

**PANAMA CENTRAL SCHOOL**  
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**2023-2024 CODE of CONDUCT**  
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This supplements the information received from the District in the School Calendar - Directory. Both contain information related to the school district and students' rights and responsibilities. Every effort has been made to ensure that statements in both this book and the School Calendar - Directory reflect the Board of Education Policies. If there are any discrepancies, the Board of Education Policy Manual is the legal resource.

## INTRODUCTION

The Board of Education ("Board") is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and District personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other District personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The District has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity.

The Board recognizes the need to clearly define these expectations for acceptable conduct on school property and to identify the possible consequences of unacceptable conduct. To this end, the Board adopts this Handbook and Code of Conduct ("Code").

## APPLICATION

The District is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of environment, it is necessary to define the expected conduct of all persons on school property and at school functions. The purpose of this Code is to maintain order and prevent interference with the rights of others.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner, and shall abide by all of the rules applicable to them. Except as specified below, the Code of Conduct applies to all students, school personnel, parents and other persons when on school property or at a school function. While those rules are written using the term "student," they are applicable to all persons on school property or at school functions, including faculty, administrators, non-instructional personnel and visitors. It should be noted, however, that the rules of this Code are not the only rules governing the conduct and performance of District employees, and the Code shall not be construed to limit the authority of the District to take action upon grounds not listed in this Code.

In accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act, School District policy and practice must ensure that no student is subject to discrimination or harassment, based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity or sex by school employees or students on school property, on a school bus, or at a school function.

## DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Code, the following definitions apply:

**"Disruptive student"** - Means an elementary or secondary student under the age of 21 who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom

**"Parent"** - Means parent, guardian or person in parental relation to a student.

**"School day"** - Means any day of required pupils attendance. Unless preceded by the word "calendar," "day" means a school day.

**"Electronic cigarette"** - (e-cig or e-cigarette), personal vaporizer (PV) or electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS) is a battery-powered vaporizer, which simulates tobacco smoking by producing an aerosol that resembles smoke.

**"Employee"** - means any person receiving compensation from a school district or employee of a contracted service provider or worker placed within the school under a public assistance employment program, pursuant to title nine B of article five of the Social Services Law, and consistent with the provisions of such title for the provision of services to such district, its students or employees, directly or through contract, whereby such services performed by such person involve direct student contact (Education Law Section s11[4] and 1125[3]).

**"School property"** - Means in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot or land contained within the real property boundary line of a public elementary or secondary school, or in or on a school bus, as defined in Vehicle and Traffic Law §142, or other transportation vehicle operated by or for the District.

**“School function”** - refers to a school-sponsored or school-authorized extra-curricular event or activity regardless of where such event or activity takes place, including any event or activity that may take place in another state (§ 280 (1)).

**“Violent student”** - Means a student under the age of 21 who:

Commits an act of violence upon a school employee, or attempts to do so.

Commits, while on school property or at a school function, an act of violence upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or at the school function, or attempts to do so.

Possesses, while on school property or at a school function, a weapon.

Displays, while on school property or at a school function, what appears to be a weapon.

Threatens, while on school property or at a school function, to use a weapon.

Knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys the personal property of any school employee or any person lawfully on school property or at a school function.

Knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys school District property

**“Weapon”** - Means a firearm as defined in 18 USC §921 for purposes of the Gun-Free Schools Act. It also means any other gun, BB gun, pellet gun, pistol, revolver, shotgun, rifle, machine gun, disguised gun, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, gravity knife, brass knuckles, slingshot, metal knuckle knife, box cutter, cane sword, electronic dart gun, Kung Fu star, electronic stun gun, pepper spray or other noxious spray, explosive or incendiary bomb, or other device, instrument, material or substance (including chemical and biological substances) that can cause physical harm or death when used to cause or in an effort to cause physical harm or death.

**“Sexual Orientation”**- means actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, or bisexuality (Education Law Section 11[5]).

**“Gender”**- means actual or perceived sex and includes a person's gender identity or expression (Education Law Section 11[6]).

**“Disability”**- means (a) a physical, mental or medical impairment resulting from anatomical, physiological, genetic or neurological conditions which prevents the exercise of a normal bodily function or is demonstrable by medically accepted clinical or laboratory diagnostic techniques or (b) a record of such an impairment or (c) a condition regarded by others as such an impairment, provided, however, that in all provisions of this article dealing with employment, the term must be limited to disabilities which, upon the provision of reasonable accommodations, do not prevent the complainant from performing in a reasonable manner the activities involved in the job or occupation sought or held (Education Law Section 11[4] and Executive Law Section 292[21]).

**“Harassment or bullying”**-means the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by (verbal) threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying as defined in Education Law section 11(8), that either:

(a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional (or) and/or physical well-being (; or) including conduct, (verbal) threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause emotional harm; or

(b) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury to a student or to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety (; such conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse includes but not limited to conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse

(c) Such definition shall include acts of harassment or bullying that occur:

on school property, at a school function, off school property where such acts create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property.

(d) For purposes of this subdivision, the term “threats”, intimidation or abuse” shall include verbal and non-verbal actions. Acts of harassment or bullying shall include, but not limited to, acts based on a person’s actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex.

(e) “Emotional harm” that takes place in the context of “harassment or bullying” means harm to a student’s emotional well-being through creation of a hostile school environment that is so severe or pervasive as to unreasonably and substantially interfere with a student’s education.

**“Race”**- means a group of persons related by a common descent or heredity. For purposes of enumeration the U.S. Census Bureau uses terms such as: "White/Caucasian", "Black/African American/African-descent", "Asian", "Bi-racial", "Hispanics/Latinos" etc. to describe and classify the inhabitants of the United States.

**“Color”**- means the term refers to the apparent pigmentation of the skin, especially as an indication or possible indication of race.

**“Weight”**- means aside from the obvious meaning in the physical sciences, the word is used in reference to a person's "size".

**“National Origin”**- means a person's country of birth or ancestor's country of birth.

**“Ethnic Group”**- means a group of people who identify with each other through a common heritage including language, culture, and often a shared or common religion and or ideology that stresses ancestry.

**“Religion”**- means specific fundamental beliefs and practices generally agreed to by large numbers of the group or a body of persons adhering to a particular set of beliefs and practices.

**“Religious Practice”**- means a term including practices and observances such as attending worship services, wearing religious garb or symbols, praying at prescribed times, displaying religious objects, adhering to certain dietary rules, refraining from certain activities, proselytizing, etc.

**“Cyberbullying”** - has been described by the U.S. Department of Education as bullying that occurs through the use of electronic technology, such as cell phones, computers, and tablets. It can also involve the use or communication tools, such as social media sites, text messages, chat and websites.

## STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The District is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law and to promote a safe, healthy, orderly and civil school environment. Students in a democratic nation must be aware of their rights and learn to exercise them responsibly. With every right comes a responsibility.

At Panama Central School a student has the right to....

1. Attend school in the district in which his parent or guardian resides.
2. Dress in such a way as to express his or her personality without violating the school dress code.
3. Express his or her opinions verbally or in writing at appropriate times and places.
4. Be granted the opportunity to develop school publications such as the school newspaper.
5. Expect that the school be a safe, neat and orderly place for all students.
6. Be granted due process in the event of disciplinary action brought against the student, including detention, suspension and/or exclusion.

And the responsibility to....

- Attend school daily, except when ill, and be on time to school and classes.
- Dress so as not to endanger physical health, safety, limit participation in school activities, or be distracting, obscene or offensive to others.
- Express students' opinions, thoughts and ideas in a respectful manner so as not to offend, slander or restrict the rights and privileges of others.
- Follow legal and ethical guidelines when publishing student work in newspapers or other publications.
- Be aware of all rules and expectations and act in accordance with these guidelines.
- Volunteer information in disciplinary cases if they have relevant information in such a case.

7. Be represented by an active student government selected by free school elections.	Participate in student government by running for office, or casting a vote for the best candidate, and making his or her problems known to the student representatives.
8. Be granted equal and appropriate educational opportunities, regardless of disabilities.	Be aware of tutoring or after school education programs in order to use and develop his or her capabilities to the maximum.
9. Be granted an opportunity to be involved in the evaluation of his or her curriculum and instruction, with assistance from a guidance counselor.	To discuss course material and procedures with the instructing teacher in a courteous manner and at an appropriate time.
11. Be granted the opportunity to take part in all school athletic teams and extracurricular activities without discrimination relative to race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or national origin.	Know all rules and expectations for participating in extracurricular activities and conduct oneself in accordance with these guidelines.
12. Have availability and access to relevant and objective information concerning drugs, smoking and alcohol abuse, as well as access to individuals, groups or agencies capable of providing direct help or counseling to students.	Know which activities constitute serious and dangerous wrong doing (possession of drugs, etc.), and refrain from such acts.
13. Have student records available for review or inspection by his or her parent or legal guardian upon request, or by the students themselves if 18 years of age or older.	Follow guidelines and procedures governing access to materials under the freedom of information system.
14. Be free from unreasonable intrusion upon his person or property by school personnel, administration and/or police agencies.	Refrain from participating in any discriminatory or illegal practices against others, including students, teachers, custodians, etc.
15. Be granted the ability to express and resolve grievances, which cannot be resolved through informal discussion.	Understand what steps to take about perceived grievances before moving to a formal stage
16. Be seen and respected as an individual entitled to his or her integrity.	Show respect and appreciation for the dignity and integrity of his or her personal dignity and all others in the school.
17. To be protected from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, or religious practice, sex, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability, by employees or students on school property or at a school-sponsored event, function or activity.	To respect one another and treat others fairly in accordance with the District Code of Conduct and the provisions of the Dignity Act. To conduct themselves in a manner that fosters an environment that is free from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination. To report and encourage others, to report any incidents of intimidation, harassment or discrimination.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### EXPECTED CONDUCT

Panama Central School will be a clean and safe environment where everyone will take responsibility for his/her own actions and treat others with respect. This means students and supervisors have specific responsibilities in all areas including classrooms, bathrooms, cafeteria, hallways, offices, and on the buses and playground as well as during assemblies.

Consequences are in place to correct student behavior and retrain the student to use appropriate behaviors. Adults supervising students will usually use a nonverbal warning (such as a disapproving expression) first and then give a quiet verbal warning. Adults will use a calm, firm, and respectful tone of voice. After using these two consequences, a third step is to have the student state the problem and then state the appropriate behavior along with "why" a particular rule is in place.

In various places, there are other possible consequences which would follow the consistent three named above. However, in all situations, students will be referred to the principal for dangerous or destructive behaviors or for insubordination.

All staff will encourage positive behaviors by:

- providing frequent verbal praise to individuals and groups for good behaviors and
- relating comments from others about good student behaviors.

