

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

The intent of this Code of Conduct is to promote responsible behavior that creates an orderly and safe school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. It is the belief of Sharon Springs Central School that everyone in our community must strive towards contributing to this goal, including students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors.

The District has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property as well as conduct off school premises, which relates to the Sharon Springs Central School Districts, its students and staff. 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, identify the possible consequences of unacceptable conduct, and to ensure that discipline, when necessary, is administered in a firm, fair and consistent manner. SSCS will operate on a progressive discipline philosophy designed to bring about behavior change. The history and disciplinary record of each student may demand a different response from the administrator. To achieve the goal of an orderly and safe school environment, the Board adopts this code of conduct ("Code").

### **DEFINITIONS:**

For purposes of this code, the following definitions apply.

- A. "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.
- B. "Parent" means parent, guardian or person in parental relation to a student.
- C. "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.
- D. "School function" means any school-sponsored extra-curricular event or activity on or off school property.
- E. "Sexual Orientation" shall mean actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality".
- F. "Gender" shall mean actual or perceived sex and shall include a person's gender identity or expression.

- G. "Harassment" shall mean 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 well being; or 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 safety; such conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse includes but is not limited to conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.
- H. "Violent student" means a student under the age of 21 who:
1. Commits an act of violence upon a school employee, or attempts to do so.
  2. 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.
  3. Possess, while on school property or at a school function, a weapon.
  4. Displays, while on school property or at a school function, what appears to be a weapon.
  5. Threatens, while on school property or at a school function, to use a weapon.
  6. 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.
  7. Knowingly and intentionally damages or destroys school district property.
- I. "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, pistol, revolver, shotgun, rifle, machine gun, disguised gun, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, gravity knife, brass knuckles, sling shot, metal knuckle knife, box cutters, cane sword, electronic dart gun, Kung Fu star, electronic stun gun, pepper spray or other noxious spray, incendiary bomb, ammunition, imitation ammunition or exploding substances, or other device, instrument, material or substance that can cause physical injury or death when used to cause physical injury or death.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The intent of this document is to establish standards for discipline that will enable students, parents, teachers and administrators to know what acceptable and unacceptable behavior is and how unacceptable behavior will be handled.

The primary function of Sharon Springs Central School is to provide for all students an equal educational opportunity. Every student has that right. In turn, a student is responsible for the way he/she exercises these rights, and be ready to accept the consequences of his/her actions if they impinge on the rights of other individuals. Discipline, therefore, must emphasize humanitarian principles and ideals such as justice and equality. It must recognize the dignity and rights of every individual and must include self-direction and self-discipline rather than unquestioning obedience to a leader.

Good discipline should always be considered in terms of helping the learner and not solely as punishment; good discipline should help the learner change unacceptable behavior into acceptable conduct. Respect both for individual rights and for the rights of the group is basic to sound discipline.

The school is obligated to the community and to the students to provide an environment conducive to learning. The School Law of the State of New York grants teachers and administrators the power to control and discipline students in carrying out the education process.

The rules and standards set forth in the handbook apply to conduct on school premises, on school buses, or involving school property, as well as conduct off school premises, which directly affects Sharon Springs Central School students. Although this handbook doesn't define all types and aspects of student behavior, it serves as an attempt by the school administration and faculty to set forth policies, rules and regulations to help each student conduct himself/herself in a proper manner as a good citizen in our school community.

### Bill of Rights

#### 1. Freedom of Expression

- a. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects freedom of speech to all Americans. However, that constitutional protection does not include the license to interfere with the order and conduct of classes, to coerce others to participate in a particular mode of expression, or to violate the rights of those who disagree with a given point of view.

Student speech may be subject to disciplinary action or restriction imposed by school officials if such speech:

1. Is slanderous, i.e. spoken maliciously or without regard to the truth of the assertion;
  2. Clearly and immediately incites others to damage property or physically harm others;
  3. Materially and substantially interferes with the normal operation of the school;
  4. Is obscene or profane.
- a. All student meetings in the school building or on school grounds may function only as part of the formal education process or as authorized by the building administrator.
  - b. Students are entitled to express in writing their personal opinions. Such written expression must be signed by the authors. Libel, obscenity, and personal attacks are prohibited in all publications.

