

Township of Union Public Schools

Code of Conduct and Core Values



2022-2023

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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 positive, proactive philosophy. An effective academic and behavioral program 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 needing additional guidance. Finally, it is a program that assigns appropriate consequences for students who knowingly make choices that are not aligned with 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, and strong family and community partnerships. We promote a supportive learning environment where every student is challenged, inspired, empowered, and respected as diverse learners. Through cultivating 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, collaborating, and being patient.
- **Empowerment** – School Community Members take the 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 students, staff, administrators, and community leadership.
- **Accountability** – School community members take ownership of actions that impact peers and community members.
- **Achievement** – School Community Members demonstrate determination in reaching personal and societal goals and recognize the efforts of those making an impact.
- **Leadership** – School Community Members lead by embodying the district's core values 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 appropriately and effectively.
- Individuals utilize effective problem-solving and conflict-resolution strategies.
- The dignity of every individual is protected and maintained.

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 implementing the Student Code of Conduct. This will be disseminated annually through the district website to staff, parents, and teachers to address the changing needs of the school community. Its effectiveness rests on the community's awareness, understanding, and 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. The school administrator ensures that the entire school environment is conducive to learning. The school administrator must also ensure that all students, staff, and parents are fully aware of school rules, 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 the instruction and safety of staff and students.
- Regularly monitor instruction during any remote, virtual, and/or hybrid learning.
- Respond to all severe 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 due process rights before suspensions or expulsions.
- 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., violating the Code, school rules, or statutes, or ordinances. The school administrator may authorize the search of school property temporarily assigned to students. Before a search of said property, the student(s) involved shall be notified and allowed to be present. However, where school authorities reasonably suspect that the property contains materials threatening the health, welfare, or safety of students and staff, it may be searched without prior warning.

All visitors must register in the school's main office and state the visit's purpose, providing photo identification before being admitted. School administrators reserve the right to visitors during any pandemic or emergency situation 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 correctly

identify himself or herself or his or her purpose, the person is considered trespassing, and 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 providing support, 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 students to attain their full potential and contribute positively to the school and community in support of our core ethical values (REAAL).
- 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, is the foundation for the home-school partnership.
- Work in collaboration to provide each student with an exceptional educational program.

Student Conduct and Responsibilities

An essential component of the Township of Union Public Schools' Mission is to have students embody ethical, compassionate, and responsible characteristics. Students will be recognized for modeling 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. Students absent from school cannot participate in after-school activities or attend evening performances/events without school administrator approval for extenuating circumstances. Regular attendance shall be during all the days and hours 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. Late students must report to the school office for a late pass;
- be appropriately prepared for school and classes.
- Complete all academic work as assigned and actively engage in their own learning. In the case of an absence, students are responsible for contacting the teacher(s) for all missed assignments.
- Refrain from gum chewing on school grounds and 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](#), [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](#).
- 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 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 authority to reinstate.
- Protections concerning the maintenance and security of student records according to [Policy 5610](#).

Student Privileges

Students must understand that 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.
- Participation in the promotion and/or graduation exercises.
-

Student Support Programs

- There are several 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. They aim to educate, build a strong character for all students, and provide quality school counseling programs to meet the child’s specific developmental needs.

Student Dress (See Policy 5511 Dress and Grooming)

Parents/guardians and school staff are expected to cooperate regarding student dress. The school administration reserves the right to choose an appropriate dress at school-sponsored events.

The purpose of the school dress code is to establish standards for 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 dress and grooming 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 prohibited.
- 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 except for 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 appropriately 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, obscene, or offensive writing, pictures, or slogans.
- Gloves may not be worn.
- Blouses and dresses with plunging necklines or underwear may not be worn.
- Trousers, slacks, shorts, jeans, or other bottoms must be worn at the waist.
- Appropriate footwear is required. Slippers, Heely sneakers, or shoes that create a safety hazard shall not be worn.
- Special announcements will be made concerning “new styles” and/or situations not covered above.
- Special trips: Teachers chaperoning field trips will advise their group on 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 During 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 not part of the performance must remain seated with an adult.
- Treat the performer(s) respectfully 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 must follow their teachers' directions in using 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 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 the school facilities or school day. It may not be used to harass, intimidate or bully anyone. Any violation of law through 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 participate in person or virtually.

Fire Drill Regulations and Other Safety Drill Procedures (See [policy 8420](#) Emergency and Crisis Situations)

- At the sound of the alarm, all students are to exit the building according to the directions posted in each room and 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 a recall signal is given.
- Talking during a fire drill or building evacuation is not permitted.

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

There are varying situations that may justify the 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. The reason for such release can be shown to have a positive benefit for the student and are at the school administrator's discretion 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 assigned to a bus.
- Bus passes are checked. Students without passes may not be permitted to ride the bus and must 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 from windows.
- Students are not allowed to throw items on or off the bus.
- The opening of emergency exits is forbidden unless performing an evacuation or other emergency act.
- Bus students involved in an after-school activity or detention can 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 Comments	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: 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).

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 suspended from school and parents 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 classroom setting with supervision.

Saturday detention for Middle and High school students will follow the individual schools' Student Handbook.

Please refer to the Student Handbook.

[Battle Hill Elementary School Handbook](#)

[Burnet Middle School](#)

[Connecticut Farms Elementary School](#)

[Franklin Elementary School](#)

Hannah Caldwell Elementary School

[Jefferson Elementary School](#)

[Kawameeh Middle School](#)

[Livingston Elementary School](#)

[Union High School](#)

[Washington Elementary School](#)

Morning or Afterschool Detention

Morning or Afterschool detention district-wide will follow individual schools' Student Handbook. Please refer to the Student Handbook.

NOTE: The administration has the right to use sound judgment 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 to 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

Dr. Scott Taylor, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Gerry Benaquista, Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Gretel Pérez, Assistant Superintendent
District Principals
BOE Education Committee

Glossary

Core Ethical Values – A value is a belief about what is good that transcends a specific situation and guides judgment and decision-making. 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 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 comprises professionals, including a school social worker, school psychologist, learning disability teacher consultant, and speech and language pathologist. The Child Study Team also provides support services to district students as needed (for example, they provide resources, and can be part of the I&RS, determine the need for mental health assessments, etc.

List of District Policies

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Title</u>
2361	Acceptable Use of Computer Networks/Computers and Resources
5200	Attendance
5230	Late Arrival/Early Dismissals

<u>5500</u>	Expectation for Student Conduct
<u>5512</u>	Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying
<u>5530</u>	Substance Abuse
<u>5533</u>	Student Smoking
<u>5550</u>	Disaffected Students
<u>5560</u>	Disruptive Students
<u>5600</u>	Student Discipline/Code of Conduct
<u>5610</u>	Suspension
<u>5611</u>	Removal of Students for Firearms Offenses
<u>5612</u>	Assaults on District Board of Education Members or Employees
<u>5620</u>	Expulsion
<u>5751</u>	Sexual Harassment