Administrators will encourage positive behaviors by:

- giving positive announcements over the PA system and
- sending memos about good behaviors to individuals and groups.

Teachers will help students learn positive behavior by teaching and reviewing rules in all grade levels. Teachers in elementary grades will teach and review rules and expectations frequently, after school breaks, and with new students. Teachers will periodically discuss the importance of responsible behaviors and will encourage students to be responsible in managing their own behaviors.

There are specific student and supervisor responsibilities in various school locations. Below are expectations for students and supervisors and specific consequences to help correct student behaviors.

## **Cafeteria**

### **Students will:**

- Bring lunch identification card and pay for all food.
- Use quiet voices and good manners.
- Keep their hands, feet, and lunch supplies to themselves.
- Walk at all times.
- Stay in their seats until dismissed.
- Raise their hands to request help or get permission
- Be permitted to read, do schoolwork, or other quiet activities.

### **Monitors will:**

- Circulate throughout the cafeteria.
- Initiate positive attention and friendly interactions.
- Provide verbal praise to students who are following cafeteria rules and expectations.
- Use a firm respectful voice when talking to students.

### **Suggestions to correct student behavior are:**

- Provide positive practice – have the student try again.
- Have the student go to the end of the line if behavior occurs in line.
- Assign student a designated seat for a short period of time.
- Report whole class problems to the classroom teacher.
- Submit an incident report to the administrator for dangerous or destructive behaviors.

### **Teachers will:**

- Reinforce appropriate cafeteria behavior.

## **Assemblies/Auditorium Use**

### **Students will:**

- Demonstrate respectful behavior during assemblies by listening, participating, and following instructions.
- Wait quietly for the program to begin.
- Sit in their assigned seats/sections.
- Keep hands and feet to themselves.
- Not eat or drink in the auditorium.
- Be respectful of auditorium furniture.

### **Faculty/Staff will:**

- Attend all assemblies held for their students. Place themselves throughout the audience to assist with supervision.
- Model appropriate behavior by clapping at appropriate times, not talking while the assembly is in progress, etc.

### **Suggestions to correct student behavior are:**

- Change seating arrangements.
- Quietly remove the student from the assembly.

## **Bathrooms**

### **Students will:**

- Have teacher/supervisor permission to use the bathrooms during the school day.
- Sign out and note the time they leave and return in middle/high school classrooms.
- Report problems immediately to the teacher/supervisor.
- Use bathrooms as intended and keep them clean.

- Put toilet paper in the toilet and all other paper in the garbage can.
- Flush the toilet only once after use.
- Wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet.
- Not write on the walls, stalls, and doors.

**Faculty/Staff will:**

- Remind students to keep the bathrooms clean and safe.
- Inspect the bathrooms at least once each day. Note positive things to reinforce and areas to be improved. Discuss this information with the students.

**Suggestions to correct student behavior are:**

- Inform the student's teacher of individual bathroom problems.
- Notify the elementary student's parents/guardians of related problems.
- Submit an incident report to the administrator.
- For any repeated infractions, the principal will have the student call his/her parents to notify them that he/she will have to assist in cleaning the bathrooms.

## **Office**

**Students will:**

- Enter the offices using quiet voices and proper manners.
- Stop and see the secretary for assistance.
- Have a pass from the adult that is responsible for him/her.
- Use phones for emergency purposes only and use proper manners (say excuse me, thank you, etc.) during phone conversations.
- Be respectful of office property.

**Office staff will:**

- Remind students that the office is a place of business.
- Use a respectful but firm voice to inform students of appropriate office behavior.
- Be aware of confidential discussions in front of students, parents, and non-school personnel.

**Suggestions to correct student behavior are:**

- Provide positive practice – have the student try it again.
- Restrict student from the office unless there is an emergency.
- Report the situation to the classroom teacher.
- Submit an incident report to the Principal.

**Teachers will:**

- Give a student a pass before she/he can go to any office.
- Provide the office with necessary information if the student is sent to the office for negative reasons. This can be a phone call or written on the student's pass.

## **Hallways**

**Students will:**

- Talk quietly in the hallways.
- Be polite at all times.
- Walk and stay on the right hand side.
- Keep their hands and feet to themselves, not touching other students, posted work, displays, and walls.
- Pick up papers and put them in the trash containers.
- Not eat or drink in the hallways.

**Faculty/staff will:**

- Be visible in the hallways.
- Model appropriate behavior for students.

**Suggestions to correct student behavior are:**

- Provide positive practice by having the student do it again.
- Walk with teacher.
- Send discipline referral to Principal.



## **School Busses**

### **Students will:**

- Follow the rules outlined in the Code of Conduct.
- Stay in their seats.
- Not eat or drink on the bus.
- Be respectful and cooperative at all times.
- Ride their assigned bus unless they have written permission from the office.

### **The driver will:**

- Initiate professional, friendly interactions with students.
- Use a firm, respectful voice when talking with students.

### **Suggestions to correct student behavior are:**

- Assign seat.
- Written discipline referral sent to the administration.
- Meet with parents/guardian

## **Playground**

### **Students will:**

- Use the equipment only for its intended purpose.
- Watch to be sure their actions won't hurt others.
- Take turns without pushing ahead of others.
- Share the equipment and play area.
- Line up promptly when called by the teacher.

### **Supervisors (including Faculty/Staff) will:**

- Be visible at all times and alert to students' activities.
- Move around on the playground continuously.
- Limit the number of classrooms on the playground at one time.

### **Suggestions to correct student behavior are:**

- Sit out of playtime for 5 minutes.
- Sit out for a longer period of time.
- Contact the parents.
- Send discipline referral to Principal if behavior is dangerous or destructive.

## **PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, District personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The best discipline is self-imposed, and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. District personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

The Board recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct while on school property or engaged in a school function specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct.

**Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:**

### **Engage In Conduct That Is Disorderly. Examples include but are not limited to:**

- Running in hallways.
- Making inappropriate and/or unreasonable noise.
- Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
- Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
- Engaging in any willful act, which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
- Entering a school building without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
- Entering any school premises without authorization or remaining in any school building after it is normally closed.

- Computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the District's "iPad Acceptable Usage" Policy and/or "District Computer System and Internet Ethics" Policy.
- Unauthorized use of personal electronic devices/equipment (i.e., cell phones, MP3 devices, cameras, and other personal electronic devices deemed inappropriate by the administration).
- Loitering on school premises.

**Engage In Conduct That Is Insubordinate.** Examples include but are not limited to:

- **Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators and other school employees or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.**
- Lateness for, missing or leaving school without permission.
- Skipping detention.

**Engage In Conduct That Is Disruptive.** Examples include but are not limited to:

- Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators and other school personnel.
- Any other conduct which would cause one to be a disruptive student as defined in this Code of Conduct.

**Engage In Conduct That Is Violent Or Threatening.** Examples include but are not limited to:

- Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee or attempting to do so.
- Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so.
- Engaging in harassing conduct, verbal threats, intimidation, or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical well-being.
- Possessing a weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.
- Displaying what appears to be a weapon.
- Threatening to use any weapon or to do any form of harm to another individual by any other means.
- Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, other District employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
- Intentionally damaging or destroying school District property.
- Fighting and/or using any form of physical force against another person.
- Instigating or initiating a fight or the use of any form of physical force against another person.

**Engage In Any Conduct That Endangers The Safety, Morals, Health Or Welfare Of Others.** Examples include but are not limited to:

- Lying to school personnel.
- Stealing the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.
- Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of Individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them. This can include posting or publishing video, audio recordings or pictures (written material, cell phones, Internet, YouTube, etc.).
- Discrimination, based on a person's actual or perceived race, age, sexual orientation, use of a recognized guide dog, hearing dog or service dog, color, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sex, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity, marital or veteran status, use of a recognized guide dog, hearing dog or service dog, or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner on school property or at a school function.
- Harassment, the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical wellbeing based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, political affiliation, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, marital or veteran status, use of a recognized guide dog, hearing dog or service dog, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
- Harassment, which includes a pattern of actions or statements directed at an identifiable individual or group which are intended to be or which a reasonable person would perceive as ridiculing or demeaning, including but not limited to all forms of harassment prohibited in the Board's Harassment Policies, which is incorporated as a part of this Code of Conduct.
- Sexual harassment, which includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taking, sending or receiving sexually explicit videos, pictures or auditory recordings and other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature.
- Bullying and intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm.
- "Internet bullying" (also referred to as "cyber bullying") including the use of instant messaging, email, websites, chat rooms, text messaging, or by any other electronic means, when such use interferes with the operation of the school; or infringes upon the general health, safety and welfare of students or employees.
- Harassment, bullying and/or discrimination that happens, "Off school property where such acts create or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property".

- Hazing, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with or maintaining membership in any school sponsored activity, organization, club or team.
- Selling, using or possessing obscene material.
- Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing or swearing.
- Possessing, using, selling, distributing or exchanging a cigarette, cigar, pipe, e-cigarette or using chewing or smokeless tobacco.
- Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal or controlled substances, counterfeit and designer drugs, or paraphernalia for use of such drugs or be under the influence of any such substances on school property or at a school function, or being under the influence of either. "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, synthetic cannabinoids, ecstasy, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs."
- Inappropriately using, possessing or sharing prescription and/or over-the-counter drugs.
- Gambling.
- Indecent exposure, that is, exposure to sight of the private parts of the body.
- Initiating a report, warning or threat of fire or other catastrophe (including but not limited to a bomb threat or a threat of harm from a chemical or biological substance) without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.

### **Engage In Misconduct While On A School Bus.**

It is important for students to behave appropriately while riding on District buses to ensure their safety and that of other passengers and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving and fighting, harassment, and discrimination will not be tolerated.

### **Engage In Any Form Of Academic Misconduct. Examples include but are not limited to:**

Plagiarism.  
Cheating.  
Copying.  
Altering records.  
Assisting another student in any of the above actions.

### **Instigate Or Encourage Another To Violate This Code Of Conduct.**

## **DRESS CODE**

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting (Law ☉ 2801(2)(a)).

A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up and nails, shall be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.

Revealing garments such as tube/halter tops, tops made of net or see through material, tank tops with large arm holes, spaghetti straps, plunging necklines (front and/or back), bare back, bare midriffs, too short skirts or shorts are not appropriate for school.

- Straps on tops must be a minimum of 2 inches wide
- Bottom of top/shirt must meet the top of pants/shorts/skirts during normal activity
- Skirts and shorts may be no more than 8 inches off the floor when kneeling

Underwear must be completely covered by outer clothing (this includes bra straps).

Substantial, safe footwear must be worn at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed. Gym shoes are strongly recommended for elementary students.

No headgear of any kind including hats, headbands, caps, hoods or bandanas may be worn except when required by medical or religious reasons.

No clothing items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability may be worn.

No clothing may promote and /or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and /or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

No coats, jackets, gloves or clothing generally accepted as "outerwear" may be worn in the building during the school day.

