

Township of Union Public Schools

Code of Conduct and Core Values



2020-2021

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Township of Union Public Schools Code of Conduct

Introduction

The Township of Union Public Schools recognizes the excellence of students and approaches behavior issues with a positive, proactive philosophy. An effective academic and behavioral program is one which contains strategies to assist students in engaging in critical reflection; respecting themselves, others, and the school; developing an understanding of their individual needs and one in which leaders model these actions and provide opportunities for students to develop these qualities.. Further, it provides support services for all students, with special attention to those students who may need additional guidance. Finally, it is a program which assigns appropriate consequences for students who knowingly make choices that are not aligned to the appropriate behaviors communicated by the school community.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Township of Union Public Schools is to build on the foundations of honesty, excellence, integrity, strong family, and community partnerships. We promote a supportive learning environment where every student is challenged, inspired, empowered, and respected as diverse learners. Through cultivation of students' intellectual curiosity, skills and knowledge, our students can achieve academically and socially, and contribute as responsible and productive citizens of our global community.

Township of Union Public Schools' Core Values (REAAL)

- **Respect** – School Community Members respect themselves and others, maintaining a collaborative environment that promotes academic, social, emotional, and personal growth. Respect includes being empathetic, showing compassion and making an effort to understand others' differences, being kind to others, collaboration, and patience.
- **Empowerment** – School Community Memberstake initiative and give their best in all that pertains to school and the community. Empowering others will appear in our school community as providing opportunities for student, staff, administrator, and community leadership.
- **Accountability** – School Community Memberstake ownershipfor actions that impact peers and members of the community.
- **Achievement** – School Community Members demonstrate determination in reaching personal and societal goals and recognizes the efforts of those making an impact.
- **Leadership** – School Community Members lead by embodying the core values of the district and modeling them in all aspects and situations. . Strong leadership includes being an example of the values and inspiring others to be an example of those values as well..

We believe that this can be accomplished when:

- teachers, parents, administrators, and other adult members of the Township of Union Public School community model respectful and respectable behavior toward one another in support of our core values;
- individuals acknowledge differences, demonstrate a respect for diversity, and recognize the worth of each individual;
- individuals communicate concerns and/or suggestions in an appropriate and direct manner;
- individuals utilize effective problem-solving and conflict-resolution strategies; and
- the dignity of every individual is protected and maintained.

In order for this document to be effective, the entire school community must make every effort to promote and practice its contents. This Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually. The Superintendent of Schools shall report annually on the implementation of the Student Code of Conduct. This will be disseminated annually through the district website to staff, parents, and teachers in order address the changing needs of the school community. Its effectiveness rests with the community's awareness, understanding, and taking action on its purpose and contents.

Administrators' Responsibilities

School administrators must develop and implement procedures and routines to ensure that the school maintains a safe and drug-free environment. It is the school administrator's responsibility to make certain that the entire school environment is conducive to learning. The school administrator must also make sure that all students, staff, and parents are fully aware of the school rules as well as procedures and routines for maintaining student discipline and decorum. To do this, school administrators should:

- make available a copy of school rules and procedures to all students, staff, and parents;
- visit classrooms and other areas in and around the school regularly to monitor instruction and safety of staff and students;
- regularly monitor instruction during any remote, virtual, and/or hybrid learning;
- respond to all serious cases of student misconduct and to student misbehavior that persists after other appropriate measures of progressive discipline utilized by staff have been exhausted;
- ensure that the parents/guardians and students are afforded the appropriate rights of due process prior to suspensions or expulsions; and
- communicate with parents/guardians using written, verbal, and/or face-to-face (in-person or virtual) contact.

All school property, such as lockers, desks, etc., assigned to students is the property of the Township of Union School District. The student is given a temporary privilege to use the property and this privilege may be revoked at any time. School property should not be used to store materials, objects, etc. that are in violation of the Code, school rules, or any statutes or ordinances. The school administrator may authorize the search of school property temporarily assigned to students. Prior to a search of said property, the student(s) involved shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. However, where school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the property contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare, or safety of students and staff in the school, it may be searched without prior warning.

All visitors must register in the school's main office and must state the purpose of the visit, providing photo identification prior to being admitted. During any pandemic or emergency situation, school administrators reserve the right to visitors without prior approval. The school administrator has the ability to approve, deny, or reschedule any visit for a more appropriate time. All visitors or other persons on school premises must identify themselves

when requested by school personnel, including at school-sponsored activities and events. If the person does not properly identify himself or herself, or his or her purpose, the person is considered as trespassing and the appropriate legal action will be taken. Any person whose actions or language threatens the health, safety, or welfare of students or staff will be restricted from visiting a school or attending school-sponsored events.

