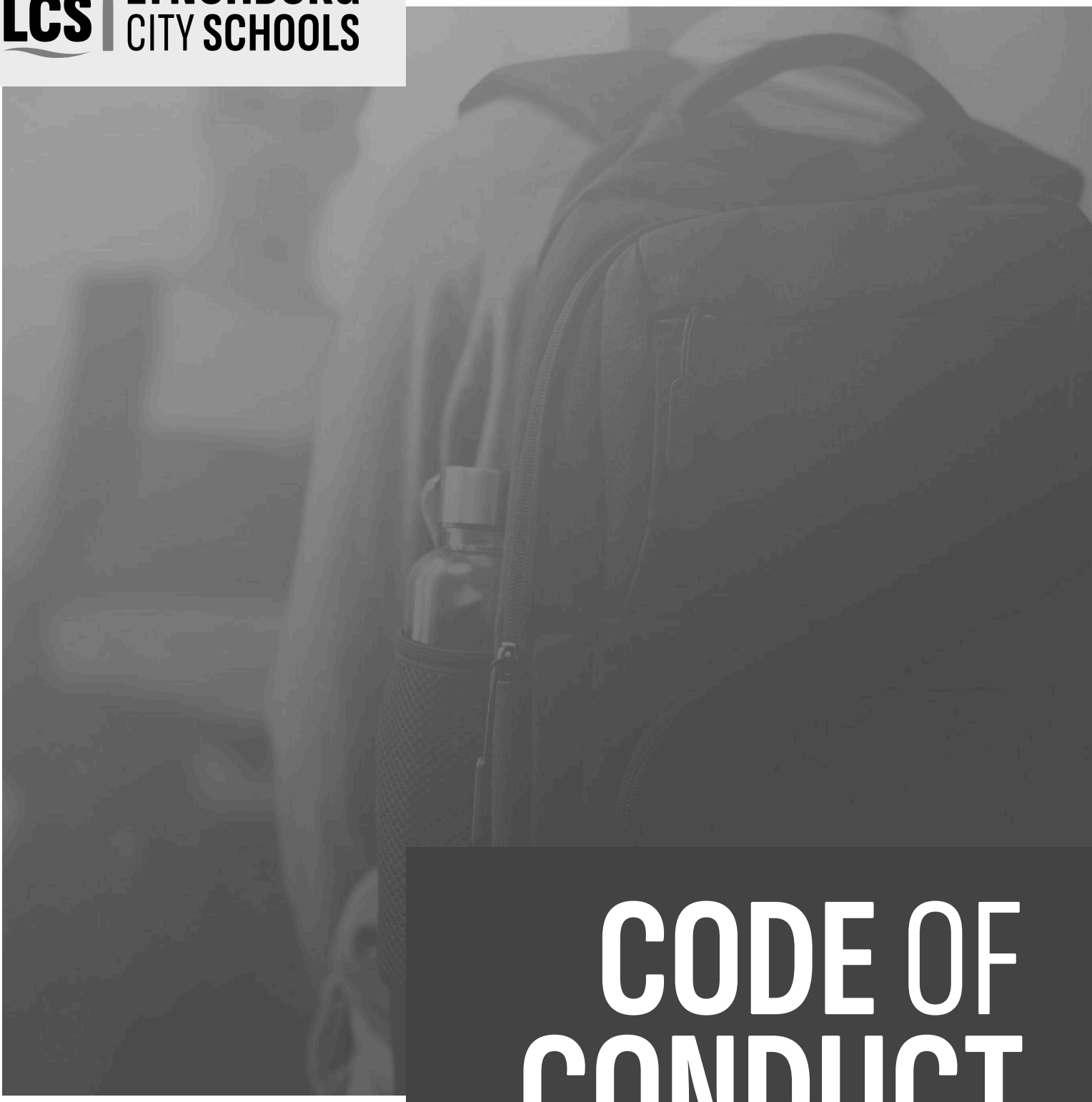
LCS LYNCHBURG CITY SCHOOLS



# CODE OF CONDUCT

2026-27

*Revised 8/20/26*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


Philosophy....1
Purpose & Intent....1
Roles & Responsibilities....2
Continuum of Support....4
Student Behavior & Response (SBAR)....6
Prohibited Behaviors....9
Law Enforcement Notification....12
Discipline & Students with Disabilities....12
Suspensions & Expulsions....14
Attendance....16
Dress Code....20
Acceptable Use & Electronic Devices....23
Transportation....28
Students Experiencing Homelessness....29
Key Terms & Definitions....29
Notice of Non-Discrimination....35


# STRATEGIC PLAN

## Mission

To empower students for future success through high-quality instruction, supportive learning environments, and experiences that connect classroom learning to real-world opportunities.

## Vision

Growth, Opportunity, Success

## Goals

**Goal 1: Student-Driven Learning -** LCS students are curious, collaborative, and critical thinkers who set goals and build the competencies to thrive in school, future careers, and life.

**Goal 2: Student-Centered School Culture** - LCS fosters a division-wide culture of well-being, belonging, and support where students feel connected, engaged, and valued.

**Goal 3: Purpose-Driven People** - LCS employees are collaborators, dedicated to continuous professional growth, and committed to our community through a shared sense of purpose.

**Goal 4: Safe & Sustainable Systems** - LCS ensures safe, welcoming, and well-managed learning environments and operational systems that support well-being, collaboration, and trust.

**Goal 5: Trusted Partnerships** - Families, students, staff, and community partners experience trust, connection, and shared purpose through meaningful partnerships and transparent communication.

# PHILOSOPHY

Lynchburg City Schools believes in the potential of all students to excel. Guided by our vision of *Growth*, *Opportunity*, *Success*, we are committed to maintaining safe, orderly, and supportive learning environments that promote academic achievement and holistic student development. Through clear expectations, preventive strategies, and consistent practices, we help students develop the knowledge, skills, and character needed for success in school and beyond.

Our work is grounded in fairness, accountability, and respect, recognizing the uniqueness and context of each situation. We value strong partnerships among schools, families, and the community as we foster positive conditions for learning and create opportunities for students to engage, contribute, and achieve their goals.

# PURPOSE & INTENT

The Lynchburg City Schools (LCS) Code of Conduct serves as a one-stop resource for all matters related to student behavior, expectations, supports, and responsibilities. It is designed to be an accessible and comprehensive guide for students, families, and staff—bringing together policies, expectations, and related information in a single, easy-to-navigate format that promotes understanding, clarity, and transparency.

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to promote a safe and effective school environment that nurtures student safety, well-being, and achievement. It is intended to:

- Promote accountability, high expectations, and fairness for all students.
- Build positive character traits and behaviors that support lifelong success.
- Offer support and resources that provide each student with opportunities to excel.
- Offer positive, task-specific feedback and interventions that promote personal development and academic learning alike.
- Proactively reinforce expectations through instructional measures and preventative practices that promote growth and understanding.
- Support healthy school environments so students and staff can focus fully on teaching and learning.
- Foster caring, trusting, and respectful relationships among students, staff, families, and the community.

Through these efforts, Lynchburg City Schools advances its vision of *Growth*, *Opportunity*, *Success*, and *empowers students for future success through high-quality instruction, supportive learning environments, and experiences that connect classroom learning to real-world opportunities.*

## Intent

**The intent of this Code is to:**

- Serve as the benchmark for minimum behavioral expectations for all students.
- Promote a safe, non-disruptive learning environment that supports teaching, learning, and personal growth.
- Provide an accessible reference for families seeking information about behavioral expectations, supports, and disciplinary processes.
- Enhance transparency and consistency in how conduct expectations and consequences are communicated and applied across all schools.

**This Code applies to all Lynchburg City Schools students:**

- While on school property,
- Traveling to and from school, including at bus stops,

- In school board vehicles, and
- During or at any school-sponsored event or activity.

Students who observe or experience inappropriate behavior as described in this Code are expected to report such incidents promptly to school administration. Additionally, students must inform a staff member of any information concerning threats or disruptions involving the safety of students, staff, or the school environment.

To maintain a safe and productive learning environment, students and their property, including but not limited to backpacks, purses, containers, automobiles, lockers, desks, computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices, are subject to search. Security measures such as metal detectors, surveillance cameras, and detection dogs may be used on school property and at school-sponsored activities.

## Legal Compliance

Lynchburg City Schools complies fully with all applicable federal laws, including but not limited to:

- Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964,
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972,
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The School Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability in any of its programs or activities.

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for coordinating compliance with these provisions.

The School Administration Office is located at 915 Court Street, Lynchburg, Virginia.

## Authority & Updates

The Superintendent reserves the authority, upon the recommendation of an administrator or teacher, or at their own discretion, to impose or recommend to the School Board or Disciplinary Hearing Officer a suspension or expulsion when the circumstances warrant a consequence more severe than those listed in this guide.

This Code of Conduct is a supplementary tool intended to summarize policies, regulations, and procedures as they exist in publication and are subject to change without notice. The Lynchburg City Schools Board reserves the right to enforce changes immediately. In any dispute, the official regulation in effect at the time of the incident will govern and supersede the language in this document.

For the most current policies and regulations, please visit LCS BoardDocs.

# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

## Parent/Guardian Responsibility & Involvement

Lynchburg City Schools recognizes that families are essential partners in supporting students' success, academically, socially, and behaviorally. Families play a vital role in helping students develop the skills, strategies, and habits of personal responsibility that enable them to meet high expectations and thrive within our schools and beyond.

## Shared Commitment

Parents and guardians share with the school division the responsibility of ensuring that learning takes place in an atmosphere free of disruption and supportive of individual rights. To that end, families are encouraged to:

- Work collaboratively with school staff to help students understand, practice, and meet behavioral and academic expectations.
- Encourage students to take personal responsibility, demonstrate accountability, and reflect on their actions as part of their learning and growth.
- Support students in developing competencies such as honesty, integrity, ethical behavior, equity-mindedness, emotional intelligence, cultural competence, safety awareness, and quality work habits.
- Promote positive character and citizenship that align with the division's vision: *Growth*, *Opportunity*, *Success*.

## Communication & Collaboration

Families are expected to maintain ongoing, two-way communication with the school community. This includes:

- Engaging in open dialogue, in person, by phone, or electronically, to share updates, concerns, and celebrations related to their child's progress and well-being.
- Responding promptly to communication from school staff and participating in meetings or conferences as needed to support the student's learning and behavior goals.
- Working collaboratively with all members of the school community, including teachers, administrators, counselors, bus drivers, and support staff, in a spirit of mutual respect and partnership.

