

2025 - 2026



# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



# CODE OF CONDUCT



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# OUR PHILOSOPHY

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Washington Township School District Elementary Schools are committed to fostering a strong and supportive community, where every student feels like they belong to a caring "school family." We believe that positive relationships between students, their peers, and adults are fundamental to creating a safe and thriving learning environment.

Our code of conduct is designed to guide students in developing into responsible and respectful citizens. We view discipline not merely as a system of rules and consequences, but as an opportunity for growth and learning. We emphasize teaching accountability, encouraging self-reflection, and promoting respect for oneself and others. Integral to this philosophy is the active implementation of restorative practices. We will guide students in understanding the impact of their actions, taking responsibility for their behavior, and working to repair any harm caused. This approach involves creating opportunities for students to reflect on what happened, acknowledge their role in the situation, and engage in dialogue to address the needs of those affected.

We are dedicated to a progressive approach to discipline that prioritizes fairness, consistency, and the individual needs of each child. By integrating Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) into our daily practices, we aim to equip students with the skills necessary to make positive choices, navigate challenges, and contribute meaningfully to our school community.

We believe in the power of collaboration. Through strategies like mentor teachers, peer mediation, and team-based approaches, we actively guide students in understanding their role within the school and the impact of their actions. We also recognize the vital importance of a strong home-school connection. By ensuring clear, consistent, and accessible communication, we partner with families to reinforce positive behaviors and support each student's ongoing journey of growth and success.

Ultimately, our code of conduct serves as a framework to cultivate a nurturing environment where students feel safe, supported, and empowered to learn, grow, and become caring, responsible members of our community and the wider world.





# COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

02

Our schools thrive when we work together. Through our stakeholder focus groups and feedback, we designed community expectations for everyone to follow. This section outlines the positive expectations we have for everyone who is part of our school community – students, parents, guardians, staff, and visitors. By upholding these shared standards when attending any school-sponsored event or function, we collectively create a safe, respectful, and encouraging environment. We believe that by working as a team and supporting one another, we can maintain the high standards that make our schools a wonderful place to be!

Students	Staff	Families/Parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn and follow school's expectations</li> <li>• Partner with your teachers, principals, deans, and families to solve problems</li> <li>• Be honest and take accountability</li> <li>• Reflect on how actions affect members your school community</li> <li>• Follow ALL directions and procedures</li> <li>• Respect one another and school staff</li> <li>• Ask for help and support from adults when necessary</li> <li>• Be safe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know and understand Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Model expected behaviors</li> <li>• Enforce rules consistently, fairly, and equitably</li> <li>• Communicate expectations and consequences clearly</li> <li>• Address misbehavior promptly and appropriately</li> <li>• Use de-escalation strategies and restorative practices</li> <li>• Focus on educating student on behavior and provide strategies</li> <li>• Collaborate with families and keep open line of communication with home</li> <li>• Participate in professional development for best practices</li> <li>• Seek and value input from students, colleagues, and families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become familiar with the code of conduct</li> <li>• Support school's response to behavior</li> <li>• Avoid undermining school decisions</li> <li>• Advocate respectfully for your children</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with the school to help child learn from the experience</li> <li>• Have open lines of communication with staff</li> <li>• Inform school of relevant external factors</li> <li>• Attend meetings and respond to school communication</li> <li>• Model appropriate behavior</li> <li>• Set clear expectations and consequences at home</li> <li>• Acknowledge positive behavior</li> <li>• Teach problem-solving and conflict resolution skills</li> </ul>



A photograph of a stone sign for Whitman Elementary School. The sign features the school's name in blue letters, a graphic of a stack of books with an apple on top, and the text 'KIDS ARE #1' and '1991'. The sign is set against a background of greenery and a clear blue sky.

# APPLICATION OF CODE

## EARLY CHILDHOOD (K-2)

Our schools are committed to nurturing a positive and supportive learning environment for all students, especially our youngest learners. For students in Kindergarten through Second Grade, disciplinary responses outlined in this Code of Conduct will be applied in strict adherence to New Jersey state law and federal guidance regarding early childhood education. This means that:

- **Limited Use of Exclusionary Discipline:** In most circumstances, students in Kindergarten through Second Grade will not be suspended or expelled from school. New Jersey law prioritizes alternative, age-appropriate interventions and supports for addressing challenging behaviors in these early grades. Exceptions are extremely limited and apply only to severe incidents involving firearms or conduct of a violent or sexual nature that endangers others.
- **Focus on Behavioral Supports:** Our primary approach for addressing behavioral challenges in K-2 will involve identifying the underlying causes of behavior, implementing positive behavioral supports, and providing appropriate interventions. All interventions will be in collaboration with families and support staff.
- **Developmentally Appropriate Practices:** We believe that effective discipline for young children focuses on teaching, guiding, and supporting them to develop self-regulation and positive social skills, rather than solely on punitive measures. Our practices will be developmentally appropriate and aimed at fostering a child's successful engagement in their educational program.

