



Secondary School Student Code of Conduct

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

GOAL: To establish a positive learning atmosphere for all students to ensure understanding and respect for the rights of all persons, to protect the property rights of all, and to promote individual responsibility and self-control.

Students are expected to behave in a responsible manner while at school or on school-sponsored activities. Behavior which infringes upon another student's safety or right to obtain a quality education at St. Mary's School for the Deaf will not be tolerated and offenders will receive discipline appropriate to the misbehavior.

RULES & REGULATIONS: Rules and regulations are necessary to enable large numbers of people to live and work together harmoniously. Students are expected to be courteous to their fellow students and to staff members. Cooperation is also an important ingredient in having classes and school run smoothly. To develop and maintain a culture of respect, discipline is used to change disruptive/unhealthy behavior. Students and staff are encouraged to engage in reflective practice regarding one's choice of words/signs/actions/behaviors. The overall goal is an environment based upon mutual respect so that all stakeholders can live, work and learn in a nurturing atmosphere.

The basic authority for student discipline in class settings is the teacher assigned to that class. The basic authority for student discipline elsewhere in the building or on school grounds is any staff member present. This authority lies with all staff custodians, cafeteria workers, substitute teachers, classroom assistants, secretaries, teachers, and administrators.

The teacher is the first line of correction within the classroom setting. When a problem exists, the teacher is expected to exhaust all methods of classroom management and behavior modification in dealing with the situation. These methods are to include discussions with the student and/or parent(s) of the student. Teachers will establish firm and fair limits while infusing social skills training within the classroom setting. Should the problem persist beyond all strategies available to the teacher, the student will be referred to the appropriate administrator for disciplinary action.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:

1. Be on time for classes.
2. Be prepared for class and ready to learn.
3. Follow classroom expectations and rules.
4. Be respectful with all students and adults.
5. Be responsible for yourself.
6. Think before you act.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR; including, but not limited to the following:

1. The possession or use of intoxicating beverages, controlled substances, or illegal drugs and/or drug paraphernalia.
2. Vandalism or theft.
3. Lying or giving false information to administrators, faculty or staff members.
4. Fighting or causing a fight through physical or verbal actions.
5. Physical, sexual or verbal harassment; intimidation or racial slurs.
6. Throwing objects in the halls, classrooms, or cafeterias.
7. Smoking or holding lighted smoking material, or being in the same location as a "smoker."
8. Altering or forging excuses or passes.
9. Entering private offices or rooms designated for faculty without invitation, or classrooms in which one is not scheduled.
10. Running or horseplay in the halls, classrooms or cafeteria.
11. Setting off the school fire alarm falsely.
12. The use of profane or abusive language.
13. Dress that interferes with the teaching and learning process of the school, or that endangers the health and safety of oneself or of others.
14. Inappropriate displays of affection.
15. Having lewd or profane decorations on one's locker or clothing.
16. Plagiarism and/or cheating.
17. Insubordination or defying the authority of staff members.
18. Possession of weapons and potential weapons, fireworks, items potentially noxious or injurious to students.

DISCIPLINE: MAJOR & MINOR INCIDENTS

When a student displays behaviors or actions that conflict with the rules and regulations outlined in this Student Handbook, an incident report will be completed and filed for internal records. The consequence to such behaviors will be at the discretion of the administrative staff, and will vary depending on the severity of the infraction. **Discipline is a teaching tool used to help guide a student in making positive choices and to change an inappropriate behavior, not**

punish. Progressive disciplinary actions used by the school include, but are not limited to:

1. Verbal/signed warning or reprimand and possible notification to parents.
2. Time out/Calming in a counselor's office.
3. Written notification to parent.
4. Detentions during lunchtime or afterschool.
5. A parent meeting with school personnel.
6. Suspension from an after school activity (athletic, social or extra-curricular).
7. Suspension from other privileges (i.e.: leadership positions, Jr. NAD, student competitions, field trips, etc.).
8. In-school suspension.
9. Parents may be requested to pick up their son or daughter from school to initiate an out-of-school suspension by the Superintendent. For behaviors which are against the law, (possession or sale of controlled substances, stealing, etc.) The student will be reported to the Buffalo Police Department.