By demonstrating leadership competencies, families contribute to a positive and inclusive school culture by:

- Modeling effective communication and courteous interaction;
- Thinking strategically about how to support student growth;
- Showing initiative in addressing concerns or seeking supports early;
- Acting decisively and respectfully when problem-solving;
- Collaborating effectively with school personnel; and
- Resolving conflicts proactively and constructively.

## Divisional Leadership

| Job Title | Name |
|---|---|
| Division Superintendent | Dr. Kristy Sommerville-Midgette |
| Executive Assistant | Cari Cole |
| Deputy Superintendent | Dr. Jennifer Davis |
| Executive Assistant | Jill Connelly-Mays |
| Chief Finance Officer | Sonia Jammes |
| Chief Human Resources Officer | Dr. Tiffeney Brown |
| Chief Operations Officer | Travis Marshall |
| Executive Director of Instruction | Sarah Campbell |
| Director of Facilities & Maintenance | Boyce Hamlet |
| Director of Information Technology | John Collins |
| Director of School Nutrition | Beth Morris |
| Director of Special Education | Dr. Kenya Fowler |
| Director of Student Services | Dr. Christopher Sumner |
| Director of Transportation | Shelley Harmon |
| Supervisor of Communications | Austin Journey |

## School Leadership

LCS Schools, School Addresses, Phone Numbers, and Websites

## Teachers & Staff

Teachers and staff play a vital role in creating a positive, respectful, and inclusive learning environment where all students can succeed. They are responsible for modeling integrity, fairness, and professionalism in their interactions with students, families, and colleagues. Staff members are expected to maintain high expectations for behavior and academic achievement while supporting students in meeting those expectations through consistent communication, encouragement, and guidance. Teachers and staff promote safety and respect by implementing the Code of Conduct fairly and consistently, addressing behavior in a proactive and restorative manner, and recognizing positive behavior and growth. They work collaboratively with parents, guardians, and colleagues to identify and address barriers to learning, support social and emotional development, and ensure that every student feels valued, respected, and capable of success. Through their daily actions, educators uphold the division's vision of *Growth*, *Opportunity*, *Success*.

# CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT

Lynchburg City Schools is committed to fostering a positive, safe, and inclusive learning environment where all students can grow academically, socially, and emotionally. To ensure consistency and fairness in addressing student behavior, LCS employs a continuum of support that emphasizes prevention, intervention, and restoration at multiple levels—classroom, school, and division.

## Classroom-Level Supports

Teachers and school staff establish clear classroom expectations aligned with schoolwide behavioral standards. Most student behaviors are addressed at this level through proactive strategies, redirection, reteaching of expectations, and positive reinforcement. When needed, teachers implement interventions or consequences designed to support student growth and learning.

Teachers are expected to maintain open communication with parents and guardians regarding classroom-managed behaviors, providing timely updates and collaborating to promote positive change.

## Administrative-Level Supports

When behaviors escalate beyond the classroom or require administrative involvement, administrators, such as principals or assistant principals, work collaboratively with staff, students, and families to determine appropriate responses. These may include additional interventions, restorative practices, or consequences aligned with division policies.

Administrators will notify parents or guardians of all administrative-level behaviors and engage them as partners in developing plans to support the student's continued success.

## Division-Level Supports

In cases where behaviors exceed the capacity to be managed effectively at the classroom or school level, the matter may be referred for division-level review and response. This level of support may involve specialized personnel, district-level administrators, or community partners to ensure that comprehensive supports and appropriate disciplinary measures are provided.

## Anonymous Reporting

### SpeakUp for Safety

The SpeakUp for Safety tip line provides a simple way for students to easily and confidentially report threats of violence, bullying, peers in crisis, and other imminent threats. Students can email, call, or text to speakup@lcsedu.net or (434) 300-2230.

The tip line is monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year by trained safety representatives. A representative will send an email regarding non-life-threatening items to designated school or division staff members. In severe situations, division-appointed contacts are notified immediately. In the most imminent cases, law enforcement will be contacted to intervene if the tip line representative is unable to notify a division-appointed contact.

### Crime Stoppers

Students, staff, and community members can anonymously report bullying and suspected unlawful activity using Crime Stoppers. This program is a partnership between LCS, Central Virginia Crime Stoppers, and the Lynchburg Police Department. Cash rewards of up to $1,000 may be offered for tips that lead to arrests. Non-criminal tips are filtered through School Resource Officers and shared with school administrators and/or counselors, who determine next steps.

Students and staff can access Crime Stoppers through the LCS Bookmarks dropdown menu or the ClassLink launchpad. The hotline can also be reached at 1-888-798-5900.

## Community Resources

LCS Community Resource Guide

## Immediate Help

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - (800) 273-8255

Crisis Text Line - Text HOME to 741741

National Domestic Violence Hotline - 1 (800) 799-SAFE (7233)

Virginia COPES - warm line for anyone experiencing trauma, grief and distress caused by COVID-19 - Call or text (877) 349-6428

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) -1 (800) 662-HELP (4357)

National Human Trafficking Hotline - Call 1 (888) 373-7888 or Text 233733

National Eating Disorder Association - Call or Text (800) 931-2237

Horizon Mobile Crisis Unit - Call 1 (800) 970-5897 (Monday-Friday, noon-7:30 p.m.)

911

# STUDENT BEHAVIOR & RESPONSE (SBAR)

In accordance with the Code of Virginia (Va. Code § 22.1-279.3:1), all school divisions are required to submit data annually to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) on incidents of student behavior and the administrative responses to those incidents. These data provide important safety indicators for Virginia's School Quality Profile.

The reporting requirement applies to qualifying events that occur on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity.

The Student Behavior and Administrative Response (SBAR) system provides a standardized set of behavioral categories by which infractions are classified. Each incident is reported under a specified SBAR category, ensuring consistent statewide collection and analysis of data.

Responses or consequences to student behavior are leveled within the SBAR framework. This structure gives school administrators a continuum of options to address and improve student behavior in a manner that is fair, developmentally appropriate, and consistent with division policy and the Code of Virginia.

The leveled approach allows administrators to select responses that both support positive behavioral change and, when necessary, protect the safety and order of the school environment.

## Student Behavior Categories

### BAP – Behaviors that Impede Academic Progress

These behaviors interfere with a student's own learning as well as the learning of others. Such actions present important opportunities to support students in understanding how their choices affect others and the overall learning environment. With guidance and encouragement, students can develop greater awareness and skills to engage positively in their education.

### BESO – Behaviors that Endanger Self or Others

These behaviors pose a risk to the health, safety, or well-being of the student or others. Because these situations are often complex, addressing them effectively requires a collaborative and integrated approach involving staff, families, and community supports to ensure the safety and growth of all involved.

### BSC – Behaviors of a Safety Concern

Behaviors in this category create unsafe conditions for students, staff, and visitors within the school community. Administrators are encouraged to thoughtfully explore the underlying reasons behind these behaviors. Supportive interventions typically focus on building social awareness and responsible decision-making skills, especially when safety is at stake.

### BSO – Behaviors Related to School Operations

These behaviors disrupt the smooth functioning of daily school routines. They provide valuable opportunities to help students strengthen their self-management, self-awareness, and social awareness skills, enabling them to contribute positively to a respectful and orderly school community.

### RB – Relationship Behaviors

These behaviors cause negative interactions between two or more members of the school community without resulting in physical harm. Relationship behaviors impact the overall school climate, highlighting the importance of nurturing respectful, caring, and supportive interactions among all individuals.

### PD – Behaviors Defined by Virginia's Unsafe School Choice Option Policy

These behaviors are outlined under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 and include actions that require specific responses to ensure a safe educational environment for all students.

## SBAR Leveled Responses

Lynchburg City Schools utilizes a leveled response system to guide administrators and school staff when addressing student behavior and discipline. This system aligns with the *Virginia Department of Education's Model Guidance for Positive and Preventative Code of Student Conduct Policy and Alternatives to Suspension*.

According to the Virginia Department of Education, an effective approach to intervention and discipline ensures that when students do not meet behavioral expectations, they are provided with supports that address the underlying causes of the behavior and help them learn appropriate alternatives. When a student's behavior does not improve following an intervention, or when the behavior increases in frequency, intensity, or duration, a problem-solving approach is used to identify alternative interventions and responses.

All stages of intervention should include:

- Opportunities for students to learn acceptable replacement behaviors within the school and community; and
- Access to supports and interventions that address the root causes of the behavior.

While disciplinary responses are sometimes necessary, they are never sufficient on their own to reduce inappropriate behavior. A leveled system of responses should always operate as part of a broader, comprehensive approach to student behavior that emphasizes instructional, preventative, and proactive strategies.

The delivery of disciplinary responses should serve four key functions:

1. Preventing a negative behavior from being rewarded;
2. Preventing a problem behavior from escalating;
3. Preventing a problem behavior from significantly interrupting instruction; and
4. Preventing physical or social-emotional harm to others.

**Below are examples of consequences and interventions that may be considered as leveled responses within this framework.**

## Examples of Level 1 Responses

Intended to prevent further behavioral issues while keeping the student in school

- Administrator, student, teacher, and parent or guardian conference
- Behavior progress chart
- Community Service (appropriate to correct the behavior)
- Confiscation by the administration
- Detention (before school, at lunch, or after school)
- In-school suspension (1 or 2 days) with academic/behavioral support
- Loss of school privileges
- Lunch detention
- Peer mediation or conflict resolution
- Recognize/Reward appropriate behavior
- Restitution
- Re-teach or model the desired behavior
- Seat change
- Written reflection or letter of apology

## Examples of Level 2 Responses

Designed to prevent further behavior issues and keep the student in school. Depending upon the severity of the behavior, short-term removal of the student from the classroom may be appropriate.

- Administrator, teacher, counselor, student conference (includes reteaching expectations)
- Administrator, teacher, parent or guardian conference
- Check-in/out
- Confiscation
- Detention
- Develop behavior plan
- In-school suspension (1-3 days) with academic support, behavior interventions and/or restorative practices

- Mediation or conflict resolution
- Referral to community-based services
- Referral to Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team
- Referral to support services (e.g. School Counselor, Behavior Certified Board Analyst (BCBA) Mentor Program, Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies) PBIS, Substance Use and Intervention Program)
- Restitution
- Schedule change
- Student conference
- Temporary loss of privileges

## Examples of Level 3 Responses

Level 3 responses are dependent on the severity, chronic nature of the behavior and/or safety concerns. Level 3 behaviors may result in the student's short-term removal from school.