- d. Student participation in publication of student newspapers, yearbooks, literary magazines and similar publications is encouraged. These publications have qualified faculty advisors and strive to meet the high standards of journalism. School authorities may regulate the time, manner, place, and duration for distributing literature on school grounds.

## 2. Right to an Education

Each student has the right to an education and he also has the responsibility not to interfere with, or threaten the education of others by his action. Each student has the responsibility to attend school regularly and to abide by the policies and regulations of the school. Students have the right to suggest changes in school policies and regulations in an orderly manner by utilizing their student government or by meeting with their building administrator.

## 3. Right of Privacy

It is the responsibility of the school to protect the student's privacy. They will not disclose any information from the student's permanent records except when such disclosures will serve a legitimate educational need or when so directed by legal authorities. Access to permanent student records is available to authorized school personnel, to the parent or legal guardian of the student, or if the student is eighteen years of age or older, directly to the student. In all cases, the request must be a signed release or a written request directed to the principal of the building. Further information concerning the disclosure is covered by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

## 4. Rights of Handicapped

The Sharon Springs Central School Board of Education believes in the value of special education programs and services for all individuals with exceptional needs within the legally defined eligibility criteria and age requirements. It shall be the policy of the Board of Education to seek out these individuals and to assure appropriate rights and safeguards for pupils and their parents. The Superintendent shall identify and direct the regulations and procedures necessary to implement this policy.

Sharon Springs Central School District will provide services to assure that special needs and/or physically challenged students of the district will be identified, evaluated, and receive adequate educational and related services.

## Student Rights

The district is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law. In addition, to promote a safe, healthy, orderly and civil school environment, all district students have the right to:

- Take part in all district activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender or sexual orientation or disability.
- Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.
- Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.
- 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

All district students have the responsibility to:

- Contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.
- Be familiar with and abide by all district policies, rules and regulations dealing with student conduct.
- Attend school every day unless they are legally excused and be in class, on time, and prepared to learn.
- Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
- React to direction given by teachers, administrators and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
- Work to develop mechanisms to control their anger.
- Ask questions when they do not understand.
- Seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline.
- Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
- Accept responsibility for their actions.
- Conduct themselves as representatives of the district when participating in or attending school-sponsored extracurricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.
- 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.

## **PARTNERS IN CREATING A CLIMATE OF MUTUAL RESPECT FOR STUDENTS**

The Board of Education recognizes the essential roles of all members of the school community, including parents, students, administrators and principals, teachers, guidance counselors, support staff and other school personnel in promoting a positive, healthy and harassment free environment. Collaboration is essential in promoting and fostering a school environment that promotes tolerance, respect and dignity for all persons within the school community. School administrators, teachers, staff and other school personnel are charged with providing an age appropriate and timely response to discourage and respond to incidents of discrimination and/or harassment on school property or at a school function.

### **A. Parents**

All parents are expected to:

1. Recognize that the education of their child(ren) is a joint responsibility of the parents and the school community.
2. Send their children to school ready to participate and learn.
3. Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
4. Ensure absences are excused.
5. Insist their children be dressed and groomed in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
6. Help their children understand that in a democratic society appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.
7. Know school rules and help their children understand them.
8. Convey to their children a supportive attitude toward education and the district.
9. Build good relationships with teachers, other parents and their children's friends.
10. Help their children deal effectively with peer pressure.
11. Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
12. Provide a place for study and ensure homework assignments are completed.
13. 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.

### **B. Teachers and other instructional staff**

All district teachers and other instructional staffs are expected to:

1. Maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity, which will strengthen students' self-concept and promote confidence to learn.
2. Be prepared to teach.
3. Demonstrate an interest in teaching and concern for student achievement.
4. Know school policies and rules, enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.