No jewelry that may be deemed a weapon (for example rings covering multiple fingers and spiked necklaces, wrist bands and belts) may be worn.

Students wearing inappropriate clothing to school or to any school activity will be told to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so or continues to knowingly violate the dress code will have appropriate consequences.

- Parents will be called to bring appropriate clothes to school.
- Students may be assigned to detention outside of the school day.

## **REPORTING STUDENT VIOLATIONS**

All students are expected to promptly report violations of the Code of Conduct to a teacher, guidance counselor, principal or his or her designee. Any student observing a student possessing a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property or at a school function must report this information immediately to a teacher, principal, principal's designee or the superintendent.

All District staff who are authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to do so in a prompt, fair and lawful manner. District staff who are not authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to promptly report violations of the Code of Conduct to their supervisor, who shall in turn impose an appropriate disciplinary sanction, if so authorized, or refer the matter to a staff member who is authorized to impose an appropriate sanction.

Any weapon, alcohol or illegal substance found shall be confiscated immediately, if possible, followed by notification to the parent of the student involved and the appropriate disciplinary sanction if warranted, which may include permanent suspension and referral for prosecution.

The principal or their designee must notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency of those Code violations which constitute or may constitute a crime and which, in their judgment, substantially affect the order or security of a school, its students, and/or its staff, as soon as practical. The notification may be made by telephone and may be followed by appropriate written documents. The notification must identify the student and explain the conduct which violated the Code of Conduct and which constitutes or may constitute a crime.

Dignity Act Coordinator: Scott Costantini & Emily Harvey

## **DISCIPLINARY PENALTIES, PROCEDURES AND REFERRALS FOR STUDENTS**

Discipline is most effective when it deals directly with the problem in a way that students view as fair and impartial. School personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when warranted and to place emphasis on the student's ability to grow in self-discipline. In determining appropriate disciplinary action, school personnel authorized to impose disciplinary penalties will consider the following:

- The student's age.
- The nature of the offense (including its impact on others) and the circumstances which led to the offense.
- The student's prior disciplinary record.
- The effectiveness of other forms of discipline.
- Information from parents, teachers and/ or others, as appropriate.
- Other extenuating circumstances.

Where appropriate, discipline will be progressive. This means that a student's first violation will usually merit a lesser penalty than subsequent violations, taking into account all factors relevant to the severity of the violation. However, the circumstances of a particular violation may warrant more severe action even if it is the student's first offense.

If the conduct of a student is related to a disability or suspected disability, the student shall be referred to the Committee on Special Education and discipline, if warranted, shall be administered consistent with the separate requirements of this Code of Conduct for disciplining students with a disability or presumed to have a disability.

### **Penalties**

Students who are found to have violated the District's Code of Conduct may be subject to the following penalties, either alone or in combination. The school personnel identified after each penalty are authorized to impose that penalty, consistent with the student's right to due process.

- Oral warning or admonition -- any member of the District staff
- Written warning -- bus drivers, hall and lunch monitors, coaches, guidance counselors, aides, assistants, teachers, administrators
- Written notification to parent -- coaches, guidance counselors, teachers, administrators
- Detention -- administrators
- Suspension from transportation -- principals, superintendent
- Suspension from athletic participation -- coaches, principals, superintendent
- Suspension from social or extracurricular activities -- principals, superintendent

- Suspension of other privileges -- principals, superintendent
- In-school suspension -- principals, superintendent
- Removal from classroom by teacher -- teachers, principal
- Short-term (five days or less) suspension from school – principals, superintendent, Board of Education
- Long-term (more than five days) suspension from school -- superintendent, Board of Education
- Permanent suspension from school -- Superintendent, Board of Education.

**A framework of behaviors and consequences is listed below. The principal's designee will follow this table unless extenuating circumstances warrant an alternative consequence. This table is only a guide, other actions will warrant individual consequences as deemed necessary by the principal's designee.**

Behaviors	1st	2nd	3rd
Drivers/Riders Tardy to School	Warning Days 1-3	Conference with Principal-Parent notified	Loss of driving privileges for period Determined by Principal
Others Tardy to school	Warning Days 1-3	Conference with Principal-Parent notified	1 Late detention
Inappropriate language directed at a staff member	Parent notified and one late detention	Parent notified and one In School Suspension	Parent notified and Out of School Suspension
Skipping class in building	Parent notified and one late detention	Parent notified and one In School Suspension	Parent notified and two In School Suspension
Leaving school property without authorization	In-School Suspension		
Class disruption	Warning by teacher	Detention and conference with Principal	Late detention
Classroom tardy	3 or more times Detention		
Hallway	Warning	Lunch detention	Late detention
Cafeteria	Warning	Lunch detention	Late detention
Possessing, using, selling, distributing or exchanging a cigarette, cigar, pipe, e-cigarette, vaping device or using chewing or smokeless tobacco.	3 Days of In-School Suspension; Can be reduced to 1 Day In-School Suspension if student agrees to take part in Prevention Education		

## Procedures

The amount of due process a student is entitled to receive before a penalty is imposed depends on the penalty being imposed. In all cases, regardless of the penalty imposed, the school personnel authorized to impose the penalty must inform the student of the alleged misconduct and must reach a determination concerning the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students will be afforded an opportunity, if requested, to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary penalty.

Students who are to be given penalties other than an oral warning, written warning or written notification to their parents are entitled to additional rights before the penalty is imposed. These additional rights are explained below.

## **Detention**

Principals and the superintendent may use a detention outside of the normal school day as a penalty for student misconduct in situations where removal from the classroom or suspension would be inappropriate. Detention must be served on the date assigned. Detention takes precedence over extra-curricular activities, athletic practices or events and student employment. Failure to serve detention will automatically result in another day of detention or other discipline the administration deems appropriate.

## **Suspension from Transportation**

If a student does not conduct himself/ herself properly on a bus, the bus driver is expected to bring such misconduct to the building principal's attention. Students may have their riding privileges suspended by the building principal or the superintendent or their designees. In such cases, the student's parent will become responsible for seeing that his or her child gets to and from school safely.

A student subjected to a suspension from transportation is not entitled to a hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214 (unless the suspension from transportation will amount to a suspension from attendance). However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the building principal or the principal's designee to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved. Should the suspension from transportation amount to a suspension from attendance at school, the procedures of Education Law §3214 will be followed.

## **Suspension from Athletic Participation, Extra Curricular Activities and Other Privileges**

A student subjected to a suspension from athletic participation, extra-curricular activities or other privileges is not entitled to a hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the District official imposing the suspension to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

## **In-School Suspension**

The Board recognizes the school must balance the need of students to attend school and the need for order in the classroom to establish an environment conducive to learning. As such, the Board authorizes principals and the superintendent to place students who would otherwise be suspended from school as the result of a Code of Conduct violation in "in-school suspension."

A student subjected to an in-school suspension is not entitled to a hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the District official imposing the in-school suspension to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

## **Teacher Disciplinary Removal of Disruptive Students**

A student's behavior can affect a teacher's ability to teach and can make it difficult for other students in the classroom to learn. In most instances the classroom teacher can control a student's behavior and maintain or restore control over the classroom by using good classroom management techniques. These techniques may include practices that involve the teacher directing a student to briefly leave the classroom to give the student an opportunity to regain his or her composure and self-control. Use of time-honored classroom management techniques such as these does not constitute disciplinary removals for purposes of this Code so long as it does not involve a period of more than fifteen (15) minutes and the student is not placed in the care or custody of someone other than the classroom teacher.

On occasion, a student's behavior may become disruptive. For purposes of this Code of Conduct, a disruptive student is a student who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom. A substantial disruption of the educational process or substantial interference with a teacher's authority occurs when a student demonstrates a persistent and/or vociferous unwillingness to comply with the teacher's instructions or repeatedly violates the teacher's classroom behavior rules.

A classroom teacher may remove a disruptive student from class for up to three days (including the day on which the removal occurs) when other behavior management techniques have been used but have not been successful in eliminating the disruptive conduct, or the conduct is so severe that such techniques cannot feasibly be used. The removal from class applies to the class of the removing teacher only. Removal of a student with a disability, under certain circumstances, may cause a change in the student's placement. Accordingly, no teacher may remove a student with a disability from their class until the teacher has verified with the Principal or the chairperson of the Committee on Special Education that the removal will not violate the student's rights under state or federal law or regulation.

The teacher must provide the student with an explanation for why he or she is being removed and an opportunity to explain his or her version of the relevant events before the student is removed. Only after the informal discussion may a teacher remove a student from class. However, if the student poses a danger or ongoing threat of disruption, the teacher may order the student to be removed immediately. The teacher must, however, explain to the student why they were removed from the classroom and give the student a chance to present their version of the relevant events within 24-hours.

The teacher must complete a District-established disciplinary removal form and meet with the principal or designee as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the school day, to explain the circumstances of the removal and to present the removal form. If the principal or designee is not available by the end of the same school day, the teacher must leave the form with the secretary and meet with the principal or designee prior to the beginning of classes on the next school day.

Within 24-hours after the student's removal, the principal must notify the student's parents, in writing, that the student has been removed from class and why. The notice must also inform the parent that he or she has the right, upon request, to meet informally with the principal or designee and the teacher to discuss the reasons for the removal. The written notice must be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or some other means that is reasonably calculated to assure receipt of the notice within 24 hours of the student's removal at the last known address for the parents. Where possible, notice should also be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a telephone number(s) for the purpose of contacting parents.

If at the informal meeting the student denies the charges, the principal must explain why the student was removed and give the student and the student's parents a chance to present the student's version of the relevant events. The informal meeting must be held within 48 hours of the student's removal. The timing of the informal meeting may be extended by mutual agreement of the parent and principal.

The principal may overturn the removal of the student from class if the principal finds any one of the following:

- The charges against the student are not supported by substantial evidence.
- The student's removal is in violation of law, including the District's Code of Conduct.
- The conduct warrants suspension from school pursuant to Education Law §3214 and a suspension will be imposed.

The principal may overturn a removal at any point between receiving the referral form issued by the teacher and the close of business on the day following the 48-hour period for the informal conference, if a conference is requested. No student removed from the classroom by the classroom teacher will be permitted to return to the classroom until the principal makes a final determination, or the period of removal expires, whichever occurs first.

Any disruptive student removed from the classroom by the classroom teacher shall be offered continued educational programming and activities until he or she is permitted to return to the classroom.

Each teacher must keep a complete log (on a District provided form) for all cases of removal of students from their class. The principal must keep a complete building log of all removals of students from class.

The principal may designate another administrator to carry out their duties under this section, and the term "principal" as used in these removal procedures shall be deemed to include any such designee.

### **Suspension from School**

Suspension from school is a significant penalty, which may be imposed upon students who are insubordinate, disorderly, violent or disruptive, or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others.

