

1 Related Entries: ACF, ACF-RA, COC-RA, COE-RA, COF-RA, COG-RA,  
2 ECC-RA, ~~GDB-RA~~, **IGN, IGO-RA**, JGA-RA, JGA-RB,  
3 **JGA-RC, JGA-RD**, JGB-RA, JFA, JFA-RA, **JHF**,  
4 **JHF-RA, JNA-RB**

5 Responsible Office: ~~Deputy Superintendent of Schools~~ **Chief**  
6 **Academic Officer**  
7 **Deputy Superintendent of School Support and**  
8 **Improvement**

9  
10 Student Discipline  
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12

13 A. PURPOSE  
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15 ~~21.~~ **To promote a disciplined learning environment that is**  
16 **safe, positive, and respectful; increases student**  
17 **engagement; boosts student achievement; and, when**  
18 **possible, prevents student misbehavior before it**  
19 **occurs** ~~that holds mutual respect as an expectation,~~  
20 ~~and does not tolerate disrespect~~

21  
22 ~~32.~~ **To engage all students in learning with effective**  
23 **instruction and to intervene appropriately to support**  
24 **struggling and vulnerable students** ~~ensure that our~~  
25 ~~students and staff are protected against disruptive~~  
26 ~~behavior and encouraged to participate in the pursuit~~  
27 ~~of higher social standards for behavior and respect~~  
28 ~~for others~~

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- 13. To provide a philosophy of discipline that **promotes fairness and equity with clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive student behavior** ~~will guide staff and students in promoting good behavior in an environment that is conducive to effective and efficient learning~~
  
- 4. To clearly communicate to students, staff **members**, and parents expected student behaviors and consequences for misbehavior

B. ISSUE

~~The Board of Education of Montgomery County~~ **Board of Education (Board)** believes that **promoting student learning** is a ~~continuous evolutionary process. The Board also believes that while learning is not confined to a school building, it is nonetheless the~~ **its** primary function; **to this end**, 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 the **Board's discipline policy sets forth the expectation of** an environment that is conducive to

57 ~~effective and efficient learning,~~ and acknowledges that  
58 appropriate behavior is learned. In addition to a  
59 student's home, and ~~the need for mutual respect and~~  
60 ~~cooperation among all segments of the school community.~~  
61 ~~Schools~~ schools should beare also communities in which  
62 positive behavior is expected, and ~~modeled,~~ and learned  
63 within an environment of mutual respect and dignity.

64  
65 b) ~~The Board believes that discipline is learned~~  
66 ~~and, therefore, can and should be taught in the~~  
67 ~~home, school, and community. The child also~~  
68 ~~learns through experience and imitation of those~~  
69 ~~around him.~~

70  
71 In order to grow into healthy, productive adults, students  
72 should be afforded opportunities to learn from their  
73 mistakes, correct any harm that results from their  
74 behavior, and restore relationships that are disrupted by  
75 their conduct. An engaging environment conducive to  
76 learning can keep students in school so that they may  
77 become college and career ready.

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79 C. ~~POSITION~~PHILOSOPHY

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81 1. ~~Philosophy~~

82  
83 1. Schools that foster positive school climates help to  
84 engage all students in learning and intervene

85 appropriately to support struggling and vulnerable  
86 students.

87

88 ~~3. School Climate~~

89

90 ~~School organizational and operational structures are~~  
91 ~~as important a focus for change as the individual~~  
92 ~~student's behavior.~~

93

94 2. Discipline is a developmental process, and effective  
95 discipline strategies meet students' varied behavioral  
96 and developmental needs with tiered supports and  
97 interventions. It is the role of teachers and staff  
98 members to respond to inappropriate student behavior  
99 in a timely and age-appropriate way that supports  
100 personal growth and learning opportunities for all  
101 students. ~~As the child matures, he/she should be~~  
102 ~~given increased responsibility in keeping with his/her~~  
103 ~~developmental level and social maturity and every~~  
104 ~~opportunity to practice self-discipline in order to~~  
105 ~~positively reinforce responsible action. Classroom~~  
106 ~~models should put children's needs at the center of~~  
107 ~~decisions about classroom management and problem-~~  
108 ~~solving. Children should be helped to understand the~~  
109 ~~consequences of violence and conflict. Our schools~~  
110 ~~should be environments where conflict that may occur~~  
111 ~~can be used as an opportunity to teach and learn. The~~  
112 ~~ultimate goal should be the internalization of~~  
113 ~~discipline so that little external enforcement is~~

