

SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Salem, Connecticut

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Relations between Public and School Personnel

### CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY (Civility)

The purpose of this policy is to set clear expectations for civil behavior that support a safe, welcoming, and nurturing environment on school property and at school-related activities. The Salem Board of Education expects mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among all individuals on school property or at all school events. The Board seeks public cooperation with this endeavor.

This policy is not intended to deprive any person of his/her right to freedom of expression, but only to maintain, to the extent possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free environment for our students and staff. Volatile, hostile or aggressive actions and words cannot be tolerated, and individuals who engage in these activities may face legal penalties.

The Salem Board of Education values diversity and commonality and is committed to a culture that fosters free and open communication. The Board believes that an environment of mutual respect and civil conduct between and among students, school system employees, parents, volunteers, and the general public is critical to the achievement of students and staff. The Board is committed to maintaining a culture that recognizes the worth and dignity of the individual in support of academic achievement and social development. In the interest of presenting Board members and District employees as positive role models to the students as well as to the community, the Board encourages positive communication and discourages negative communication or negative behavior of any kind. District staff will treat parents and other members of the public with respect and expect the same in return. The Board is committed to maintaining orderly educational and administrative processes in keeping schools and administrative offices free from disruptions and preventing unauthorized persons from entering school/district grounds. The Superintendent is authorized to develop appropriate procedures for the implementation of this policy.

#### Definitions

- A. Civility: Mutual respect and consideration reflected in language and behavior.
- B. Harassment and Intimidation: Conduct, including verbal conduct, that creates a hostile environment by substantially interfering with an individual's education, opportunities, or performance, or with an individual's physical or psychological well-being, and is motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic such as race, national origin,

marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion or disability, or is threatening or intimidating.

- C. School Property: Any property owned or leased by the Salem School District. The concept of property shall extend to school activities such as field trips, use of parks and recreation facilities, dances at other venues, etc. This means that when a facility is scheduled for student use, it will be considered an extension of school property.
- D. School-related Activity: On or off premises activity in which a student directly participates (e.g. field trip, school-sponsored athletic event or class/graduation activity), or in which the student does not directly participate, but represents the school or student body simply by being there (e.g. spectator at a school-sponsored event).

#### Standards

- A. Expected behaviors include but are not limited to:
  - 1. Respect and courtesy in language, demeanor, and actions
  - 2. Moderate tone and volume of voice
  - 3. Active and respectful listening
  - 4. Respectful acknowledgment of cultural differences
  - 5. Respect for the personal, civil, and property rights of others
  - 6. Appropriate and courteous use of telephone, public address systems, two-way radios, and any other verbal communication device
  - 7. Appropriate and courteous written communication, including notes, letters, email, tweets, and text messages or any other form of social media
- B. Unacceptable behaviors include but are not limited to:
  - 1. Rude, insulting, or demeaning language and/or actions
  - 2. Persistently unreasonable demands
  - 3. Intrusive and/or interruptive behavior
  - 4. Displays of temper
  - 5. Harassment and intimidation
  - 6. Threatening and/or abusive gestures and behavior
  - 7. Inappropriate, threatening, or abusive communication, either spoken or written, including but not limited to notes, letters, email, tweets, or text messages or any other form of social media
- C. Incidents of uncivil behavior should be resolved cooperatively with the individual most directly involved. Each individual is responsible for behaving in a civil manner and for cooperating in resolving incidents of uncivil behavior. Any individual who disrupts or threatens to disrupt normal school or office operations; threatens the health and safety of students or staff; willfully causes property damage; uses loud or offensive language which could provoke a violent reaction; or who has otherwise established a continued pattern of unauthorized entry on District property, will be directed to leave the premises by a member of the administrative staff or his/her designee. If any member of the public uses obscenities or speaks in a demanding, loud, insulting and/or demeaning manner, the staff member will calmly and politely admonish the speaker to communicate civilly. If the abusing party does not take corrective action, the District employee will terminate the meeting or conversation and may contact law enforcement. If violence is directed against

an employee, or theft against property, employees shall promptly report the occurrence to their Principal or supervisor and file a written report.

An employee whose person or property is injured or damaged by willful misconduct may ask the District to pursue legal action.

(cf. 1110.1 - Parent Involvement)

(cf. 1120 - Public Participation at Board of Education Meetings)

(cf. 1250 – School Visitors)

(cf. 1312 - Public Complaints)

(cf. 1330 - Use of School Facilities)

(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)

(cf. 4118.15/4218.15 - Workplace Bullying)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes: 1-225 Meetings of the government agents to be public. 1-232 Conduct of the meeting. 10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rule(s), policies, and procedures. 10-238 Petition for hearing by board of education. 10-239 Use of school facilities for other purposes. 53a-185 Loitering in or about school grounds: Class C misdemeanor.

Policy 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: December 3, 2012

Policy Adopted: January 7, 2013

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