The Board retains its authority to suspend students, but places primary responsibility for the suspension of students with the superintendent and the principals.

Any staff member may recommend to the superintendent or the principal that a student be suspended. All staff members must immediately report and refer a violent student to the principal or the superintendent for a violation of the Code of Conduct. All recommendations and referrals shall be made in writing unless the conditions underlying the recommendation or referral warrant immediate attention. In such cases a written report is to be prepared as soon as possible by the staff member recommending the suspension.

### **Short-Term (5 days or less) Suspension from School**

When the superintendent or principal (referred to as the "suspending authority") proposes to suspend a student charged with misconduct for five days or less pursuant to Education Law §3214(3), the suspending authority must immediately notify the student orally. If the student denies the misconduct, the suspending authority must provide an explanation of the basis for the proposed suspension. The suspending authority must also notify the student's parents in writing that the student may be (or has been) suspended from school.

The written notice must be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or some other means that is reasonably calculated to assure receipt of the notice within 24 hours of the decision to propose suspension at the last known address for the parents. Where possible, notice should also be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a telephone number(s) for the purpose of contacting the parents. The notice shall provide a description of the charges against the student and the incident for which suspension is proposed and shall inform the parents of the right to request an immediate informal conference with the principal. Both the notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parents. At the conference, the parents shall be permitted to ask questions of complaining witnesses under such procedures as the principal may establish.

The notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place before the student is suspended unless the student's presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process. If the student's presence does pose such a danger or threat of disruption, the notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon after the suspension as is reasonably practicable. After the conference, the principal shall promptly advise the parents in writing of his or her decision.

**Long-Term (more than 5 days) Suspension from School** When the superintendent or building principal or designee determines the suspension for more than five days may be warranted, he or she shall give reasonable notice to the student and the student's parents of their right to a fair hearing. At the hearing the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, the right to question witnesses against themselves and the right to present witnesses and other evidence on their behalf.

The superintendent shall personally hear and determine the proceeding or may, in their discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer shall be authorized to administer oaths and to issue subpoenas in conjunction with the proceeding before him or her. A record of the hearing shall be maintained, but no stenographic transcript shall be required. A tape recording shall be deemed a satisfactory record. The hearing officer shall make findings of fact and recommendations as to the appropriate measure of discipline to the superintendent. The report of the hearing officer shall be advisory only, and the superintendent may accept all or any part thereof.

An appeal of the decision of the superintendent may be made to the Board, which will make its decision based solely upon the record before it. All appeals to the Board must be in writing and submitted to the District Clerk within fourteen calendar days of the date of the superintendent's decision, unless the parents can show that extraordinary circumstances precluded them from doing so. The Board may adopt in whole or in part the decision of the superintendent. Final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the Commissioner within 30 calendar days of the decision.

### **Permanent Suspension**

Permanent suspension is reserved for extraordinary circumstances such as where a student's conduct poses a life-threatening or other form of serious danger to the safety and well-being of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function. The same procedures shall be used as for a long-term suspension.

### **Minimum Periods Of Suspension**

#### **Students Who Bring a Weapon to School**

Any student, other than a student with a disability, found guilty of bringing a weapon onto school property will be subject to suspension from school for at least one calendar year. Before being suspended, the student will have an opportunity for a hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. The superintendent has the authority to modify the one-year suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the superintendent may consider the following:

- The student's age.
- The student's grade in school.
- The student's prior disciplinary record.
- The superintendent's belief that other forms of discipline may be more effective.
- Input from parents, teachers and/ or others.
- Other extenuating circumstances.

#### **Students Who Commit Violent Acts Other than Bringing a Weapon to School**

Any student, other than a student with a disability, who is found to have committed a violent act, other than bringing a weapon onto school property, shall be subject to suspension from school for at least five days. If the proposed penalty is the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parents will be given the same notice and opportunity for an informal conference given to all students subject to a short-term suspension. If the proposed penalty exceeds the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parents will be given the same notice and opportunity for a hearing given to all students subject to a long-term suspension. The suspending authority has the authority to modify the minimum five-day suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the Superintendent may consider the same factors considered in modifying a one-year suspension for possessing a weapon.

#### **Students Who are Repeatedly Substantially Disruptive of the Educational Process or Who Repeatedly Substantially Interfere with the Teacher's Authority over the Classroom**

Any student, other than a student with a disability, who repeatedly is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom will be suspended from school for at least five days. For purposes of this Code of Conduct, "repeatedly is substantially disruptive" means engaging in conduct that results in the student being removed from the classroom by teacher(s) pursuant to Education Law §3214(3-a) and this Code on four or more occasions during a semester. The student and the student's parent will be given notice and opportunity for an informal conference. If the proposed penalty exceeds the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for a hearing given to all students subject to a long-term suspension. The suspending authority has the authority to modify the minimum five-day suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the suspending authority may consider the same factors considered in modifying a one-year suspension for possessing a weapon.



## Referrals

**Counseling and Human Services Agencies** the Guidance Office and School Psychologist shall handle all referrals of students to counseling and human services agencies.

**PINS Petitions.** The District may file a PINS (person in need of supervision) petition in Family Court on any student under the age of 16 who demonstrates that he or she requires supervision and treatment by:

- Being habitually truant as required by part one of Article 65 of the Education Law.
- Engaging in an ongoing or continual course of conduct which makes the student ungovernable, or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of the school.

**Juvenile Delinquents and Criminal Offenders** The Principal is required to refer the following students to the County Attorney or District Attorney as appropriate, for a juvenile delinquency proceeding before the Family Court or proceedings before the appropriate criminal court:

- Any student who is found to have brought a weapon to school, or
- Any student 14 or 15 years old who qualifies for juvenile offender status under the Criminal Procedure Law §1.20 (42).
- Any student committing an offense against the District, the school or any school personnel.

The principal is required to refer students age 16 and older or any student 14 or 15 years old who qualify for juvenile offender status to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

## ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTION

When a student of any age is removed from class by a teacher or a student of compulsory attendance age is suspended from school pursuant to Education Law §3214, the District will take steps to provide continued educational programming and activities/alternative means of instruction for the student. The policies and procedures for the provision of such services shall be developed by the superintendent (or designee) who shall be responsible for assuring compliance with those policies and procedures.

## WELLNESS/CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY PROGRAM

Panama Central School recognizes education as a means of achieving successful individual development. The school strives to serve the needs of all youth and to prepare them for living productively in a democratic society. We believe in the value and potential of each member of the school community. We recognize that chemical abuse/dependency and dysfunctional behavior seriously impair the ability of individuals to develop to their full potential. We also recognize that problems created by chemical abuse/dependency and dysfunctional behavior, have an adverse effect on the ability of all members of the school community.

Our policy is based on the belief that chemical dependency and dysfunctional conduct is a life threatening illness that affects individuals in all areas of their lives: morally, emotionally, physically, intellectually and socially. We recognize that chemical dependency and dysfunctional demeanor is a treatable health problem. We further recognize that health problems of youth are primarily the responsibility of the home and community, but schools share in that responsibility because chemical dependency and dysfunctional actions often interfere with school behavior, student learning and the fullest possible development of each student.

The Panama Central School District has made it a priority to promote a drug-free school. There are opportunities for individual counseling and group support on a voluntary basis. We believe that confidentiality is critical to the success of the programs offered.

Because it is our conviction that chemical dependency and dysfunctional behavior is a treatable illness, the Panama Central School District has adopted the following Alcohol/Drug Abuse Policy.

## ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE POLICY

All staff members, administrators, and members of the Board of Education are obligated to guard the confidentiality of students.

Situational Category	Immediate Action	Investigation	Notification of		Disposition of Substance	Disciplinary Action taken
			Parents	Police		
1. Student is suspected of using drugs but does not have extreme behavior changes and there is no evidence.	Administration notified and then student is sent to nurse	Administration follows up	Yes	No	No	Depending on investigation
2. A student contacts a faculty member in regards to the drug use of another student.	Faculty member contacts administration	Administration follows up	As Needed	As Needed	No	As Needed
3. A student volunteers information about personal drug use.	Student is encouraged to personally seek help. Administration is notified	Monitor student	Only with student consent unless there is a clear and imminent danger as determined by Principal or nurse	No	No	No
4. A student has a drug or alcohol related medical emergency.	The nurse and principal will be summoned immediately and staff members will write an anecdotal report	The principal will investigate the incident. This may include a search of the student, locker, and other possessions	Yes. Requested to come to school immediately	Yes	Police analysis of substance	May warrant in or out of school suspension
5. Prescription and/or non-prescription medicine found in possession.	Administration notified. Substance placed in a sealed envelope and labeled; given to the nurse.	Nurse/principal determines if possession is legal. If illegal, student's locker and other possessions are searched	Yes, School policy is explained to parents and student. Parent requested to pick up prescription at school	As Needed	No	As Needed
6. A student possess drug related paraphernalia.	Principal and/or nurse are summoned. Paraphernalia is confiscated; given to the principal. Staff member writes an anecdotal report.	Student's locker and other possessions will be searched	Parents Notified	As Needed	Confiscated and retained by the Principal.	In/Out school suspension
7. A student possesses, uses, or is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.	Principal and nurse are summoned immediately and staff member writes an anecdotal report	Student's locker and other possessions will be searched	Yes, Parents responsible for transporting student home immediately.	Yes	Confiscated and retained by the principal. Analysis of substance	In/Out school suspension and a Superintendent's hearing
8. A student possess or is under the influences of drugs or alcohol at a school related activity	Chaperone will contact the group advisor and administrator	Student's locker and other possessions will be searched	Yes, Parents responsible for transporting student home immediately. Conference scheduled with Principal	Yes	Confiscated and retained by the principal. Analysis of substance	In/Out school suspension and a Superintendent's hearing
9. A student is distributing a drug, alcohol or controlled substance, or has a larger amount than would be consumed by one individual.	Principal and/or nurse are summoned. Substance is confiscated; given to the principal. Staff member writes an anecdotal report.	Student's locker and other possessions will be searched	Yes	Yes	Analysis for use in further proceedings will be requested	In/Out school suspension and a Superintendent's hearing
10. Look alike drugs.	Principal and/or nurse are summoned. Substance is confiscated; given to the principal. Staff member writes an anecdotal report.	Student's locker and other possessions will be searched	Yes	Yes	Analysis for use in further proceedings will be requested	In/Out school suspension and a Superintendent's hearing

## **DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Board recognizes that it may be necessary to suspend, remove or otherwise discipline students with disabilities to address disruptive or problem behavior. The Board also recognizes that students with disabilities enjoy certain procedural protections whenever school authorities intend to impose discipline upon them. The Board is committed to ensuring that the procedures followed for suspending, removing or otherwise disciplining students with disabilities are consistent with the procedural safeguards required by applicable laws and regulations. This Code of Conduct affords students with disabilities subject to disciplinary action no greater or lesser rights than those expressly afforded by applicable federal and state law and regulations. Authorized Suspensions Or Removals Of Students With Disabilities.