Staff, Parent, and Other Adult Community Members' Responsibilities

The Township of Union Public School Community believes that in order to instill in each student an understanding of, and an ability to demonstrate, the District's Core Values, its members have a responsibility to:

- clearly define behavioral expectations, boundaries, and behavioral supports;
- provide positive recognition for appropriate conduct and academic success
- assist students with seeking or by providing supports including interventions and referral services, when appropriate;
- be firm, fair, and consistent in responses to violations of behavioral expectations;
- provide an educational experience that enables each student to attain their full potential and contribute positively to the school and community in support of our core ethical values (REAAAL);
- act as an effective role model for students to emulate;
- act respectfully toward students and all other members of the school community;
- use appropriate, acceptable, and culturally responsive language when communicating with students;
- keep appropriate, direct, and timely communication between home and school as positive and effective communication serves as the foundation for the home-school partnership; and
- work in collaboration to provide each student an exceptional educational program.

Student Conduct and Responsibilities

An important component of the Township of Union Public Schools' Mission is to have students embody ethical, compassionate, and responsible characteristics. Students will be recognized for modelling the District's Core Values. Students who break school rules and regulations can expect specific consequences and/or other interventions to support the student. Certain disciplinary actions are guided by state and federal laws and may require a report to be made to the police department. Therefore, every student is called upon to:

- learn the Student Code of Conduct;
- practice the skills needed to follow behavioral expectations;

- use behavior that reflects our core ethical values;
- respect themselves and all members of the Township of Union Public School community;
- welcome visitors and all those who contribute to the school community and extend them courtesy, respect, and assistance;
- attend and be on time for school daily. Those students who are absent from school are not permitted to participate in after-school activities or attend evening performances/events without school administrator approval for extenuating circumstances. Such regular attendance shall be during all the days and hours that school is in session. (Refer to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25 through N.J.S.A. 18A:38-31; N.J.S.A. 32-8, 13.1, and 6A:16-7.8; District Policy 5230.);
- report to homeroom and class on time. Students who are late must report to the school office for a late pass;
- be appropriately prepared for school and classes;
- complete all academic work as assigned and be actively engaged in their own learning. In the case of an absence, students are responsible to contact the teacher(s) for all missed assignments;
- refrain from gum chewing on school grounds and on the bus;
- refrain from the recreational use of radios, cell phones, iPods, electronic games, etc., in the school;
- maintain a drug-free environment. Students may not possess, consume, or sell tobacco, drugs, or alcohol in any form while at school, on school grounds, or attending a school-related function;
- use appropriate, acceptable, and culturally responsive language;
- refrain from fighting, gambling, and possessing dangerous or inappropriate objects or substances;
- understand that bullying, harassment, intimidation, or coercion of any person is not permitted. (Refer to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 et seq.; N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.9, District Policies 5230, 5512.01, 5500, and 5600).

Student Rights (See Policy 5610 & 5620 Suspension and Expulsion)

All students enrolled in the Township of Union Public Schools have the right to:

- receive advanced notice of any behaviors that will result in suspension or expulsion under the authority of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-2 and Policy 5610 which states that *“No student otherwise eligible for attendance shall be removed from the instructional program to which he/she has been assigned unless that student has materially and substantially interfered with the maintenance of good order (i.e., indulged in disruptive behavior) or removal is necessary to protect the student’s physical safety or emotional well-being.”*;
- an education that supports development into productive citizens;

- attend a safe and drug-free school environment;
- attend school irrespective of marriage, pregnancy, or parenthood;
- freedom of speech and expression;
- privacy and free association;
- equal protection;
- be free from intimidation, harassment, and bullying and to be treated without discrimination;
- defend one's actions when accused of a wrongdoing;
- parental notification of disciplinary action involving detention, suspension, or expulsion consistent with the policies and procedures established pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:6.2(b). Protections pursuant to; 20 U.S.C. 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99, Family Educational Rights and Privacy act; 20 U.S.C. 1232h and 34 CFR Part 98, Protection of Student Rights Amendment; N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7, Student Records; 45 CFR 160, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act; 20 U.S.C. 6301, Title IV (A) IV 4155 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as reauthorized under the No Child Left Behind Act; 42 CFR Part 2, Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Patient Records; N.J.S.A. 18A:40A-7.1, School-based drug and alcohol abuse counseling; information from participants; disclosure; N.J.A.C. 6A:16-3.2, Confidentiality of student alcohol and other drug information; N.J.S.A. 18A:36-19, Creation; Student Records; Maintenance and Retention, Security and access, Regulations, Non-liability; N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.9, student records; as well as other existing federal and state laws pertaining to student protections;
- due process of law in cases of suspension and expulsion pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:3-1.3 through 1.17; N.J.A.C 6A:4; N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.7 and 2.8; and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2-7.6. Specifically, no student shall be suspended from the public schools of this District without notice of the charges made against him/her and an opportunity to be heard before the person or body with the authority to reinstate; and
- protections with regard to the maintenance and security of student records pursuant to Policy 55610.

