Summary of the 2026-27 Code of Rights and Responsibilities

Introduction

The 2026-27 Code of Rights and Responsibilities for the School District of La Crosse outlines the shared rights and responsibilities of students, parents/guardians, and staff to foster a positive, safe and effective educational environment. It emphasizes collaboration among all stakeholders to support students' educational journeys, ensuring that each child is treated with dignity and given the opportunity to succeed.

Discipline Philosophy

This section describes our discipline philosophy developed with input from students, parents, staff, and community stakeholders. Our philosophy aims to promote positive behavior through professional dispositions, effective systems, and supportive practices. Key elements include:

- *Staff Dispositions*: Emphasis on building positive relationships, maintaining high expectations for student success, addressing biases, and treating students with respect.
- *Supportive Systems*: Implementation of frameworks such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) to support student success.
- *Supportive Practices:* Partnering with families to understand and solve problems, balanced discipline that prioritizes interventions and restorative practices first, helping students learn through reasonable accountability

Shared Rights and Responsibilities

The section details the collective rights and responsibilities of students, families, and staff to ensure the safe and effective operation of schools:

- *Attendance Matters:* Students have a right and responsibility to attend school and families and staff play an important role in supporting regular school attendance.
- *Respect:* Every person in our schools has a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect.
- *Safety:* Students, families, and staff share the responsibility of following school rules, actively participating in conflict resolution, and maintaining open communication to ensure a safe and positive school environment.
- *Engagement:* All of us are responsible for staying engaged in school, working together, and actively supporting each other to make sure students are at school and learning at high levels.

Positive School Cultures

Creating and maintaining a positive school culture involves clear communication of expectations, consistent support for positive behavior, and collaborative problem-solving to address challenges. This section describes some of the proactive approaches used to create a welcoming environment and positive cultures in our schools. Those include:

- *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports:* Teaching and supporting positive student behavior.
- *Social Emotional Learning:* Teaching students the skills to navigate life and relationships.
- *Restorative Practices:* Solving problems together in a way that promotes accountability, repairing harm, and fostering a supportive and respectful school community.
- *Mental Health Supports:* Promoting and providing mental health supports, ensuring a supportive and healthy school environment for everyone.

Key District Policies, Rights, and Responsibilities

This section outlines important policies that ensures all students have the right to a safe and inclusive educational experience.

- Students have the right to feel safe in school which means they should be able to attend school without fear of threat, harm, harassment or bullying.
- Students and families have the right to bring concerns about curriculum, materials or instruction to the attention of school staff.
- Students have the right to attend school in an alcohol and drug-free environment.

- Students have the right to a learning environment free from discrimination, harassment and violence based on an individual's actual or perceived: sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, socio-economic status, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, gender nonconformity or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability.
- Students have a right to report concerns and not to be retaliated against for making good faith reports of concerns, discrimination, harassment, or violence.
- Students must not bring any item or material that would cause, or tend to cause, a disruption or endanger the health or safety of students or other people.
- Students have a responsibility to follow school rules and have the right to due process when involved in a violation of rules. Included is the opportunity to hear the nature of the violation and to give their account of the situation.
- Students have the right to choose their manner of dress and personal grooming unless it presents a clear danger to the student's health or safety, causes an interference with school work or creates classroom or school disorder.
- Students have the right to privacy regarding their school records and students and families can review those records upon request, as allowed by law.
- Students must use district and personal electronic devices responsibly as allowed by the school and cannot use those devices to record, distribute or publish acts of violence or other school violations which bully, harrass, harm or shame others, unless the recording is to solely report it to school staff.
    - ***Elementary Schools***: Phones and other smart devices should be left at home. If brought to school, those devices will not be accessible to students at all during the school day.
    - ***Middle Schools****:* Phones and smart devices will be collected and securely stored in lockboxes in homeroom classrooms each morning or secured another way during the day. Devices will be returned at the end of the school day.
    - ***High Schools***: Phones must be turned off and put away throughout the school day. Students will have access to their devices at lunch but will be encouraged to minimize use to foster in-person connection and meaningful engagement with peers.

Standards of Student Behavior and Staff Responses
Students are expected to be respectful, responsible and safe in school and must work with school staff and their families to learn and practice those behaviors. School interventions and discipline are categorized based on the severity and impact of the behavior:

- *Minor Behaviors:* Behaviors that only affect the student are addressed through classroom-based interventions and proactive teaching of expected behaviors.
- *Moderate Behaviors:* Behaviors that affect others' learning often require additional interventions such as behavior skills re-teaching, peer mediation, and restorative practices as well as school consequences.
- *Major Behaviors:* Behaviors that disrupt the school or are illegal or unsafe will require more intensive interventions and will be subject to further disciplinary action including school removals, district discipline hearings, pre-expulsion meetings, or expulsion hearings.

Special Education and Section 504 Protections
The section provides specific guidelines for students with disabilities, ensuring they receive appropriate support, accommodations and protections. It outlines the procedures for addressing behavioral issues and ensuring compliance with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Section 504 plans.

Concerns and Grievances
Students and parents have the right to voice concerns and seek resolution through a structured grievance process. Initial concerns should be addressed at the building level with teachers and principals, with the option to escalate unresolved issues to district administrators and, ultimately, the superintendent.

The 2026-27 Code of Rights and Responsibilities aims to create a supportive, respectful, and effective educational environment for all members of the School District of La Crosse community. This document is solely a summary of our code so please take time to familiarize yourself with the full code so you can support a safe and effective learning environment for all students.