We will work closely with families to ensure that any behavioral concerns for our early childhood students are addressed constructively and in full compliance with state and federal laws designed to support their unique developmental needs.

## COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

Like the state of New Jersey, our schools are dedicated to providing a fair and equitable learning environment for every student. We recognize that disproportionality in school discipline can occur, and we are committed to actively working to eliminate any disparities in how our Code of Conduct is applied. In accordance with New Jersey law\* and best practices for equitable education, all disciplinary responses will be administered fairly, consistently, and without bias, ensuring that every student is treated with respect and has the opportunity to learn and thrive. We continuously review our practices to promote a positive school climate where all students feel safe, valued, and supported.

\*The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) plays a key role, prohibiting discrimination in schools based on various protected characteristics, including race, national origin, gender, and disability.

A photograph of a brick pillar supporting a sign for Wedgwood Elementary School. The sign features the school's name and a logo of a horse. A red curved line is overlaid on the image.

# APPLICATION OF CODE

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Our schools are committed to fostering a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. This Code of Conduct outlines general expectations for behavior and potential consequences. However, for students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan, the application of disciplinary actions will be handled in accordance with specific state and federal laws and regulations, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

This means that disciplinary responses for students with IEPs or 504 Plans may differ from those for general education students, and will always consider the student's unique circumstances and disability-related needs. Key considerations and procedures include, but are not limited to:

- **Individualized Plans:** The student's IEP or 504 Plan may contain specific accommodations, modifications, and behavioral supports designed to address their individual needs. Any disciplinary action will take these established plans into account.
- **Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs):** When a student's behavior impedes their learning or that of others, especially after a manifestation determination, the IEP team may conduct an FBA to understand the function of the behavior and develop or revise a BIP with positive behavioral interventions and supports to address the behavior proactively.
- **Manifestation Determination:** For removals that constitute a "change in placement" (e.g., typically suspensions totaling more than 10 school days in a school year), a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) meeting will be convened by the IEP team (including parents) to determine if the behavior was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability, or if it was a direct result of the school's failure to implement the IEP.

Our administration will work closely with the Child Study Team, parents, and relevant staff to ensure that all disciplinary actions for students with IEPs or 504 Plans comply with applicable laws and best practices, prioritizing the student's right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

# RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE

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## ADMINISTRATIVE DISCLAIMER

This Code of Conduct outlines general expectations and potential consequences. Our expectations apply to all students, staff, and visitors when attending any school-sponsored event or function, in or outside school grounds and hours. For any infractions, school administrators reserve the right to use its discretion when determining the appropriate response and consequence. This means that the specific action taken will depend on various factors, including the nature and severity of the infraction, the student's prior disciplinary record, and the overall context of the situation. Our goal is always to ensure a fair and effective outcome that supports a positive learning environment for all students.

## TIER DEFINITIONS

**Tier 1 Infraction:** Tier One infractions are minor disruptions and behaviors that occur throughout the school day. Staff are required to implement a variety of behavior management interventions, including home contact, in attempts to improve student behavior.

**Tier 2 Infraction:** Tier Two infractions can fall under two categories:

1. The student has been referred by a teacher after the teacher has acknowledged/identified the behavior, implemented multiple interventions, and has contacted home and the behavior continues.
2. The behavior was significantly disruptive and/or unsafe. Therefore, the teacher interventions were not applicable, making administrative intervention necessary.

**Tier 3 Infraction:** Tier Three infractions are major disruptions and behaviors that require immediate administrator notification, intervention, and response due to safety concerns.





The difference of Tier One and/or Two infractions depends on two variables:

1. Severity: Depending on the harm/affect on others and the disruption caused, the infraction can be categorized as a Tier One or Tier Two. (i.e. if the teacher cannot continue conducting the class, another student is physically harmed, etc.)
2. Frequency or number of occurrences: Depending on the amount of times that the expectation is not followed, the teacher will try a variety of interventions, contact home, and then refer the student to administration.