Student Privileges

It is important for students to understand that the students are expected to model the expectations outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and Township of Union Public Schools Core Values (REAAL) at all times. The following are considered privileges, not rights, and may be revoked by the school administrator:

- participation in assembly programs, dances, parties, and other school-related functions;
- participation in day field trips and overnight field trips;

- access to the school Internet and building network;
- participation in co- and/or extra-curricular activities; and
- participation in promotion and/or graduation exercises.

Recognition for Achievement (See policy 5126 Recognition for Achievement)

A program of recognition for academic achievement and positive reinforcement for conduct that reflects the district's core ethical values shall include, but is not limited to:

- Student of the Month
- Breakfast with the Principal
- PBSIS (Positive Behavior Support in Schools)
- Pros Award
- Dolphin Dollars
- Lion's Loot
- PAWS
- Citizenship Award
- Jefferson Blue Knights Nickels
- The Leader In Me

Student Support Programs

- There are a number of programs available to students to support their academic and behavioral growth, including but not limited to: School Counseling Program – The Counseling Department provides services to all children as well as their families. Their objective is to educate, build strong character for all students, and provide quality school counseling programs designed to meet the child's specific developmental needs.
- Peer Mediation (Peer to Peer) - Students also serve as Peer Mediators. Through this program, trained students help their classmates identify problems behind conflicts and find solutions.

Student Dress (See Policy 5132 Dress and Grooming)

Parents/guardians and school staff are expected to cooperate in the matter of student dress. The school administration reserves the right to make a final decision regarding appropriate dress in school and at school-sponsored events.

The purpose of the school dress code is to establish standards for what is acceptable dress and grooming within the school setting with particular concern for the health and safety of the students. In addition, the code is designed to encourage a mode of dress and grooming that is conducive to establishing an effective learning environment, fostering a climate of discipline, order, teaching and professionalism. Therefore, please note the following:

Elementary Schools

- no open-back shoes; no showing of midriff; tops must have straps of three-finger width.
- hats are not permitted unless they are part of a school function or for a documented medical/cultural reason.
- wearing a hood in the school (halls, classroom, bathroom, etc.) is not permitted;
- armbands or bandanas are prohibited.
- shirts that display offensive or profane language are prohibited.

Middle Schools and High School

- Active recreational use of headphones or other personal audio equipment is not permitted with the exception of times needed due to IEPs/BIPs or part of Chromebook usage as directed by the teacher.
- All shorts must be of mid-thigh length or longer.
- Leggings must be worn under ripped jeans if rips are above the knee.
- Undergarments must be worn. No undergarments may appear above the waistline of the outer garment. No underwear or clothing resembling underwear may be worn as outerwear.
- Shirts and blouses must be properly buttoned.
- The following are not to be worn: tube tops, halters, midriff tops, bareback tops, string tops, see-through tops or pants, or pajamas. Excessively short or tight clothing may not be worn.
- Clothing may not display suggestive, indecent, obscene, or offensive writing, pictures or slogans.

- Gloves may not be worn.
- Blouses and dresses with plunging necklines or displaying underwear may not be worn.
- Trousers, slacks, shorts, jeans, or any other bottoms must be worn at the waist.
- Appropriate footwear is required. Slippers, Heely sneakers, or shoes that will create a safety hazard shall not be worn.
- Special announcements will be made concerning “new styles” and/or situations not covered above.
- Special trips: Teacher chaperoning field trip will advise their group of the appropriate dress for the trip.
- Hats are not permitted unless they are part of a school function or for a documented medical/cultural reason.
- Wearing a hood in the school (halls, classroom, bathroom, etc.) is not permitted.

