Rationale

The Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) recognizes that acceptable behavior is essential for the development of responsible and self-disciplined citizens and for the provision of an effective school program. Positive behavior is based on respect for one's self and for the worth and human dignity of others. The development of such positive behavior in students is a dual function of the home and of the school. Additionally, the LPS is also required to implement protocols (requirements) set forth in RI General Law regarding student behavior as well as applicable federal statutes.

Scope of Policy

This code of conduct applies to all students involved in any school-related, school-sponsored activities, including extra-curricular, co-curricular, and athletic competitions regardless of whether they are on or off school grounds, or whether they are participating in an activity or a spectator at an event.

Every student is under the direction and control of the teachers and/or principal in the school during the following periods of time:

- during school hours of a designated school day while on school premises during school day
- while attending any school activities
- while being transported, on a school bus paid and/or supported by the Lincoln Public School funds, to and from school at the time the child has entered the school bus at the designated route pickup point and/or left the school bus at the designated route drop-off point
- Follow the rules, regulations, and guidelines as outlines in each school's respective student handbooks

Students are expected to maintain proper standards of behavior at all times and will:

- Respect the rights and dignity of others
- Observe and adhere to the rules of the school/classroom
- Contribute to a positive school culture/climate

School Staff will:

- Implement the provisions of the code of student conduct and specific provisions included in the student handbooks in an equitable manner;
- Nurture a school environment that supports learning, where academic, physical, social, and emotional growth are emphasized; and
- Ensure that expectations are clear and consistently communicated.

It is the responsibility of school administrators to establish a student handbook for the elementary, middle, and high school that provides detail relating to matters of discipline. Each handbook shall clearly set forth behavioral standards as well as appropriate responses when these standards are not met. These handbooks will be reviewed/updated annually by the administrators and signed by each student's parent/guardian at the beginning of the school year. All professional staff members have responsibility for consistency in establishing and maintaining an appropriate behavioral atmosphere.

POTENTIAL RESPONSES FOR VIOLATIONS OF BEHAVIOR CODE

The culture/climate of the school rests on principles of mutual respect, responsibility, and the building of positive relationships between and among adults and students who make up the school community. When student behavior does not reflect that expectations set forth in the Student Handbook, responses supported by the Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) include but are not limited to the following:

- Positive supports and interventions
- Restorative responses
- Restrictive interventions
- Interventions/responses outlined in school level student handbooks (such as before and after school detention, alternative placements within the school day, loss of extra-curricular/social activity privileges, etc.)
- Suspension (short and long-term)
- Expulsion

Appeal Process

1. Prior to suspension, except for such time as not feasible, as where the student's presence endangers persons or property or threatens disruption of the academic process, thus justifying immediate removal from school, the necessary notice or hearing shall follow as soon as practicable, the student shall be afforded:

    a. a clear, written statement of the reasons for the suspension that may be imposed;

    b. within three days of the receipt of the notice of the suspension, the building administrator's decision may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools.

    c. following the appeal hearing with the Superintendent of Schools, the notice of the right to a prompt public or private hearing, before the School Committee, at the student's election, and the right to be represented by counsel at such hearing will be provided; and

d. if a hearing is requested, the student shall be given a prompt notice setting the time and place of such hearing, said time and place to be reasonably set so as to allow sufficient time for preparation, without undue delay.

2. In the event a student has not attained the age of majority (18 years), the parent or guardian shall be afforded the procedures stated in Section a, b, c and d above. Such notice shall be written in the parent's spoken language unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

3. Should a hearing before the Lincoln School Committee be requested the student shall have the right to:

   a. representation and participation by counsel; and

   b. cross-examine witnesses and to present evidence in his or her behalf.

4. The student may be furnished a copy of the record without cost upon request.

5. A written decision shall be rendered, within a reasonable time, based exclusively on the record detailing the reasons and factual basis, therefore.

6. The student shall promptly be provided with a copy of the said decision.

7. A copy of the decision, together with the record, shall be promptly forwarded to the Commissioner of Education if there is an appeal.

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TOWN OF LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE, Lincoln, Rhode Island