INFRACTIONS		
Academic dishonesty	Disrespect	Mistreatment of peers
Bathroom misconduct	Disruptive behavior	Misuse of school materials/tech
Cell phone/electronics violation	Inappropriate behavior (drawing, gestures, language, etc.)	Physical aggression
Defiance and/or failure to follow procedure	Inappropriate display of affection	Out of assigned area
Derogatory jokes/remarks towards protected class	Minor physical contact	Theft or extortion
Dishonesty as a form of deception		Throwing objects

TEACHER INTERVENTIONS & RESPONSES	ADMINISTRATIVE INTERVENTIONS & RESPONSES
<p><u>PBIS Tier 1 Interventions</u></p> <p><u>PBIS Tier 2 Interventions</u></p> <p>Verbal Correction</p> <p>Reminders and redirection</p> <p>Classroom PBIS system</p> <p>De-escalation strategies</p> <p>Change of seat</p> <p>"Think" Sheets</p> <p>Peer mediation</p> <p>Teacher/student conference</p> <p>Student-student conference</p> <p>Brain breaks</p> <p>Break from environment and/or activity</p> <p>Restorative approaches</p> <p>Documented home contact (preferably a phone call)</p> <p>Conference with caregiver</p> <p>Daily progress sheets, reflection forms, behavior plans, etc</p>	<p><b>Consequences/Responses</b></p> <p>Administrator/student conference</p> <p>Teacher/student conference</p> <p>Caregiver conference</p> <p>Loss of privileges</p> <p>Lunch/recess reflection</p> <p>Time in office</p> <p>In-School Suspension (ISS)</p> <p>Administrative detention before or after school</p> <p><b>Restorative Actions (in addition to consequences)</b></p> <p><u>PBIS Tier 2 Interventions</u></p> <p>Apology (written, verbal, etc.)</p> <p>Peer mediation</p> <p>Written reflection</p> <p>Assignment of project</p> <p>Behavior contracts</p> <p>Peer/adult mentor system</p> <p>Behavior plans or behavior progress reports</p> <p>Referral to counselor</p> <p>Change of seat</p>



# INFRACTIONS

## TIER 2 & TIER 3

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The difference of Tier Two and/or Three infractions depends on two variables:

1. Severity: Depending on the harm/affect on others and the disruption caused, the infraction can be categorized as a Tier Two or Tier Three. (i.e. another student is physically injured, significant damage being done, threat to safety of students/school, etc.)
2. Frequency or number of occurrences: Depending on the amount of times that the same infraction is broken, the administrator will select progressive disciplinary responses.

Infractions	Minimum Consequence Required	Administrative Interventions & Responses
<u>Acceptable Use Policy violation</u>	Lunch/recess & restorative action	<b>Consequences/Responses</b> Lunch/recess reflection Time in office Administrative detention before or after school In-school suspension (ISS) Out-of-school suspension (OSS) Bus suspension Threat assessment Following district policies Development or revision of I&RS plan Referral to outside services or counseling Referral to counselor Restitution of property Break from environment/activity <b>Restorative Actions (in addition to consequences)</b> <a href="#">PBIS Tier 2 Interventions</a> <a href="#">PBIS Tier 3 Interventions</a> Apology (written, verbal, etc.) Peer mediation Written reflection Conference (Student, family, administrator) Loss of privileges Assignment of project Behavior contracts Peer/adult mentor system Behavior plans or behavior progress reports
False public alarm	1 day ISS & restorative action	
Defacing, vandalizing, and/or damaging school property	Lunch/recess & restorative action	
<u>Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (Policy 5512.1)</u>	Follow district HIB protocol. Consequences for the students' actions will be determined	
Leaving school building/grounds without permission	Lunch/recess & restorative action	
Sexual misconduct or harassment	Lunch/recess & restorative action	
Threat, simple (written, verbal, electronic, gesture, etc.)	Lunch/recess & restorative action	

\*Administrators will choose one consequence and a minimum of one restorative action in response to student behavior to repair the harm done.

