525 VIOLENCE PREVENTION [APPLICABLE TO STUDENTS AND STAFF]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to recognize that violence has increased and to identify measures that the school district will take in an attempt to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from violent and disruptive behavior.

The school board is committed to promoting healthy human relationships and learning environments that are physically and psychologically safe for all members of the school community. It further believes that students are the first priority and they should be protected from physical or emotional harm during school activities, and on school grounds, buses or field trips while under school district supervision.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. It is the policy of the school district to strictly enforce its weapons policy (Policy 501).

B. The policy of the school district to act promptly in investigating all acts, or formal or informal complaints, of violence and take appropriate disciplinary action against any student or staff member who is found to have violated this policy or any related policy.

C. The administration will periodically review discipline policies and procedures, prepare revisions if necessary, and submit them to the school board for review and adoption.

D. The school district will implement approved violence prevention strategies to promote safe and secure learning environments, to diminish violence in our schools, and to aid in the protection of children whose health or welfare may be jeopardized through acts of violence.

III. IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

A. The school board will review and approve policies to prevent and address violence in our schools. The superintendent or designee will develop procedures to effectively implement the school weapons and violence prevention policies. It shall be incumbent on all students and staff to observe all policies and report violations to the school administration.

B. The school board and administration will inform staff and students annually of

policies and procedures related to violence prevention and weapons.

C. The school district will act promptly to investigate all acts and formal and informal complaints of violence and take appropriate disciplinary action against any student or staff member who is found to have violated this policy or any related policy.

D. The consequences set forth in the school weapons policy (Policy 501) will be imposed upon any student or nonstudent who possesses, uses or distributes a weapon when in a school location.

E. The consequences set forth in the school hazing policy (Policy 526) will be imposed upon any student or staff member who commits an act against a student or staff member; or coerces a student or staff member into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person in order for the student or staff member to be initiated into or affiliated with an organization, or for any other purpose.

F. Students who engage in assault or violent behavior will be removed from the classroom immediately and for a period of time deemed appropriate by the principal, in consultation with the teacher, pursuant to the student discipline policy (Policy 506).

G. Students with disabilities may be expelled for behavior unrelated to their disabilities, subject to the procedural safeguards required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.

H. Procedures will be developed for the referral of any person in violation of this policy or the weapons policy to the local law enforcement agency in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 121A.05.

I. Students who wear objectionable emblems, signs, words, objects, or pictures on clothing communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group or which connotes gang membership or that approves, advances, or provokes any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence against other individuals as defined in the harassment and violence policy (Policy 413) will be subject to the procedures set forth in the student dress and appearance policy (Policy 504). "Gang" as used in this policy means any ongoing organization, association or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities, the commission of one or more criminal acts, which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol, and whose members individually or collectively engage in or whose members engaged in a pattern of criminal gang activity. A "pattern of gang activity" means the commission, attempt to commit, conspiring to commit, or solicitation of two or more criminal acts, provided the criminal acts were committed on separate dates or by two or more persons who are members of or belong to the same criminal street gang.

J. This policy is not intended to abridge the rights of students to express political, religious, philosophical, or similar opinions by wearing apparel on which such

messages are stated. Such messages are acceptable as long as they are not lewd, vulgar, obscene, defamatory, profane, denote gang affiliation, advocate harassment or violence against others, are likely to disrupt the education process, or cause others to react in a violent or illegal manner (Policy 504).

IV. PREVENTION STRATEGIES

The school district has adopted and will implement the following prevention strategies to promote safe and secure learning environments, to diminish violence in our schools, and to aid in the protection of children whose health or welfare may be jeopardized through acts of violence.

[Note: The school board can adopt any of the prevention strategies that it intends to implement in its schools, including some or all of the following sample strategies.]

A. Adopt a district crisis management policy to address potential violent crisis situations in the district.

B. Provide training in recognition, prevention, and safe responses to violence, and development of a positive school climate.

C. Coordinate a local school security review committee or task force comprised of school officials, law enforcement, parents, students and other youth service providers to advise on policy implementation.

