

POCANTICO HILLS SCHOOL

PLAIN LANGUAGE CODE OF CONDUCT



LEARNING • ACHIEVEMENT • GROWTH • DIRECTION



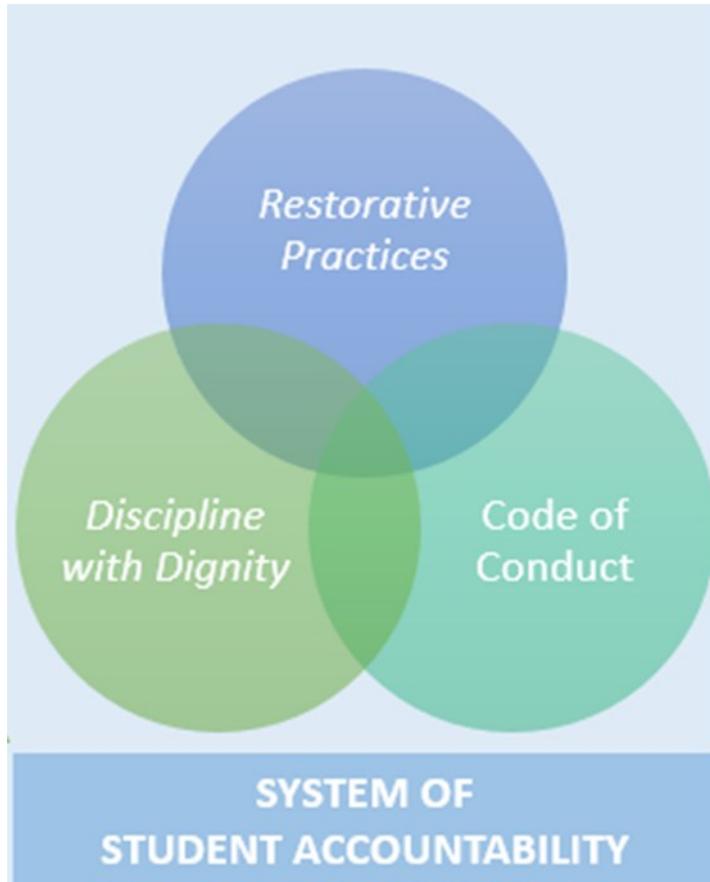
The Pocantico Hills School Plain Language Code of Conduct is designed to distill the larger Code of Conduct into a manageable framework of behavioral expectations and accountability that is easily referenced and understood by students, staff and families. Pocantico believes in a balanced approach to behavioral supports that utilizes three intersecting systems of student accountability. The **Code of Conduct** respects that negative behaviors have consequences while **restorative practices** strengthen social relationships and connections for students. **Discipline with Dignity** supports staff's capacity to manage classrooms with positive disciplinary interventions, recognizing the difference between behavioral interruptions and more elevated violations of the Code of Conduct. This framework is responsive to the U.S. Department of Education's **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** signed into law in 2015 establishing a commitment to equal opportunity for all students.

System of Accountability:

Code of Conduct: Recognizes that negative behaviors have consequences.

Restorative Practices: Recognizes the need for mediation and explicit teaching of core values while repairing and strengthening social relationships between students.

Discipline with Dignity: Recognizes that classroom and building behavioral norms are consistent with established expectations that build capacity to manage behavior through positive disciplinary practices.



I acknowledge that I have read and reviewed the 2018-2019 Plain Language Code of Conduct with my child(ren).

Child's Name (please print): _____

Grade: _____ Teacher Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Child Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please complete this page and return to your child's teacher by Friday, September 7 2018.

Policies and Procedures

Behavioral interruptions are defined as classroom level infractions of rules that largely require interventions and communication by the classroom teacher. Such infractions may be documented by the classroom teacher in the student information system for the purposes of documenting behaviors but are addressed through a less formal system of consequences. Communication between teacher and parent/guardian is an expectation. If a pattern of behavior becomes elevated in nature, then the principal may be notified directly through an email or direct conversation.

Such examples include:

- Talking when someone else is talking
- Not sitting when asked
- Slamming a door
- Using an unauthorized electronic device
- Disrupting the lesson by humming, tapping, and so on
- Not doing homework or in-class assignments
- Engaging in horseplay
- Throwing harmless objects

Elevated behaviors are those that have a larger impact on the safety and/or learning environment of students. These behaviors require the intervention of the school principal and may require a more significant level of accountability, including the temporary or short-term removal from class, transportation, area of the building or school building in general. Decisions regarding accountability are generally progressive in nature and are communicated directly to the child and his/her parent/guardian. Such records of elevated disciplinary decisions are recorded in the student information system and maintained in the principal's student files. Additionally, school suspensions are reported annually to the state.

