Code of Conduct Summary for Students and Families

- An updated Code of Conduct was adopted by the Greater Johnstown School District Board of Education on November 12, 2015.
- This summary document is distributed to students at the start of the school year in accordance with New York State Education Law.
- The complete Code of Conduct is available on the school district website: www.johnstownschools.org; copies of the complete Code of Conduct are also available in each school building’s main office.

Dignity for All Students Act

A New York State law that took effect on July 1, 2012, called the Dignity for All Students Act (“DASA”), seeks to provide public school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function.

Each school buildings has a Dignity Act Coordinator that has received special training in methods to respond to human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex. If you are a student who is the target of harassment, hazing or bullying, or if you know of someone who is a target, you are encouraged to speak with a teacher, principal or dignity act coordinator.

The Board of Education has appointed the following persons as Dignity Act Coordinators:
- Pleasant Avenue Elementary: Marilyn Fariello (762-8216) and Jessica Mucilli (762-8216)
- Glebe Street Elementary: Abbey North (762-3714) and Deborah Ruggeri (762-8316)
- Warren Street Elementary: Kathy Salls (762-3715) and Jessica Mucilli (762-3715)
- Knox Junior High: Bobbie Jo Senzio (762-8711) and Angela Yetto (762-3726)
- Johnstown High School: Scott Hale (762-4661) Stephanie Ellsworth (762-4663)

Prohibited Student Conduct

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

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school when they engage in conduct that is disorderly, insubordinate, disruptive, violent, endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others, engage in misconduct on the school bus, or engage in academic misconduct.

Disciplinary Actions

As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. Possible disciplinary consequences are listed in the complete Code of Conduct. The amount of due process a student is entitled to receive before a penalty is imposed depends on the penalty being imposed. Students who are to be given penalties other than an oral warning, written warning or written notification to their parents may be entitled to additional rights before the penalty is imposed.

Student Searches and Questioning

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, nor are school officials required to contact a student’s parent before questioning the student. Students will be told why they are being questioned.

School property (including lockers and desks) is subject to search by school officials at any time. Authorized school officials may also 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.

All students are expected to:
- arrive at school and all classes on time;
- respect themselves, others and school property;
- cooperate throughout the day.

Student Rights

It is the student’s right to be afforded equal and appropriate educational opportunities and 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.

Student Responsibilities

Every student has the responsibility to attend school daily and on time, to express opinions and ideas in a respectful manner so as not to offend, slander, or restrict, the rights and privileges of others; to dress appropriately in accordance with the dress code, so as not to endanger physical health, safety, limit participation in school activities or be unduly distracting and to conduct themselves in a manner that fosters an environment that is free from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination.
Dress Code

The primary responsibility for the dress and appearance of students shall rest with individual students and parents. They have the right to determine how the student shall dress, provided that such attire is not destructive to district property, complies with requirements for health and safety, does not interfere with or distract from the educational process, or impinge upon the rights of others. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet these stated requirements.

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 program.
- Recognize that extremely brief or see-through garments are not appropriate.
- Ensure that undergarments are completely covered with outer clothing.
- Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
- Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, or libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, age, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or use of a recognized guide dog, hearing dog or service dog, gender or disability.
- Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.
- Not display any signs of gang affiliation.

Student Use of Electronic Communication Devices

Students are prohibited from using or having on or in an operational mode any paging device, mobile telephone, cellular telephone, laser pointer or pen or any personal electronic device, including but not limited to any other type of telecommunications or imaging device during instructional time, except as expressly permitted in connection with authorized use in classrooms. While students are permitted to possess such devices during the school day, they are prohibited from using them in any manner which invades the privacy of students, employees, volunteers or visitors. Students are not permitted to use any form of information technology, including their own personal electronic devices, to intimidate, harass or threaten others. This type of harassment is generally referred to as cyberbullying.

School Visitors

Visitors must adhere to the Code of Conduct. All persons on school property or attending a school function, shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner.

Reporting

All students are expected to promptly report violations of the Code of Conduct to a teacher, guidance counselor, social worker, the building 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 shall report this information immediately to a teacher, the building principal, the principal’s designee or the superintendent.