DETENTION

1. The St. Mary's staff member who is in authority at the time of the incident will initiate the disciplinary procedure.
2. Detention is conducted, when necessary/appropriate during lunch and after school.
3. St. Mary's staff may recommend detention by completing an Incident Report form via the School Wide Information System (SWIS).
4. After school detention will be held on an as needed basis.
5. If students fail to report to detention, they risk further disciplinary action.
6. While in detention, students are simply required to sit quietly and attentively for the designated time. Only school work is allowed; no other activities are permitted. Violations of these rules will result in an additional detention assignment.
7. Students who receive after school detention may miss part or all of the privilege to participate in activities from 3:00-5:00 P.M. and possibly evening activities as well. This rule applies equally to day and residential students. We encourage parents/guardians to emphasize the

seriousness of detention via communicating the expectation of mature/responsible behavior by all students.

8. Following detentions, day students are to immediately board their 5:00 P.M. bus for home. If the student is a resident, he/she should report to the cafeteria for supper.

SUSPENSION

"A student who is insubordinate or disorderly, or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others, a minor whose physical or mental condition endangers the health, safety, or morals of himself or others may be suspended from required attendance at schools," Section 3214 of the Education Law.

The decision to suspend a student is not made lightly, and is generally used only after all other disciplinary measures have been attempted. However, if a student commits a serious rule violation involving danger to the student, other students, or staff, the Superintendent and/or the Superintendent designee may suspend a student. This suspension may be in-house (ISS – In School Suspension) or off-campus (OSS – Out of School Suspension) for the number of days determined. In the case of an ISS, parents will be called by the appropriate administrator, and a form documenting the situation will be sent home. In the case of an OSS, a parental conference will be held and a letter documenting the situation will be sent home.

Any out-of-school suspension in excess of five days constitutes (means) a possible change in the pupil's educational placement and requires a referral to the CSE for review. Parents/guardians will be notified of the review procedures required for such a change by Section 200.7 (b) (3) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

When a student has been suspended out of school for a cumulative total which exceeds ten days in the school year, an immediate referral to the student's Committee on Special Education will be made as required by Section 100.2 (1) (IV) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

If the CSE recommends an alternative placement, the parents have the option of agreeing to that placement recommendation or of filing for an impartial hearing. If a hearing is requested, the student's current placement (St. Mary's) would continue to be the placement during all due process procedures. That is, the student may remain at St. Mary's until all administrative and legal procedures surrounding placement for that student have been completed. If a student cannot, despite all good efforts, be safely maintained at St. Mary's during the due process procedures, the recourse would be for the CSE to seek a court order temporarily prohibiting a dangerous student from attending school.

DRESS CODE

1. Clothing and all jewelry must be safe and not disrupt or interfere with the educational program. You may not wear chains and jewelry that may be used or construed as weapons are prohibited. Hazardous jewelry cannot be worn, including but not limited to spiked jewelry or wallet chains.
2. Coats and jackets (outerwear) are not to be worn in the building.
3. Hats, hoods, bandanas, do-rags, visors, non-functional headgear, gloves and sunglasses are not to be worn inside the school building except for religious or medical purposes.
4. Students must wear footwear at all times. Slippers and flip-flops are not allowed.
5. Skirts, dresses, and shorts must come down to at least the fingertips.
6. Pants/shorts should be worn at/near the waist. Pants/shorts should not be sagging and may only have holes from the fingertips down, unless covered by fabric. Pajama pants are not allowed.
7. All underwear must be completely covered by outer garments. Girls should not have cleavage showing.
8. Tube tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, backless tops, one shoulder tops, strapless tops, and off the shoulder tops are not allowed.
9. Bare midriffs are not allowed. Shirts or tops must cover the waistband of pants, shorts, and skirts.
10. Mesh/nylon see through clothing is not allowed. Gloves may not be worn in the classroom.
11. Clothing and accessories must not display or promote:
 - a. racial or ethnic slurs
 - b. gang affiliations
 - c. vulgar, subversive or sexually suggestive language or images
 - d. messages about alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs
 - e. words written/printed across buttocks of pants, shorts, skirts, etc.