Examples of *elevated behaviors* include:

- Physical altercation
- Use or possession of illicit substances including alcohol or drugs
- Possession or dissemination of obscene materials
- Theft, destruction or vandalism of personal or school property
- Activation of a false alarm, bomb threat or other disaster alarm
- Ongoing behavioral interruptions

Finally, a long-term suspension of more than five days requires a Superintendent's hearing and subsequent decision. Permanent suspensions/expulsions are an extreme penalty that, according to the commission on education, are generally unsound. **Education Law 52:53**

A complete version of the District Code of Conduct (Board Policy 5300) is available on the school's website.

Definitions:

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT: SUPPORTING ALL STUDENTS

The Big Picture

New York State believes that the highest levels of learning can occur when students and educators learn and teach in environments that are safe, culturally and linguistically responsive, supportive, and welcoming to all.

To Ensure Learning for All, New York State will:

Support districts and schools in creating conditions that maximize all student learning, especially for youth of color, LGBTQ youth and youth with disabilities, through activities, policies, and strategies that reduce bullying, harassment, and the overuse of punitive and exclusionary responses to student misbehavior while promoting and understanding diverse cultural characteristics, positive disciplinary practices, improving school climate, and providing students with social-emotional support.

Dignity for All Students Act: An allegation of a targeted attack, verbal or physical, that falls within the definition of harassment but is specific to a student's identity, most often associated with race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or nationality.

Harassment: The creation of an unpleasant or hostile situation through uninvited or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance.

Bullying: The ongoing targeted victimization of a student whose actions reflect a clear imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. Harassment falls in the same category as bullying.

The Plain Language Code of Conduct is intended to communicate consistent expectations that are universally understood and reinforced with fidelity and flexibility. The core values of kindness, respect and perseverance provide students with a common language of accountability for meeting standards of behavior. Expectations of what these values look like and mean are defined in the Plain Language Code of Conduct.

Core Values

KINDNESS

Your actions reflect generosity, consideration and friendliness towards others.

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”
—Aesop

This looks like:

- Smile and say hello when greeting others.
- Show patience and use thoughtful words.
- Show care and concern for others, particularly those in need of support and help.

PERSEVERANCE

Your willingness to show sustained effort to do or achieve something despite short-term difficulties, failure or opposition. Grit and growth mindset are often used to describe perseverance.

“Great works are performed not by strength but by perseverance.”
—Samuel Johnson

This looks like:

- Show care, planning, and follow through on your school commitments.
- Be on time for class.
- Come to school every day on time, prepared, and ready to learn.
- Concentrate on the work you are doing.
- Ask for help if you are stuck.
- Ask yourself if you are doing your best.

RESPECT

You care enough to think about others’ feelings before you act.

“Respect for ourselves guides our morals, respect for others guides our manners.”

—Laurence Sterne

This looks like:

- Be responsive to adults’ directions and questions, following instructions and maintaining an appropriate tone of voice and healthy body language.
- Look for positive and peaceful ways to solve conflict that may arise.
- Treat the property of Pocantico Hills and the personal belongings of others with care and consideration.
- Follow the *Responsible Use of Technology Policy* and use the school computers and devices in an appropriate and educational way.
- Use appropriate language and a respectful tone of voice with classmates.
- Listen to whoever is speaking and make eye contact when talking to others.
- Keep Pocantico clean, including taking care of personal and school belongings, keeping them in locker or cubby.
- Walk in the hallways.
- Keep your hands to yourself.

Staff Resources for Students

The classroom teacher or staff member directly responsible for the student at any given time is the most immediate resource to redirect and support students’ behavior. Additionally, guidance counselors, Mrs. Sara Sonne and Mr. James McVeigh, work directly with our students in different circumstances to provide support and redirection. Our Therapeutic Support Team may be utilized as resource depending on the context of a child’s needs. An assigned Teaching Assistant, Mr. Brian Tompkins, with a background in behavior management may be called to work directly with a child or support the process of accountability depending on the context and frequency of a behavior. Finally, the building principal plays a crucial role in addressing elevated behaviors as outlined and defined below in our policies and procedures.