Rules of Acceptable Conduct Suring Assemblies/Performances

- Enter and exit in a quiet, orderly manner.
- No talking, cell phone use, or physical contact during the performance.
- Remain in one’s seat for the duration of the program, unless one has an emergency or assignment; if one must enter/exit, do so only between selections, not during a performance.
- Any student/child who is not part of the performance must remain seated with an adult.
- Treat the performer(s) in a respectful manner and offer appropriate applause.
- Assemblies must follow safe distancing practices

Appropriate Use of District Technology Devices, the Internet, and the School Network

The rapidly changing, technologically driven society in which we live presents us with new challenges in our pursuit to encourage ethical behavior for our students. The following regulations will help to guide our students, staff, and Board of Education members in the acceptable use of district devices and networks:

- All are required to read carefully, understand, endorse, and submit an “Acceptable Use Policy” contract.
- Unauthorized or improper opening or manipulating of files is forbidden.
- Purposeful changing of system configuration is forbidden.

- Students are required to follow the directions of their teachers in the use of district technology devices, the Internet, and the network.
- To transmit or knowingly receive any materials in violation of any United States, New Jersey, or Township of Union Public Schools regulation or law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: copyrighted material, threatening, harassing, pornographic, obscene, or profane material, materials related to the illegal use or manufacture of restricted substances, defamatory or discriminatory material, or material protected by trade secret.
- Any use of educational technology and/or electronic communication that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other pupils will not be tolerated in or outside of the school facilities or school day. It may not be used to harass, intimidate or bully any person or persons. Any violation of law through the use of this technology may be dealt with through disciplinary action and may result in the suspension and/or cancellation of privileges.
- All school community members are expected to model the expectations set in the District Code of Conduct whether they are participating in-person or virtually.

Fire Drill Regulations and Other Safety Drill Procedures

- At the sounds of the alarm, all students are to exit the building according to the directions posted in each room, or at the direction of the adult in charge.
- Students are to conduct themselves in an orderly and silent fashion; misconduct of any kind while leaving or returning to the building is forbidden.
- Students shall leave the building in a rapid walk, but **MUST NOT** run.
- Students are to return to the building when recall signal is given.
- Talking during a fire drill or building evacuation is not permitted.
- Wearing a hood during a fire drill or building evacuation is permitted.

Regular Release of Students Before the End of the Normal School Day

There are varying situations which may justify release of certain students from school before the normal time for closing. Such situations are justifiable only if the release does not jeopardize the student's educational program and the reason for such release can be shown to have a positive benefit for the student and are at the discretion of the school administrator in conjunction with the Supervisor of Counseling.

General Bus/Bus Stop Regulations

The safety of our students is our primary concern. Any student who does not adhere to the following regulations will be reported to the bus supervisors, the Assistant Principal, or the Principal. Offenders risk the suspension of bus privileges.

- Behavior that reflects the Student Code of Conduct is expected when waiting for and riding the school bus.
- The authority of the school bus driver/bus aide must be respected while riding the school bus.
- Bus passes are issued to eligible students who are assigned to a bus.
- Bus passes are checked. Students without passes may not be permitted to ride the bus and will need to contact a parent/guardian.
- Students must ride their assigned bus and may be assigned seats.
- Students are only permitted to stand or move around the bus when entering or exiting the bus.
- No arms, heads, or other body parts, objects, etc. are permitted out of windows.
- Students are not permitted to throw items of any kind on or out of the bus.
- The opening of emergency exits is forbidden, unless performing an evacuation or other emergency act.
- Students involved in an after school activity or detention will be able to ride a late bus. A late bus pass must be obtained daily from the school office. Regular bus regulations apply to all riders of the late bus.
- Students must wear seat belts when provided.

**Student Behaviors That Result in Disciplinary Action
(i.e., Detention, Suspension, Expulsion, and/or report to the Police Department)**

Elementary

Including but not limited to:

Failure to Report for Lunch Detention	Inappropriate Comment	Left School Without Permission
Failure to Report for Afternoon Detention	Unprepared for Class/Homework	Forgery
Failure to Report for Morning Detention	Class Disruption	Destruction of School Property
Rude/Discourteous	Continued Misconduct	Fighting
Insubordinate	Inappropriate Physical Contact	Profanity
Safety Hazard	Bullying Behavior	Lack of Cooperation
Horseplay	Excessive Lateness to School	Cafeteria Misconduct
Cell Phone/Laser Pointer/ Electronic Device	Inappropriate Bathroom Behavior	Recess Misconduct

Present Action and Recommendations

Detention: Lunch AM PM

Suspension: In-School Suspension Out-of-School Suspension

The above consequences are guidelines. The principal has the legal right to suspend any student for up to 10 days (Legal reference: NJSA 18A:37-Y NJSA 6A:14-218).