DRESS CODE VIOLATION CONSEQUENCES

1. Students in violation of the dress code will be asked to change their clothing. Inappropriate clothing must be replaced. If a student does not have appropriate clothing on campus, replacement clothes will be available in the Principal's Office, Dean of Student's Office, or PE Department.
2. Chains, inappropriate jewelry and hats will be confiscated for the day for the 1st offense. These items will be confiscated and held until the end of the year for 2nd offenders.
3. After each offense for both clothing and jewelry policies, parent or guardians will be contacted via telephone, TTY, or VP. After the 3rd offence parents or guardians will be called in for a meeting.
4. Students will be given ISS starting with the 4th offense.

BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS

STUDENTS RIGHTS

Students have the right to an education in the least restrictive environment.

Students have the right to assembly.

Students have the right to express their opinions.

Students have the right to expect clear and understandable rules of student conduct to be available to them, and to seek changes in unfair or outdated rules and regulations, or to suggest new rules where appropriate.

Students have a right to participate in St. Mary's School for the Deaf representative organization for students, which has as its purpose:

- a) leadership development
- b) service to St. Mary's School for the Deaf
- c) service to the community
- d) service to the Deaf community
- e) school improvement
- f) development of relationships with state and national organizations for the deaf
- g) support of Jr. NAD programs

Eligible students (18 years or older) have the right to review, update, and question information in the students' permanent cumulative records.

STUDENTS RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have the responsibility to attend all classes, to work to the best of their ability, to do homework and to cooperate with staff members within the classroom, the dormitory, and while on St. Mary's campus.

Students have the responsibility of planning for, seeking approval of and conducting those assemblies which are consistent with the educational objectives of the school.

Students have the responsibility of expressing and publicizing their opinions and ideas in such a manner as not to offend, slander (speak badly) or libel (untrue things) other persons.

Students have a responsibility to know the school rules which pertain to them, and to seek the help of staff when in doubt; students are responsible to challenge the rules appropriately and to adhere to (obey and follow) the rules until they are changed.

Student organization officers and representatives are responsible to be aware of the school community and student needs and to work toward the fulfillment of these needs. Students are responsible to participate regularly and appropriately in the respective activities.

Parents, guardians, or eligible students have the responsibility of providing the school with accurate and current information.

Students have the right to be protected by legal provisions which prohibit the release of personally identifiable information to anyone other than legally authorized persons, without the consent of the parent, guardian, or eligible student.

Students have the right of privacy of their personal possessions unless there is reason to believe that the student has or is concealing materials prohibited by school rules.

Students have a right to expect professional and ethical treatment of personal information shared with school personnel.

Students have a right to expect courtesy, fairness and respect from staff and other students.

Students have property rights.

A student's grade in each class should represent fairly and impartially his/her progress in that class. The student should have the opportunity of periodically reviewing his/her progress with the teacher. The student has the right to a warning letter if an academic grade falls below 70%

Students have the right to appropriate counseling for personal/educational issues
Students have the right to be protected under city, state, and federal laws.

Parents, guardians, or eligible students have the responsibility to release information to legally authorized persons.

Students have the responsibility not to carry, possess, or conceal any materials that are prohibited by school rules.

Students have a responsibility to assist and cooperate with the school staff in operating a safe school.

Students have a responsibility to extend courtesy, fairness and respect to members of the school staff and other students.

Students have a responsibility to respect the property rights of others. Students are responsible for their own property as well as school property entrusted to them.

Students have the responsibility to achieve their progress through their own efforts. Students are responsible to periodically review their progress with teachers and seek additional help in problem areas.

Students have the responsibility to schedule appointments in advance unless the problem or concern is of an emergency nature. Students have the responsibility to know and obey city, state and federal laws. Students have a right to expect a safe school environment.