For purposes of this section of the Code of Conduct, the following definitions apply.

A “suspension” means a suspension pursuant to Education Law § 3214.

A “removal” means a removal for disciplinary reasons from the student’s current educational placement other than a suspension, change in placement to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) ordered by an impartial hearing officer because the student poses a risk of harm to himself or herself or others; or a change in placement to an IAES for behavior involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances.

### **Special Rules Regarding The Suspension Or Removal Of Students With Disabilities**

The removal of a student with disabilities other than a suspension or placement in an IAES shall be conducted in accordance with the due process procedures applicable to such removals of non-disabled students, except that school personnel may not impose such removal for more than 10 consecutive days or for a period that would result in a disciplinary change in placement, unless the CSE has determined that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student’s disability. During any period of suspension or removal, including placement in an IAES, students with disabilities shall be provided services as required by the Commissioner’s regulations which are incorporated into this Code.

### **Expedited Due Process Hearings**

An expedited due process hearing shall be conducted in the manner specified by the Commissioner’s regulations incorporated into this Code, if:

The District requests such a hearing to obtain an order of an impartial hearing officer placing a student with a disability in an IAES where school personnel maintain that it is dangerous for the student to be in their current educational placement, or during the pendency of due process hearings where school personnel maintain that it is dangerous for the student to be in their current educational placement during such proceedings.

The parent requests such a hearing from a determination that the student’s behavior was not a manifestation of the student’s disability, or relating to any decision regarding placement, including but not limited to any decision to place the student in an IAES.

During the pendency of an expedited due process hearing or appeal regarding the placement of a student in an IAES for behavior involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances, or on grounds of dangerousness, or regarding a determination that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student’s disability for a student who has been placed in an IAES, the student shall remain in the IAES pending the decision of the impartial hearing officer or until expiration of the IAES placement, whichever occurs first, unless the parents and the District agree otherwise.

If school personnel propose to change the student’s placement after expiration of an IAES placement, during the pendency of any proceeding to challenge the proposed change in placement, the student shall remain in the placement prior to removal to the IAES, except where the student is again placed in an IAES.

An expedited due process hearing shall be completed within 15 business days of receipt of the request for a hearing. Although the impartial hearing officer may grant specific extensions of such a time period, he or she must mail a written decision to the District and the parents within five business days after the last hearing date, and in no event later than 45 calendar days after receipt of the request for a hearing, without exceptions or extensions.

### **Referral To Law Enforcement And Judicial Authorities**

In accordance with the provisions of IDEA and its implementing regulations the District may report a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities, and such action will not constitute a change of the student’s placement. The Superintendent shall ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of a student with disabilities are transmitted for consideration to the appropriate authorities to whom a crime is reported.

## **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Corporal punishment is any act of physical force upon a student for the purpose of punishing that student. Corporal punishment of any student by any District employee is strictly forbidden. However, in situations where alternative procedures and methods that do not involve the use of physical force cannot reasonably be used, reasonable physical force may be used to:

- Protect oneself, another student, teacher or any person from physical injury.
- Protect the property of the school or others.

- Restrain or remove a student whose behavior interferes with the orderly exercise and performance of school District functions, powers and duties, if that student has refused to refrain from further disruptive acts.

The District will file all complaints about the use of corporal punishment with the Commissioner of Education in accordance with Commissioner's regulations.

## **STUDENT SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS**

The Board of Education is committed to ensuring an atmosphere on school property and at school functions that is safe and orderly. To achieve this kind of environment, any school official authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty on a student may question a student about an alleged violation of law or the District Code of Conduct. Students are not entitled to any sort of "Miranda"-type warning before being questioned by school officials.

In addition, the Board authorizes the superintendent, principals, the school nurse and District security officials to conduct searches of students and their belongings if the authorized school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in evidence that the student violated the law or the District Code of Conduct. Whenever practicable, the school official shall consult with another person concerning the presence of reasonable suspicion and shall have another adult witness the search.

Before searching a student or the student's belongings, the authorized school official should first ask the student if he or she possesses physical evidence that they violated the law or the District Code and/or ask the student to voluntarily consent to the search. Searches will be limited to the extent necessary to locate the evidence sought.

Whenever practicable, searches will be conducted in the privacy of administrative offices and students will be present when their possessions are being searched.

### **Student Lockers, Desks And Other School Storage Places**

The rules in this Code of Conduct regarding searches of students and their belongings do not apply to student lockers, desks and other school storage places. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to these places and school officials retain complete control over them. This means that student lockers, desks and other school storage places may be subject to search at any time by school officials, without prior notice to students and without their consent.

### **Documentation Of Searches**

The authorized school official conducting a search shall be responsible for promptly recording the following information about each search as soon as practicable after it has been conducted:

- Name, age and grade of student searched.
- Reasons for the search.
- Purpose of search (that is, what item(s) were being sought).
- Nature and scope of search.
- Person conducting search and their title and position.
- Witnesses, if any, to the search.
- Time and location of search.
- Results of search (that is, what items(s) were found).
- Disposition of items found.
- Time, manner and results of parental notification.

The principal or the principal's designee shall be responsible for the custody, control and disposition of any item taken from a student. The Principal or their designee shall make a record of each item taken from the student and retain control of the item(s), until the item(s) is turned over to the police or other appropriate authorities. The principal or their designee shall be responsible for personally delivering dangerous or illegal items to police authorities.

### **Police Involvement In Searches And Interrogations Of Students**

District officials are committed to cooperating with police officials and other law enforcement authorities to maintain a safe school environment. Police officials, however, have limited authority to interview or search students in schools or at school functions, or to use school facilities in connection with police work. Police officials may enter school property or a school function to question or search a student or to conduct a formal investigation involving students only if they have:

- A search or an arrest warrant; or
- Probable cause to believe a crime has been committed on school property or at a school function; or
- Been invited by school officials.

Before police officials are permitted to question or search any student, the Building Principal or his or her designee shall first try to notify the student's parent to give the parent the opportunity to be present during the police questioning or search. If the student's parent cannot be contacted prior to the police questioning or search, the questioning or search shall not be conducted at school. Whenever practicable, the principal or designee will be present during any police questioning or search of a student on school property or at a school function.

## Child Protective Services Investigations

Consistent with the District's commitment to keep students safe from harm and the obligation of school officials to report to Child Protective Services when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a student has been abused or maltreated, the District will cooperate with local child protective services workers who wish to conduct interviews of students on school property relating to allegations of suspected child abuse, and/or neglect, or custody investigations.

All requests by child protective services to interview a student on school property shall be made directly to the principal or his or her designee. The principal or his or her designee shall set the time and place of the interview. The Principal or designee shall decide if it is necessary and appropriate for a school official to be present during the interview, depending on the age of the student being interviewed and the nature of the allegations. If the nature of the allegations is such that it may be necessary for the student to remove any of his or her clothing in order for the child protective services worker to verify the allegations, the school nurse or other District medical personnel must be present during that portion of the interview. No student may be required to remove his or her clothing in front of a child protective services worker or school District official of the opposite sex.

A child protective services worker may not remove a student from school property without a court order, unless the worker reasonably believes that the student would be subject to danger of abuse if he or she were not removed from school before a court order can reasonably be obtained. If the worker believes the student would be subject to danger of abuse, the worker may remove the student without a court order and without the parent's consent.

## Technology Misuse

The use of any personal or school issued electronic device (i.e. cell phone, all handheld game devices, iPod, tablet, iPhone) to exploit personal information, invade personal privacy, compromise the integrity of educational programs or disrupt instruction and/or the school day is prohibited.

Technology required for instructional purposes will be provided to students by the school district (ex. iPads). It is recommended that personal electronic devices be left at home. Bringing these items to school is done at the student's own risk. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items. Students in UPK-4 are prohibited from bringing electronic devices to school at any time. Students in grades 5-6 must keep all non-school electronic devices in their lockers during the school day.

Inappropriate use of any electronic device will result in the device being confiscated and the consequences will be as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense**      The student may pick up the device at the end of that day.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense**      The parent/guardian must pick up the device from the office.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense**      The parent/guardian must pick up the device and the student will be placed on social probation for a time period to be determined by the principal.

If an electronic device/cell phone is used in an inappropriate manner at school, in a school owned vehicle, or at any school related activity, the phone will be confiscated and kept until an investigation is complete. Inappropriate use includes but is not limited to cheating, invasion of privacy, unauthorized and/or inappropriate use of the Internet, and bullying. Consequences for such actions will be determined according to the Code of Conduct.

Exceptions to these procedures may be granted by an administrator on a case-by-case basis to accommodate a family emergency or medical necessity.

## VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

The Board encourages parents and other District citizens to visit the school and classrooms to observe the work of students, teachers and other staff. Since schools are a place of work and learning, however, certain limits must be set for such visits. The principal or his designee is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds. For these reasons, the following rules apply to visitors to the schools:

Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor. All visitors to the school will be required to sign the visitor's register and will be issued a visitor's identification badge, which must be worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds. The visitor must return the identification badge before leaving the building.

Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as parent-teacher organization meetings, athletic competitions or public gatherings, are not required to register or wear an identification tag.

Parents or citizens who wish to observe a classroom while school is in session are required to arrange such visits in advance with the classroom teacher(s), so that class disruption is kept to a minimum. The teacher will notify the respective office of such a visit.

Student visitors may be approved by the building principal if a request is submitted at least 24 hours in advance.

Visitors cannot expect teachers to take away from classroom instruction to discuss individual matters.

Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the principal or his or her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.

All visitors must abide by the rules contained in this Code of Conduct.

## **ENFORCEMENT FOR PERSONS OTHER THAN STUDENTS**

For all persons other than students, violation of this Code shall be subject to the following provisions.

### **Penalties**

Persons who violate this Code shall be subject to the following penalties:

Visitors. Their authorization, if any, to remain on school grounds or at the school function shall be withdrawn and they shall be directed to leave the premises. If they refuse to leave, they shall be subject to ejection. Where warranted, they may be excluded from school property and/or functions in the future.

Tenured faculty members and administrators. They shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, as the facts may warrant in accordance with Education Law §3020-a and any other legal rights that they may have.

Staff members in the classified service of the Civil Service entitled to the protection of Civil Service Law §75. They shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, as the facts may warrant in accordance with Civil Service Law §75 and any other legal rights that they may have.

District employees other than those described above. They shall be subject to warning, reprimand, suspension, dismissal or other disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with any legal rights they may have.

### **Enforcement**

Each principal or their designee shall be responsible for enforcing the conduct required by this Code.