- Administrator, teacher, parent or guardian conference
- Behavior contract (developed with and signed by the student, parent/guardian, and school officials)
- Community Services
- Detention
- Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Support Plan (BSP) development (General Education Students)
- Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) development
- In-school suspension (3 - 5 days) with academic support and restorative practices
- Referral to alternative education program
- Referral to community-based services
- Referral to support services (e.g. School Counselor, Behavior Certified Board Analyst (BCBA), Mentor Program, School Social Worker, Therapeutic Day Treatment (TDT), Substance Abuse Program)
- Restitution
- Revocation of privileges
- Restorative Suspension Center (RSC) **Short-term out-of-school suspension (1-3 days for elementary students and 1-5 days for secondary students with restorative conference upon return)

***The duration of any short-term suspension is to be limited as much as possible while adequately addressing the behavior but may not exceed five (5) school days [may not exceed 3 days for PK-3]*

## Examples of Level 4 Responses

Some Level 4 responses require a report to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee as outlined in Va. Code § 22.1-279.3:1. A referral to the superintendent or superintendent's designee does not automatically result in a long-term suspension, change of placement, or expulsion. After a review of the incident in context, the superintendent or designee may return students to the comprehensive setting with additional supports and/or responses to be implemented.

- Long-term revocation of privileges
- Parent, administrator, teacher, student behavior meeting
- Recommendation for long-term suspension
- Referral to law enforcement as required
- Restitution via written contract
- Schedule change
- Short-term out-of-school suspension: One (1) to three (3) days for PK-3 and four (4) to ten (10) days for fourth-sixth grade students, or five (5) to ten (10) days for seventh-twelfth grade students
- Return to school with additional supports and interventions
- Threat assessment as indicated by behavior
- Alternative education placement

## Examples of Level 5 Responses

Level 5 responses are reserved for those behaviors that require a referral to the superintendent or designee. For preschool to grade three students, any suspension beyond three days must be referred to the superintendent or designee. A referral to the superintendent or designee may not automatically result in an expulsion, alternative placement, school reassignment, or long-term suspension.

- Referral to law enforcement as required

- Referral to superintendent or designee
- Threat assessment as indicated by the behavior
- Alternative placement
- Expulsion - additional supports may be provided throughout the expulsion period
- Long-term suspension (11-45 days as defined in Va. Code § 22.1-276.01.)
- School reassignment - students may be assigned to another school within the division
- Return the student ot the school setting with appropriate supports and interventions

***Restorative practices will be implemented as deemed appropriate. Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) should be developed, reviewed, and modified as needed.*

# PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS

## Assault & Battery (Policy JFC)

Assault, intimidation, battery, or threats of such actions toward any teacher, staff member, volunteer, or student are strictly prohibited. These behaviors are unacceptable at any time, whether during school hours or after school, on or off school property.

Assault and battery between students, as well as by an adult toward a student, will not be tolerated and will be addressed in accordance with school division policy and, when appropriate, referred to law enforcement or other legal authorities.

Students involved in assault or battery against school personnel, volunteers, or other students will face consequences, including consideration for expulsion in accordance with applicable laws. When such incidents occur, the principal or their designee will evaluate the severity and context, potentially using threat assessments to guide disciplinary recommendations. Consequences may range from short-term suspension to referral for long-term suspension or expulsion.

## Drugs & Medications (Policy JFCF)

Regardless of their age, students are strictly prohibited from using, possessing, being under the influence of, manufacturing, selling, or distributing any controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, or marijuana. This rule applies at all times while students are on school property, including buildings and grounds, on any public property or property open to the public within 1,000 feet of any school property, on school buses, at designated school bus stops, and on public property or property within 1,000 feet of those bus stops while children are waiting to be picked up or dropped off for school or school-sponsored activities.

If a student needs to take prescription medication, it must be brought to school by a parent and checked in at the school clinic. Students may only carry prescription medication if it is essential due to a life-threatening condition and has been registered with the clinic.

Any student involved in the sale, distribution, or possession with the intent to distribute drugs, alcohol, or look-alike substances will face serious consequences, including a recommendation for expulsion.

Students are also forbidden from possessing, using, or distributing alcohol, tobacco products, nicotine vapor products, anabolic steroids, inhalants, or any other controlled substances while on school grounds, on school buses, or during any school activities, whether on or off school property. This prohibition also extends to attempting to obtain or use these substances, or anything represented to be such substances.

Being under the influence of any restricted substance is also not allowed, regardless of whether the student's level of intoxication meets legal standards.

Restricted substances include but are not limited to alcohol, tobacco and nicotine products as defined by school policies, inhalants, anabolic steroids, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, marijuana, imitation and look-alike drugs, drug paraphernalia, and any prescription or non-prescription drugs possessed in violation of school policy.

Furthermore, students who are athletes face additional consequences. If a student athlete is found to have used anabolic

steroids during training or the sports season without a physician's prescription, they will be ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletics for two school years, as determined by the school principal and superintendent.

## False Emergencies & Hoaxes (Va. Code § 18.2-212)

A false fire alarm is the intentional activation of a fire alarm system or reporting of a fire when no fire or emergency exists. This includes, but is not limited to, pulling a fire alarm without cause, triggering smoke detectors, or making a verbal or electronic report of a fire as a prank or to cause disruption. False fire alarms endanger the safety of students, staff, and visitors, disrupt the educational environment, and are subject to disciplinary action and potential legal consequences in accordance with the Code of Virginia.

Similarly, the creation or communication of false emergencies, hoaxes, or threats, such as bomb threats, active shooter hoaxes, or other fabricated crises, will not be tolerated. These actions cause unnecessary panic, misuse emergency response resources, and will be addressed through division policy and, when applicable, referred to law enforcement for possible criminal prosecution.

## Fights & Altercations (Policy JFC)

Fights and altercations are physical confrontations or aggressive encounters between two or more individuals that may involve hitting, pushing, shoving, or other forms of physical aggression. These behaviors threaten the safety of students, staff, and visitors, disrupt the educational environment, and are strictly prohibited on school property, on school buses, and at school-sponsored activities.

Students are expected to resolve conflicts peacefully and seek the assistance of school staff to address disagreements. Participation in fights or altercations is subject to disciplinary action in accordance with school division policy and the Code of Virginia. Administrators may also provide interventions aimed at teaching conflict resolution skills, anger management, and other social-emotional competencies to prevent future incidents.

## Hazing (Policy JFC)

Hazing is strictly prohibited and is considered a Class 1 misdemeanor under Virginia law (Va. Code § 18.2-56). Hazing is defined as any reckless or intentional action that endangers the health or safety of one or more students, or causes bodily harm, during activities related to initiation, admission, affiliation, or continued membership in any club, organization, association, fraternity, sorority, or the student body. This applies regardless of whether the student(s) involved agreed to or participated voluntarily in the activity.

## Profane, Vulgar, Obscene, or Abusive Language & Obscene Conduct (Policy JGD/JGE)

The use of profane, vulgar, obscene, or abusive language, gestures, or conduct toward teachers, staff members, volunteers, or other students is prohibited. Such behavior is inappropriate for the school environment and may subject the student to disciplinary action. If the language, gestures, or conduct pose a potential danger due to their severity, persistence, or if the student has a history of serious or repeated infractions of this nature, disciplinary measures may include suspension or expulsion. The principal or designee will evaluate the severity and circumstances surrounding the behavior and recommend appropriate disciplinary action.

## Gang Activity & Association (Policy JFCE)

Lynchburg City Schools are committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment. Gang activity or association of any kind is not permitted on school property, on school buses, at school-sponsored events, or through the use of school technology. A “gang” refers to any group of individuals whose purpose includes illegal acts, threats to safety, or actions that disrupt the school environment or create fear and intimidation.

Students may not display or wear gang-related clothing, symbols, jewelry, tattoos, or gestures; recruit or intimidate others on

behalf of a gang; or engage in any behavior that promotes gang interests or disrupts school operations. Such behavior threatens the safety and well-being of everyone in our schools and will result in disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct and applicable laws.

The division works closely with law enforcement and community agencies to prevent gang involvement and to support positive alternatives through school activities and programs.

## Harassment & Retaliation (Policy JFHAZ/GBAZ)

Lynchburg City Schools are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all students and staff. Harassment, discrimination, or retaliation of any kind is strictly prohibited. This includes unwelcome conduct based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, marital or military status, pregnancy, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law. Any behavior, verbal, written, physical, or electronic, that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment, or interferes with a person's ability to learn or work, will not be tolerated.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, name-calling, slurs, jokes, threats, unwanted touching, spreading rumors, displaying offensive images or symbols, or any act of intimidation or bullying based on personal characteristics. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual comments or advances, sharing explicit materials, or any behavior of a sexual nature that affects another person's sense of safety or equal access to education.

Students who believe they have been harassed or have witnessed harassment should promptly report the incident to a teacher, counselor, administrator, or the school's Title IX Coordinator. All complaints will be investigated, and appropriate actions will be taken to stop the behavior, protect those involved, and prevent future occurrences. Retaliation against anyone who reports harassment or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited.

## Intentional Injury of Others (Policy JFC)

Students are prohibited from intentionally causing physical harm to others. This includes hitting, kicking, pushing, or using objects to injure another person, as well as any other behavior intended to cause bodily injury. Such actions endanger the safety of students and staff, disrupt the learning environment, and will result in disciplinary consequences in accordance with school policy and applicable law.

## Threats & Intimidation (Policy JFC)

Students are prohibited from making any verbal, written, or physical threat of bodily harm or injury toward another person. This includes any behavior, gesture, or communication that could reasonably be perceived as an intent to cause fear, intimidation, or harm. Such actions undermine the safety and well-being of the school community and will not be tolerated.

## Trespassing (Policy JFC)

Students are prohibited from entering or remaining on school property without authorization. This includes students who have been suspended, expelled, or otherwise restricted from campus. Any unauthorized presence on school grounds or at school-sponsored events may be considered trespassing and may result in disciplinary action and/or legal consequences.

## Vandalism (Policy ECAB)

Students are prohibited from vandalizing, defacing, or otherwise damaging school property, or the property of any School Board staff member, student, or other individual. The School Board urges staff, students, and members of the public to cooperate in reducing vandalism by promptly reporting incidents and identifying any person(s) believed to be responsible. The School Board may institute legal action to recover from the parents or guardians of any minor, up to $2,500, for damages resulting from the willful or malicious destruction of, or damage to, public property by such minor. In addition, any student who damages or destroys public property will be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the school principal, which may include restitution, suspension, or other consequences in accordance with Policy ECAB – Vandalism.

## Weapons & Dangerous Devices (Policy JFCD)

Students are strictly prohibited from possessing, using, displaying, or transmitting any weapon or dangerous device on school property, on a school bus, or at any school-sponsored event. Weapons include, but are not limited to, guns, firearms, blank guns, starter guns, pellet guns, air guns, toy or imitation guns, tear gas guns, chemical weapons, knives, metallic knuckles, blackjacks, explosive devices, joined rings, and any other object that can be used or perceived as a weapon.

