. Most of our parents are involved and support our schools, helping to create the environment that is necessary to promote learning. Consequently, the School Division recognizes that it will not need to resort to the enforcement provisions of this law unless a parent willfully and unreasonably fails to meet their legal responsibility as outlined below. Rather, this legislation provides the School Division with an additional tool for involving all parents in the maintenance of a safe school environment. Requirements of this law are summarized as follows:

- Parents must sign and return a statement acknowledging receipt of the School Board’s “Code of Behavior,” and recognizing their responsibility to assist the school in enforcing the standards of student conduct set forth in the “Code of Behavior,” and ensuring school attendance. In signing that statement, which is set forth on the back of the student’s Emergency Information Card, parents and students acknowledge that they have read and understand the provisions of the “Code of Behavior” and that a parent’s failure to comply with the requirements of the law could result in court action against the student and the parents. By signing the statement, parents shall not be deemed to have waived, but to expressly reserve, their rights protected by the constitutions or laws of the United States or the Commonwealth. A parent shall have the right to express disagreement with a school’s or school division’s policies or decisions. Students/parents also maintain the right to appeal a suspension or expulsion under §22.1-277.04-06 of the Virginia Code.
- The law authorizes the principal to request that the student’s parent (or parents, if both parents have legal custody and physical custody of such student), meet with the principal or his or her designee to review the “Code of Behavior” and the parent’s or parents’ responsibility to participate with the school in disciplining the student and maintaining order, to ensure the student’s compliance with compulsory school attendance law, and to discuss improving the student’s behavior, school attendance, and educational progress.
- The law authorizes the principal to notify the parent(s) when a student violates the “Code of Behavior” or other School Board policy or the compulsory school attendance law, when such violation could result in a suspension or the filing of a court petition, whether or not the school administration has imposed or initiated such action. The notice shall state (i) the date and particulars of the violation; (ii) the parent(s) obligation to take action(s) to assist the school in improving the student’s behavior and/or compulsory school attendance; (iii) that, if the student is suspended, the parent(s) may be required to accompany the student to meet with school officials; and (iv) that a petition with the juvenile and domestic relations court may be filed under certain circumstances to declare the student a child in need of supervision.
- Suspended students may not be readmitted to the regular school program until the student and parent meet with school officials to discuss improving the student’s behavior. However, the principal or designee is authorized to readmit the student without the parent conference if it is appropriate for the student.
- If parents fail to comply with these requirements, or other requirements under the statute, the School Board may petition the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court to proceed against the parents for willful and unreasonable refusal to participate in efforts to improve the student’s behavior and/or school attendance. The court may take the following actions:
  - Order the parent to meet with school officials; and
  - Order the student and/or parent(s) to participate in treatments or programs to improve the student’s behavior and school attendance, including participation in parenting, counseling, or a mentoring program as appropriate, or be subject to other limitations and conditions as the court deems appropriate, and/or impose a fine upon the parent of up to $500.

Parents seeking additional information about Virginia’s compulsory attendance laws are referred to Regulation 724-1, “Attendance and Excuses,” and Sections 22.1-254 et. seq., of the Virginia Code, available online at [http://leg1.state.va.us/](http://leg1.state.va.us/).
Student Rights

The Constitution, the laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia give students many legal rights and liberties. School Board policies and regulations provide students many privileges as well, according to their ages and maturity levels. Students may exercise these rights and privileges as long as they do not interfere with the rights of others or the schools’ ability to provide a safe learning environment.

PWCS students have the right to:

- Expect that schools, offices, and classrooms are caring, nurturing, and enhance positive relationships;
- Expect that curriculum and instruction promote opportunities for rigorous educational experiences;
- Attend schools that are welcoming, safe, and conducive to a positive learning environment for staff and students;
- Expect equitable and valuable educational experiences with respect to their individual level of understanding and capabilities;
- Express their opinions freely through speech, assembly, petition, and other lawful means, so as not to interfere with the instructional process;
- Advocate for due process when disputing a suspension or expulsion decision;
- Expect essential documents to be translated or interpreted in a language of their understanding when requested; and
- Expect courtesy, respect, and fairness from adults and other students to include their cultural beliefs and differences.