

# Policy JK

## Board of Education Las Cruces Public Schools

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**Related Entries:** JK-R, JI, JI-RA, JICF, JICF-RA, JICH, JICH-RA, JICK, JICK-RA, JIH, JIH-RA, JKA, JKA- RA, JKC, KLG

**Responsible Office:** Division of Equity Innovation and Social Justice

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY**

#### **I. PURPOSE**

- A. To provide a philosophy of discipline that will guide staff and students in promoting good behavior in an environment that is conducive to effective and efficient learning
- B. To promote a disciplined environment that is safe and holds mutual respect as an expectation.
- C. To provide notice to students and parents of how student conduct prohibited by the Board of Education is regulated and enforced. To clearly communicate to students, staff, and parents/guardians the prohibition of corporal punishment.

#### **II. ISSUE**

The Board of Education believes that learning is a continuous, evolutionary process. The Board also believes that while learning is not confined to a school building. It is nonetheless the primary function of the school. Like all social institutions, the school must evolve a certain set of rules and regulations to govern its participants and to facilitate the performance of its primary function. These rules should reflect a balance between the responsibilities and rights of the individual and the responsibilities and rights of the group. They must also reflect the need to promote good behavior in an environment that is conducive to effective and efficient learning and the need for mutual respect and cooperation among all segments of the school community. Schools should be communities in which positive behavior is expected and modeled within an environment of mutual respect and dignity.

#### **III. POSITION**

- A. Philosophy
  - 1. In a system the size of Las Cruces Public Schools, absolutely consistent application of a discipline policy, if valued as the overriding consideration and taken to the extreme, would require the listing of every possible infraction with a specific, mandated disciplinary action in response to each. At the other extreme, recognition of both the diversity of community settings within the district and the individuality of each disciplinary

situation would suggest that each school should establish its own disciplinary standards and apply them only as appropriate to each student's situation. The Board finds the need to balance these two opposing considerations and, therefore, elects to follow a middle-ground policy.

2. Certain major infractions are recognized as requiring consistent district-wide actions from and direction for all schools. For these infractions, a specified range of responses must be utilized by all school personnel, with the severity and/or frequency of the infraction determining where in the range the penalty should lie. At the same time, for disciplinary infractions not established with mandated disciplinary actions, development of appropriate standards and responses will remain an individual school responsibility subject to review by the superintendent and/or their designee. Input from students, parents/guardians, and school personnel will permit these disciplinary actions to be tailored to the needs and desires of each school community within the district. The Board seeks in this way to provide consistent responses to the more severe infractions without prejudging every disciplinary situation and without depriving individual school administrators of the opportunity for flexible and creative responses to the vast majority of cases.
3. The Board believes that discipline is learned and, therefore, can and should be taught in the home, school, and community. The child also learns through experience and imitation of those around them. Discipline is a developmental process. As the child matures, they should be given increased responsibility in keeping with their developmental level and social maturity and every opportunity to practice self-discipline in order to positively reinforce responsible action. Classroom models should put children's needs at the center of decisions about classroom management and problem-solving. Children should be helped to understand the consequences of violence and learn various methods of addressing conflict. Our schools should be environments where conflict that may occur can be used as an opportunity to teach and learn. The ultimate goal should be the internalization of discipline so that little external enforcement is required. The Board believes that this philosophy will foster the development of positive, self-disciplined, self-reliant individuals capable of behaving appropriately as the situation demands.
4. While causes are not always evident, misbehavior may be related to economic, social, physical, psychological or emotional factors. It is important for staff to consider that misbehavior could be a symptom. Effective discipline depends on the cause of the behavior. Staff members are encouraged to involve the family to seek solutions. The family and community also must take responsibility to provide guidance, support, and structure to meet student needs. In some instances, changing the environment will be the most appropriate response; in other situations, the

student and his behavior must be dealt with directly.

5. The district approach to student success reflects the Board of Education's desire to work with students and school communities to understand and address root causes of behavior, resolve conflicts, repair harm done, restore relationships and successfully sustain and reintegrate students into the school community. It is the responsibility of school and district staff to foster an equitable and equal learning environment that builds trust and fosters physical, psychological, and social/emotional safety.