114 ~~required. The Board believes that this philosophy will~~  
115 ~~foster the development of positive, self-disciplined,~~  
116 ~~self-reliant individuals capable of behaving~~  
117 ~~appropriately as the situation demands.~~

118

119 a.3. ~~The superintendent will seek a~~ **A continuum of**  
120 **instructional strategies and disciplinary responses**  
121 **supports teaching and learning, fosters positive**  
122 **behaviors, and reflects a restorative discipline**  
123 **philosophy,** ~~alternative strategies to address students~~  
124 ~~who are chronically disruptive and/or dangerous to the~~  
125 ~~school including as follows:~~

126

127 a) **Providing staff training to** ~~Strengthening~~  
128 **strengthen** classroom behavior management skills  
129 **with strategies for teaching and modeling**  
130 **expected behavior and social and emotional**  
131 **competencies** ~~through staff training~~

132

133 b) **Providing** ~~Expanding the repertoire of curriculum~~  
134 ~~based instruction~~ **regarding social/emotional**  
135 **learning, cultural awareness, problem solving,**  
136 **and** ~~about conflict resolution, positive social~~  
137 ~~skills, problem solving, bias awareness and~~  
138 ~~prejudice reduction~~

139

140 c) ~~Increasing~~ **Maintaining a continuum of prevention,**  
141 **and intervention strategies and programs, as**  
142 **needed, in coordination with the community and**

~~alternative strategies, programs, and/or sites~~

143  
144  
145 4. Caring adults in schools play an important role in  
146 building strong relationships with students, which  
147 facilitates their connection to school and decreases  
148 their likelihood to engage in disruptive behaviors.  
149 School staff members should seek ways to develop  
150 meaningful relationships with students because  
151 students who have meaningful relationships with an  
152 adult in their school are less likely to engage in  
153 disruptive behaviors in class, be absent, or drop out  
154 of school.

155  
156 5. Staff members are ~~encouraged to involve the family to~~  
157 ~~seek solutions. The~~ **will collaborate with family**  
158 **families** and **the** community also ~~must take~~  
159 ~~responsibility to~~ provide guidance, support, and  
160 structure to meet student needs.

161  
162 i. ~~In some instances, changing the environment will~~  
163 ~~be the most appropriate response; in other~~  
164 ~~situations, the student and his behavior must be~~  
165 ~~dealt with directly.~~

166  
167 ~~It is equally important that there be a careful~~  
168 ~~evaluation of the individual situation so that~~  
169 ~~the school's response to the student is~~  
170 ~~appropriate. To that end. All available~~  
171 ~~resources should be utilized, including~~

172 ~~preventive and responsive interventions to~~  
173 ~~support students' needs. These interventions~~  
174 ~~should include interdisciplinary, psychological~~  
175 ~~curricular, behavioral services which should take~~  
176 ~~place within classrooms, schools and alternative~~  
177 ~~settings.~~

178  
179 6. ~~Exclusion from the classroom should be the~~  
180 ~~disciplinary action of last resort. Fair, firm, and~~  
181 consistent application of disciplinary action is  
182 expected, and students should be made aware of the  
183 consequences of misbehavior. **However, school**  
184 **discipline should be administered in a way to keep**  
185 **students within their regular school program to the**  
186 **greatest extent practicable. Removing students from**  
187 **the classroom, and suspensions and expulsions in**  
188 **particular, are to be used only as a last resort.**

189  
190 7. **Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) will build**  
191 **staff capacity and continuously evaluate its**  
192 **discipline policies and practices to promote fairness,**  
193 **equity, and achievement for all students.**

194  
195 a) **To ensure fairness and equity to all students,**  
196 **school staff members need to be equipped with the**  
197 **support, knowledge, and skills needed to prevent**  
198 **and address conflict, meet the behavioral needs**  
199 **of a diversity of students, and fairly and**  
200 **equitably apply discipline policies and**

201 practices.

202

203 b) Staff members shall be equipped and supported to  
204 apply discipline using individualized approaches  
205 that, as necessary, take into account available  
206 information regarding student developmental  
207 delays, mental health challenges, and other  
208 medical or physical issues, or outside stressors  
209 as well as cultural and linguistic factors that  
210 may play a role in behavior.

