



One Vision. One Durham.

Date: February 25, 2016

**Durham Public Schools
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PRECIS**

Agenda Item: *Board Policy 4300–School Discipline: Climate and Prevention-Revised*

Staff Liaison Present: Dr. Deborah Pitman Phone: (919) 560-2554
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Community Liaison: Superior Court Judge Elaine O’Neal

Main Points:

- The Superintendent’s Code of Student Conduct Task Force presents recommendations to the board for revision of *Policy 4300–School Discipline: Climate and Prevention*. The policy revisions reflect feedback from the Operational Services and Policy Work Session which subsequently have been reviewed and are supported by the Task Force.
- As a culmination of the work of the Task Force, *Policy 4300–School Discipline: Climate and Prevention* is presented for board approval.

Fiscal Implications:

- None

<u>Purpose</u>			
Information <input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion <input type="checkbox"/>	Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consent <input type="checkbox"/>
Reviewed by:	<input type="checkbox"/> Finance ____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attorney <u>N.R.</u>	

4300.1 Philosophy

Durham Public Schools is committed to providing all students with an outstanding education that motivates them to reach their full potential and enables them to discover their interests and talents, pursue their goals and dreams, and succeed in college, in the workforce and as engaged citizens.

In its 2014 publication “Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline,” the U.S. Department of Education calls for districts to:

- take deliberate steps to create the positive school climate that can help prevent and change inappropriate behaviors. Such steps include training staff, engaging families and community partners and deploying resources to help students develop the social-emotional and conflict resolution skills needed to avoid and de-escalate problems;
- ensure that clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and consequences are in place to prevent and address misbehavior;
- understand their civil rights obligations and strive to ensure fairness and equity for all students;
- provide programmatic interventions to support positive behavior and learning. Interventions may include the following: opportunities to participate in peer mediation, conflict resolution, counseling, student/parent/teacher/ conference, and/or other restorative practices.

4300.2 Students

Students have the right to participate in the teaching and learning opportunities at school within a safe and orderly environment. Students are expected to behave appropriately, cooperatively, and responsibly in school and are accountable for their own decisions and conduct. Students will have the opportunity to engage with teachers, school administration and family if behavior is inappropriate in order to learn and practice acceptable standards of behavior.

4300.3 Parents/Families

Parents/families are encouraged to participate in discussions on promoting a positive school climate and how they can help prevent and change inappropriate behaviors. Parents/families are invited to partner with teachers and staff on effective strategies for correcting misbehavior within the parameters of the Code of Student Conduct and all other applicable policies and procedures. Parents/families will be provided information about the Code of Student Conduct and the due process rights of students and will be encouraged to support schools when programmatic interventions are instituted to support positive behavior and learning.

4300.4 Teachers and Staff

Every teacher is expected to teach and implement clear, age-appropriate, consistent, expectations and consequences aligned with school-wide rules and board policy. Teachers and staff are expected to communicate these expectations with the parents/guardian. When there is a concern with a student’s behavior, teachers/staff should communicate with the parent/guardian as appropriate and are encouraged to involve the parent/guardian in addressing the problem behavior.

According to G.S.115C-307(a), teachers have a responsibility to maintain order and discipline: "It shall be the duty of all teachers, including student teachers, substitute teachers, voluntary teachers, and teacher assistants when given authority over some part of the school program by the principal or supervising teacher, to maintain good order and discipline in their respective schools." A teacher may not suspend a student from school nor may he/she permanently remove a child from a classroom. A teacher should report serious misconduct to the principal or designee for appropriate disciplinary action.

The responsibility for appropriately supervising and monitoring each student's conduct should be assumed by all teachers and staff of the school. Teachers and staff are obligated to accept this responsibility wherever they are in the classroom, halls, restrooms, and auditorium, on the playground or at school-sponsored events.

4300.5 Principal

The principal will establish and maintain a positive school climate based on the principles of fairness, accountability and restorative practices. In order to maintain a positive climate that supports safety, order and student achievement, the principal will clearly communicate school rules, standards, and procedures in accordance with Policy 2475-*School Rules* and will promote the following goals on an ongoing basis:

- that all students, families, faculty and staff will understand what constitutes positive behavior;
- that all students will understand the Code of Student Conduct and other behavioral expectations;
- that all students will be supported if they begin to struggle with behavior.

The principal shall have authority to exercise discipline over the students in the school. A principal may choose to delegate to an individual or group the authority to make or review disciplinary decisions, but the final responsibility for making or recommending those decisions shall rest with the principal.

When there is a violation of board policies, the Student Code of Conduct, or other rules and standards around inappropriate behavior, principals will communicate with parents/guardians regarding the violation of the Code of Student Conduct and both the in-school options and disciplinary response.

In the event a disciplinary consequence is warranted, schools are committed, to the extent feasible, to implementing programmatic interventions that can occur within the school so the student can remain in an educational environment.

Examples of Programmatic Interventions			
Parent-student-school conference	Behavior contracts	Counseling	Behavior monitoring, self-charting, feedback
Change in schedule or classes	Restitution, community service	Loss of privileges	In-school suspension
Social-emotional skills, strategies to cool down and return to class	Referral to school Multi-Tiered System of Support School Team	Negotiation/ Problem solving approaches	Lunch, afterschool, or Saturday detention
Peer Mediation	Mini-courses, modules for additional support, Skill-building group	Conflict Resolution	Referral to community resource

When in-school intervention and/or disciplinary action is not sufficient or appropriate given the severity or frequency of the behavior, or other relevant considerations, the student may be removed from school pursuant to Policy 4303-*Suspension and Expulsion*.

4300.6 Superintendent

The Superintendent is authorized to take reasonable measures to support positive school climates, programmatic interventions, and procedures for students. Programmatic interventions and procedures will support a safe and orderly school and give clear expectations for appropriate behavior. Evidence-based interventions will be implemented consistently within all schools to ensure fairness. Restoration and accountability are key components in establishing procedures for maintaining positive school climate.

The Superintendent will also take reasonable measures to inform staff, students, parents/guardians, and other stakeholders in the school community of this policy and the Code of Student Conduct and to solicit community input in their periodic review. Both this policy and the Code of Student Conduct will be distributed annually in the Durham Public Schools Student/Parent Handbook.

Cross Reference: School Rules (policy 2475); Code of Student Conduct – Elementary Schools (policy 4301); Code of Student Conduct – Middle and High Schools (policy 4301).

Legal Reference: G.S.115C-307, -390.1, -390.2, United States Department of Justice and United States Department of Education, Dear Colleague Letter on Nondiscriminatory Administration of School Discipline (January 8, 2014).

Adopted Effective: July 2, 1992

Revised Effective: July 1, 1999

Revised Effective: July 1, 2016