5. Communicate to students and parents:
  - a. Course objectives and requirements
  - b. Marking/grading procedures
  - c. Assignment deadlines
  - d. Expectations for students
  - e. Classroom discipline plan
6. Communicate regularly with students, parents and other teachers concerning growth and achievement.
7. Confront issues of discrimination and harassment in any situation that threatens the emotional and physical health or safety of any students, school employee or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.
8. Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students in the school and classroom setting.
9. 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.

#### C. Counseling Staff

1. Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social and emotional problems.
2. Initiate teacher/student/counselor conferences and parent/teacher/student/counselor conferences, as necessary, as a way to resolve problems.
3. Regularly review with students their educational progress and career plans.
4. Provide information to assist students with career planning.
5. Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extracurricular programs.
6. 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.

#### D. Principals and Supervisory Personnel

1. Seek to develop a sound and helpful atmosphere of mutual respect within the school.
2. Evaluate the program of instruction in their school to achieve a meaningful educational program;
3. Help their staff self-evaluate their own procedures and attitudes in relation to the interactions within their classrooms;
4. Develop procedures which reduce the likelihood of student misconduct; this includes the authority to administer tests on suspicious substances, administer breath tests on students and to use metal detection devices if a reasonable suspicion exists that a student is possesses or is under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or is in possession of a weapon.
5. Provide the opportunity and encouragement for students and staff to approach the principal or other appropriate administrators directly for redress of grievances;
6. Work with students and staff to formulate individual school regulations;

7. Assist staff members to resolve any school related problems which may occur;
8. Work closely with parents to establish a cooperative relationship between home and school;
9. Utilize all appropriate support staff and community agencies as resources to help parents and students identify problems and seek solutions;
10. Establish necessary building security;
11. Assume responsibility for the distribution of the code of conduct and ensure that all discipline cases referred are resolved justly and promptly;
12. Ensure fairness, reasonableness and consistency,
13. Comply with pertinent state laws governing hearings, suspensions and student rights;
14. Demonstrate desirable standards of behavior through personal example.
15. 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.
16. 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 in a timely manner.

E. Superintendent and District Administration

1. Take such steps as are necessary to develop, publicize and carry out the rules and regulations for students;
2. Consider and act upon recommendations for suspensions in keeping with the Board of Education policy;
3. Review with the principals and other supervisory personnel the policies of the Board of Education and State Laws relating to discipline,
4. Listen and consider the views of the total community;
5. Inform the Board of Education of educational trends relating to discipline;
6. Provide for the development of innovative educational programs which will help to minimize problems of misconduct;
7. Make himself/herself available to administrators, teachers and other staff, advise them on serious discipline matters and support them so long as the latter have acted in accordance with the discipline policies of the District and the laws of the State of New York;
8. Be well informed on the programs and the problems of the District and work with staff in offering leadership.
9. Promote a safe, orderly, respectful and stimulating school environment, free from intimidation, discrimination and harassment, supporting active teaching and learning.

F. Board of Education

1. 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.

2. 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.
3. Lead by example by conducting Board meetings in a professional, respectful, courteous manner.
4. 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.

## **DRESS CODE**

### Right to Select School Attire

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.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up and nails, shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
2. Recognize that extremely brief garments, plunging necklines (front and/or back), bare mid-drifts are not appropriate. Skirts must be worn in such a manner so that length must extend at least past the fingertips when standing with hands at side. Low necklines and/or necklines that expose cleavage are inappropriate. A-shirt, tube tops, net tops, halter tops and any other see-through type garments are also inappropriate.
3. Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
4. Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
5. Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, and libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
6. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. As a guideline for shorts and skirts, the length should extend past the students outstretched hand, unless leggings are worn underneath. If there is no suitable replacement available, the student will be asked to cover the offending attire with a t-shirt, which will be supplied by the school. This shirt must be worn for the duration of the day and returned before the student leaves for the day. In addition, students are to leave their hats and head cover in their lockers for the duration of the school day. Any student who refuses to comply with the above requests will be subject to discipline, up to and including in school suspension for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to

comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension. Should a student need to be removed from a participatory curricular event, their grade may be impacted by their lack of participation.

