

Discipline

Behavior

eStem schools hold high expectations for student performance and behavior. Students are expected to show respect for fellow students, staff members, volunteers and members of the community with whom they have contact during the school day and at school events. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own behavior and for working towards their academic goals. **Repeated violations of our policies, procedures, & expectations could result in removal from school. All rules will be strictly enforced.**

Bullying

eStem Public Charter School District strives to provide a positive learning environment, free of bullying and harassment, for all of its students.

eStem utilizes the BRIM anti-bullying app as a reporting resource for students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders to anonymously report incidents of bullying. Each school's website includes a red, highly visible BRIM button on the front page, and anyone may submit a report by clicking on the button and answering questions about the incident.

Bullying is defined as "the intentional harassment, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, defamation, or threat or incitement of violence by a student against any other student or public school employee,

- by written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that may address an attribute of the other student, public school employee, or person with whom the other student or public school employee is associated; and causes or creates actual or reasonably foreseeable
 - a. physical harm to a public school employee or student or to their property,
 - b. substantial interference with a student's education or with a public school employee's role in education;
 - c. a hostile educational environment for one or more students or public school employees due to the severity, persistence, or pervasiveness of the act, or;
 - d. substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment.
- In other words, bullying is when someone repeatedly and systematically on purpose says or does mean or hurtful things to another person who has a hard time defending themselves.

Cyberbullying is defined as bullying in the form of an electronic act. An electronic act includes written communication or images transmitted by using an electronic device such as a telephone, tablet, or computer.

Cyberbullying is prohibited even if the incident did not originate on school property or with school communication systems/tools. eStem Public Charter Schools prohibit bullying, meaning that it is not allowed in the following areas:

- in school,
- on school equipment or property,
- in school vehicles, at school bus stops,
- at school sponsored activities, or at school sanctioned events,
- or by an electronic act that results in the substantial disruption of the educational environment; does not matter whether the electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment

If a staff member of the school has witnessed or has reliable information regarding an act of bullying as defined by the outlined definition of bullying, the staff is required to report the incident via BRIM or notify the Administration. Once the incident is reported, the director, assistant directors, deans, and/or counselors will be alerted.

When an incident of bullying is reported to the school either through BRIM or by notifying an Administrator, the school will follow the school's bullying investigative process which includes the following steps:

- An administrator will be assigned to investigate the report of bullying and will begin an investigation no later than 24 hours after a report is received. Parents of the students involved will be communicated to within this same timeframe, regarding the alleged incident of bullying.
- The investigation shall be completed no later than 5 school days following the date of the initial report. The parents of the students involved will receive communication regarding the completion of the investigation and what follow up steps will be taken.
- Once an investigation is complete, the administrator assigned to the case will finish the report, including the findings from the investigation as well as any disciplinary action that was handed out. The report will also include any additional follow up actions that will be completed for the individual(s) involved.

Students found to be in violation of the bullying policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. The consequence for a student engaging in an act or bullying will vary depending on the age and grade of the student.

- In addition to any disciplinary actions that may be handed out, the school will take appropriate steps to remedy the effects of bullying that may have been incurred from those students and/or public school employees that were involved in the incident(s).

The student or staff member that files the complaint of bullying will not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form.

Discipline

The Director has discretion to move past any steps and administer consequences that may jump categories or steps in our process based on the nature of the action.

Our K-6 discipline process includes a system in which we listen and conference with students regarding their behaviors. When the behaviors continue, we then proceed with appropriate consequences. Our goal is to provide more feedback to parents, allow students to learn from their mistakes, and provide a chance to correct behaviors before more serious consequences are assigned. The steps below will be followed in classrooms kindergarten through sixth grade.

Tier 1: Redirection/Classroom Managed

This is a chance to simply acknowledge the behavior and give the student an opportunity to change the undesired behavior. Students may receive verbal or non-verbal cues from the teacher to encourage them to change their behavior. The student will have an opportunity to then change the said behavior to ensure positive learning experiences continue to happen. During this step, the conversation may also be paired with a logical consequence for the student.