Middle/High Schools

Including but not limited to:

Failure to Report for Teacher Detention	Inappropriate Comment	Left School Without Permission
Failure to Report for Afternoon Detention	Failure to Identify	Forgery
Failure to Report for Saturday Detention	Class Disruption	Destruction of School Property
Cyber Bullying	Stealing	Smoking on School Grounds
Cutting Class	False Alarm	Possession of Illegal Substance
Truant	Excessive Lateness to Class	Dress Code Violation
Rude/Discourteous	Continued Misconduct	Fighting
Insubordinate	Inappropriate Physical Contact	Profanity
Safety Hazard/Horseplay	Bullying Behavior	Lack of Cooperation
Misuse of Hall Pass	Excessive Lateness to School	Cafeteria Misconduct
Cell Phone/Laser Pointer/ Electronic Device	Inappropriate Bathroom Behavior	Transportation Misconduct

Present Action and Recommendations

Detention(s): Teacher AM PM Saturday

Suspension: In-School Suspension Out-of-School Suspension

The above consequences are guidelines. The principal has the legal right to suspend any student for up to 10 days (Legal reference: NJSA 18A:37-Y NJSA 6A:14-218).

Suspension

The violation of school rules can result in suspension. Continued behaviors resulting in suspension can also lead to a referral to the Superintendent's Office for possible expulsion proceedings. When suspended, a student should make up work. Students will have the same number of days to make up work as the number of days suspended. The teacher is not obligated to provide extra help to the student.

Morning, Afterschool, or Saturday Detention

Students that are suspended from school and parents are unable to pick students up immediately will spend the day in an out of classroom setting with supervision. Student's class assignments will be provided. The student must serve noted suspension days, which may not include the out of classroom setting with supervision.

Saturday Detention

Saturday detention for Middle and High school students will be in accordance with individual school Student Handbook. Please refer to the Student Handbook.

Morning or Afterschool Detention

Morning or Afterschool detention district-wide will be in accordance with individual schools' Student Handbook. Please refer to the Student Handbook.

NOTE: Administration has the right to use sound judgement after investigating the incident to determine the proper discipline.

Student Behavior Standards - Not on School Premises

Please note that student behavioral standards extend beyond school grounds, as per N.J.A. C. 6A:16-7.6. This applies especially to incidents involving all forms of harassment, bullying, intimidation, fighting, substance abuse, and dangerous instruments/weapons.

School-based Services

- School Counselor
- Child Study Team
- Intervention & Referral Services Committee

Acknowledgment

The Township of Union Public Schools gratefully acknowledges the efforts of the Code of Conduct and Core Values Committee

Mr. Gregory Tatum, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Annie Moses, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Gerry Benaquista, Assistant Superintendent
District Principals
BOE Education Committee

Adoption

The Township of Union Public Schools Code of Conduct will be adopted by the Township of Union Public Schools Board of Education AUGUST __, 20__.

Glossary

Core Ethical Values – A value is a belief about what is good that transcends a specific situation and that guides judgment and decision-making. In order for a value to be a “core” ethical value, it must be of central importance in the life of the individual and the life of the community.

Intervention and Referral Service (I&RS) Committee – The Township of Union Public School District shall provide a program of intervention and referral services for all students who may be experiencing learning, behavior, and/or health difficulties to help them function productively and develop positively in the classroom environment.

Child Study Team – The Child Study Team is comprised of a team of professionals, including school social worker, school psychologist, learning disability teacher consultant, and speech and language pathologist. The Child Study Team also provide support services to district students as needed (for example they provide resources, and can be part of the I&RS, determine need for mental health assessments, etc.

List of District Policies

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Title</u>
2361	Acceptable Use of District Technology Devices
5200	Absences & Excuses
5230	Late Arrival/Early Dismissals
5500	Expectation for Pupil Conduct
5512.01	Harassment, Intimation & Bulling
5530	Substance Abuse
5533	Smoking
5550	Disaffected Pupils
5560	Disrupted Pupils
5600	Pupil Discipline
5610	Suspensions
	Removal of Pupils from the General Education
5611	Program for Weapons & Fire Arm Offenses
5612	Assault by Pupils, on Board Members or Employees
5620	Expulsion
5751	Sexual Harassment