## **PROHIBITED STUDENT 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; 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. It is important to remember that the conduct and discipline actions outlined below are not all-inclusive and individual situations may differ and result in differing disciplinary consequences. 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:

1. Engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - a. Running in hallways.
  - b. Making unreasonable noise.
  - c. The use of cell phones, beepers or other electronic devices.
  - d. Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
  - e. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
  - f. Engaging in any willful act, which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
  - g. Trespassing. Students are not permitted in any school building, other than the one they regularly attend, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
  - h. 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 acceptable use policy.
  
2. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - a. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
  - b. Lateness for, missing or leaving school without permission.
  - c. Skipping detention.

3. Engage in conduct that is disruptive. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - a. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school personnel in charge of students.
  
4. Engage in conduct that is violent. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - a. Committing, threatening or attempting an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching and scratching) upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee.
  - b. Committing, threatening or attempting an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching and scratching) upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property.
  - c. 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.
  - d. Displaying what appears to be a weapon.
  - e. Threatening to use any weapon.
  - f. 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.
  - g. Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property.
  - h. 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.
  
5. Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - a. Lying to school personnel.
  - b. Stealing the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.
  - c. Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements of representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them.
  - d. Discrimination, which includes the use of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, gender, sexual orientation or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner.
  - e. Harassment, which includes the creation of a hostile environment by conduct, intimidation, verbal threats 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 well being; or fear for his or her physical safety.
  - f. Intimidation or bullying. Threatening, stalking or seeking to coerce or compel a person to do something; engaging in verbal or physical conduct that threatens another with harm, including intimidation through the use of epithets or slurs involving race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, religious practices, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability that substantially disrupts the educational process. Intimidation and bullying are forms of harassment.

- g. 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.
  - h. Selling, using or possessing obscene material.
  - i. Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing or swearing.
  - j. Smoking a cigarette, cigar, pipe or using chewing or smokeless tobacco.
  - k. Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances, or being under the influence of same. "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look alike drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs."
  - l. Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
  - m. Gambling.
  - n. Indecent exposure, that is, exposure to a sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.
  - o. Initiating a report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.
6. Engage in misconduct while on a school bus. It is crucial 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 will not be tolerated.
7. Engage in any form of academic misconduct. Examples include but are not limited:
- a. Plagiarism
  - b. Cheating
  - c. Copying
  - d. Altering records
  - e. Assisting another student in any of the above actions.
8. Engage in inappropriate use of electronic devices during the school day; including, but not limited to, cell phones, cameras, pagers/beepers, radios iPods, MP3 players and CD players.

### **Reporting Violations**

All students are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to a teacher, guidance counselor, the building principal or other designated administrator. 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.

All district staff who are authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to do so in a prompt, fair and lawful manner. District staff that 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 building principal or other designated administrator must notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency of those code violations that constitute a crime and substantially affect the order or security of a school as soon as practical, but in no event later than the close of business the day the principal or other designated administrator learns of the violation. The notification may be made by telephone, followed by a letter mailed on same day as the telephone call is made. The notification must identify the student and explain the conduct that violated the code of conduct and constituted a crime.

### **Disciplinary Penalty and Enforcement of the Rules**

Discipline is most effective when it deals with the problem at the time and place it occurs, and in a way that students view as fair and impartial. School 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.

Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be firm, fair and consistent so as to be the most effective in changing student behavior. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, school personnel authorized to impose disciplinary penalties will consider the following:

1. The students' age.
2. The nature of the offense and the circumstances which led to the offense.
3. The students' prior disciplinary record.
4. The effectiveness of other forms of discipline.
5. Information from parents, teachers and/or others, as appropriate.
6. Other extenuating circumstance.

