

STUDENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

The Board of Education recognizes that the use, possession, distribution, and sale of narcotics or other controlled substances is illegal according to the federal and state law and constitutes a hazard to the District's students. The use, possession, distribution and sale of alcohol to students under age 21, and tobacco to students under age 18, is also illegal and hazardous for such students. In an effort to reduce the risk of use and abuse of illegal substances by the District's students, the Board adopts this policy in accordance with Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, otherwise known as the Safe and Drug-Free School and Communities Act.

As used in this policy, "controlled substances" shall include all drugs which are banned or controlled under federal or state law, including those for which a physician's prescription is required, as well as any other chemical substance which is deliberately ingested to produce psychological or physiological effects, other than accepted foods or beverages.

BACKGROUND

Throughout the county, state, and nation, parents and school authorities are deeply concerned about the substance abuse problem among our children. For many years Schodack Central administrators and faculty at the elementary, middle school and high school levels have been actively attempting to educate our students about the dangers of substance abuse. Our faculty points out the medical problems and the legal ramifications which could jeopardize the productive lives we want for students. The District has established developmental programs, such as those in our health courses, which systematically and thoroughly attempt to discourage young people from abusing their bodies and their minds. Faculty and staff are made aware of how to recognize signs and signals exhibited by the students to let us know they are experiencing a substance abuse problem.

The District will develop substance abuse prevention and intervention programs that address the legal, social, personal and health consequences of the use/abuse of tobacco, alcohol, and controlled substances, promote a sense of individual responsibility and provide information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use such substances. In establishing such programs, the District shall tailor the programs to the needs of the District's students based on the assessment of objective data regarding the incidents of students' abuse of these substances. The District shall also base such programs on scientific research shown to reduce substance abuse and shall establish such programs after a consultation and an input from parents. The District's programs shall be governed by the following principles:

- The use and abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substances are preventable and treatable.
- The use and abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substances inhibit the District from carrying out its central mission of providing students with a safe and drug-free learning environment.
- The Board of Education, the administration, and all school staff should act as role models for children in achieving the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substance use and abuse.

- While the District can and must assume a leadership role in the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substance use and abuse, this goal will be accomplished only through coordinated, collaborative efforts with federal and state agencies, parents, students, staff, and the community as a whole.

PREVENTION

Any school staff member who sees or has tangible evidence of a student possessing, selling, transferring, using, or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, and/or controlled substances while on school premises or under school supervision must immediately notify the principal of the building or the employee's immediate supervisor.

Students who appear to be under the influence of a controlled substance and/or alcohol will be reported to the school nurse by the building principal.

If a student is suspected by the principal to be in possession of alcohol, tobacco and/or controlled substances or to be under the influence of controlled substance and/or alcohol, while on school premises or at a school related activity, the principal will, with reasonable cause for suspicion, notify parents of possible abuse by their child and search the suspected student or students, purses, book bags, pockets in clothing and cars. No written record will be made of any unfounded suspicion, nor will it be a part of the pupil's record.

Lockers are the property of the school and may be searched with or without reasonable suspicion. With prior Board approval, effective for a specified period of time, canine (K-9) searches of lockers may be conducted.

As a condition for the privilege of parking a vehicle on school property, student vehicles may be subjected to K-9 searches. Any such searches may be conducted with prior Board approval, effective for a specified period of time.

Every effort will be made to assist students in need in receiving available counseling or treatment. School authorities encourage students and employees to seek counseling without the fear of self-incrimination and reprisals. Voluntary disclosures by students will be treated as confidential and will be revealed only to the principal and to the parents. Such disclosures will not result in punitive action to the student or to the employee.

The District also shall be active in providing prevention programming for its students regarding tobacco, alcohol, and controlled substance use/abuse. The District's prevention program shall include:

1. A sequential K-12 prevention curriculum that provides for:
 - Accurate and age-appropriate information about alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substances, including the physical, psychological, and social consequences of their use and abuse.
 - Information about the relationship of alcohol and controlled substance use and abuse to other health-compromising behaviors such as AIDS, teenage pregnancy, eating disorders, child abuse, suicide, dropping out of school and involvement in crime.

- Helping students develop appropriate life skills to resist the use of alcohol, tobacco and controlled substances and to promote healthy life styles.
 - Helping students identify personal preventive factors for alcohol, tobacco and controlled substance use and abuse and the steps needed for risk reduction.
 - Helping students develop a positive self-concept.
 - Helping students identify when they are under stress and how to manage or reduce stress through non-chemical means.
2. Training parents, legal guardians of the students and staff to use the information and skills necessary to reinforce the components of this policy in the school, home and community.
 3. Community education about the issues of alcohol, tobacco and controlled substance use and abuse as a basis for providing a consistent message to District youth.
 4. Positive alternatives to alcohol, tobacco and controlled substance use and abuse, such as peer leadership programs, service projects, and recreational and extracurricular activities. Such activities will be planned collaboratively with students, parents, community members and agencies.

INTERVENTION

To reduce the use and abuse of alcohol, tobacco and controlled substances and to identify support services for students at risk and their families, the District shall establish a substance abuse intervention program that includes:

1. Providing information in regard to alcohol, tobacco and controlled substance use and abuse assessment and counseling services for students.
2. Developing a referral process between District schools and community providers.
3. Identifying and referring students to appropriate agencies when the students' use and abuse of alcohol, tobacco and controlled substances appears to require counseling and/or treatment.
4. Providing support to students in, or returning from, treatment to assure that the school environment strengthens the process of recovery initiated in the treatment program.
5. Providing information regarding individual, group and family counseling targeted at students at risk for alcohol, tobacco and controlled substance use and abuse.
6. Educating parents and staff on when and how to access appropriate District personnel for information regarding intervention services available in the community for students at risk for alcohol, tobacco and controlled substance use and abuse.
7. Assuring confidentiality.

TRAINING

The Board recognizes that the administrative, instructional, and non-instructional staff who are responsible for implementing this policy must be trained periodically to carry out the prevention and intervention programs developed by the District. The training program will include the following principles:

1. For all staff: their role in implementing this policy, including how to identify students who exhibit certain risk behaviors or who are using and abusing alcohol, tobacco and controlled substances, and how to refer these students to appropriate services.
2. For teachers: the knowledge and skills necessary to implement the District's K-12 alcohol, tobacco and controlled substance prevention curriculum.
3. For intervention staff: appropriate staff training for those carrying out the intervention function to assure that their assessment, individual, group, and family counseling and referral skills support the needs of those at risk of using and abusing alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substances.

DISCIPLINE

The District shall establish a comprehensive student code of conduct and effective disciplinary policies to address the problems of student possession, sale, distribution, use and abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substances.

CONCLUSION

No policy alone will change the attitudes or behavior of some young people, and the problem of substance abuse will continue. The best method for discouraging young people from becoming involved with controlled substances is to have parents learn as much as they can about controlled substances and tell children the truth; that is, the real dangers and myths that exist. The school, parents, and the community as a whole, working cooperatively, can help students meet the challenges of our complex society.

The Board of Education charges the Superintendent to collaborate with District staff, parents, students, community members, organizations, and agencies, including alcohol, tobacco and controlled substance abuse service providers, in developing the specific programs and strategies necessary to implement this policy.

Upon adoption, copies of this policy shall be annually distributed to and reviewed with all District staff, students, and parents and shall be disseminated to the community through its organizations.

Approved: 7/7/03 (3rd 7/7/03; 2nd 6/19/03; 1st 5/13/03)

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