A firearm is defined as any weapon, including starter guns, that is designed or may be readily converted to expel one or more projectiles by the explosion of a combustible material; the frame or receiver of such a weapon; or any unloaded firearm kept in a closed container. Pneumatic guns are not considered firearms under this definition.

Any threat, verbal, written, or electronic, to bomb or use substances or devices intended to explode, burn, damage school property, or harm students or staff is strictly prohibited. Intentionally making a false report regarding the presence of dangerous chemicals, biological agents, or other threats is also prohibited and will result in serious disciplinary action, which may include suspension, expulsion, and/or legal consequences.

# LAW ENFORCEMENT NOTIFICATION (Policy KNAJ)

Certain student behaviors require notification to law enforcement. Principals shall report all violations of law that require disciplinary action to the appropriate law enforcement officials in accordance with Va. Code § 22.1-280.1, including alcohol and drug violations. Any material suspected of being a controlled substance shall be turned over to law enforcement authorities.

Criminal offenses such as homicide, sexual assault, weapons offenses, and kidnapping/abduction must always be reported to law enforcement. Some offenses, such as assault and battery on staff or threats to others, may also require law enforcement notification depending on the circumstances.

# DISCIPLINE & STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (Policy JGDA)

## Overview

Students with disabilities are expected to follow the same standards of behavior as all students. When disciplinary situations occur, Lynchburg City Schools applies its Code of Conduct fairly and consistently while also ensuring that students with disabilities receive all rights and protections guaranteed by federal and state law.

## Disciplinary Procedures

When a student with a disability violates the Code of Conduct, school staff follow standard disciplinary procedures and consider the student's individual circumstances and needs.

- If a disciplinary action results in removal from the student's current educational placement for more than 10 consecutive school days, or for a series of shorter removals that form a pattern, it is considered a change in placement.
- Parents or guardians will be notified immediately, and a copy of their procedural safeguards will be provided.

## Educational Services During Disciplinary Removals

Lynchburg City Schools believes that all students must continue learning, even when facing disciplinary consequences.

- During the first 10 school days of removal in a school year, educational services may not be required unless they are

provided to students without disabilities under similar circumstances.

- After 10 cumulative school days of removal, students with disabilities must receive educational services that allow them to:
    - Continue participating in the general education curriculum; and
    - Work toward meeting the goals outlined in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

## Interim Alternative Educational Settings

For serious situations, such as bringing a weapon to school, using or selling illegal drugs, or causing serious bodily injury, a student with a disability may be placed in an interim alternative educational setting.

- During this time, the student continues to receive educational services and behavioral support designed to address the misconduct and prevent its recurrence.

## Manifestation Determination Review (MDR)

When a disciplinary change of placement occurs, a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) must be held within 10 school days.

- The MDR team includes the parent/guardian and relevant members of the IEP team.
- The team determines whether the student's behavior was:
    - Caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability; or
    - The result of the school's failure to properly implement the IEP.
- If the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability:
    - The student cannot be disciplined in the same manner as a non-disabled peer for that behavior.
    - The IEP team must conduct or review a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and develop or revise a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) to support positive behavior.
- If the behavior is not a manifestation, the student may be disciplined according to the Code of Conduct but must continue to receive educational services that support progress toward IEP goals.

## Section 504 & Special Circumstances

Students identified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act receive similar disciplinary protections.

- A manifestation determination process must occur before any disciplinary change of placement.
- However, if a student with a 504 plan engages in misconduct related to alcohol or illegal drugs, the student may be disciplined in the same manner as a non-disabled student.

## Students Not Yet Identified as Having a Disability

Students who have not been formally identified as having a disability may be disciplined in the same way as their non-disabled peers unless the school had prior knowledge of the possible disability before the incident.

- If, during disciplinary proceedings, the student is evaluated and found eligible for special education services, the student will then receive protections and services consistent with their identified needs.

## Key Principles

- All students are expected to follow school rules.
- Students with disabilities are entitled to fair, individualized, and legally compliant disciplinary processes.
- Educational services must continue when required by law.
- Parents and guardians are active partners in decision-making and will be notified promptly when disciplinary actions occur.
- The ultimate goal is to ensure safety, equity, accountability, and ongoing educational success for every student

# SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS (Policy JGD/JGE)

Suspension or expulsion is the final step in the Lynchburg City Schools' student disciplinary process. A suspension is the denial of access to all facilities and programs of the school division during the length of the suspension or expulsion. All long-term suspensions and expulsions require approval by the school board.

Lynchburg City Schools is committed to maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment. Students are expected to follow all school rules, respect the rights of others, and avoid behavior that disrupts learning or threatens the safety of the school community. Certain violations of law or school policies may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion. Examples of such behaviors include possession of weapons, drugs, or alcohol, acts of violence or threats, and other actions that endanger persons or property.

Suspensions may be short-term (10 days or fewer) or long-term (more than 10 days). Expulsion is the most serious form of discipline and may result in denial of school attendance for up to 365 days. In all cases, students are entitled to written notice, an explanation of the facts, and an opportunity to present their side before long-term suspension or expulsion is imposed. In emergency situations where a student poses an immediate threat, the student may be removed immediately, with notice and opportunity to respond provided as soon as practicable.

In some cases, students may be assigned to alternative education programs as an alternative to suspension or expulsion. These programs provide instruction in a structured setting when the regular school program is deemed inappropriate for the student. Additionally, students expelled or suspended long-term from another school may be denied admission until the conditions of their prior disciplinary action are resolved.

The possession or use of firearms, destructive devices, or other weapons on school property is strictly prohibited and may result in mandatory expulsion. All disciplinary actions are taken in accordance with Virginia law, ensuring that students who have been adjudicated delinquent or convicted of certain offenses are appropriately handled within the school system.

## Suspension or Expulsion Upon Receipt of Court Reports

A student may be suspended or expelled from school if the Division Superintendent receives a report under Va. Code § 16.1-305.1 regarding an adjudication of delinquency or a conviction. This section of the Code of Virginia requires that when a juvenile is adjudicated delinquent or convicted of certain offenses, the clerk of the court must provide written notice to the Division Superintendent of the school where the student was enrolled at the time of the court disposition, within 15 days if there is no notice of appeal.

If the student was not enrolled in school at the time of the court disposition, the notice is sent to the school division where the student was last enrolled. The notice must include the nature of the offense and the disposition ordered by the court. Upon receipt of this report, the Division Superintendent may take disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, in accordance with Va. Code § 22.1-277.

## Emergency Suspension

Any student whose presence poses an immediate danger to persons or property, or presents an ongoing threat of disruption, may be immediately removed from school. The student will be provided, as soon as practicable, with written notice of the suspension, an explanation of the facts, and an opportunity to present their version of events.

## Suspension from Extracurricular Activities

A student's privilege to participate in all or certain extracurricular or school-sponsored activities may be suspended for a specific period of time or until certain conditions are met. Such suspensions may be imposed by a coach, sponsor, principal, Superintendent, Discipline Hearing Officer, or the School Board, depending on the circumstances.

# Alternative Education

Under certain circumstances defined by the Code of Virginia and Lynchburg City Schools policy, the School Board may require a student to attend an alternative education program. When this occurs, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Written Notice – The student and the student's parent or guardian will receive written notice that the student is required to attend an alternative education program.
2. Opportunity for Hearing – The notice will include information about the opportunity for the student or parent/guardian to participate in a placement hearing conducted by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.
3. Request to Participate – If the student or parent/guardian wishes to participate in the hearing, they must notify the Superintendent or designee within 5 calendar days of receiving the written notice of the student's assignment to the alternative education program.

The alternative education placement is intended to provide a safe and supportive environment that addresses the student's educational and behavioral needs.

# Appeal & Discipline Review Information

## Short-Term Suspensions (1–10 Days)

Parents and guardians may request a review of a short-term suspension when they:

A. Dispute the facts of the incident
B. Believe the student's rights were violated
C. Dispute the length of the suspension

Requests for appeal or review must be made within two (2) days of receiving the suspension notice.

**Step 1: Meeting with the Principal** - The first step in the review process requires the parent/guardian to meet with the principal to discuss the suspension.

**Step 2: Appeal to Student Services** - If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting, they may submit a written request for review to Student Services within two (2) days of the suspension notice.

The decision of the division superintendent or designee is final, as established by School Board regulations.

## Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsions (11–365 Days)

Long-term suspensions range from 11-45 days, and in certain cases involving weapons, drugs, or persistently dangerous behavior, may be extended up to 364-365 days (expulsion).

The Discipline Hearing Officer (DHO) reviews long-term suspension materials to determine whether the case will proceed to a DHO Hearing or be referred directly to a School Board Disciplinary Committee Hearing, based on the nature and severity of the infraction.

## Appeals of DHO Decisions

Parents and guardians may request that the case be heard by the School Board Disciplinary Committee if they:

A. Dispute the facts of the incident
B. Believe the student's rights were violated
C. Dispute the length of the suspension

Such a request will result in a School Board Disciplinary Committee Hearing held within 30 days of the appeal.

## School Board Disciplinary Committee Decisions

- Unanimous decisions of the School Board Disciplinary Committee are final.
- If the committee's decision is not unanimous, the parent/guardian may appeal to the full School Board, which will issue a decision within 30 days.

Cases referred directly to the School Board Disciplinary Committee (without a DHO hearing) may appeal only non-unanimous decisions.

# ATTENDANCE

## Compulsory Attendance Requirements (Policy JEA)

Under Virginia law, every parent or guardian must ensure that children between the ages of five (by September 30) and eighteen attend school regularly or participate in an approved alternative education program.

Attendance may include participation in in-person or approved remote educational programs. This requirement also applies to students in the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice or the Department of Corrections.

Exemptions apply to:

- Students who have earned a high school diploma or equivalent, or
- Certain students in adult correctional facilities who are actively pursuing a high school equivalency certificate.

## Individual Student Alternative Education Plan (ISAEP)

Students aged sixteen or older may meet attendance requirements through an Individual Student Alternative Education Plan (ISAEP).

The ISAEP is developed collaboratively by the student, parent or guardian, and school administrator. It includes:

- Career counseling,
- Enrollment in programs leading to a high school equivalency credential and a career certification,
- Completion of economics and personal finance coursework, and
- Procedures for re-enrollment in the regular school program.

Failure to follow the terms of the ISAEP is considered a violation of the compulsory attendance law.

## Alternative Education Placement

The Superintendent or designee may require a student to attend an alternative education program if the student has been charged with, found guilty of, or committed serious or repeated offenses involving:

- Weapons,
- Drugs or alcohol,
- Injury to others, or
- Other violations specified by state law.

Parents or guardians will receive written notice of any placement decision and have the right to appeal through the established process.