**B. Student Behavior**

1. Prohibited student conduct that disrupts class work, involves disorder, or invades the rights of others will not be tolerated and may be cause for suspension or other disciplinary action.
2. The administration of disciplinary action will focus both on consequences and on changing or managing inappropriate behavior. To that end, all available resources should be utilized, including preventive and responsive interventions to support students' needs. These interventions should include interdisciplinary – psychological, curricular, behavioral – services which should take place within classrooms, schools, and alternative settings. Exclusion from the classroom should be the disciplinary action of last resort. Fair, firm, and consistent application of disciplinary action is expected, and students should be made aware of the consequences of misbehavior. It is equally important that there be careful evaluation of the individual situation so that the school's response to the student is appropriate.
3. No employee of the district shall cause corporal punishment to be inflicted upon a student to reform unacceptable conduct or as a penalty for unacceptable conduct.
4. LCPS shall not allow for the imposition of discipline, discrimination or disparate treatment against a student based on the student's race, religion or culture or because of the student's use of hairstyles or cultural or religious headdresses. Racialized aggression, defined as any aggressive act that can be characterized, categorized or that appears as such to be racial in nature, is prohibited.

**C. School Climate**

School organizational and operational structures are an important focus for change of a student's individual behavior. The superintendent will work with district departments and building administrators to implement a comprehensive

plan for safety and security that will ensure a learning and working environment that protects the rights, health, and welfare of students and staff.

#### **IV. DESIRED OUTCOMES**

- A. Students will understand their responsibilities and rights.
- B. Schools will be safe and orderly environments where students are engaged in learning.
- C. Students will exercise self-discipline, self management, and demonstrate appropriate behavior in order to become productive citizens.
- D. Parents/guardians and students will be well informed about school discipline policies and will be encouraged to participate in efforts to ensure that schools are safe and orderly.

#### **V. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES**

- A. Through the process prescribed in Policy BG (Policy Adoption, Revision and Review), parents, school personnel and students shall be given an opportunity to be involved in the development of these policies through notice of three public readings in an open Board meeting with opportunity for public comment during the formulation of these policies. Prior to the third reading and final adoption or revision, the administration shall hold a public hearing in each of the four high school attendance areas to promote greater involvement and feedback by parents, school personnel and students, for consideration by the Board.
- B. The superintendent and/or their designee(s) shall develop a *Student's Code of Conduct*, which shall align with this policy. Prior to administrative adoption or revision of the *Student Code of Conduct*, the administration shall hold a public hearing in each of the four high school attendance areas to allow parents, school personnel and students to be involved in its development.

The *Student Code of Conduct* shall be made available to all LCPS students and parents/guardians.

- C. This policy shall be interpreted and implemented in conjunction with the following policies:
  - 1. ACA-: *Sexual Harassment*
  - 2. JICFA-: *Bullying, Cyberbullying, Hazing and Harassment*
  - 3. JKD: *Suspension or Expulsion of Students*

- 4. JICH: *Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs*
  - 5. JIH: *Student Searches, and Seizures*
  - 6. JLCD: *Administering Medicines to Students*
- D. The superintendent or their designee will monitor issues of concern to the safety and security of the community and report to the Board, particularly those items for which legislative positions need to be taken.
- E. The superintendent or their designee will monitor recordkeeping and other data collection from schools and department offices regarding disciplinary infractions and interventions to evaluate and develop programs.
- F. The superintendent or their designee shall provide links to the statewide hotline to report racially charged incidents or racialized aggression.
- G. The superintendent or their designee will work with district departments, and building administrators to strengthen existing instructional programs to include such skills as respect for others, conflict resolution, interpersonal relations, etc. Efforts to improve discipline should include students in identifying effective classroom management strategies and problem solving.
- H. Removing students experiencing homelessness from school shall be used only as a last resort, pursuant to the requirements in 42 USC Sec. 11431 et seq., the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act.

**VI. REVIEW AND REPORTING**

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in accordance with the Board of Education’s policy review process.

*History:* New Policy, Adopted 04.04.06, revised \_\_\_\_\_  
*Legal Reference:* 22-5-4.3 NMSA (1978), 6.11.2.7-6.11.2.12 NMAC

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*Board of Education, President*

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*Date Approved*