As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. This means that a students' first violation will usually merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations.

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 the code of conduct for disciplining students with a disability or presumed to have a disability. A student identified as having a disability shall not be disciplined for behavior related to his/her disability.

## **THE SCHOOL DAY GENERAL RULES AND EXPECTATIONS**

### 1. Academic Expectations

The classroom is a setting for learning, therefore, it is your responsibility:

- To use class and study time for learning.
- To complete assigned work on time.
- To prepare thoroughly for each class.
- To respect the rights of other students.
- To participate in class discussions and activities.
- To respect the authority of the teacher or substitute.
- To follow classroom procedures as determined by the teacher.
- To use textbooks, school technologies, and other class materials appropriately and with care.

### 2. Citizenship

School provides an opportunity to learn to communicate with others, to respect the rights of others and to operate within certain rules for the common good. In an effort for you to help to promote self-esteem among your peers, it is your responsibility:

- To treat other people as you would wish to be treated.
- To respect the rights, property and safety of every other person.
- To assist in keeping the school, clean and free from litter and vandalism.
- To understand that the school operates within established rules and regulations and these rules and regulations must be followed.
- To respect the property of the school
- To follow the directions of people in authority.
- To avoid inappropriate physical contact.
- To behave appropriately at school.
- To avoid inappropriate public displays of affection. Inappropriate public displays of affection are those, which make others uncomfortable. For example, handholding may be an acceptable public display of affection in school. However, embracing and kissing are not acceptable public displays of affection in school.
- To avoid sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, sexually degrading works or gestures; verbal sexual abuse, obscene phone calls; offensive sexual graffiti, pictures or cartoons, subtle pressure for sexual activity; leering or staring; insulting remarks to a person about his or her gender or sexual orientation; demands for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats; and unwanted touching, petting, pinching or brushing. The Sharon Springs School District policy on Sexual Harassment is included in this book.
- To show respect by your words and actions for racial and religious differences.
- You are expected to use appropriate language while at school and while on school property. Cursing and swearing are examples of inappropriate language.

### 3. Unauthorized Areas

Students are considered in an unauthorized area if they are in an area where there is not regularly assigned adult supervision. Outside of the building, including the parking lots, playing fields, as well as the atrium and auditorium are considered unauthorized areas. In addition, loitering during class time in the stairwells, gymnasium, bathrooms and locker rooms is also violation.

#### 4. Unauthorized Items

Any item that is potentially disruptive to the educational process or presents a safety concern will be confiscated and the student will be subject to disciplinary action. This includes the possession of wallet chains that are longer than twelve inches, electronic devices such as Walkmans, Discmans, MP-3 players, headphones and sunglasses. Other prohibited items include; skateboards, roller blades, boom boxes, beepers, laser pointers, snowmobiles, 3-wheelers, 4-wheelers, and water pistols.

Hats and other head coverings along with student backpacks and other large bags must be left in lockers during the course of the school day. Students should visit their lockers before homeroom, between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> period, before eating lunch, between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> period, and at the end of the day. Student padlocks are available through homeroom teachers for a deposit of \$5.

Any locker that is experiencing mechanical problems should be reported to the main office immediately. Students are advised that the locker remains the property of the Sharon Springs Central School District and the district retains the right to search any locker that they believe may contain illegal or dangerous items.

#### 5. General Rules

1. Students should not leave money or valuables around school. The school cannot be held responsible.
2. Public display of affection: There is to be no physical contact with another student other than holding hands.
3. No guns, weapons or knives are allowed on school property.
4. Students are expected to demonstrate respect for all persons and property at Sharon Springs Central School.
5. There will be absolutely no drugs or alcoholic beverages brought on school property at any time.
6. There will be no smoking or possession of tobacco products by students anywhere on school property at any time. There will be no use of chewing tobacco or any other smokeless tobacco by students anywhere on school property at any time.
7. Improper language, such as swearing, abusive or foul language, will not be tolerated at school.
8. Gambling is not permitted on any property owned or leased by the school district.
9. Students are to move through the corridors in an orderly fashion. Students are not to push, run or shove.
10. Students are expected to follow all directives and requests made by all school adults. Hats are not to be worn in the building during the course of the school day.
11. Students are not expected to leave the school building or grounds without permission. This includes morning arrival by parent and/or bus.