If a student's presence poses a safety or disruption risk, the Superintendent or designee may order immediate placement pending appeal.

## Daily Attendance Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Arrive at school and attend all classes on time each day.
- Remain at school for the entire day unless dismissed with both parental and school permission.

Regular attendance supports academic success and helps students develop punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility.

*Students must be present during the school day to participate in afterschool activities. Exceptions must be approved by school administration.*

## Withdrawal Before Age Eighteen

No student under the age of eighteen may withdraw from school unless:

1. Released from compulsory attendance by the school board, or
2. Released from compulsory attendance by the court.

## Homebound & Home Educational Services (Home Services Program Guide)

If a student experiences a long-term illness, homebound instruction may be provided with appropriate medical or psychiatric documentation.

A student may also qualify for Home Educational Services under certain circumstances (ie: Director of Student Services may recommend it for students for discipline related reasons).

Some classes may not be available through homebound or home educational services.

## Absence Notification and Excused Absences (LCS School Absence Note Form)

In accordance with Policy JED-RZ, students are required to provide written documentation for all absences, tardies, and early dismissals.

### Documentation Requirements

- Upon returning to school after an absence, the student must provide a note signed by the parent or guardian explaining the reason and dates of the absence.
- The school should receive the note on the day the student returns. Notes may also be submitted by email.
- If the school does not receive written documentation within two school days of the student's return, the absence will be recorded as unexcused, even if the parent or guardian has called the school.

Schools are required to notify parents or guardians daily of student absences and must obtain an explanation for each occurrence.

All absences, including early dismissals and late arrivals, are considered unexcused unless a parent or guardian contacts the school (in person, in writing, by phone, or by email) within two school days to provide a valid reason.

## Tardiness & Early Dismissal

In all cases of tardiness or early dismissal, students must present a written note from a parent or guardian on the same day, stating the reason for the tardiness or early departure.

Excused tardies and early dismissals are permitted only for the following reasons:

1. **Personal illness** – Written excuses should include a brief description of the illness.
2. **Court appearance** – Verified by documentation from the court.
3. **Death or serious illness in the immediate family** – Consideration will be given to individual circumstances and any extenuating factors.

4. **Medical condition or appointment** – Verified by a note from a medical or dental professional.
5. **Religious holidays** – Excused upon receipt of written verification from the parent or guardian.
    - Students will not be penalized or denied any award, eligibility, opportunity to compete, or the right to make up tests or assignments missed due to a verified religious absence.

## Missed Bus Pickup Program

LCS believes that any attendance is better than no attendance. To support students in getting to school, the division offers a Missed Bus Pickup Program. This pilot program provides an alternative ride to school for students who miss their regular bus. Service is available from 7:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Examples of excused absences include:**

Excused absences will only be granted for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness. Written excuses should contain a description of the illness.
2. Personal required court appearance with documentation from the court.
3. Death or serious illness in immediate family. The principal will also consider each individual case and any extenuating circumstances.
4. Medical condition or appointment verified by a note from a medical professional or dentist.
5. Religious holidays will be excused upon presentation of written verification from the student's parent/guardian. No student will be deprived of any award, eligibility, or opportunity to compete for any award, or the right to take an alternate test or examination the student missed by reason of such verified absence.
6. Conditions beyond the control of the student, parent/guardian, or the school as approved by the school administration.
7. For middle and high school students, one school day per school year to engage in a civic event.

## Truancy & Chronic Absenteeism

Va. Code §22.1-258 outlines specific procedures for monitoring absences and identifying truancy.

The state defines chronic absenteeism as missing more than 10% of the school year, whether absences are excused, unexcused, or a combination of both.

The reason for absence will not generally affect this designation, except in cases where:

- The student is under a doctor's care for a serious illness or accident,
- The student is enrolled in division-approved homebound or home education services,
- The absence is due to a recognized religious holiday, or
- The absence is for approved school-related activities.

School administrators or the division attendance officer may require additional documentation when deemed necessary.

### 5 Unexcused Absences

A student is considered truant after five (5) unexcused absences in a school year.

- The parent or guardian will receive a 5-Day Letter and a copy of the student's attendance record.
- A 5-Day Conference will be scheduled with the parent/guardian and student to discuss attendance concerns.
- During this meeting, an Attendance Plan will be developed to support regular attendance.
- After this point, all future absences must be documented with a note from a professional service provider (such as a doctor, dentist, or mental health provider).

### 7 Unexcused Absences

If a student continues to miss school without excuse after the 5-Day Conference:

- The 7th unexcused absence will trigger a referral to the Interagency Truancy Review Team (ITRT).
- The parent or guardian will receive a City Attorney Letter inviting them to the ITRT meeting.

- The ITRT, which may include school and community representatives, will work with the family to identify barriers to attendance and create further supports.
- If the parent or student fails to comply with attendance requirements, a referral may be made to the Student Support Specialist.
- Continued nonattendance may result in the filing of a court complaint under state law, either against the parent or the student, depending on the circumstances.

### 10 or More Unexcused Absences

If truancy continues after ITRT intervention:

- The school division may file a complaint with the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, alleging the student is a Child in Need of Supervision, in accordance with Va. Code §22.1-267.

### 10 Excused or Unexcused Absences

Attendance concerns are addressed even when absences are excused.

- When a student reaches 10 total absences (excused or unexcused), the parent/guardian will receive a 10-Day Letter and the student's attendance record.
- A 10-Day Attendance Conference will be held with the student and parent/guardian to develop or update an Attendance Plan.
- Absences due to documented medical illness (5–10 days), approved vacation requests, or suspension are exceptions.

### 11–14+ Absences

Students with 11 or more absences, whether excused or unexcused, are at risk of becoming chronically absent. Chronic absenteeism can seriously affect academic progress and may lead to additional intervention by school and division staff.

### 15 Consecutive Absences

Under state regulation (8VAC20-110-130), a student who misses 15 consecutive days of school, for any reason, will be withdrawn from school enrollment.

- If the student does not re-enroll within three school days, the Student Support Specialist will mail a Compulsory Enrollment Letter outlining the legal consequences of continued non-enrollment.

## Reporting Requirements

LCS reports student attendance as required by the Learnfare provisions of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

# DRESS CODE

## Purpose

The purpose of the Student Dress Code is to promote a safe, orderly, and inclusive learning environment that supports academic success and prepares students for participation in school, work, and community life. Appropriate dress contributes to a positive school climate, minimizes disruption, and helps ensure the health, safety, and well-being of all students.

## Guiding Principles

Lynchburg City Schools is committed to a dress code that:

- Respects diversity and differences based on race, color, national origin, ethnicity, sex, gender identity or expression, religion, disability, ancestry, marital or parental status, and other protected characteristics.
- Applies equally to all students.
- Is enforced consistently, objectively, fairly, and is respectful of student dignity.
- Recognizes the important role of students and parents/guardians in making appropriate clothing choices.
- Addresses community and school safety concerns, including attire associated with gang-related or unsafe activity.

## Non-Discrimination

This Student Dress Code shall be implemented and enforced in a non-discriminatory, fair, and respectful manner. Dress code standards apply equally to all students, regardless of sex, gender identity, gender expression, race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, ancestry, marital or parental status, or any other protected characteristic under state or federal law.

Enforcement of the dress code shall not be based on stereotypes, assumptions, or subjective judgments related to a student's body type, appearance, cultural expression, or identity. No student shall be disciplined or excluded from instructional time in a manner that results in disparate treatment or impact. Students are expected to arrive at school in compliance with the dress code; however, when a student is out of compliance, staff shall address the matter promptly, respectfully, and in a manner that minimizes loss of instructional time. The primary objective of enforcement is to bring the student into compliance as expeditiously as possible so that the student may return to class and continue receiving instruction.

LCS affirms its obligation to comply with all applicable state and federal anti-discrimination laws, including Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Virginia Code § 22.1-279.6.

## General Dress Expectations

Students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for a PK–12 educational environment. Clothing and appearance must be safe, appropriate, and not disrupt or interfere with learning or school operations.

Student-athletes who wear team attire during the school day shall ensure that such attire is in compliance with the LCS Standard of Dress.

Students enrolled in William Marvin Bass Elementary School shall participate in a school uniforms program. See Bass School Uniforms page for details.

***All students must wear attire that meets the following expectations:***

### Shirts or Tops

- Shirts or tops shall be worn at all times and must fully cover the chest and midriff, with no skin visible in these areas.
- Sheer, mesh, or lace garments without full lining are not permitted.
- Necklines shall not be excessively low or revealing (e.g., "U" or "V" shaped necklines extending below the sternum).
- Backless, strapless (e.g., tube tops), or tie-only tops are not permitted.

- All tops must fully cover any undergarments.

### Pants, Shorts, Skirts, Skorts, Dresses, Jumpers, or Equivalent

- Bottom garments shall be worn at the waistline and must fully cover all undergarments.
- Clothing shall not expose skin from the waistline to mid-thigh - including rips or holes.
- Shorts and skirts shall be of sufficient length to reach mid-thigh, including when worn with a backpack. Tights should be worn below shorts and skirts that do not meet this standard.
- Leggings and yoga pants are permitted; however, they shall be worn with a top that fully covers the student's backside.

### Sleepwear

- Clothing designed primarily as sleepwear is not permitted during the school day.
    - Examples include, but are not limited to, pajamas, pajama pants, nightgowns, robes, and blankets.

### Shoes

- Shoes shall be worn at all times.
- Footwear must allow students to move safely throughout the school day, including during emergency procedures.
- Footwear that poses a safety concern or interferes with the school environment is prohibited, including, but not limited to, flip-flops, house shoes and slippers, shoes with wheels, skates, or other devices, or footwear not designed for walking.
- Certain classes or activities (e.g., Physical Education, laboratory courses, or technical programs) may require specific types of footwear, such as closed-toe, athletic shoes, or boots for safety reasons. In such instances, the teacher shall communicate these requirements to students and families as soon as practicable.

*Clothing should be appropriate to the time, place, weather, and instructional activity and must conform to standards of health and safety.*

## Prohibited Attire

Students are expected to make attire choices that contribute to a positive, respectful, and inclusive school environment. Clothing and accessories should reflect standards that uplift the school community; items that do not meet this expectation may be subject to review under the provisions outlined below.

