

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

2801
Policy No.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

ADMINISTRATION

Safe and Supportive Schools

A. **POLICY STATEMENT**

- A. The Prince George's County Board of Education (Board) is committed to providing for the safety of all persons on Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) property and to creating and maintaining safe, inclusive, and supportive schools and workplaces where students and staff can be successful at achieving excellence in education.
- B. All PGCPS students, employees, and parents and third parties share the responsibility for the health, safety, and general welfare of students and employees and for establishing and sustaining a safe and supportive school climate.
- C. Preparation and open communication with school communities and local agencies are key considerations in promoting school safety. The Board values PGCPS' relationships with its county agencies that provide health and human services, provide and support mental health services, law enforcement, and other public safety responders, and other community service organizations who contribute to the establishment and maintenance of safe and welcoming learning environments and workplaces for all students and staff.

B. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the approach to maintaining safe and supportive school and workplace environments.

C. **DEFINITIONS**

- A. *Abuse* –
 - 1. Physical or mental injury of a child by any parent, or other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for supervision of a child, or by any household or family member, under circumstances that indicate that the child's health or welfare is harmed or at substantial risk of being harmed; or

2. Any sexual abuse of a child, whether or not physical injuries are sustained.
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- B. *Behavior threat assessment* – A comprehensive structured group process emphasizing an appraisal of observed (or reasonably observable) behaviors to identify, assess and manage the risks of threats of targeted violence posed by an individual or group.
 - C. *Emergency Plan* – A plan for each public school and non-instructional facility within PGCPs that addresses mitigation, prevention, preparation, response, and recovery to an emergency.
 - D. *Employee* – For the purposes of this policy, an *employee* is an individual employed by the Board, including tenured and non-tenured teachers and certificated and noncertificated individuals, whether full-time, part-time, temporary, permanent or substitute, and independent contractors, vendors, and contractors’/vendors’ own personnel.
 - E. *Employee Code of Conduct* – A summary of the expectations and standards of conduct that PGCPs expects of employees. It provides the disciplinary steps that PGCPs utilizes to address employees’ inappropriate behavior or failure to meet PGCPs expectations or standards of conduct.
 - F. *Parent* – Any one of the following individuals who are legally responsible for a student:
 1. Biological parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated.
 2. Adoptive parent – A person who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated.
 3. Custodian – A person or agency appointed by a court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and privileges.
 4. Guardian – A person who has been placed by a court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and privileges.
 5. Caregiver – An adult resident of Prince George’s County who exercises care, custody or control over the student, but who is neither the biological parent nor legal guardian.
 6. Foster parent – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in their home by a State agency or a licensed child placement as provided by Section 5- 507 of the Family Law Article.

- G. *Safety program* – A program which provides ongoing evaluation of safety conditions in schools, buildings, and grounds to (1) identify and eliminate recognized safety hazards, and (2) provide instructional programs to train personnel to minimize these hazards and prevent accidents.
- H. *School climate* – The prevailing attitudes, standards, or environmental conditions within a school. Reflects shared responsibility for the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures of a collaborative school community.
- I. *School property* – Any property owned or leased by PGCPS or used by PGCPS for school-related activities. The concept of *school property* extends to school activities such as field trips, use of parks and recreation facilities, proms at hotels, etc. Facilities scheduled by PGCPS for student use are considered an extension of school property.
- J. *School-related activity* – Any school system activity, whether held on or off school property, in which a student directly participates (*e.g.*, school field trip, athletic event, or class/graduation activity), or in which the student does not directly participate but represents the school or student body simply by being there (*e.g.*, spectator at a school event).
- K. *Student Code of Conduct* – A disciplinary framework that is designed to support a safe, positive, and respectful learning environment and discipline procedures for effective learning.
- L. *Supportive* – Providing encouragement and social and emotional assistance.
- M. *Third parties* – Any visitor or volunteer coming on school property.
- N. *Threat* – An expression of an intent to cause physical harm to someone. The *threat* may be expressed/communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means; and is considered a *threat* regardless of whether it is observed by or communicated directly to the target of the *threat*, observed by or communicated to another person, or the target of the *threat* is aware of the *threat*. Student protests or other activities where students are lawfully exercising their first amendment rights are not considered "*threats*."

IV. **STANDARDS**

- A. All PGCPS students, employees, and parents, and third parties shall contribute to the establishment and maintenance of safe, welcoming and supportive learning environments and workplaces for all students and staff.
- B. The Superintendent/designee will review and approve the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, which includes the Student Code of Conduct, annually.