When the Building Principal or his or her designee sees an individual engaged in prohibited conduct, which in his or her judgment does not pose any immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the principal or his or her designee shall tell the individual that the conduct is prohibited and ask the individual to stop such behavior. The principal or their designee shall also warn the individual of the consequences for failing to stop. If the person refuses to stop engaging in the prohibited conduct, or if the person's conduct poses an immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the principal or their designee shall have the individual removed immediately from school property or the school function. If necessary, local law enforcement authorities will be contacted to assist in dealing with the person.

The District will consider violations of the Code as a possible basis for disciplinary action against any staff member, as appropriate in accordance with the "Penalties" section above. In addition, the District reserves its right to pursue a civil or criminal legal action against any person violating the Code and/or the law at or in connection with school.

## **ALL ESSENTIAL EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS ARE EXPECTED TO ADHERE TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT.**

### **Parents Are Expected To:**

- Recognize that the education of their child(ren) is a joint responsibility of the parents and the school community.
- Send their children to school ready to participate, learn and ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
- Insist their children be dressed and groomed in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
- Help their children understand that appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.
- Know school rules and help their children understand them.
- Convey to their children a supportive attitude toward education and the district.
- Build good relationships with teachers, other parents and their children's friends.
- Help their children deal effectively with peer pressure.
- Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
- Provide a place for study and ensure homework assignments are completed.
- Teach their children respect and dignity for themselves, and other students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, which will strengthen the child's confidence and promote learning in accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act.

### **Teachers Are Expected To:**

- Maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, which will strengthen student's self-concept and promote confidence to learn in accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act.
- Demonstrate interest in teaching, concern for student achievement, and be prepared to teach.
- Know school policies and rules, and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
- Communicate to students and parents:
  - Course objectives, requirements, and marking/grading procedures
  - Assignment deadlines
  - Expectations for students
  - Classroom discipline plan
- Communicate regularly with students, parents and other teachers concerning growth and achievement.
- Confront issues of discrimination and harassment in any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any students, school employee or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.
- Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students in the school or classroom setting.
- Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to a teacher's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.

#### **Guidance Counselors Are Expected To:**

- Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social and emotional problems.
- Initiate teacher/student/counselor conferences and teacher/student/counselor conferences and initiate parent/teacher/student/counselor conferences, as necessary, as a way to avoid and/or resolve problems.
- Regularly review, with students, their educational progress and provide information to assist students with career planning.
- Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extracurricular programs.
- Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
- Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to the counselor's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.

#### **Other School Staff Members Are Expected To:**

- Follow the Code of Conduct; know, abide by and enforce school rules in a fair and consistent manner.
- Set a good example for students and other staff by demonstrating dependability, integrity and other standards of ethical conduct.
- Assist in promoting a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment.
- Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.
- Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
- Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to a staff member's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.

#### **Student Support Service Personnel Are Expected To:**

- Support educational and academic goals.
- Know school rules, abide by them and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
- Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social and emotional problems.
- Set a good example for students and colleagues by demonstrating dependability, integrity and other standards of ethical conduct.
- Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.
- Initiate teacher/student/counselor conferences and parent/teacher/student/counselor conferences, as necessary or requested, as a way to resolve problems and communicate as necessary in any other manner with parents and other staff regarding student progress and needs.
- Regularly review with students their educational progress and provide information to assist with career planning
- Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extra-curricular programs.
- Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
- Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to the staff member's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.

#### **Administrators Are Expected To:**

- Promote a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment, free from intimidation, discrimination and harassment, supporting active teaching and learning.
- Ensure that students, staff, parents and community residents have the opportunity to communicate regularly with administrators to address concerns.
- Support the development of and student participation in appropriate extracurricular activities.
- Be responsible for enforcing the Code of Conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly and, when necessary, appropriately documenting actions.
- Know the policies of the board of education and state and federal laws relating to school operations and management.
- Work to create instructional programs that minimize problems of misconduct and are sensitive to student and teacher needs.
- Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
- Follow up on any incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to the Principal's attention in a timely manner in collaboration with the Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC)

### **Members Of The Board Of Education Are Expected To:**

- Collaborate with student, teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel to develop a Code of Conduct that clearly defines expectations for the conduct of students, district personnel and visitors on school property and at school functions.
- Adopt and review at least annually the District's Code of Conduct to evaluate the code's effectiveness and the fairness and consistency of its implementation.
- Lead by example by conducting board meetings in a professional, respectful, courteous manner.
- Appoint a Dignity Act Coordinator in each school building. The Dignity Act Coordinator will be thoroughly trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, and sex. The Dignity Act Coordinator will be accessible to students and other staff members for consultation and advice as needed on the Dignity Act.

## **DISSEMINATION AND REVIEW**

The Board will work to ensure that the community is aware of this Code of Conduct by:

- Making copies of the Code available to all parents, students and community members upon request, at the beginning of the school year.
- Providing all current teachers and other staff members with a copy of the Code and a copy of any amendments to the Code as soon as practicable after adoption.
- Providing all employees with a copy of the current Code of Conduct annually.
- Providing all students with a copy, in an age-appropriate, plain-language version, of the current Code of Conduct at a general school assembly held at the beginning of each school year.
- Making the Code available to view on the school's website at [www.pancent.org](http://www.pancent.org).

The Board will sponsor in-service education programs for all District staff members to ensure effective implementation of the Code. The Superintendent will determine the frequency, length, nature of and presenters for such programs, and in doing so may solicit the recommendations of staff, particularly administrators and teachers.

The administration will review this Code of Conduct every year and update it as necessary. In conducting the review, the administration will consider how effective the Code's provisions have been and whether the Code has been applied fairly and consistently. The Board may appoint an advisory committee to assist in reviewing the Code and the District's response to Code of Conduct violations. The committee will be made up of representatives of student, teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel. Revisions to the Code will be made only after at least one public hearing, which provides for the participation of school personnel, parents, students and any other interested party.

The Code of Conduct and any amendments to it will be filed with the New York State Department of Education Commissioner no later than 30 days after adoption by the Board.

Effective July 9, 2001

## **STUDENT INFORMATION**



## COVID-19

Staff and students are required to comply with all New York State Department of Education (NYSED), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and New York state Department of Health regulations and guidelines. This includes the use of personal protective equipment.

In accordance with the NYSDOH guidance regarding face coverings, we will communicate and enforce expectations for the wearing of face coverings any time or place that individuals cannot maintain appropriate social distancing. All individuals in our school facilities and on school grounds will be expected to wear face coverings if another person unexpectedly cannot socially distance; and for this reason, individuals - including students - must wear face coverings in common areas such as entrances/exits, lobbies, and when traveling in hallways around the school. Students will be provided face covering breaks throughout the day but are expected to comply with all staff directives to wear masks. Non-compliance with these directives will be considered insubordination.

If a child presents with COVID-19 symptoms the parent/guardian must not send the child to school and is asked to contact the school nurse. Additionally, families will be asked to complete a daily health screening of their child. Any child who cannot produce proof of this health screening, will be screened by school staff once they enter the building. Any student with a fever greater than 100.4 at school will be placed into an isolation room until they can be picked up from school. Staff and visitors will follow this same procedure for completing appropriate health screenings and isolation, when needed.

Panama Central School will work with the Department of Health to conduct appropriate COVID-19 testing and contact tracing. It will be the district's responsibility to maintain accurate attendance records, transportation records, and visitor logs as a part of this process.

Under hybrid and remote learning models, attendance policies and participation expectations will be maintained for all students. Specific expectations for the course during these models of learning will be communicated by the course instructor. All students will be provided a district-issued iPad. Any family who does not have reliable internet access should contact the district technology staff to receive support in ensuring that their student is able to access remote learning.

## ATTENDANCE

The Compulsory Education Law requires the regular attendance of all children between six and sixteen years of age. The quality of work done in school depends to a great extent upon attendance. The student who is habitually absent or tardy is not able to work up to his capabilities and very often, the result is poor marks and the eventual dropping out of school. Absence from school also decreases the revenue to the school district, as state aid is determined by the attendance of each of the pupils enrolled. The law only recognizes a few legitimate excuses for absences from school such as personal illness, serious illness or death in the family, weather making travel unsafe (as determined by the district), quarantine, attendance at clinics, courts or funerals.

Absences for nearly all other reasons are not excused by the law. Parents are urged to cooperate with school personnel and to refrain from taking students out of school for other than legal reasons. Because vacation periods are provided within the school calendar, trips taken at other times during the school year will be considered illegal absences. When a student is absent from school with the knowledge and consent, stated or implied, of his parents for other than legal reasons, it may be considered unlawful detention or educational neglect. The following are examples of unexcused absences: visiting, hunting, vacation, shopping, needed at home, caring for a baby, overslept.

To receive credit for courses, students not only must fulfill the necessary academic requirements of each course, but also must comply with the attendance requirements. In order for students to be eligible to take tests and submit papers, homework, projects, etc., for grades required to receive credit for any course, students must be in attendance a minimum of 85% of the total number of days the course is scheduled to be in session.

Any student absent from a class more than 15% of the time, for any reason, (including excused and unexcused absences), may not receive credit for the course. For example, more than 27 absences in a full year course or 14 absences in a semestered course, or 7 absences in a quarter long course may result in loss of credit. However, where a student earns a passing grade, credit will not be denied for the course(s). Lateness to class of twenty (20) minutes or more will be considered a full period absence. Transfers and students re enrolling after having dropped out will be expected to attend 85% of the scheduled class meetings during their time of enrollment. The procedures followed will be prorated according to their possible number of class meetings.

Once a grade 9-12 student exceeds the 15% absence rate, the classroom teacher may not accept a student's remaining exams/tests or submit papers/projects, etc. for grades necessary to receive credit for that course, regardless of the student's performance on prior tests, exams, or other graded work. Students who violate the minimum attendance standards and do not have a passing grade must, nonetheless, be allowed to continue to attend class unless the district affords the student a full disciplinary hearing in accordance with education law. If a student identified as having a disability by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) does not meet the attendance requirements, he/ she will be referred to the CSE before any other action is taken.

## ABSENCES

Please call the school 782-2455 Ext. 11 for students in grades 7-12 and Ext. 12 for students in grades UPK-6 when your child is home sick. Unless prior information is received, the parents of any absent child may be contacted by a school district employee to determine the nature of the absence. When a student returns to school after an absence, they must bring a note signed by the parent/guardian, stating the day(s)

and date(s) of the absence and the reason. An elementary student should give the note to his/her teacher and middle and high school students should take the note to the office on the day they return to school. *An absence is marked unexcused until a written note is received from a parent/guardian.* If the excuse states an unexcused reason, the absence will remain unexcused. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with teachers to obtain missed assignments.

## **LATE TO SCHOOL/CLASS**

Any student who is tardy to school must bring a note signed by the parent/guardian stating the date and the specific reason for the tardiness. Unexcused tardies may result in disciplinary action.