Examples of Tier 1 behaviors include but are not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sleeping in class• Failure to return homework• Disruption of classroom instruction• Arguing• Mild horseplay• Teasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instigating others• Obscene gestures• Random profanity• Fighting words• Name calling• Insubordination
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The teacher will follow a sequence of classroom interventions and consequences in order to allow the student to self-correct the behavior. These interventions may include but are not limited to:

- Verbal warning
- Dojo points taken
- Time out (In class, with Buddy Teacher, or Behavior Interventionist) or loss of privilege and student conference (loss of recess or physical activity cannot be used as a form of punishment)
- Contact parent/parent conference
- Morning or lunch detention
- Behavior document (after the 3rd document for the same behavior student receives referral to the Dean of Students)

Tier 2: Dean Managed

Students will automatically receive a referral to their Dean of Students for Tier 2 Behaviors which include but are not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inappropriate or offensive language about race, culture, sexual orientation, or intelligence ● Defacement of school property or the property of others ● Truancy or leaving class and/or campus without permission ● Pulling alarms ● Malicious pranks ● Possession of tobacco products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical violence; threats of intimidation; spitting, biting, using profanity or slander toward a staff member or peer ● Fighting ● Plagiarism or cheating ● Inappropriate use of technology ● Repeated violations of cell phone or other electronic devices during school hours ● Repeated Tier 1 offense ● Documented reports of bullying
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These offenses will be handled with the following consequences:

- Conference with Dean of Students and parent contact/possible send home
- Assignment to morning or lunch detention or Saturday school
- Parent/Guardian conference with Behavior Intervention Specialist, Dean of Students, and Assistant Director of School Culture
- Referral to School Counselor and/or Behavioral Health Services
- Develop Behavior Intervention Plan with Discipline Team and Parent/Guardian

Tier 3: eCARE Team

Students will automatically receive a disciplinary referral to the eCARE Team. Parents are not required to attend but must be notified/invited. The following offenses will constitute this type of referral: student assault or battery; theft/theft by receiving; indecent exposure; sexual misconduct; sexual harassment; vandalism; tampering with any safety device on school property; use or distribution of drugs, including alcohol; disorderly conduct that interferes with the function of the classroom, school operations, school activities or programs; harassing communications through email, phone, voice, social media, etc.; physical assault on staff; verbal abuse of staff; possession of firearm or weapon; terroristic threatening; repeated violations of Tier 2 offenses:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeated violations of Tier 2 offenses• Student assault or battery• Theft/theft by receiving• Indecent exposure• Sexual misconduct• Sexual harassment• Harassing communications through email, phone, voice, social media, etc• Possession of firearm or weapon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vandalism; tampering with any safety device on school property• Use or distribution of drugs, including alcohol• Disorderly conduct that interferes with the function of the classroom, school operations, school activities or programs• Physical assault on staff• Verbal abuse of staff• Terroristic threatening
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The following disciplinary actions for Tier 3 behaviors are included below:

- Mandatory eCARE Team meeting, Behavior Plan, or Special Education plan review
- In School Suspension
- Out of School Suspension
- Asynchronous Learning
- Expulsion

Overall, our goal in discipline is to help our students develop successful skills in managing their behavior. Just as we strive to create and support students' individual academic needs, we will also meet their individual behavior needs as well. All disciplinary actions for students are left up to the discretion of the Director.

Due Process Procedures

Due process for students will include, at a minimum, the following steps: 1) notice of charge; 2) opportunity for denial; 3) evidence against him/her (if denies); 4) opportunity to tell his/her side; 5) decision, timely notice, and an opportunity for a fair hearing. The degree of due process required is directly proportional to the degree of loss to the student. Any penalty that effectively denies a student's education will require the greatest degree of due process.

Expulsion

eStem Public Charter Schools may expel a student for a period longer than ten (10) school days for violation of the District's written discipline policies. The Chief Executive Officer may make a recommendation of expulsion to eStem Board of Directors for student conduct deemed to be of such gravity that suspension would be inappropriate, or where the student's continued attendance at school would disrupt the orderly learning environment or would pose an unreasonable danger to the welfare of other students or staff.

The Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee shall give written notice to the parents or legal guardians (mailed to the address reflected on the District's records) that he/she will recommend to the eStem Board of Directors that the student be expelled for the specified length of time and state the reasons for the recommendation to expel. The notice shall give the date, hour, and place where the eStem Board of Directors will consider and dispose of the recommendation.

The hearing shall be conducted not later than ten (10) school days following the date of the notice, except that representatives of eStem Public Charter Schools and the student may agree in writing to a date not conforming to this limitation.

The Board President of eStem or other designated Board member shall preside at the hearing. The student may choose to be represented by legal counsel. The hearing shall be conducted in open session of the eStem Board of Directors unless the parent, or student if age 18 or older, requests that the hearing be conducted in executive session. Any action taken by the eStem Board of Directors shall be in open session.