D. In-service training for personnel in aspects of reporting, visibility and supervision as deterrents to violence.

E. Promote student safety responsibility by encouraging the reporting of suspicious individuals and unusual activities on school grounds.

F. Establish a curriculum committee that explores ways of teaching students violence prevention strategies, law-related education and character/ values education (universal values, e.g. honesty, personal responsibility, self-discipline, cooperation and respect for others.)

G. Establish clear school rules that prevent and deter violence.

H. Develop cross-cultural awareness programs to unify students of all cultures and backgrounds, to develop mutual respect and understanding of shared experiences and values among students, and to promote the message of inclusion.

I. Establish conflict resolution training, conflict management, or peer mediation programs for staff and students to teach conservative approaches to settling disputes.

J. Develop curriculum that teaches social skills such as maintaining self-control, building communications skills, forming friendships, resisting peer pressure, being

appropriately assertive, forming positive relationships with adults, and resolving conflict in nonviolent ways.

K. Develop curriculum that teaches critical viewing and listening skills in analyzing mass media to recognize stereotypes, distinguish fact from fantasy and identify differences in behavior and values that conflict with their own.

L. Develop student safety forums that both inform and elicit students' ideas about particular safety problems in the building.

M. Develop a student photo or name identification system for quick identification of the student in case of emergency.

N. Develop a staff photo or name identification system using identification badges for quick identification of unauthorized people on campus.

O. Require all visitors to check-in the main office upon their arrival and state their business at the school. A visitor badge may be issued for easy identification that the visitor is authorized to be present in the school building.

P. Develop curriculum on character education including, but not limited to, character qualities such as attentiveness, truthfulness, respect for authority, diligence, gratefulness, self-discipline, patience, forgiveness, respect for others, peacemaking, and resourcefulness.

V. STUDENT SUPPORT

A. Students will have access to school-based student service professionals, when available, including counselors, nurses, social workers, and psychologists who are knowledgeable in methods to assist students with violence prevention and intervention.

B. Students will be apprised of school board policies designed to protect their personal safety.

C. Students will be provided with information as to school district and building rules regarding weapons and violence.

D. Students will be informed of resources for violence prevention and proper reporting.

VI. PERSONNEL

A. School district personnel shall comply with the school weapons policy (Policy 501) and the school hazing policy (Policy 526).

B. School district personnel shall be knowledgeable of violence prevention policies

and report any violation to school administration immediately. School district personnel will be informed annually as to school district and building rules regarding weapons and violence prevention.

C. School district personnel or agents of the school district shall not engage in emotionally abusive acts including malicious shouting, ridicule, and/or threats or other forms of corporal punishment (Policy 507).

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 13.43, Subd. 16 (School District or Charter School Disclosure of Violence or Inappropriate Sexual Contact)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.22 (Violence Prevention Education)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.232 (Character Development Education)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.05 (Policy to Refer Firearms Possessor)
Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.44 (Expulsion for Possession of Firearm)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.61 (Discipline and Removal of Students from Class)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.57 (Crisis Management Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.64 (Notification)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.69 (Hazing Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 181.967, Subd. 5 (School District Disclosure of Violence or Inappropriate Sexual Contact)
18 U.S.C. § 921 (Definition of Firearm)
20 U.S.C. § 1400 *et seq.* (, Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004)
29 U.S.C. § 794 *et seq.* (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, § 504)
Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503, 89 S.Ct. 733, 21 L.Ed.2d 31 (1969)
Stephenson v. Davenport Cmty. Sch. Dist. 110 F.3d 1303 (8th Cir. 1997)
McIntire v. Bethel School Indep. Sch. Dist. No. 3, 804 F.Supp. 1415, 78 Educ. L. Represent. 828 (W.D. Okla. 1992)
Olesen v. Board of Educ. of Sch. Dist. No. 228, 676 F.Supp. 822, 44 Educ. L.Rep. 205 (N.D. Ill. 1987)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 501 (School Weapons Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 504 (Student Dress and Appearance)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 507 (Corporal Punishment)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514 (Bullying Prohibition Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 526 (Hazing Prohibition)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 529 (Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Students)

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