The following attire, including clothing, jewelry, accessories, body art, or other displayed personal belongings, is prohibited when it reasonably creates a disruption or poses a safety concern:

### 1. Offensive, Discriminatory, or Intimidating Content

Attire that includes language, symbols, or images that are:

- Profane, vulgar, obscene, or sexually explicit
- Discriminatory, demeaning, or hostile toward an individual or group
- Racially, culturally, or ethnically divisive

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Confederate flags
- Swastikas
- KKK references
- Hate symbols or imagery reasonably considered intimidating or harmful

### 2. Promotion of Illegal or Unsafe Behavior

Attire that promotes or depicts:

- Illegal activity
- Violence or weapons
- Gang affiliation, symbols, colors, or identifiers
- Alcohol, drugs, tobacco, vaping, nicotine products, or drug paraphernalia

### 3. Disruption or Safety Risks

Attire that causes or is reasonably likely to cause a substantial disruption to the learning environment or creates a safety hazard, including but not limited to:

- Excessively baggy or loose clothing that presents a safety concern
- Heavy or free-swinging chains
- Spiked or sharp jewelry or accessories
- Items that could reasonably be used as a weapon
- Costumes or props

### 4. Excessively Revealing Clothing

Clothing that exposes:

- Cleavage
- Chest
- Midriff
- Undergarments
- Private parts

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- See-through or mesh garments without appropriate coverage
- Backless tops or tops held together only by ties
- Sagging or low-cut pants revealing undergarments

### 5. Headwear and Accessories

- Shoes must be worn at all times and be appropriate for instructional activities.
- Headwear and face coverings (including hats, hoods, caps, bandanas, durags, bonnets, sunglasses, face masks, and ski masks) may not be worn indoors unless:
    - Required for religious or cultural reasons
    - Required for documented medical or health-related reasons, in which case a standard-issued medical face mask is expected when applicable
    - Approved for specific school activities or instructional purposes

*Religiously and ethnically significant head coverings and hairstyles are always permitted, including but not limited to hijabs, yarmulkes, headwraps, braids, locs, and cornrows.*

### 6. Gang-Related Apparel and Grooming

- Disciplinary action may be taken against any student whose attire, accessories, tattoos, or grooming styles denote gang affiliation and are disruptive to the school environment or advocate illegal or unsafe behavior.

### 7. Special Circumstances

- Certain classes or activities (e.g., physical education, laboratories, career and technical education) may require specific dress or safety gear; these requirements will be communicated by school staff.
- Administrators may approve alternative attire for special events, spirit days, field trips, athletics, or school-sponsored activities.
    - During Spirit Week, limited exceptions to the Standard of Dress may be permitted. Any approved modifications, including specific parameters and expectations, will be clearly defined and communicated in advance to all students and families as part of Spirit Week guidance.
        - During Spirit Week, spirit days, and other school-approved themed events, limited exceptions to the Standard of Dress may be authorized by the principal or designee.
            - Any approved exceptions shall be communicated in advance and must remain consistent with standards of health, safety, and the orderly operation of the school.
            - Costumes, themed attire, and accessories worn as part of an approved spirit day may not include items that:

        - Obscure a student's identity or prevent reasonable identification;
        - Depict or promote violence, illegal activity, alcohol, tobacco, vaping, drugs, or gang affiliation;
        - Include weapons, replica weapons, or other items that could create a safety concern;
        - Contain offensive, discriminatory, profane, or disruptive language or imagery; or
        - Substantially interfere with the educational environment or school operations.
    - School administrators retain the authority to prohibit or require modification of any spirit day attire that poses a safety concern, creates a disruption, or is otherwise inconsistent with the purpose and expectations of the Student Dress Code.
- Families seeking accommodations for religious beliefs, disabilities, or other reasonable circumstances should contact the school principal in writing.

## Enforcement and Consequences

Dress code enforcement shall:

- Be conducted without direct physical contact with students or their clothing
- Never require a student to disrobe in the presence of others
- Protect student dignity, privacy, and instructional time
- Be applied consistently, equitably, and in a non-discriminatory manner

When a student is found to be out of compliance, staff shall address the concern promptly and discreetly. Students may be asked to:

- Cover noncompliant clothing
- Change into appropriate clothing in a private setting
- Wear school-provided attire when necessary to restore compliance

Responses to dress code violations may include one or more of the following:

- Student conference
- Parent/guardian notification
- Referral to school administration

*Repeated or willful violations may result in progressive disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.*

*The primary objective of enforcement is to achieve prompt compliance while minimizing loss of instructional time.*

## Administrative Authority

School administrators retain final authority to determine whether student attire:

- Is appropriate for the school environment
- Creates a disruption to the educational setting
- Presents a safety concern

*Administrative determinations shall be made using reasonable judgment and consideration of the student's age, developmental level, and context.*

*All decisions shall be applied fairly, consistently, and in a manner that is non-discriminatory and aligned with applicable state and federal law.*

# ACCEPTABLE USE & ELECTRONIC DEVICES

## Purpose & Expectations

LCS provides access to computer systems, networks, and technology resources to support teaching, learning, and division operations. All students and staff are expected to use these resources in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner, consistent with the mission, vision, and goals of the division.

Use of the LCS network and technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be suspended or revoked at any time due to misuse or inappropriate behavior. Violations may also result in disciplinary or legal action.

All users must agree to abide by the division's Acceptable Use Policy before receiving access.

## Scope of the Policy (Policy IIBEA/GAB)

This policy applies to all technology-based devices and systems used within the school division, including:

- Division-owned hardware, software, and data;
- Communication systems, servers, printers, projectors, cameras, and network cabling;
- Internet and wireless access points;
- Personal devices connected to the LCS network; and
- Any other internal or external technology resources.

Acceptable use governs the access, transmission, and storage of data and information within the K–12 educational environment.

## System Monitoring & Security

To enhance the safety and security of students, staff, and the school environment, LCS uses Gaggle, a monitoring software that helps identify concerning or inappropriate use of school-issued devices and accounts.

All activity on the LCS network, systems, and devices may be monitored, logged, or reviewed at any time to ensure compliance with division policies and applicable laws.

## Acceptable Conduct

Acceptable use of school technology includes:

- Using computer resources to support educational and research objectives.
- Demonstrating proper code of conduct in all electronic communications, including email, messaging, and online forums.
- Protecting privacy: sharing personal information such as addresses, phone numbers, or passwords online is not appropriate.
- Using appropriate and respectful language in all communication.
- Refraining from obscene, lewd, profane, threatening, harassing, or disruptive language.

Policies prohibiting sexual harassment, discriminatory harassment, and bullying apply to all communications conducted using school division computer systems and networks.

Users must also respect the division's computer resource limits and may not use computers or networks for entertainment.

Downloading or streaming music, videos, or news programs is permitted only when directly related to instruction or curriculum and approved by staff.

Each user is responsible for his or her own actions while using division technology.

## Prohibited Conduct

The following actions are strictly prohibited and may result in loss of access privileges, disciplinary action, and/or legal consequences:

1. Illegal or unauthorized activity, including violation of copyright or licensing agreements and transmission of materials that violate federal, state, or local laws.
2. Sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading illegal, obscene, or inappropriate materials.
3. Unauthorized downloading or installation of software or applications.
4. Using division technology for private financial gain, commercial purposes, or personal business.
5. Wasteful use of network resources, such as excessive printing or unnecessary file storage.
6. Gaining unauthorized access to network accounts, systems, or data belonging to others.
7. Posting or publishing material created by others without their consent.
8. Submitting, posting, or displaying content that is obscene, profane, threatening, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate.
9. Using technology privileges while access has been suspended or revoked.
10. Vandalizing the computer system, including destroying data, spreading viruses, or interfering with network operations.
11. Harassing, intimidating, coercing, or threatening others through digital means.
12. Promoting, encouraging, or threatening illegal, immoral, or unsafe acts.

## Email Use & Communication

- The LCS email system is owned, managed, and controlled by Lynchburg City Schools.
- Unauthorized access to, or use of, any email account by a student or staff member is strictly prohibited.
- Users may not download or open email attachments unless they are certain of the sender's identity and the file's authenticity.
- All email entering or leaving the LCS system is scanned for viruses and offensive material to help protect users and maintain a safe environment.
- The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requires school divisions to archive all electronic communications.
- Users are personally responsible and legally accountable for the content of all messages they create, send, or forward using LCS systems.

## Internet Safety & Digital Citizenship

LCS recognizes that technology and the Internet are valuable educational tools that also require careful supervision.

All stakeholders share responsibility for promoting safe, ethical, and effective technology use.

- Students will use the Internet safely, responsibly, and for educational purposes.
- Teachers and staff will model appropriate online behavior and teach digital citizenship, including the responsible use of social media.
- Administrators will oversee and periodically review the division's Internet safety program to ensure compliance and effectiveness.
- Parents and guardians are encouraged to be aware of their child's online activities and reinforce safe technology practices at home.

Internet safety instruction will emphasize:

- Online security and privacy,
- Ethical and responsible technology use,
- Safe participation in social networking and online forums, and
- Cyberbullying awareness and prevention.

## Monitoring, Filtering & Privacy

LCS uses filtering software to block access to inappropriate or harmful online content. Attempts to bypass or disable filters are prohibited and may result in disciplinary or legal action.

While the division strives to maintain a safe online environment, it cannot guarantee that users will never encounter inappropriate material. If this occurs, students and families should report it immediately to the Office of Technology.

LCS may provide access to online educational services or learning platforms that collect limited, personally identifiable information (PII).

The division ensures that providers comply with all federal and state privacy laws. Staff may not use any platform that has not been vetted for student privacy compliance, even if it is free.

## Disclaimer & Limitation of Liability

- The School Board makes no guarantees about the computer systems and services it provides.
- The School Board is not responsible for damages resulting from use of the system, including loss of data, non-delivery or misdelivery of information, or service interruptions.
- The division does not guarantee the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its network or the Internet.
- Users agree to indemnify and hold harmless the School Board for any losses, costs, or damages arising from violations of this policy.
- The division assumes no responsibility for unauthorized charges or fees incurred through use of the computer system.

## Oversight & Review

- The Instruction and Technology Departments will regularly review this policy and gather stakeholder feedback.
- The Superintendent and School Board will periodically review and approve updates to ensure compliance with federal telecommunications codes and state and local laws.
- Community members, including those in adult education programs or groups using school facilities, may use LCS technology resources and are expected to follow this policy.
- LCS will continue to offer Internet safety awareness programs for students, staff, parents, and community members.

## Electronic Devices (Policy JFCZ)

Students are provided school-issued electronic devices to access instructional content. The use of personal electronic devices, including, but not limited to, cell phones, Bluetooth devices, cameras, electronic games, and e-readers, during the school day is prohibited.

Students who bring cell phones to school for the purpose of communicating outside of school hours must keep their devices powered off and stored out of sight during the school day.

Prohibited uses of personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to, using built-in cameras or other features for unethical or illegal purposes. Examples include cheating on tests, taking and distributing unauthorized photographs or videos of others, or reproducing copyrighted materials.