During the hearing, the Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee will present evidence, including the calling of witnesses, which gave rise to the recommendation of expulsion. The student, or his/her representative, may then present evidence including statements from persons with personal knowledge of the events or circumstances relevant to the charges against the student. Formal cross-examination will not be

permitted. However, any member of the eStem Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer, or designee, the student, or his/her representative may question anyone making a statement and/or the student. The presiding officer shall decide questions concerning the appropriateness or relevance of any questions asked during the hearing.

The Chief Executive Officer shall recommend the expulsion of any student for a period of not less than one (1) year for possession of any firearm or other weapon prohibited on school campus by law. The Chief Executive Officer shall, however, have the discretion to modify the expulsion recommendation for a student on a case-by-case basis. Parents or legal guardians of a student enrolling from another school after the expiration of an expulsion period for a weapons policy violation shall be given a copy of the current laws regarding the possibility of parental responsibility for allowing a child to possess a weapon on school property. The parents or legal guardians shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understand said laws prior to the student being enrolled in school.

The Chief Executive Officer and the eStem Board of Directors shall complete the expulsion process of any student that was initiated because the student possessed a firearm or other prohibited weapon on school property regardless of the enrollment status of the student.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-18-507

Gangs & Gang Activity

eStem is committed to ensuring a safe school environment conducive to promoting a learning environment where students and staff can excel. An orderly environment cannot exist where unlawful acts occur which cause fear, intimidation or physical harm to students or school staff. Gangs and their activities create such an atmosphere and shall not be allowed on school grounds or at school functions.

The following actions are prohibited on school property or at school functions:

- Wearing or possessing any clothing, bandanas, jewelry, symbol or other sign associated with membership in or representative of any gang;
- Engaging in any verbal or nonverbal act such as throwing signs, gestures, or handshakes representative of membership in any gang;
- Recruiting, soliciting, or encouraging any person through duress or intimidation to become or remain a member of any gang;
- Extort payment from any individual in return for protection from harm from any gang;
- Gang graffiti

- Social media posts depicting students displaying gang related posturing or affiliated clothing on eStem property or wearing eStem attire.

Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Students arrested for gang related activities occurring away from school grounds shall be subject to the same disciplinary actions as if they had occurred on school grounds.

Harassment

Harassment is any form of uninvited and unwanted physical, verbal or written behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, or demeaning environment for education. The eStem Public Charter Schools will not tolerate this type of behavior.

Harassment - Sexual

eStem recognizes that harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of law, school district policy and common courtesy. eStem is committed to providing a learning environment free from sexual harassment and will not tolerate such conduct on the part of employees, students, non-employees, vendors, board members or any others having business or contact with eStem students. Sexual harassment when perpetrated on any student by an employee or student will be treated as sexual harassment under this policy.

Sexual harassment of students consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests or demands for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of a student's academic status or advancement;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for academic decisions affecting the student(s); or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment.

Forms of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal harassment, including derogatory comments, jokes, requests, or other sexually oriented language;
- Uninvited letters, telephone calls, electronic communications or materials of a sexual nature;

- Physical harassment, including unnecessary or offensive touching, repeatedly brushing against another person's body, or impeding or blocking movement;
- Visual harassment, including offensive posters, cards, cartoons, graffiti, drawings, or gestures; and
- Attempted or actual rape or sexual assault.

Harassment - Verbal

Verbal harassment includes threats, gestures, or verbal attacks on persons, including attacks directed at one's racial, ethnic, or religious background, sexual preference, physical or mental disability, appearance, as well as any form of obscene language, swearing, slander, name-calling, or slur. eStem is a place where everyone must be comfortable and treated with due respect. Verbal harassment when perpetrated on any student by an employee or student will be treated as verbal harassment under this policy.

Harassment – Response

The eStem Public Charter Schools are committed to the equitable and swift resolution of harassment issues. Any student experiencing harassment should follow these measures:

1. Make a Brim report
2. Notify a teacher. The Director of Schools will ensure that the student discipline policy is used for handling the case.

Verbal Abuse of Staff

State law specifically prohibits insults or verbal abuse directed to a school employee in the course of his or her duties. Those who violate this policy will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law and may be banned from campus and all school related events.

Medical Information/Student Support Services

Counseling Services

The eStem schools employ full-time counselors who work closely with students. Students removed from class for behavioral issues, returning from suspensions, or who have been referred by the school administration may meet with the counselor on an informal basis. In addition, students may be referred by the school administration to the counselor for more regular one-on-one or group counseling.