211 ~~While causes are not always evident, misbehavior~~  
212 ~~may be related to economic, social, physical,~~  
213 ~~psychological or emotional factors. It is~~  
214 ~~important for staff to consider that misbehavior~~  
215 ~~could be a symptom. Effective discipline depends~~  
216 ~~on the cause of the behavior.~~

217

218 8. The superintendent of schools will put in place  
219 appropriate procedures for students with disabilities,  
220 consistent with federal laws and due process for all  
221 students.

222

223 ~~a) In a school system the size of Montgomery County,~~  
224 ~~absolutely consistent application of a discipline~~  
225 ~~policy, if valued as the overriding consideration~~  
226 ~~and taken to the extreme, would require the~~  
227 ~~listing of every possible infraction with a~~  
228 ~~specific, mandated disciplinary action in~~  
229 ~~response to each. At the other extreme,~~



230 ~~recognition of both the diversity of community~~  
231 ~~settings within the county and the individuality~~  
232 ~~of each disciplinary situation would suggest that~~  
233 ~~each school should establish its own disciplinary~~  
234 ~~standards and apply them only as appropriate to~~  
235 ~~each student's situation. The Board finds the~~  
236 ~~need to balance these two opposing considerations~~  
237 ~~and, therefore, elects to follow a middle ground~~  
238 ~~policy. Certain major infractions are recognized~~  
239 ~~as requiring consistent countywide actions from~~  
240 ~~and direction for all schools. For these~~  
241 ~~infractions, a specified range of responses must~~  
242 ~~be utilized by all school personnel, with the~~  
243 ~~severity and/or frequency of the infraction~~  
244 ~~determining where in the range the penalty should~~  
245 ~~lie. At the same time, for disciplinary~~  
246 ~~infractions not established with mandated~~  
247 ~~disciplinary actions, development of appropriate~~  
248 ~~standards and responses will remain an individual~~  
249 ~~school responsibility subject to review by the~~  
250 ~~appropriate director in the Office of School~~  
251 ~~Administration. Input from students, parents,~~  
252 ~~and school personnel will permit these~~  
253 ~~disciplinary actions to be tailored to the needs~~  
254 ~~and desires of each community within the county.~~  
255 ~~The Board seeks in this way to provide consistent~~  
256 ~~responses to the more severe infractions without~~  
257 ~~prejudging every disciplinary situation and~~

258 without depriving individual school  
259 administrators of the opportunity for flexible  
260 and creative responses to the vast majority of  
261 cases.

262  
263 The Board believes that this philosophy will  
264 produce individuals with social consciences who  
265 see the good sense in acceptable behavior and who  
266 are spared the consequences of misbehavior.

267  
268 2. Student Behavior

269  
270 a) Student conduct that disrupts class work,  
271 involves disorder, or invades the rights of  
272 others will not be tolerated and may be cause for  
273 suspension or other disciplinary action.

274  
275 The administration of disciplinary action will  
276 focus both on consequences and on changing or  
277 managing inappropriate behavior.

278  
279 e) The superintendent will ensure that major  
280 infractions that are recognized as requiring  
281 consistent countywide actions from and direction  
282 for all schools are described in Regulation JFA-  
283 RA, *Implementation of Students Rights and*  
284 *Responsibilities* and summarized in the *Student*  
285 *Guide to Rights and Responsibilities*.

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~~d) Each school will maintain a local school discipline policy developed and reviewed regularly with the active involvement of parents, students, and staff. All school discipline policies and procedures shall be consistent with the philosophy of this student discipline policy.~~

9. The superintendent **of schools** will implement a comprehensive plan for safety and security that ~~will ensure~~**maintains** an learning and working environment **for working and learning** that protects the rights, health, and welfare of students and staff.

10. The superintendent of schools will work with the Montgomery County Department of Police, the Montgomery County State's Attorney Office, and other law enforcement agencies to review, implement, and update as necessary, a written agreement that sets clear expectations for the roles and responsibilities of law enforcement personnel as important partners in supporting a positive school climate, while avoiding unnecessary arrests and referrals to the justice system that may have unintended negative collateral consequences for students and their families, as well as disproportionate impacts on students of color and students with disabilities.