12. Shirts or any articles of clothing with sayings or drawings on them that may be disruptive to the educational process are not permitted.
13. Students driving to school must have permission of the Principal and must obtain a parking permit from the main office. The permit must be displayed on the driver's side, rear passenger window of the vehicle.
14. Fighting in school will not be tolerated.
15. Students are expected to leave school grounds after the dismissal of school unless they are under the direct supervision of a teacher and/or coach.
16. There will be no boom boxes, MP3 players, CD's, radios, walkmans, game boys, or card trading, during the school day.
17. Students are expected to be on time for all classes.
18. Unless under the direct supervision of a teacher or similar permission is granted, no food or drink should be in the hallways.
19. No food or drink is permitted in the Auditorium at any time.
20. Students are not to use snowmobiles, 4-wheelers or any other mechanical recreational vehicle for transportation to school or any school related event including weekend and night time sporting events.
21. The Building Principal or designee must approve all posters and/or advertisements before they are hung up in the building.
22. There will be a \$1 replacement fee for failure to return report card envelopes.

## 6. Emergencies

The following are general instructions for emergency situations.

- School officials and/or teachers will provide instructions for emergencies.
- Pupils are to proceed quietly, in single lines, keeping in order, and moving briskly without running. Pupils who are unable to follow the line or drill pattern should step aside and await assistance.
- Fire Emergency: Regardless of the time the alarm sounds, including after regular school hours, pupils must vacate the building. The signal to leave the building is a ringing bell.
- Students should be at least one hundred feet away from the building and fire hydrants.
- All driveways and parking lots must be kept clear to allow the passage of emergency vehicles.
- The signal for students and teachers to return to the building will be given by the Principal to designated personnel via radio. These personnel will signal others to reenter the building.

## 7. Work Release

Work release requests will be considered for early work release or a late entry. Other applications will be considered only under special circumstances.

- A work release form must be obtained from your school counselor and completed—applies for seniors only. Other students with extenuating circumstances may seek permission from the Principal.

- When a student receives permission for work release from school for a specific employment opportunity, it is understood that the student will leave the building each day at the time approved on the application.
- Permission for release will be granted for no more than two instructional periods per day. The two periods may be at the start of the school day or at the end of the school day. All students must take the minimum full-time schedule of five subjects.
- Should a student cease to be employed, the student or the parent/guardian should notify the school.
- Release will continue only as long as school attendance, grades and conduct are acceptable. Should problems arise, a conference with the student, parent/guardian, and school counselor will be convened.

#### 8. Telephone Regulations

**The Office and front desk phones are not for student use.** Students will not be called from classes to the telephone except in family emergencies. Employers and parents are requested not to call the school asking that messages be given to students unless it is absolutely necessary.

#### 9. School Dances

Dances are a privilege and the same rules of conduct that apply for other school activities are in effect. It is the decision of the advisor and/or Principal to allow guests to be signed in to any dance. Students that wish to bring a guest to a dance must seek approval and then sign in the guest in the main office one week prior to the dance. A student takes full responsibility for their guest and their guest's actions at all times.

