

**Discipline Equity/Advisory Task Force**  
**February 23, 2017**

**Present:**

Edie Adams, FIC	Rick Carr, FIC
Kaleb Carter, Centennial	Stephanie Hayek, CECC
Gwenetta Posey, Dr. Howard	Kathy Shannon, Board of Education
Joel Wright, Jefferson	Bryan Yacko, Central
Orlando Thomas, Mellon, Chair	Jeanne Smith, Mellon, Recorder

**Code of Conduct Suggested Changes**

- *Acknowledgement of Receipt of Student Code of Conduct:* Orlando asked the group if they favored keeping the parent signature page (page 63) in the Code of Conduct even though we don't make an effort to collect these forms. He indicated that Jennifer Smith advised us last year to keep the page in the book rather than eliminate it. Responses varied:
  - 1) We could make a more concerted effort to collect these signed forms, possibly at parent-teacher conferences or at re-entry conferences in the cases of students who are suspended.
  - 2) Would having signed forms from some parents and not others make the District more liable if a parent claimed they didn't receive a Code of Conduct in the mail?
  - 3) Collected signed forms would be helpful if a particular parent claimed they didn't receive a Code in the mail but had turned in a signed form.

Orlando and Jeanne will contact Jennifer Smith to pose this question again.

- *False Alarms:* This topic was discussed because a fire alarm had been pulled by a student on this date at Dr. Howard. The consequences, per the Code of Conduct, were discussed. So changes were suggested.
- *Dress Code Glossary Definition:* Kaleb Carter shared a concern from some Centennial staff members regarding the dress code definition in the glossary. Some staff believe the wording about clothing being "distracting or indecent to the extent it interferes with the learning and teaching process" is sexist because it impacts female students far more than male students and puts the "blame" on females for being "distracting" instead of on males for being "distracted." These staff believe the verbiage in the Code perpetuates females being viewed as sexual objects. Kaleb reported that far more girls are asked to cover up or change clothing that is considered "revealing" than boys are. He said occasionally boys will be required to put on a belt or tie up their pants if they are sagging. Kaleb reported that the staff members who asked that this topic be discussed also asked to make a presentation to the group. Orlando clarified that Kaleb's membership on the committee means he is the conduit for Centennial staff to share their concerns.
  - 1) Enforcement of the dress code policy was discussed. Task force members indicated that the dress code is not enforced consistently from school to school or even throughout the same school because different staff have different ideas of what is "distracting" or

“indecent.” Kaleb reported that he also believes there is a racial component to the lack of consistency in enforcement. He said, in his experience, African-American girls are asked to change or cover up more often than white girls who violate the policy. It was also discussed that there is a cultural component involved. One task force member stated that sometimes girls are merely dressing the way their mothers do and in their culture it is acceptable. Should cultural differences such as these be considered “violations”?

2) Kaleb reported that as a male, he usually asks a female administrator to deal with girls who violate the dress code because he feels uncomfortable having discussions of that nature with female students.

3) Bryan Yacko said the dress code is not enforced to the letter of the Code for practical reasons as well. He said temperatures vary greatly throughout Central, so students are allowed to wear jackets, coats, or gloves as necessary. He advocated for exempting hats from the forbidden list but keeping hoods since hoods can be used to hide one’s face and hinder identification. The question was asked whether hats still connote gang affiliation. Bryan and Kaleb said there are many ways to signify gang affiliation and still abide by the dress code, so hats aren’t the issue they used to be. Bryan said often the reasons Central administrators ask students to cover up or change is due to students wearing clothing that depicts alcohol or drug usage.

4) It was noted that dress code is a volatile topic because it requires a delicate balance between self-expression and social acceptability.

Orlando suggested that dress code issues believed to be sexist or racist be addressed by the Social Justice Committee rather than DEA since dress code is not something for which students are “disciplined” per se. It was noted that if this committee suggests that the glossary definition be changed, the Policy Review Committee would need to consider changes to Board policy since the Code definition is predicated on Board policy.