Students reporting to school after 7:59 a.m. must report directly to the appropriate office to be admitted to school. A written excuse is due to the office no later than the second day following the tardiness.

### **Excused absences are defined as follows:**

- Doctor appointments
- Dentist and orthodontist appointments
- Illness (specific information must be provided)
- Legal/court appointments
- School related events
- Family emergencies or illness 1 per semester
- Automobile breakdown - 1 per semester

### **Unexcused absences are defined as follows:**

- Tardy without a note from a parent/guardian
- All appointments other than those listed at left
- Overslept
- Missed Bus/Ride Late
- Taking family member to work
- Hunting/fishing
- Automobile repair
- Returning from vacation

## **LATE ARRIVAL/EARLY RELEASE**

Students may be granted late arrival/early release privileges with principal, parent, and guidance counselor approval. These are to be considered to be a privilege and may be revoked due to attendance, academic or behavioral issues by the building principal.

## **LEAVING THE BUILDING**

A child sent to school and expected to be in school, but who does not attend for other than lawful reasons is truant. All students, unless specifically excused by the principal, must remain on school grounds throughout the school day. Any violation of this regulation is considered an act of truancy which makes the offender immediately subject to disciplinary action. If a student must leave school during the school day because of illness, he/she is to report to the nurse's office. The student is examined by the nurse and the parents are contacted by phone if there is a need for the student to leave the building. For any other emergency, students should report to the principal's office. Students must sign out in the office before leaving the building.

Students may be excused during the school day for emergency medical or dental appointments. Because students do miss necessary instruction, testing, and other learning opportunities when they leave during the day, parents are encouraged to schedule routine appointments at times outside of the regular school day. Any student who is to be excused during the school day must bring a written note, signed by the parent or guardian to the appropriate office. The office will determine if the request is a legitimate request and give approval. Students must sign out in the office before leaving the building. Students in grades UPK-6 leaving the building must be signed out in the school office by an adult authorized to do so. Procedures for leaving the building have been established for the protection of the students.

## **PERFECT ATTENDANCE**

A Perfect Attendance Award can only be received if the student was in school every minute of every day. A student cannot be tardy or signed out early for any reason.

## **PROCEDURE FOR EXTENDED TRIPS**

If you are planning an extended trip with your children while school is in session, you need to submit a letter of request to the principal stating the reason for taking your child(ren) out of school. Once the letter is received, students in grades 7-12 will receive an Extended Trip Form. The student is responsible for taking the Extended Trip Form to all teachers to sign and return to the office. The student must make arrangements with each of his/her teachers, ten (10) days prior to leaving, to obtain required assignments. **Assignments may not be available if the students and parents do not give ten (10) days notice.**

**The days out of school are still marked as unexcused absences and counted with your child's total absences for course credit. Class participation counts as a percentage of your child's grade and cannot be made up.**

## **BUS SERVICE**

Bus routes are planned in order to have students walk a minimum distance to the bus. Time and expense make it impossible to stop at every door. During bad weather, students should be ready a few minutes early as buses start earlier in order to be on time for school. Buses cannot wait for each student in the morning. Therefore, the cooperation of all parents and students is needed if the buses are to run on time.

- No one may ride on other than his assigned bus without a written request from the parent/guardian. This written request will be exchanged in the office for a bus permission slip before the end of the day.

If a student creates a disturbance on a bus, they will receive a discipline report from the bus driver. **Bus related problems will not be tolerated.** The safety of everyone is jeopardized when students misbehave on the bus. The school's Code of Conduct is in effect on the bus.

## LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles will be placed in the office (either UPK-6 or 7-12) and may be claimed by students with proper identification. Large amounts of money or valuable items should not be brought to school. If it is necessary for a student to have a large amount of money or valuables in school, these articles should be stored in the school safe. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## SCHOOL TELEPHONES

It is up to the staff member to determine if a student's need is an emergency. Students will be sent to the office to use the phone. Normally, forgetting homework, gym shoes, a musical instrument, note to ride a different bus, etc. is NOT an emergency. Students need to learn responsibility for remembering what they need. Please help your child learn to be an organized, responsible person by getting things ready the night before. Please support the school by helping your child accept the consequences of forgetting a needed item.

## TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are loaned to the student for the school year. Students are responsible for the care of each book and for the condition of it at the close of the school year. Each teacher will keep a record of the books loaned, the number of the book, the condition of the book and the student's name. The books are inspected from time to time during the year. If a book has been lost or damaged, the student will be charged the price of the book on a prorated basis depending upon the condition of the book at the time it was issued. Final report cards will be held if book(s) or payment(s) are not received.

## IPADS

iPads may be loaned to a student for the school year. Per the 'Student iPad Acceptable Use Policy', which must be signed by the student's parent/guardian prior to receiving an iPad, students are responsible for the care of their iPad. While parents/guardians will not be held financially responsible for any misuse or loss of an iPad, students are subject to disciplinary action for any misuses or carelessness resulting in the loss or damage of the iPad. iPads will be collected at the end of the school year. If they are not returned, final report cards will be held if the iPad is not received. Parents will also be notified that their student has not returned their iPad. Prior to the start of the following school year all iPads that are not returned will be considered lost/stolen and reported to the proper authorities.

## LIBRARY

The library will not serve as a study hall, but as a reference, reading room. Students may go to the library if they have a pass from a subject teacher or if they have signed up in study lab with permission of the study lab teacher/librarian. All students go to the library to learn library skills and use the resources.

## STUDY LAB PROCEDURES

- Students are to arrive on time for study lab.
- Students are to study for the full period, so they should plan enough work in advance. It should not be necessary for students to go back to their lockers for books, pencils, papers or other materials.
- After attendance is taken, students may obtain passes for the lavatory or library, or present pre-signed passes from other teachers.
- Students should sign out on the sheet provided by the teacher or monitor to use the lavatory.
- There will be no general conversation. If a student wishes to speak to someone, he or she should ask permission.

## INSURANCE PROGRAM

The school is covered by liability insurance for all accidents on school property, including transportation. Any claim must prove negligence on the part of the Board of Education or its employees.

A student accident policy provided by the district covers the student during school attendance hours when school is in session, at all school sponsored activities, and in school furnished transportation. The policy is non-duplicating which means that the parents' insurance is to be used prior to submitting claims through the school. The policy DOES NOT cover injuries caused by horseplay or fighting.

## STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

If a student is hurt or ill, they should tell a teacher and ask for a pass to the school nurse's office. Students must "sign out" from the appropriate office if they are released from school early by the nurse.

The school nurse also provides emergency care for students in accidental or unexpected medical situations. State Education Law prohibits any school personnel from administering medication or giving treatment, other than First Aid, to school children. There is, however, an exception to this rule, making it possible for school personnel to cooperate with the plan for care that your family physician recommends. Please contact the school nurse at 782-2455 Ext. 15 to obtain the proper forms to gain this permission so that school personnel may comply with your request. We must have:

- The written order of your physician specifying diagnosis, medication, dosage, frequency and time for administering this medicine.
- The written request of the parent requesting that school personnel administer the medication as ordered.
- The family must provide the medication in a bottle labeled by the pharmacist that clearly indicated date, name of child and physician, medication dosage and frequency. This is given to the school nurse.

Parents are asked to sign and submit an emergency medical authorization which shall indicate the procedure they wish the school to follow in the event of a medical emergency involving their child.

In all cases where the nature of an illness or injury appears serious, the parent or guardian will be contacted, if possible. In extreme emergencies, arrangements may be made for the child's immediate care to be handled by the Panama Volunteer Fire Department Rescue Squad whether or not the parent or guardian can be reached.

Students will report all accidents to a teacher or the school nurse, so the appropriate accident report can be filed.

## **DISTRICT COMPUTER SYSTEM AND INTERNET ETHICS**

The following rules and regulations govern the use of the District's computer network system and access to the Internet. Students will have access to the Internet through classrooms, libraries, computer labs and electronic devices.

1. The District's computer system has been established for educational purposes. The term "educational purpose" includes classroom activities, career development, and limited high-quality self-discovery activities.
2. Students should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received on the District's computer system or stored in a file/folder/directory on a District computer. District staff may, at any time, review the subject, content and appropriateness of electronic communications or other computer files and remove them if warranted, reporting any violation of rules to the school administrations or law enforcement officials.
3. Students will not:
  - Use the system to access material that is profane or obscene, that advocates illegal acts or violence.
  - Participate in "chat rooms."
  - Post personal contact information about yourself or other people. This includes your address and telephone number.
  - Make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means.
  - Use the system to engage in any illegal act.
  - Use obscene, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful language.
  - Engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
  - Harass another person
  - Post chain letters or engage in "spamming." Spamming is defined as sending an annoying and/or unnecessary message to a large number of people.
  - Infiltrate or "hack" outside computer systems.
  - Use the District's computer system to solicit sales or conduct business by posting an advertisement to a newsgroup.
  - Set up a web page to advertise or sell a service.
  - Without guidance, use Artificial Intelligence to complete school work.
4. Students will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any files that do not belong to them. This includes using another person's password to gain access to their files.
5. The Internet contains an abundance of material, some of which is copyrighted. You must respect the rights of copyright owners. Items from the Internet must be cited in your work in a fashion similar to books and encyclopedias. Please see the librarians if you are not sure of the correct format. Do not plagiarize works that you find on the Internet. Plagiarism is defined as taking the ideas or writing of others and presenting them as if they were yours. Copyright law can be very confusing. If you have questions, ask a teacher.

It is important that parents and students are informed about the policies regulating the use of the Internet and the District Computer Network. You should understand that inappropriate network use will result in the loss of the privilege to use this educational tool as well as other disciplinary action in accordance with the District's policies. The District does have a filtering system in place.

## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

The Panama Central School curriculum is designed to provide the best possible educational experience for our students and to assist our students in meeting the NYS Standards. Teachers will make students aware of their course requirements and grading procedures at the beginning of the course.

The district shall provide intervention services for the purpose of improving academic achievement to students who have been identified as being at risk of falling below the state learning standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and/or Science. Such services may include additional instruction services and/or student support services such as guidance, counseling, and study skills.

A student's eligibility for intervention services will be determined in accordance with the District AIS/RtI Plan.

When it has been determined that a student needs academic intervention services, the parents will be notified, in writing, by the building principal. The notice will outline the reason the student needs such services, the type of services to be provided and the consequences of not achieving the performance standards. In addition, the District will provide the parents with opportunities to consult with teachers and other professional staff, regular reports on the student's progress and information on ways to monitor and work with teachers to improve the student's performance.

## GUIDANCE PROGRAMS

Guidance programs are available for all students UPK-12 to ensure effective participation in their current and future educational programs. In grades 7-12, the guidance program may provide the following services:

- An annual review of each student's educational progress and career plans;
- Instruction to help students learn about curriculum options and careers;
- Scheduling classes to include a minimum of six classes plus physical education each semester;
- Individual and/or group assistance to help students develop and implement post secondary education and career plans;
- Individual or group assistance to help students who exhibit any attendance academic, behavioral or adjustment problems.

## DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS BASED ON JUNE 2005 BOARD OF REGENTS ACTION

Entering Freshman Class	Regents Diploma Requirements	Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation Requirements
2008 and thereafter	Score 65 or above on 5 required Regents exams. Earn 22 units of credit.	Score 65 or above on 8 required Regents exams. Earn 22 units of credit.

**Note:** The low-pass option of scoring between 55-64 on the required Regents exams, compensatory safety net, and Superintendent Determination of Graduation to earn a local diploma will continue to be available for students with disabilities.

## HONOR POINT SYSTEM FOR HIGH SCHOOL

**Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2009 and thereafter**

Subjects are classified in the following fashion and weighted accordingly:

<u>LEVEL</u>	<u>WEIGHTING FACTOR</u>
College Coursework	1.06
Select Classes/Electives	1.03
All Others	1.00

## SENIOR CERTIFICATION

Senior Certification will be determined for each senior by the end of the 30-week marking period of the senior year. A senior earns certification by maintaining a 70 average in all subjects necessary for graduation.

**Senior Certification may be canceled at any time during the last quarter by the principal or a committee appointed by the principal. Unsatisfactory school citizenship, as well as failing grades, may be used as a basis for canceling Senior Certification.**

A senior who is not certified at the end of the 30 week marking period will be notified by letter that his/her graduation depends on obtaining a final mark of 65 or higher in the subjects needed for graduation. If the student fails the subject required for graduation, the student will not be awarded a diploma or participate in the commencement program.

## **HOMEWORK**

The average student should plan to spend sufficient time for each class on outside preparation of homework. Homework and projects are the responsibility of the student. A teacher may recommend that a student stay after school to complete homework if a persistent inability to complete the work at home is demonstrated. Parent support by offering a place and a time to study is encouraged.

## **REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS**

Student progress is evaluated and report cards are issued every ten weeks. Progress reports are done at the 5 week point between Report Cards for students with a course average of 70 or below. These reports will be sent as notification of student progress. The subject, teacher, and the grade for a specific marking period will be included on the report card to inform students and parents.

## **HONOR & MERIT ROLLS**

Four times each year, after report cards are issued, an Honor and Merit Roll will be released based upon grades received during the quarter. High school students are eligible for Honor/Merit Roll listings if they have passed all courses and are enrolled on a full time basis. Honor will be given to those students with weighted averages of 92% or above. Merit will be awarded to students with a weighted average between 85% and 91%.

The Student Honor/Merit Rolls will be published in the local newspaper.

## **NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY**

The National Honor Society provides membership for eligible 10th, 11th and 12th grade students. Selection is based on four criteria: scholarship (cumulative average,) leadership, service (two activities minimum) and character.

Students who show distinguished performance in all four areas may be admitted to the NHS. In accordance with the National Constitution, no single area is sufficient to assure selection. Once a student becomes a member, he/she is responsible to remain a member in good standing in all four of the areas listed. Selection to the Honor Society is decided by a faculty committee as determined by Honor Society policy guidelines.

## **COURSE FAILURES HIGH SCHOOL**

Any student who fails a course at the end of the school year will receive a notice from the guidance counselor advising whether or not they will be permitted to attend summer school, as determined by the administration. Parents and students should realize that if the student opts not to attend summer school, or for whatever reason is unable to attend summer school, that they may be in jeopardy of not graduating with their current class.

Should a senior fail to meet requirements for graduation, they have the choice of returning the next year to complete those requirements for a diploma, or attend summer school. A senior who returns the next year may take the mid-term examination if they have a passing average. If the student passes with a 65%, he/she will be considered as passing the course and will receive his diploma.

We hope that by informing students and parents of this policy ahead of time, we may help to prevent students from falling into situations where they will not be able to maintain placement with their present class.

## **COURSE REPEATERS**

A student should be encouraged to repeat a subject in order to receive a passing grade or to improve his present grade.

A final examination may be taken at mid-year if the student is carrying a passing average.

1. Final examinations are to be comprehensive, not just a term's work, except for one term subjects. In these cases the examination would cover the work for just one term.
2. To pass the course, the student must have a passing cumulative average for the course. The course average will be computed by averaging the final examination with the marks given for the reporting periods just completed. The grades for the previous year's work are not utilized for this purpose.
3. If the student's cumulative course average is not passing after completing a final exam and two (2) reporting periods, the student will remain in the class for the remainder of the school year. At the completion of the school year, the student's grade will be calculated in the same manner as all other students in the class. The final exam taken at the midpoint will be treated as a midterm for grading purposes.

The student's permanent record card would then show two final marks for that subject.

The better mark would be utilized to compute rank in class.

## INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

Interscholastic athletics, which are an extension of the Physical Education program, shall be under the control of the Board Of Education, in conjunction with the administration, athletic director, and individual coaches. It is understood that the athletic program is also overseen by the rules and regulations of many other organizations. Among these are the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (N.Y.S.P.H.S.A.A.), Section VI, and the Chautauqua County Athletic Association. All rules and regulations of these organizations will be adhered to, as well as all local conference rules, and those rules mandated by Regents Regulations as stated in regulations set up by the Commissioner of Education. Coaches will provide athletes with the rules and the regulations for each sport. See the Athletic Director for further information.

### Sports that may be offered at Panama Central School:

#### FALL SPORTS

Modified Football  
JV Football  
Varsity Football  
Girls Volleyball  
Girls Swim  
Modified Cross Country  
Cross Country

#### WINTER SPORTS

Boys Swim  
Modified Boys Basketball  
JV Boys Basketball  
Varsity Boys Basketball  
Modified Girls Basketball  
JV Girls Basketball  
Varsity Girls Basketball  
Wrestling

#### SPRING SPORTS

Girls Softball  
Boys Baseball  
Boys Track  
Girls Track  
Tennis  
Girls Flag Football  
Golf

Extracurricular activities and Interscholastic Athletics often require transportation to other communities. It may be necessary to take lunches, but none will be eaten on the bus. **Glass bottles or breakable jars are not permitted.** Plans should be made to eat before leaving. Buses may be provided for transporting students **from school to school** for all interscholastic athletic events. There will be **no buses** provided for transporting any student **from their home** to Panama School for any athletic event. Spectator buses may be provided, **from school to school**, for students in grades 7-12 for away games.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

Extra-curricular activities can assist the student to better adjust to his/her school environment, can supplement regular class work, can provide for explorations of interest and growth of talent, and can furnish opportunities to serve the school and community. They develop leadership, give practice in citizenship, make guidance easier, and draw the school together in common experiences. The following extracurricular activities are offered at Panama Central School:

Cross Country Ski Club  
Athletics  
MS Student Council  
HS Student Council

Honor Society  
High School Bowl  
SADD  
Yearbook

Trap Club  
School Musical  
Language Club  
Mock Trial

Envirothon  
Science Olympiad

## STUDENT FEES, FINES AND CHARGES

Students are expected to exercise reasonable care in the use of school equipment and any damage done to library books, textbooks or other school equipment due to misuse or negligence must be paid for by the students, with the exception of a student issued iPad. In the case of this particular device, students are subject to disciplinary action for any misuse or carelessness

Lost or damaged textbooks will be immediately reported to the office for payment. Other school equipment which is damaged should be reported to the Building Principal, who will determine if negligence on the part of the student was the cause of the damage. If so, the students and the student's parents/guardians will be expected to pay for such damage.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Open House and parent information meetings are scheduled in the fall each year to allow parents to see our school, meet teachers, and learn new information.

We also have scheduled parent teacher conferences during the year. This allows teachers to explain their program, address individual student issues, and listen to parent concerns and questions. However, parents may request a conference at any time throughout the year. Parents who have questions about their children's education are encouraged to talk with the teachers through email, by phone or ask for a personal conference. It is important to us that we communicate with each other to support the students.

For information regarding the Parents for Panama group, please contact the Elementary office.

## ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

Under the provisions of the “Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,” parents, legal guardians, and a student who is 18 or older have the right to inspect and review any and all official records, files and data including all materials that are incorporated into each student’s cumulative record folder.

The procedure to be followed in requesting, inspecting and copying the information detailed above shall be the same as the procedure established to comply with the New York State Freedom of Information Law. The content of the school records may be challenged to ensure records are not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the students. The confidentiality of these documents will be protected.

## EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENT

Students under 18 years of age who are interested in working papers can pick up an application from the Health office. Despite the attraction of having a part-time job after school hours, students should give careful thought to the amount of time and energy a job can demand. Students should remember that school responsibilities always take precedence over such jobs.

## DANCES

Tickets for the Panama Jr./Sr. Prom may only be purchased by Panama students in grades 11 & 12. Panama Jr./Sr. ticket holders may purchase one (1) additional ticket for a guest who is under the age of twenty-one (21) and/or attending 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade. All guests are subject to approval of the Secondary Principal. If the guest is not a student of Panama Central School, an out-of-school district student permission slip must be completed. These forms are due no later than the Wednesday prior to Prom. A decision will be made on the out of district student’s attendance by noon Friday. Notification in writing will be made to the Panama student at that time.

## STUDENT DRIVING/PARKING REGULATIONS

The following guidelines shall be adhered to:

1. In order to drive to school and park the vehicle on school property, students must submit a completed application signed by the parent, a copy of the vehicle insurance card and a copy of the student’s license.
2. When parents grant permission for students to drive vehicles to school, it is expected that students will drive directly to school and directly home or to work.
3. Drivers must obey all traffic laws and to exercise special care in populated areas.
4. Parking permits will be issued by seniority; seniors first.
5. Students permitted to drive vehicles to school will park in the assigned area and have their parking permits displayed on the vehicle.
6. Students who need to drive to school on a particular day for a special reason (i.e. doctor’s appointment), must notify the office and park in the student parking area.
7. Student passengers must obtain permission from their parents to ride with students who have approval to drive to school. This permission is granted using form 7480F.
8. There will be no loitering in and around parked vehicles at any time.
9. State and Federal Laws prohibit smoking on school property; this includes in vehicles on school property.
10. Students will be permitted to drive to BOCES if approved by the PCS and BOCES principals. The appropriate forms must be completed and approved by **both principals** prior to driving and parking permits being issued. Students must have parent permission.
11. Any student vehicle parked without permission or out of designated areas may be towed.
12. Violation of these regulations will result in loss of parking privileges on school property and/or towing at the student’s expense.
13. Any student driver and his/her passengers who are tardy to school 3 times will receive a warning, then detention. Any additional days tardy will result in loss of driving/riding privileges as determined by the principal.
14. Students may lose their driving/riding privileges due to attendance, academic or behavioral issues.