

September 4, 2019

Dear Families,

Ensuring that your child learns in safe, supportive, and inclusive schools is our top priority. To improve school culture and climate, we use preventive approaches that address the real causes of a conflict. We believe it is important to reinforce positive behaviors through teachable moments. At the same time, we hold students accountable for their actions and want them to reflect on their behavior and repair any harm done.

To build a strong base on which students can grow and thrive, today our schools are adopting an updated *Citywide Behavioral Expectations to Support Student Learning* (Discipline Code), which you can find at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/DCode>. The Discipline Code applies to all students—and include both supports and interventions, as well as disciplinary responses, to unwelcome behavior. It also includes the K-12 Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities (<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/StudentRights>). The Code also addresses protections for students with disabilities.

All updates are a result of a public review process that included hearings and feedback from community members like you (see more information about this process here: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/SaferSchools>). Changes include:

- Focusing on keeping students in their classroom and minimizing the interruption of instruction due to suspensions
- Providing more options for supports, interventions, and disciplinary responses
- Adding prevention and intervention strategies when there are concerns or reports about bullying behavior
- Including additional guidance when determining a disciplinary response, helping to factor considerations outside of the student's control and to best respond to the student's needs
- Enhancing information about how you and your child can report bullying behavior—and how you can look up the contact information of your school and district staff to discuss supports and interventions

I encourage you to review the Discipline Code at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/DCode> and become familiar with the standards of behavior. Please discuss these standards with your child. The full Discipline Code will be available in 10 languages on the same web page this month and can be provided in hard copy at school, upon request.

We value your partnership in maintaining safe and inclusive learning environments for all. Thank you for helping to make our school community better, stronger, and safer for our children. If you have any questions, please call your school administrator.

Best wishes for a wonderful school year!

Warm regards,



LaShawn Robinson  
Deputy Chancellor  
Division of School Climate and Wellness