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ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ORLANDO, FLORIDA

MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE B-12 POLICY OF CIVIL CONDUCT

Code of Civility

The education of a child happens only through a partnership among the child, school faculty and staff, parent(s) or guardian(s), the community and district office employees. Partnership is an active state that includes sharing responsibilities, having meaningful communication and welcomed participation.

When people who are working together agree, the partnership runs smoothly. Two people will not always agree and that can make partnership difficult. The partnership is most powerful, as children are educated to reach their potential, when we agree on how to disagree. We must be civil in our discourse.

Civility is often described by its absence. We hear of harmful actions such as road rage, physical confrontation, ethnic stereotypes and slurs. But civility is not just an absence of harm. It is the affirmation of what is best about each of us individually and collectively. It is more than saying "please" and "thank you." It is reflecting our respect for others in our behavior, regardless of whether we know or like them. It is not simply being politically correct and should not be used to stifle criticism or comment. It is being truthful and kind and for us to take responsibility for our own actions rather than blaming others.

As we communicate with each other, we need to remember that we are working together to benefit the children of this community.

Therefore, the Orange County School Board requires that, as we communicate; students, OCPS faculty and staff, parents, guardians and all other members of the community shall:

1. Always treat each other with courtesy and respect

This means:

- We listen carefully and respectfully as others express opinions that may be different from ours.
- We share our opinions and concerns without loud or offensive language, gestures or profanity.

2. Treat each other with kindness

This means:

- We treat each other, as we would like to be treated.
- We do not threaten or cause physical or bodily harm to another.
- We do not threaten or cause damage to the property of another.
- We do not bully, belittle or tease one another and we do not allow others to do so in our presence.
- We do not demean and are not abusive or obscene in any of our communications.

3. Take responsibility for our own actions

This means:

- We share information honestly.
- We refrain from displays of temper.
- We do not disrupt or attempt to interfere with the operation of a classroom or any other work or public area of a school or school facility.

4. Cooperate with each other

This means:

- We obey school rules for access and visitation.
- We respect the legitimate obligations and time constraints we each face.
- We notify each other when we have information that might help reach our common goal. This includes information about:
 - o safety issues
 - o academic progress, changes that might impact a student's work
 - o events in the community that might impact the school
- We respond when asked for assistance.
- We understand that we do not always get our way.

Authority and Enforcement of the Code of Civility

Authority and enforcement of a code for civil conduct ultimately depends on the individual and collective will of those involved – students, OCPs faculty and staff, parents, guardians and all other members of the community. However, individuals need to know how to respond to uncivil behavior and how such behavior will be responded to. Therefore:

1. A student who believes that he or she has not been treated in a manner reflective of the Code of Civility should report such behavior to the appropriate school administrator.
2. A parent, guardian or community member who believes that he or she has not been treated in a manner reflective of the Code of Civility should report such behavior to the staff member's immediate supervisor.
3. An employee who believes that he or she has not been treated in a manner reflective of the Code of Civility should use the following guidelines:

- If personal harm is threatened, the employee may contact law enforcement.
- Anyone on school district property without authorization must be directed to leave the premises by an administrator or school resource officer. Anyone who threatens or attempts to disrupt school or school district operations, physically harm someone, intentionally cause damage, uses loud or offensive language, gestures, profanity or shows a display of temper must be directed to leave the premises by an administrator or school resource officer. If such person does not immediately and willingly leave and if the school resource officer is not available, law enforcement shall be called.
- If a telephone call recorded by an answering machine, email, voicemail message or any type of written communication is demeaning, abusive, threatening or obscene the employee is not obligated to respond.
 - o If personal harm is threatened, the employee may contact law enforcement.
 - o The employee shall save the message and contact his or her immediate supervisor, the school resource officer and/or OCPS District Police.
- If any member of the public uses obscenities or speaks in a demeaning, loud or insulting manner, the employee to whom the remarks are directed shall take the following actions:
 - o Calmly and politely, ask the speaker to communicate civilly.
 - o If the verbal abuse continues, give appropriate notice to the speaker and terminate the meeting, conference or telephone conversation.
 - o If the meeting or conference is on school district premises, request that an administrator or authorized person direct the speaker to promptly leave the premises.
 - o If the speaker does not immediately leave the premises, an administrator or other authorized person shall notify law enforcement to take any action deemed necessary.
- Insubordination refers to an employee who is disobedient or disrespectful to a manager or supervisor. Failure on the part of an employee to properly discharge the duties assigned shall be deemed sufficient cause for suspension and/or dismissal. Examples of insubordination include, but are not limited to:
 - o Refusal to obey orders of a supervisor/management
 - o Disrespect shown to supervisors/management in the form of vulgar or mocking language
 - o Mocking supervisors/management decisions

Barbara M. Jenkins
Superintendent

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