BULLYING BEHAVIOR

St. Mary's School for the Deaf is committed to providing a safe and productive learning environment. No one, including students, teachers or staff is allowed to engage in bullying behaviors. **Bullying will not be tolerated.** Working with information which identifies this behavior will help students learn how to deal with conflict in a healthy, socially acceptable manner. The goal is to help all students develop strategies which resolve conflicts peacefully.

Violence is “any word, look, sign, or act that inflicts or threatens to inflict physical or emotional injury or discomfort upon another person’s body, feelings (dignity), or possessions. (Johnson Institute)

Bullying is “exposure to negative actions, repeatedly or over time, on the part of one or more persons.” (Dan Olweus, *Bullying At School*, 1993)

Bullying is behavior that:

- Hurts someone’s feelings, body, reputation or things.
- Is repeated and ongoing.
- Uses assumed power to control others.
- Targets someone who is unsuccessful at defending him or herself.
- Makes the target feel alone and unsupported.
- Is not an accident.

Harassment means to bother, irritate or torment repeatedly.

Teasing is an indirect way of sending a message. It can be a positive message or a negative message.

Aggression is behavior that is intended to hurt someone who does not want to be hurt.

Relational Aggression is an act or acts that “harm others through damage (or the threat of damage) to relationships or feelings of acceptance, friendship or group inclusion.”

Indirect Aggression, is covert behavior which makes it seem as if there has been no intent to harm at all.

Social Aggression is behavior that is intended to damage self-esteem or social status within a group.

Sexual Harassment is unwelcome, uninvited, unwanted and non-mutual words, actions, gestures, or touches of a sexual or gender nature that interferes with a person’s life or negatively impacts the school environment.

Two Types of Conflict: Dealing with conflict is a healthy, normal part of life. The teaching staff and the counseling team work together to teach social skills and conflict resolution. Being repeatedly threatened, intimidated, or victimized by a stronger, more powerful student or group of students is not healthy or normal. It's unhealthy and unacceptable.

Normal conflict includes the daily disagreements that involve two or more students fairly equal in strength, status, or ability. Friends and classmates disagree and argue about ideas and activities. These conflicts are a natural part of life. They require some skills of anger management and conflict resolution to solve the problems and keep them from escalating into violence.

Bully/victim conflict is an unhealthy situation in which a student or group of students is using superior size or presumed power to win concessions from a vulnerable student or group of students. It's characterized by repeatedly harmful interactions over time. Bully/victim conflict is *not* normal. No amount of training in skills of anger management and conflict resolution will transform it into normal conflict. In fact, victims who try to reason with bullies usually find themselves worse off than before. (Zimman and Remboldt, **Respect and Protect**, 1996). Such unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Physical bullying: any act that does harm to a person or thing by becoming physical. This includes, but is not limited to, blocking a path, grabbing, hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, pinching, jabbing, pulling hair, pushing, shoving, spitting, dumping books, tripping, scratching, ripping someone's papers, throwing objects at someone, keeping possessions away from someone.
- Social bullying: behaviors which may/or may not be intended to hurt someone's self- esteem or social interactions with a group. This includes, but is not limited to, forcing someone to do something or to give you money, making fun of a person's belief, stealing, dirty looks or stares, eye rolling, turning your back on someone, shunning someone or pretending the person is invisible (exclusion), making threats, pretending to like someone you don't like, making up lies about someone, destroying a friendship or dating relationship on purpose.
- Verbal bullying: any spoken, signed, written, mouthed or uttered communication meant to hurt someone's feelings or threaten someone. This includes, but is not limited to, calling a person names, teasing, insulting someone's family, insulting someone's religion, insulting someone's race, lying, unwelcome sexual comments, making fun of a person's body, clothing or ability, ordering a person around, spreading gossip, threatening to hurt someone or their things, swearing, writing a note to scare someone or get someone in trouble, using email, instant messaging (IM) chat rooms or websites to verbally attack, threaten or tease someone, (cyber-bullying)
- Visual bullying: any behavior that the bully wants the person to see and feel threatened by. This includes, but is not limited to: showing a weapon, wearing gang colors, glaring, using obscene gestures, fake punches, gang signs, threatening with a fist, stalking, drawing a degrading picture of a person, showing a threatening stance, staring

down someone. The teaching staff and the counseling team work together to teach social skills and conflict resolution.