- *Pages 3-4 Restorative Practices:* Rick Carr noted that on p. 3 it states Restorative Practices may be assigned by a teacher or an administrator but on p. 4 Restorative Practices are listed under consequences that can only be assigned by an administrator. He felt this was confusing. Orlando responded that depending on the particular practice, it might be available to teachers and administrators or just administrators.
- The fact that there is no Level 2 or Level 3 violation for disruptive behavior in the elementary section of the code was discussed. It was noted that at the elementary level there is a Level 3 violation for Acts that Disrupt or Interfere with Staff (#43) and sometimes that is used when a student is simply disruptive to the educational environment. The title of that violation is similar to secondary violation # 17 Participation in Acts Designed to Disrupt School (Strikes, Walkouts, Mass Defiance) but inherently different. Jeanne noted that the problem she comes across with suspension letters is elementary administrators using inappropriate codes to code disruptive behavior since there is no “disruptive behavior” violation code in the elementary section. It was noted that sometimes elementary code #31 Persistent/Severe Level 1 Behaviors is used for disruptive behavior. Orlando indicated #31 is the appropriate elementary code and that will be clarified with administrators.

- *Page 23 Secondary Procedures for Teacher Involvement in Student Discipline:* Delete “~~listed above~~” from column 2, paragraph 1, since Level 1/minor offenses at secondary are not a set of designated behaviors the way they are at the elementary level, where this verbiage originated.
- *Page 47 Policy 710.14R Substance Abuse – Secondary – Administrative Procedures:* It was suggested that second and third violations of Use/Possession/Under the influence contain the same provision for reduction of suspension days from school and extracurricular activities as a first violation. This would change the verbiage as follows:

2. A second violation shall result in administrative review to determine additional disciplinary actions up to an out-of-school suspension for ten school days and suspension from all school activities (teams, clubs, and all school-sponsored activities) for up to 90 calendar days. A parent conference will be scheduled as soon as possible with the principal or his/her designee, and if the parent or legal guardian and student agree to participate in an appropriate substance abuse prevention activity as designated by the principal, the absence caused by any suspension will be excused and make-up work accepted for full credit. **Participation in the counseling program will permit reduction of the disciplinary action originally assigned. In addition, the number of days suspended from extracurricular activities will also be reduced. If the student and his/her parent or legal guardian fail to participate and complete the prevention activity, the remainder of the original disciplinary action will be invoked. If parents refuse or are unable to attend the counseling program, the principal, with the concurrence of the Superintendent or his/her designee, may permit any out-of-school suspension assigned to be reduced as stated above, providing that the student participates. Middle and high school students will be referred to the Response to Intervention (RtI) Team for additional support. Parents will be informed of all actions taken.**

3. Any subsequent violation, in any one school year, shall result in administrative review to determine additional disciplinary actions up to an out-of-school suspension for ten school days and recommendation for expulsion from school and all school activities for the remainder of the school year. **Participation in the counseling program may permit reduction of the disciplinary action originally assigned. In addition, the number of days suspended from extracurricular activities may also be reduced. If the student and his/her parent or legal guardian fail to participate and complete the prevention activity, the remainder of the original disciplinary action will be invoked. If parents refuse or are unable to attend the counseling program, the principal, with the concurrence of the Superintendent or his/her designee, may permit any out-of-school suspension assigned to be reduced as stated above, providing that the student participates. Middle and high school students will be referred to the Response to Intervention (RtI) Team for additional support. Parents will be informed of all actions taken.**

**Page 46 – Policy 710.15R Substance Abuse – Elementary – Administrative Procedure: Does the “Disciplinary Procedure” need to be tweaked to align with the Secondary Code to allow for reduction of suspension time if the student completes drug counseling? This question applies to Violations #47 Distribution or Sale of Alcohol/Drugs or Look-Alike Alcohol/Drugs and #53 Possession, Use, or Reasonable Suspicion of Being Under the Influence of Alcohol/Drugs.**

*18-Year-Olds Smoking or Vaping Off School Premises but in Proximity to School:* Kaleb reported he dealt with an 18-year-old student who was smoking across the street from the school by confiscating the smoking material, providing a warning, and returning the smoking materials to him at the end of the day. He asked if that was appropriate given the Code of Conduct. Those present believed it was an appropriate consequence.

**Next meeting: March 9, 2017, 4:00 p.m., Mellon North Conference Room.**

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