Parents/guardians and students who choose to bring personal electronic devices onto school property do so at their own risk. The school division is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal devices.

## Elementary Schools Cell Phone Rubric

| | |
|---|---|
| 1st Offense | Verbal Warning; Counsel Student; Contact Parent; Log Incident (SBAR Code BS013) |
| 2nd Offense | Confiscate Device; Contact Parent to Retrieve Device; Log Incident (SBAR Code BS013) |
| 3rd Offense | Confiscate Device; Contact Parent; Device No Longer Allowed at School; Log Incident (SBAR Code BS013) |
| 4th Offense | Confiscate Device; Contact Parent; Require Parent Meeting; Log Incident (SBAR Code BS013) |
| 5th Offense | Confiscate Device; Contact Parent; ISS; Log Incident (SBAR Code RB10) |
| 6th Offense | Confiscate Device; Contact Parent; OSS; Log Incident (SBAR Code RB10) |

## Secondary Schools Cell Phone Rubric

| | |
|---|---|
| 1st Offense | Verbal Warning; Confiscate Device; Contact Parent; Device Returned to Student at End of Day; Log Incident (SBAR Code BS013) |
| 2nd Offense | Confiscate Device; Submit Referral; Contact Parent to Retrieve Device; Log Incident (SBAR Code BS013) |
| 3rd Offense | Confiscate Device; Submit Referral; ISS; Contact Parent to Retrieve Device; Log Incident (SBAR Code RB10) |
| 4th-9th Offense | Progressive Discipline per SBAR; Log Incident (SBAR Code RB10) |
| 10th Offense | Refer Student to the Discipline Committee; Log Incident (SBAR Code RB10) |

# TRANSPORTATION

To ensure the safety of all passengers, students are expected to follow all standards of conduct, cooperate with the driver, and promptly obey all directions and instructions given by the driver or other authorized personnel while at the bus stop, entering, exiting, or riding the school bus or other school vehicles.

- Students must ride only the bus to which they are assigned.
- Bus drivers are responsible for maintaining safety and may refer students to school administration for behavioral concerns.
- For serious or unsafe behavior, drivers may return a student to school or request assistance from school administration, the School Resource Officer (SRO), or law enforcement.

Parents and guardians should never board a school bus or block the bus doors. If there is a concern regarding transportation, please contact the Department of Transportation and allow staff to address the issue directly.

Items that are prohibited in school, as outlined in this Code of Conduct, are also prohibited:

- On school buses and school vehicles,
- On school property, and
- At bus stops.

## Bus & Vehicle Safety Expectations (Policy JFCC)

Riding a school bus or LCS vehicle is a privilege and an important part of the school day. To keep everyone safe, students are expected to follow these guidelines:

### While Waiting for the Bus

- Be visible at the bus stop and stay a safe distance from the road.
- Be aware of traffic and your surroundings.
- Arrive at least ten minutes before your scheduled pickup time.
- Wait calmly and respectfully for the bus to arrive.

### While Entering or Exiting the Bus

- Wait for the driver's signal before approaching or crossing the street.
- Be mindful of the crossing arm and other safety equipment.
- Walk, do not run or push.
- Use the handrail and take steps one at a time.
- Find a seat quickly, sit down, and slide over to make room for others.
- When exiting, take all belongings with you and leave the bus safely and promptly.
- Be courteous; greet and thank your driver.

### While Riding the Bus

- Remain seated at all times and keep the aisle clear.
- Keep yourself and your belongings inside the bus.
- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Use kind and respectful language.
- Speak quietly so the driver can stay focused.
- Respect other passengers and their belongings.
- Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Help keep the bus clean and safe for everyone.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.

### Remember: Stay Safe. Stay Seated. Be Respectful.

Your actions help make every ride safe, calm, and on time for everyone.

# STUDENTS EXPERIENCING **HOMELESSNESS**

## Admission of Homeless Children (Policy JECA)

Every student has the right to go to school, even if they don't have a permanent home. Under the McKinney-Vento Act, students can still enroll and attend school if they are:

- Staying in a shelter or temporary housing,
- Living in a motel, hotel, or campground,
- Staying in a car, park, public place, or abandoned building,
- Living with friends or relatives because they lost housing, or
- Moving from place to place as a migratory child or youth.

Students in these situations can enroll right away, stay in their same school if possible, and get help with transportation and other school supports.

If this applies to you or someone you know, contact your school counselor or the division's McKinney-Vento Liaison for help.

For more information and support, see the Homeless Education page on the LCS website.

# KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

**Alternative Education Program (TAP, RA-S, RSC)**
Specialized programs provided outside the regular school setting for students who need additional structure or support due to behavioral, academic, or disciplinary reasons.

**Assault**
The intentional act of threatening or attempting to cause physical harm to another person.

**Attendance Plan**
A collaborative strategy developed by school administration, the parent or guardian, and, when appropriate, the student, to identify and address the underlying causes of non-attendance or chronic absenteeism. The plan outlines specific goals, supports, and interventions aimed at improving the student's regular school attendance.

**Battery**
The intentional and unlawful physical contact or use of force against another person without their consent, causing harm or offensive touching.

**Behavior Contract**
A written agreement between a student, parent/guardian, and school staff outlining expected behaviors, supports, and consequences for non-compliance.

**Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)**
A written plan developed by a multidisciplinary team to address specific challenging behaviors. It identifies antecedents (or triggers), outlines strategies to teach positive behaviors, and specifies how staff will respond to incidents.

**Behavior Progress Chart**
A daily or weekly tool used to monitor and record a student's behavior in relation to set goals. It helps track progress and provides feedback to the student, staff, and parents/guardians.

**Bullying**
Bullying is any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor and the victim; and is repeated over time or is severe enough to create a hostile educational environment. Bullying can be verbal, written, physical, or electronic (often referred to as cyberbullying).

It includes, but is not limited to, acts such as threats, insults, spreading rumors, social exclusion, or the use of technology to harass or intimidate others. Bullying does not include ordinary teasing, arguments, or peer conflicts that are not characterized by an imbalance of power or intent to harm. Bullying is prohibited on school property, on school buses, and at school-sponsored activities, and is subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Virginia and division policy.

**Bystander**
A bystander is any individual who witnesses or becomes aware of inappropriate, unsafe, or harmful behavior, such as bullying, harassment, or other violations of school rules, but is not the direct target or instigator of the behavior. Bystanders may play a role in either escalating or de-escalating the situation depending on their actions. Students are encouraged to report incidents they witness to a teacher, administrator, or other school staff in order to support a safe and respectful school environment.

**Character Education**
Instruction and activities designed to teach and reinforce positive character traits, such as respect, responsibility, integrity, empathy, and citizenship, to support students in making ethical decisions and contributing to a positive school community.

**Check-In/Check-Out**
A structured support system in which a student meets briefly with a designated staff member, with whom the student has a positive relationship, at the start and end of the school day. The goal is to provide encouragement, review goals, and promote accountability for positive behavior.

**Child Find (SCT)**
A legal requirement under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for schools to identify, locate, and evaluate children who may have disabilities and need special education or related services.

**Community-Based Services**
Support programs and resources provided by local community agencies, such as counseling, mentoring, mental health services, or after-school programs, that help meet students' academic, behavioral, or social-emotional needs.

**Community Service**
Activities performed by a student to give back to the school or local community as part of a restorative or disciplinary response.

**Conference**
A scheduled meeting between school staff and the student and/or their parent or guardian to discuss behavior, concerns, and possible next steps. In some cases, conferencing may include additional school staff, such as administrators or counselors.

**Confiscation**
The temporary removal of items that are prohibited at school or that disrupt the learning environment. Confiscated items are typically returned at the end of the school day or as outlined by school policy.

**Conflict Resolution**
A supportive process that teaches and guides students to identify the source of a disagreement and work toward a positive, non-punitive solution.

**Cyberbullying**
Cyberbullying is the use of electronic communication tools, including, but not limited to, social media, text messages, emails, websites, or other digital platforms, to harass, intimidate, threaten, or humiliate another person. Cyberbullying may involve the repeated or severe targeting of an individual and can include spreading rumors, posting harmful content, sending threatening messages, or sharing private information or images without consent. Cyberbullying is prohibited on school property, on school buses, at school-sponsored activities, and during any activity that substantially interferes with the school environment. Students who engage in cyberbullying are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with school division policy and the Code of Virginia.

**Detention**
A consequence in which a student is required to spend extra time at school, either before school, during lunch, or after school, to reflect on their behavior or complete assigned tasks.

**Discipline Hearing Officer (DHO)**
A Discipline Hearing Officer is a designated school or district official authorized to conduct formal hearings regarding alleged violations of the Code of Conduct. The DHO is responsible for reviewing evidence, hearing testimony from involved parties, determining whether a violation occurred, and assigning appropriate disciplinary consequences in accordance with district policy and due process requirements. The DHO acts as a neutral decision-maker to ensure fairness and consistency in the disciplinary process.

**Disposition**
The administrative decision or outcome assigned after a behavioral incident is reviewed, determining next steps, interventions, or consequences.

**Diversion**
An alternative approach to traditional disciplinary action, often in collaboration with local law enforcement or court services. It is designed to address student behavior through education, counseling, or community service instead of formal legal action.

**Expulsion**
The permanent removal of a student from their regular school setting due to serious violations of the Code of Conduct. Expulsion is decided by the school board or other designated authority and may include referral to an alternative education program.

**Falsification**
Falsification is any act intended to deceive by creating, altering, or misrepresenting information or materials related to school operations. This includes acts such as forging another person's signature without permission, altering or tampering with official school documents or records, including attendance notes, grade reports, passes, or disciplinary forms, or counterfeiting documents, passes, or other items to gain an advantage or avoid responsibility. Attempts to falsify are regarded as equally serious and may receive the same administrative response as if the act had been successfully completed.

**Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)**
A process that involves gathering and analyzing information to understand why a student engages in challenging behavior. The goal is to identify antecedents (or triggers) and develop strategies to prevent and respond to the behavior effectively.

**Harassment**
Harassment is any unwelcome or offensive conduct, comment, or behavior directed toward an individual or group based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or any other characteristic protected by law. Harassment can be verbal, written, physical, or electronic and may include actions such as threats, intimidation, derogatory remarks, or repeated unwanted attention. Harassment creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive school environment and is prohibited on school property, on school buses, and at school-sponsored activities. Students who engage in harassment are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with school division policy and the Code of Virginia.

**Home-Based Services**
Home-based services are determined by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team.

**Homebound Services**
Homebound services may be provided to students who are confined to the home or a health care facility and are unable to attend school based upon certification of need by a licensed physician, psychiatrist, or licensed clinical psychologist. The services are provided for a period of 9 school weeks (45 days) and can be extended if needed. The goal is always to transition the student back into the school environment as quickly as possible.

