



**BRIDGEWATER VILLAGE SCHOOL**  
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**CODE F1**

## **STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

### **Policy**

It is the policy of the Bridgewater School District to maintain a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment. In order to ensure that the school is free from hazing, harassment, bullying and other disruptive misconduct, a system of classroom and school management practices, supported by consistent, clear and fair disciplinary procedures, will be utilized. The goal of this policy is to create an environment where the rules for student behavior are clearly stated, are understood and accepted by students and staff, and are applied in compliance with due process requirements. This policy is to be applied in conjunction with the school's overall discipline plan developed pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1161a.

### **Student Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of each student to contribute to a safe and productive learning environment in the school by demonstrating respect and consideration for fellow students and adults. This includes complying with all policies and rules of conduct of the School District and individual classrooms.

### **Administrative Responsibilities**

The Principal, in consultation with the educational staff will develop an overall discipline plan pursuant to 16 V.S.A. §1161a. The plan will include clear guidelines for student behavior. Students and parents/guardians will be notified of behavioral expectations, and the consequences of misconduct.

The rules of conduct will be distributed to, and discussed with, all students at the beginning of each school year in accord with procedures stated in the school discipline plan. Copies of this policy will be provided to parents or guardians in a manner determined by the Principal. The Principal may ask that parents sign a form indicating that they have reviewed the rules of conduct with their children. When new students enroll during the school year, they and their parents will be given copies of the rules of conduct as part of the pre-enrollment process.

The Principal or his or her designee shall be responsible for carrying out discipline procedures conforming with the following guidelines.

1. A student may request a meeting with the Principal or his or her designee to review any disciplinary action, other than a suspension or expulsion, affecting the student. If requested, the Principal or designee shall hold an informal meeting to review the incident and to hear the views of the student and any other persons who may have information that the Principal or designee believes to be relevant in the circumstances. The Principal or

designee shall issue a prompt decision to the student, which may be oral or written. Except as otherwise provided in this policy, the decision of the Principal will be final.

2. Suspension or expulsion of students shall be imposed in accordance with state and federal law and regulations, due process requirements, and the following rules and procedures:
  - The Principal or his or her designee may assign a student to in-school detention for up to 10 consecutive school days for any infraction of school rules. As provided in the school's overall discipline plan, students assigned to in-school detention will be provided with reasonable opportunities to complete academic assignments and to benefit from counseling or other activities designed to bring about improvements in their behavior.
  - A student who poses an immediate danger to persons or property or a significant threat of disrupting the academic process of the school shall be removed from the school or to a place within the school determined by the Principal, Superintendent or their designee to be sufficiently secure to ensure the safety of students and school personnel and the continuation of the academic process. The Superintendent or Principal or their designee shall notify a parent or guardian of a student who is removed from school without undue delay. If the parent, guardian or other responsible person designated as an emergency contact by the parent or guardian cannot be notified, the student will be detained at school or at another safe and secure setting for the remainder of the school day.
  - No student will be removed from school for more than the remainder of a school day unless the student and his or her parents are given an opportunity for an informal hearing. When immediate removal of a student is necessary prior to a hearing, the hearing shall be held as soon as possible following the removal.
  - The Superintendent or Principal may suspend a student from school for a period of 10 days or less for misconduct occurring on or off school grounds. Prior to such a suspension, the student and his or her parent or guardian shall be given an opportunity for an informal hearing with the Principal or his or her designee. The student and his or her parent or guardian must be given notice of the charges, an explanation of the evidence against the student, an opportunity for the student to tell his or her side of the story, and a decision in writing to the parent or guardian.
  - The Superintendent or Principal may, with the approval of the Board and in accordance with 16 V.S.A. §1162(a), impose a long-term suspension or expulsion of a student (for longer than ten days and up to 90 school days or the remainder of the school year, whichever is longer) for misconduct on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity when the misconduct makes the continued presence of the student harmful to the welfare of the school.
  - In accord with the overall discipline plan developed under 16 V.S.A. § 1161a, short-term (ten days or less) or long-term suspension or expulsion may be imposed for misconduct not on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated.
  - Long-term suspension or expulsion must be preceded by notice and formal due process procedures, including the opportunity for a hearing before the School Board. The Superintendent shall notify the student and his or her parents in

writing of the nature of the charges, the date, time and place of the hearing, the right to legal representation, and the disciplinary action to be recommended to the board. This notice shall be provided in sufficient time to allow the student and his or her parents to prepare for the hearing. At the hearing, the student and parent/guardian shall be given an opportunity to present evidence and to cross-examine witnesses. The Board shall issue a written decision within 30 days of the conclusion of the hearing.

3. Notwithstanding the above provisions, a legal pupil who has a disability or is suspected of having a disability, and is eligible for special education services or Section 504 services may be removed from his or her current educational placement for disciplinary reasons for more than 10 consecutive days, or for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year only in accordance with Vermont State Board of Education Rules 4313 or 4312. The school Principal, with the agreement of a special education administrator, may impose short-term disciplinary sanctions on special education students as provided in Vermont State Board of Education Rule 4313. The Superintendent and coordinator of special education will develop additional procedures as needed to govern the discipline of students with disabilities.
4. In the event a student brings a weapon to school, the procedures set forth in the District's Weapons policy (F21) shall apply.

*Date Warned:* 06/18/07

*Date Adopted:* 08/20/07

*Legal Reference(s):* 16 V.S.A. §1161a (discipline)

16 V.S.A. §1162 (suspension and expulsion)

20 U.S.C. §§1400 et seq. (IDEA)

29 U.S.C. §794 (Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973)

VT State Board of Education Manual of Rules & Practices §4311, 4312, 4313

*Cross Reference:* Board Commitment to Non-Discrimination (C6)

Public Complaints About Personnel (D10)

Interrogations or Searches of Students by Law Enforcement)

Officers or Other Non-School Personnel (F4)

Search and Seizure (F3)

Alcohol and Drug Abuse (F7)

Weapons (F21)