CELL PHONE/SMART PHONE USAGE

Cell phones, Smart Phone, and other similar devices may NOT be used during classes or study hall. These devices are to be secured by the student in his/her locker between 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM daily.

Consequences:

Consequence for carry and/or using a cell phone or similar device during the hours of 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM include:

- First Offense – Device will be kept by the adult in charge until 3:00 that same day.
- Second Offense – Device will be taken by the adult in charge and given to the Principal to hold to the end of that week. The Principal will return the device to the student at dismissal at the end of the week.
- Third Offense - Device will be taken by the adult in charge and parents will be contacted. The device will be prohibited through the end of the school year.

To expand upon the concept of appropriate behaviors in school and while participating in school-sponsored activities, a "BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS," has been prepared by the teachers and administrators of St. Mary's.

GUIDELINES FOR ACCEPTABLE INTERNET USE AT SCHOOL

1. All students will have access to the most up to date computer technology possible. All users shall learn appropriate Internet use, which includes but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Users must not attempt to access or gain access to sites that are inappropriate for minors. If a site is somehow accessed, the user must tell the faculty member, staff member or administrator who will tell the IT Department to research the matter and to prevent future access to the inappropriate site.
 - b. Users shall respect the rights of others. Users should conduct themselves responsibly, ethically and politely while on-line and may not use obscene or profane language or harass anyone anywhere online (which can include chat rooms, e-mail, and other forms of electronic communication).
 - c. Users may not use any account, mailbox or other sites that does not belong to them.
 - d. Users must not send or post any personal address, phone number, passwords or credit card information or any personal information pertaining to others.
 - e. Users will only use school-approved, licensed software on school computers and will not bring to school, install or use other programs or applications without permission.
 - f. Users are not permitted to violate copyright laws by duplicating any software program or making illegal copies of media (including DVDs, CDs, floppies, etc).
 - g. Users will not attempt to gain access to unauthorized areas, including so-called “hacking” and other unlawful activities, into internet sites or areas of the network to which access is denied.
 - h. Users shall not damage the computer, monitor, printer or any peripheral components of the computer in any manner, way, shape or form.
 - i. Users are not permitted to download any files without permission and cannot install any software on any computer at any time.
 - j. Users will not send pictures of themselves or others.
 - k. Users will not access social sites such as Facebook or Twitter.
2. All users shall report any misuse of the Internet to a faculty member, staff member or administrator as soon as possible.
3. Students and parents will not hold faculty members, staff members, administrators, the school or district liable for any materials retrieved from the Internet.
4. St Mary’s School for the Deaf reserves the right to modify these guidelines at any time.

SMSD STUDENT GAMBLING POLICY

Gambling (Any form of chance or skill when played): New York law prohibits gambling in any form. Students involved in gambling-related incidents may face criminal, legal and disciplinary actions if found to be in violation of NYS law.

At St. Mary's School for the Deaf (SMSD), gambling for money or other items of value at SMSD or SMSD-sponsored events is prohibited, except activities permitted by law and SMSD Policy. Such prohibited activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Betting on sports contests; including participation in wagering or sports pools for any athletic event, including all SMSD athletic events and activities
- Involvement in bookmaking or wagering pools
- Soliciting or accepting a bribe to influence the outcome of any SMSD athletic event
- For SMSD-recognized organizations:
 - Hosting poker tournaments with SMSD resources/funding
 - Hosting casino nights with SMSD resources/funding
 - Hosting any trips to known gambling facility

Bingo events and raffles may be permitted with the prior approval of the Superintendent. Raffles and lotteries involving cash prizes are not permitted. Any event involving approved gambling activities must be registered through the Event Registration system. Prevention and educational materials and resources must be made available to all participants.