**Home Educational Services**
Home Educational services are determined by the Director of Student Services for discipline related reasons. Students who have been charged with "certain" charges, as indicated in VAC 16.1-260G, may receive Home Educational Services until charges are reviewed and resolved.

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**
A legally required plan developed by a team for a student with a disability, outlining goals, accommodations, services, and supports under IDEA.

**In-School Suspension (ISS)**
A consequence in which a student is removed from their regular classroom but remains in a supervised school setting to complete assignments and reflect on their behavior.

**Interagency Truancy Review Team (ITRT)**
The Interagency Truancy Review Team (ITRT) is a local, multi-disciplinary team convened by Lynchburg City Schools to address and resolve student nonattendance issues before or in conjunction with formal legal action. The primary function of the team is to coordinate interventions and support services involving various community providers.

**Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO)**
A Juvenile Probation Officer serves as a school resource person and liaison between the school division and the juvenile court system. The officer works to identify and address student behavioral or legal issues early, with the goal of correcting problems before they require formal court involvement. In cases involving serious violations of the law, such as drug offenses, assaults, or other criminal acts, the Juvenile Probation Officer is responsible for processing cases that must be referred to court. The officer also provides guidance and support to students and families to promote positive behavior, accountability, and compliance with legal and school expectations.

**Letter of Agreement (LOA)**
A written acknowledgement outlining expectations, conditions, or required actions a student must follow to remain in good standing or return from a disciplinary action.

**Long-Term Suspension**
A consequence that removes a student from school for more than 10 consecutive school days, up to the remainder of the semester or school year, as determined by the school division's policies.

**Manifestation Determination Review (MDR)**
A required meeting held for a student with a disability to determine whether the behavior that led to a disciplinary action was directly related to the student's disability or a result of the school's failure to implement the IEP. This review must occur when a disciplinary removal may constitute a change of placement under IDEA.

**Mediation**
A structured process in which a neutral third party (often a trained school counselor or mediator) helps students in conflict talk through their differences, understand each other's perspectives, and reach an agreement.

**Modification of Student Seating, Assignment, or Schedule**
Changes made to where a student sits in the classroom, the work assigned, or their daily schedule to help prevent behavior problems and support academic and behavioral success.

**Nicotine Vapor Product**
A nicotine vapor product is any electronic or battery-powered device that delivers nicotine, flavorings, or other substances in the form of an aerosol or vapor for inhalation. This includes, but is not limited to, e-cigarettes, vape pens, mods, pod systems, and similar devices, regardless of brand or appearance. Possession, use, distribution, or sale of nicotine vapor products is prohibited on school property, on school buses, and at school-sponsored activities, and violations are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with school division policy and the Code of Virginia.

**Physical Contact**
Physical Contact refers to any intentional or reckless physical behavior that involves or risks bodily harm to self or others. This includes, but is not limited to: unwanted or inappropriate touching; reckless actions that present a risk of injury; shoving, pushing, striking, or biting that does not result in physical injury; and fighting, with or without injury. More serious acts, such as assault or assault and battery, also fall under this category and may result in more severe disciplinary or legal consequences, depending on the nature and severity of the incident.

**Positive Behavior Intervention Strategy (PBIS)**
Proactive approaches used to teach and reinforce expected behaviors, focusing on prevention, skill-building, and positive reinforcement.

**Refusal to Comply**
Refusal to comply is a willful failure or unwillingness to follow a reasonable directive, instruction, or request issued by a teacher, administrator, bus driver, or other authorized school employee who is acting within the scope of their duties. This definition applies whether the refusal occurs in a classroom, on school grounds, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored event.

**Reinstatement**
The formal process by which a student returns to school following a long-term suspension, expulsion, or placement in an alternative program. It often includes a meeting to review expectations and supports.

**Restitution**
An action taken by a student to repair or repay for damage, loss, or harm caused by their behavior. Examples include paying for damaged property, repairing an item, or performing school or community service.

**Restorative Practices**
Approaches focused on building relationships, repairing harm, and reintegrating students into the school community through dialogue and accountability.

**Restraint and Seclusion**
Restraint and Seclusion are emergency safety interventions that may be used only by trained school personnel in accordance with Lynchburg City Schools Policy JMZ and Virginia regulations. Physical restraint involves restricting a student's movement to prevent serious physical harm to self or others, while seclusion means confining a student alone in a room or space from which they are prevented from leaving. These methods are used only when other interventions are ineffective and only to prevent serious injury, quell a disturbance, defend against harm, or obtain dangerous objects. Both restraint and seclusion must stop as soon as the risk of harm has passed and must be continuously monitored, documented, and reported to parents. Lynchburg City Schools emphasizes the use of positive behavioral supports to reduce and prevent the need for these interventions, ensuring all students are treated with dignity and respect.

**Restricted Day**
A behavioral support measure in which a student's movement and participation in the school day is limited for a set period of time to ensure safety and focus on improvement.

**School Board Discipline Committee**
A designated committee of the School Board that reviews certain disciplinary cases and determines appropriate outcomes in accordance with policy and Virginia law.

**School Resource Officer (SRO)**
A School Resource Officer is a law enforcement officer assigned to a school to promote safety, prevent crime, and provide support during emergencies. SROs work in partnership with school administrators, staff, students, and local law enforcement to maintain a safe learning environment. In addition to responding to incidents, SROs may provide guidance, education, and resources on safety, legal issues, and crime prevention. All SROs in Virginia are certified law enforcement officers and follow both school division policies and applicable state laws.

**School Security Officer (SSO)**
A School Security Officer is a certified employee of the school division responsible for helping maintain a safe and secure school environment. School Security Officers work to prevent and respond to safety concerns, assist during emergencies, and help protect students, staff, and school property. While SSOs are not law enforcement officers, they may work closely with administrators and local law enforcement when safety issues arise. All School Security Officers in Virginia complete training and certification approved by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

**Search and Seizure**
To maintain safety and order in schools, Lynchburg City Schools may conduct searches of students, their belongings, lockers, desks, automobiles, and school-owned technology when there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Searches must be justified, limited in scope, and conducted with respect for the student's privacy and rights. Lockers, desks, and school computers remain the property of the school and may be inspected at any time without notice or consent. Vehicles on school property may be searched if there is reasonable suspicion of illegal or unauthorized items.

Personal searches may include inspection of clothing or belongings and, in limited cases, a pat-down by a same-sex administrator with a witness present. Strip searches are only permitted in emergencies involving an imminent threat of death or serious injury and must follow strict procedures, typically involving law enforcement. Any illegal or unauthorized items found during a search will be seized and turned over to legal authorities. Lynchburg City Schools balances students' right to privacy with its duty to ensure a safe and secure learning environment for all.

**Self-Defense**
When evaluating disciplinary action, school administration may consider whether a student acted in self-defense. To qualify as self-defense, all of the following conditions must be met:

1. The student claiming self-defense must be without fault in provoking or initiating the fight or incident;
2. The student must have reasonably feared, under the circumstances as they appeared to a reasonable person, that they were in danger of harm; and
3. The student must have used no more force than was reasonably necessary to protect themselves from the perceived threat.

Bringing weapons of any kind to school or to a school-sponsored activity for the purpose of self-defense is strictly prohibited. Self-defense is not a valid defense for possession or use of a weapon on school property or at any school-sponsored event.

**Short-Term Suspension**
A consequence that removes a student from school for up to 10 consecutive school days.

**Stalking**
Stalking is a pattern of repeated and unwanted attention, contact, or behavior directed at a specific individual that causes fear, emotional distress, or a reasonable sense of threat to personal safety. This may include following, monitoring, or repeatedly communicating with someone in person, by phone, electronically, or through social media. Stalking is prohibited on school property, on school buses, and at school-sponsored activities and is subject to disciplinary action and potential legal consequences in accordance with school division policy and the Code of Virginia.

**Student Behavior Plan**
A plan created by school staff (sometimes in partnership with the student and family) to outline clear expectations, supports, and consequences for behavior to help the student be successful. This may be a part of a Student Success Plan.

**Student Behavioral Assessment**
A structured evaluation, often part of a threat assessment or FBA, that examines the factors contributing to a student's concerning or disruptive behavior and helps guide next steps.

**Student Success Plan**
A collaboratively developed and comprehensive plan that outlines goals, strategies, and supports to help a student achieve academic, behavioral, and personal success. It may be created for students facing ongoing challenges or at risk of falling behind.

**Theft**
Theft is the unauthorized taking, possession, or use of property belonging to the school, school staff, students, or others, with the intent to deprive the rightful owner of its use or possession. Theft includes, but is not limited to, stealing school supplies, personal belongings, electronic devices, or funds. Students who commit theft may also be financially responsible for the value of the property and are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with school division policy and the Code of Virginia.

**Threat Assessment**
A formal process used by a trained school-based team to evaluate reported threats or threatening behavior. The team determines the level of risk, plans for intervention, and takes steps to ensure safety.

**Transition**
The planned process of moving a student from one educational setting to another (for example, from an alternative education program back to their regular school) to ensure a smooth adjustment and continued success.

**Trespassing**
Trespassing is the unauthorized presence on school property, school buses, or at school-sponsored activities. This includes entering, remaining, or attempting to enter areas without permission, after being directed to leave, or in violation of school rules or administrative instructions. Trespassing threatens the safety and security of the school community and is subject to disciplinary action and potential legal consequences in accordance with school division policy and the Code of Virginia.

**Truancy Conference**
A truancy conference is a required meeting between the school, the student, and the parent or guardian that takes place after a student has accumulated 5 unexcused absences or 10 absences (excused,unexcused). The purpose of the conference is to identify the reasons for the absences, remove barriers to attendance, and develop a plan to improve the student's regular school participation before legal action or court involvement becomes necessary.

**Vandalism**
Vandalism is the willful or malicious destruction of, defacement of, or damage to property belonging to the school division, school staff, students, or others. This includes acts such as breaking, defacing, or otherwise damaging school buildings, furniture, technology, vehicles, instructional materials, or personal belongings; writing or drawing on walls, desks, or other property without authorization; and any other intentional act that diminishes the appearance, function, or value of property. Students and their parents or guardians may be held financially responsible for the repair or replacement of damaged property, and such acts are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with school board policy and the Code of Virginia.

# NOTICE OF **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The Lynchburg City School Board is committed to nondiscrimination with regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, genetic information, disability, military status, or any other characteristic protected by law. This commitment prevails in all of its policies and practices concerning staff, students, educational programs and services, and individuals and entities with whom the Board does business.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Dr. Tiffeney Brown
Chief Human Resources Officer
(434) 515-5050
brownta@lcsedu.net

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