- C. The Superintendent/designee will review and approve the Employee Code of Conduct annually.
- D. The Superintendent/designee will implement a multifaceted approach to maintain a safe and supportive learning and workplace environment to include the following:
1. Establish and maintain a behavior threat assessment process that provides appropriate measures to identify, assess, and intervene when an individual's behavior may pose a threat to the safety of the school, students in the school or staff members in the workplace, in accordance with Administrative Procedures 2952 and 2952.1.
 2. Deny access to a person who willfully disturbs or otherwise willfully prevents the orderly conduct of the activities, administration, or classes of any PGCPs school or school property.
 3. The use of school resource officers (SRO), including a Memorandum of Understanding between PGCPs and local law enforcement agencies, and safety and security services coverage.
 4. In accordance with the Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018, all PGCPs schools will conduct a safety evaluation annually.
 - a. Each school shall identify safety vulnerabilities inside and outside of the school building and develop a plan to address these vulnerabilities utilizing the school's resources. Any concerns that cannot be met with the school's available resources shall be identified in the safety evaluation.
 - b. The Superintendent/designee shall ensure that each school's safety evaluation is reviewed annually to identify the safety needs of the school and develop a plan to address the identified safety needs of each school.
 5. Each school and facility shall update its Emergency Plan annually at the start of the school year and submit it for review. Each plan shall be reviewed to ensure that it aligns with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Emergency Planning Guidelines for Local School Systems and Schools.
 6. All PGCPs schools and facilities shall practice the required number and type of emergency drills throughout the school year.
 7. System-wide security-related technology components and facility enhancements that enable the prompt and reliable communication between staff in schools, among schools, on school buses, and with public safety responders.

8. Maintain an aggressive safety program to:
 - a. Identify and eliminate recognized safety hazards, and
 - b. Provide professional learning opportunities to train employees to minimize these hazards and prevent accidents.
9. The PGCPS curriculum shall include safety and injury prevention units, supplemented by other school programs related to school safety and students' physical, social and psychological well-being.
10. Implement appropriate measures to ensure the security of all elements of PGCPS systems, technology, and data.
11. Any employee of PGCPS who suspects that a student has been abused or neglected shall report directly and personally such observation or suspicion to Child Protective Services (CPS).
12. Utilize a continuum of support services and behavior interventions, including but not limited to accommodations, social skills training, restorative practices including peer mediation, restorative chats, etc., peer coaching/mentoring; and school counseling services through PGCPS, including before, during, and after threats and emergencies.
13. In alignment with Policy 0125 – Nondiscrimination, school safety measures should not reinforce biases against, or rely on the profiling of, students based on their actual or perceived personal characteristics.
14. Collaborate with county agencies including health, law enforcement, human resources, and other public safety organizations to provide a safe and supportive learning environment.

V. IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Superintendent is authorized to develop administrative procedures to implement this policy.
- B. The Superintendent shall ensure that students, employees, parents and are notified of the provisions of this policy annually.

VI. REFERENCES

- A. Legal
Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 304.1
Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 7-410
Md. Code Ann., Educ. §§ 7-1500, *et.seq.*

COMAR 13A.01.04.03
COMAR 13A.02.02.01-05
COMAR 13A.08.04.03

- B. Other Board Policies
 - Policy 0117 – Information Technology Services – Information Security
 - Policy 0125 – Nondiscrimination
 - Policy 0126 – Student Safety and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse
 - Policy 0127 – Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect
 - Policy 2214 – Disturbing Activities and Trespass Warnings
 - Policy 2952 – Behavior Threat Assessment
 - Policy 3517 – Security of Buildings and Grounds
 - Policy 4400 – Inappropriate Relationships between Students and Employees, Volunteers and Contractors
 - Policy 5141 – Student Registered Sex Offenders – Entry on School Property
 - Policy 7101 – Pedestrian Safety Plans
 - Policy 5120 – Search and Seizure

- C. Superintendent’s Administrative Procedures
 - Administrative Procedure 2214 – Trespass Warnings
 - Administrative Procedure 2506 – Special Safety and Security Services for Schools
 - Administrative Procedure 2512.1 – Attention to Fire and Safety Inspection
 - Administrative Procedure 2801 – Safety Program Responsibilities
 - Administrative Procedure 2805.6 – Safety Inspection
 - Administrative Procedure
 - Administrative Procedure
 - Administrative Procedure 2805.6 – Safety Inspection
 - Administrative Procedure 2950 – Procedures for Crisis Response
 - Administrative Procedure 2952 – Student Behavior Threat Assessment Process
 - Administrative Procedure 2952.1 – Behavior Threat Assessment – Employees, Contractors, et.al
 - Administrative Procedure 4218 – Dating and Sexual Relationships among Students, Employees, Independent Contractors and Volunteers
 - Administrative Procedure 4219 – Inappropriate Interactions among Students, Employees, Independent Contractors and Volunteers
 - Administrative Procedure 5145 – Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect
 - Administrative Procedure 6114.1 – Fire Drills
 - Administrative Procedure 6115 – Emergency Procedures
 - Administrative Procedure
 - Administrative Procedure
 - Administrative Procedure

- D. Other
 - PGCPS Employee Code of Conduct
 - Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Emergency Planning Guidelines for Local School Systems and Schools

VII. HISTORY

Policy Adopted
07/25/1974

Policy Amended
05/12/2003

Policy Reviewed-No Revisions Required
11/09/2004

Policy Reviewed-No Revisions Required
10/4/2005

Policy Reviewed-No Revisions Required
12/01/2006

Policy Amended
04/29/2010

Policy Amended
10/24/2024