# INFRACTIONS

## TIER 3

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Infraction	Minimum Consequence Required	Administrative Interventions & Responses
Arson	1 day OSS & restorative action	<b>Consequence/Response</b> Out-of-school suspension (OSS) Long-term suspension or expulsion (follow district policy) Removal pending superintendent hearing Threat assessment Loss of privileges Student safety plan Following district policies Referral to substance counseling Referral to counselor Referral to outside services or counseling Psychiatric clearance Development or revision of I&RS plan  <b>Restorative Action (in addition to consequences)</b> Restitution of property Loss of privileges Peer mediation Apology (written, verbal, etc.) Conference (student, family, administrator) Peer/adult mentor system Behavior plans or behavior progress reports Written reflection or assignment <a href="#">PBIS Tier 3 Interventions</a>
Assault on student		
Assault on staff member		
Fighting		
Possession and/or use of illegal substances		
Possession or use of anything as a dangerous weapon		
Possession and/or use of weapons, fire arms, explosives, or any weapon defined in Regulation 8467		
Threat, Criminal		

\*Administrators will choose one consequence and a minimum of one restorative action in response to student behavior to repair the harm done.

# POLICIES

[Student Discipline](#)

[HIB](#)

[Acceptable Use](#)

[Suspension](#)

[Expulsion](#)

[Attendance](#)

# RESOURCES

[CARE SOLACE](#)

[COUNSELING](#)

[INSURANCE](#)

[STUDENT SAFETY](#)

**Academic Dishonesty:** Any behavior that deceives or misleads instructors or other evaluators in an academic setting, violating the principles of academic integrity. It encompasses a range of actions, including plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication.

**Arson:** Purposely or knowingly starting a fire or causing an explosion in or on the grounds of a school, thereby placing the victim or group of victims in danger of death or bodily injury; or purposely starting a fire or causing an explosion that destroys or damages the victim's or school's property/grounds. Arson does not include the act of lighting a match.

**Assault:** A person attempts to cause – or purposely, knowingly, or recklessly causes – bodily injury to another.

**Damage to Property:** Purposely, knowingly, or recklessly destroying or defacing school, contracted, or personal property, thereby causing an economic loss due to repair or replacement. Serious incidental damage to property that occurs during an act of violence should be reported.

**False Public Alarm:** Initiating or circulating a report or warning of an impending fire, explosion, bombing, crime, catastrophe or emergency, knowing that the report or warning is false or baseless and that it is likely to cause evacuation of a school building, school bus, or other place of assembly on school grounds. This includes knowingly setting off a fire alarm when no fire exists.

**Fight:** Mutual engagement in a physical confrontation in which the offenders understood that the confrontation may result in bodily injury to either party. Does not include a verbal confrontation or a minor confrontation, such as a shoving match. Each participant must be classified as an offender.

**Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying (HIB):** Definition by [NJDOE](#) linked

**In-School Suspension (ISS):** Indicates that the student was temporarily removed from his or her regular classroom(s) for at least half a day for disciplinary purposes, but remains under the direct supervision of school personnel.

**Restorative Discipline:** An approach to student behavior management that focuses on repairing harm and rebuilding relationships rather than solely relying on punishment. It emphasizes accountability, understanding the impact of actions, and making amends.

**Restorative Practices:** A social science approach that focuses on building and repairing relationships, improving social connections, and addressing harm in a community or group. They emphasize collaboration, accountability, and healing rather than punishment.

**Out-of-School Suspension (OSS):** Indicates that the student was temporarily removed from his or her regular classroom(s) for at least half a day for disciplinary purposes to another setting (e.g. home).

**Threat, Criminal:** Expressing – either physically or verbally – the intent to commit one of the following violent criminal offenses: Homicide, Aggravated assault, Sexual assault, Kidnapping, or Arson. The threat must be made for the purpose of placing another in imminent fear of one of these violent acts, under circumstances that would reasonably cause the victim(s) to believe the immediacy of the threat and the likelihood that it will be carried out.

**Threat, Simple:** Attempting by physical menace (e.g., verbal threats) to put another in fear of bodily injury. The offender knew that the threat could make the victim fearful.



# ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

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By signing below, you acknowledge receipt of the Elementary Code of Conduct. This signature confirms that you have seen and had the opportunity to review the expectations outlined within. Please understand that signing or not signing this document does not absolve any student from the consequences and interventions that may result from violations of the code. We believe that a strong partnership between home and school is essential for creating a positive and safe learning environment. When we work together, we can ensure that every child understands the expectations for behavior and thrives in our school community.

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FAMILY SIGNATURE

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DATE