314 D. DESIRED OUTCOMES

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316 21. Schools will **foster** ~~be safe and orderly~~ environments  
317 **that are conducive to** ~~where students are engaged in~~  
318 **learning and where positive behavior is expected,**  
319 **modeled, and learned within an environment of mutual**  
320 **respect and dignity.**

321

322 42. Parents and students will be well informed about  
323 school discipline policies and will be encouraged to  
324 participate in efforts to ensure that schools are safe  
325 and orderly.

326

327 43. Students will understand their responsibilities and  
328 rights **with respect to discipline.**

329

330 4. School discipline will be administered fairly,  
331 equitably, and consistently. Schools should avoid any  
332 disparate and disproportional impact of the policy.

333

334 5. School discipline practices will engage students in  
335 the classroom and in the school community so that they  
336 may become college and career ready.

337

338 ~~3. Students will exercise self discipline, self~~  
339 ~~management, and demonstrate appropriate behavior in~~  
340 ~~order to become productive citizens.~~

341

342 E. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

343

344 1. ~~There will be an~~ Information from this policy will be  
345 ~~described in~~ *MCPS Code of Conduct The Student's Guide*  
346 ~~to Rights and Responsibilities~~ which will be made  
347 available to all elementary school students **and their**  
348 **families.** ~~and will be distributed to all students~~  
349 ~~entering secondary schools.~~

350

351 2. ~~Specific rights and responsibilities which all members~~  
352 ~~of the school community should assume are presented in~~  
353 ~~Regulation JFA-RA, *Implementation of Student Rights*~~  
354 ~~*and Responsibilities.*~~

355

356 32. Each school shall develop its own code of conduct with  
357 the involvement of families, students, and staff, and  
358 review it periodically to incorporate feedback and  
359 learning from implementation. The superintendent of  
360 schools or his/her designee will review each school's  
361 code of conduct to ensure consistency with this  
362 policy, MCPS regulations, the *MCPS Code of Conduct*, as  
363 well as applicable federal and state law. ~~is~~  
364 ~~responsible for disciplinary infractions not~~  
365 ~~established with mandated disciplinary actions based~~  
366 ~~on analysis of local data and input from students,~~  
367 ~~parents, and school personnel.~~

368

369 4. ~~Procedures for disciplining students for major~~

370 ~~infractions that require consistent countywide actions~~  
371 ~~from and direction for all schools are found in~~  
372 ~~specific regulations such as:~~

373

374 ~~a) Regulation ACF RA, Sexual Harassment~~

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376 ~~b) Regulation CFA RA, Site-based Participatory~~  
377 ~~Management~~

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379 ~~e) Regulation COC RA, Trespassing or Willful~~  
380 ~~Disturbances on MCPS Property~~

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382 ~~d) Regulation COE RA, Weapons on MCPS Property~~

383

384 ~~e) Regulation COF RA, Intoxicants on MCPS Property~~

385

386 ~~f) Regulation COG RA, Portable Communication Devices~~

387

388 ~~g) Regulation ECC RA, Loss of MCPS Property~~

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390 ~~h) Regulation GDB RA, Protection of Employees,~~  
391 ~~Students, and Property~~

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393 ~~i) Regulation IGT RA, Appropriate Use of Computer~~  
394 ~~Networks~~

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396 ~~j) Regulation JGA RA, Maintenance of Classroom~~  
397 ~~Control and Discipline~~

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~~k) Regulation JGA-RB, Suspension or Expulsion of an  
MCPS Student~~

~~l) Regulation JGB-RA, Search and Seizure~~

53. The superintendent **of schools** will monitor issues of concern to the safety and security of the MCPS community and report to the Board **as appropriate** particularly ~~those items for which legislative positions need to be taken.~~

64. The superintendent **of schools** will monitor ~~recordkeeping and other~~ **discipline-related** data collection from schools and field offices regarding ~~disciplinary infractions and interventions to evaluate~~ **interventions** and ~~develop~~ **programs and develop steps to address any disparate and disproportional impact of discipline practices.**

~~7. The superintendent will 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 in a diverse environment.~~

426 F. REVIEW AND REPORTING

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428 1. ~~The Board of Education will receive suspension~~  
429 ~~information in the annual Success for Every Student~~  
430 ~~report.~~

431

432 2. This policy will be reviewed ~~on an ongoing basis~~ in  
433 accordance with the Board ~~of Education's~~ policy review  
434 process.

435

436

437 *Policy History:* Adopted by Resolution No. 20-97, January 14,  
438 1997; **amended** .