#### 10. Use of Electronic Devices

Student use of any item that is potentially disruptive to the educational process or presents a safety concern will not be allowed in the Sharon Springs Central School Building. Such items will be confiscated and the student will be subject to disciplinary action. School rules prohibit the possession of electronic games, CD and MP3 players, boom boxes, walkmans, laser lights, or any other electronic devices during the school day without authorization of the building administration. **Cell phone possession will be allowed as long as the device is not displayed, is stored in the off position and does not become a distraction for the student. Cell phones may not be used as a calculator. Cell phones and other unauthorized items out during the school day will be confiscated and the student will be subject to disciplinary action.**

**While the District discourages any student from bringing these items to school, it is recommended that one who chooses to bring an electronic device should store the item in the "off" position, and locked in one's locker for the entire day. The District is not responsible if these items are lost or stolen.**

The Board of Education recognizes the seriousness of the dangers of laser lights and, therefore, prohibits them not only in school but also on school buses. Clearance will be given to the teaching staff for use of a wireless mouse that is equipped with a laser pointer. This device will

be used in conjunction with the laptop computers and LCD projectors for delivery of classroom instruction.

In specific circumstances, approval may be given for:

1. The use of walkmans on bus runs if approved by the bus driver in charge.
2. The use of cassette players by special education students for educational purposes as stipulated in their IEP's.
3. The use of cell phones for parent contact after 3:00 regarding the estimated time of arrival when students are returning from away games or activities may be approved by the student's supervisor/advisor/bus driver.

#### 11. Bullying and Gang Policies

It is the policy of this district to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from bullying based on a person's race, color, sex, weight, gender, national origin, ethnic group, disability, sexual orientation, religion, religious practice, and economic status. The School District prohibits any and all forms of bullying because it violates the basic right of students and staff to be in a safe, orderly learning environment. This policy seeks to promote positive interpersonal relationships between all members of the school community.

The District will promptly and thoroughly investigate reports of bullying, whether of a physical or of a nonphysical form. If it determines that bullying has occurred, it will act appropriately within the discipline codes of the District and will take reasonable action to end the bullying.

#### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS**

The district is committed to safeguarding the right of all students within the school district to learn in an environment free from all forms of sexual harassment. Conduct is deemed to be sexual harassment when the student perceives such behavior as unwelcome, such as inappropriate touching, verbal comments, sexual name calling, spreading sexual rumor, gestures, jokes, and pictures, restricting a student's ability to move, sexual assault, or rape.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Any student, who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, whether by a teacher, other student, or any individual on school grounds or at school activities, should report the alleged misconduct immediately to the Compliance Officer, the District Superintendent. In the absence of a victim's complaint, the school, upon learning of or having reason to suspect the occurrence of any sexual harassment, an investigation will promptly begin.

#### **SPECIFIC RESPONSES TO INFRACTIONS OF THE RULES**

Any single response or any combination of administrative responses may be applied, dependent upon student's record of behavior, the severity of the infraction, and the frequency of repetitions of an infraction.

Infraction (first occurrence)

Endangering the safety of self and/or  
Others (running, pushing, throwing  
Objects, etc.)

Administrative Response

\*Reprimand  
\*Parental contact  
\*Detention  
\*Suspension

3 Tardies to school  
(illegal/unexcused)

\*Indicated on permanent records  
\*After school detention  
\*Loss of on-campus parking privileges  
\*Parental involvement

3 Lates to Class

\*After school detention  
\*Parental involvement  
\*Referral for counseling  
\*In school suspension

Display of unauthorized electronic device

\*Reprimand  
\*Confiscation  
\*Parent Contact  
\*Detention  
\*Loss of Privileges  
\*Suspension

Possession of cigarettes or other  
tobacco products

\*Confiscation of the cigarettes or other products  
\*Parental contact  
\*In-School Suspension

Smoking or other use of tobacco products

\*Immediate 2 days' suspension  
\*Parental involvement  
\*Curtailment of pass privileges  
\*Referral to counselor or social worker

Possession and/or use and/or being  
under the influence of alcohol,  
drugs, controlled substances, or drug  
paraphernalia

\*Confiscation of substance for law enforcement  
\*External suspension: 3 to 5 days  
\*Parental involvement  
\*Referral for evaluation for counseling  
\*Curtailment of pass privileges  
\*Involvement of law enforcement  
\*Superintendent's hearing

Sale of alcohol, drugs or controlled  
Substances. (The term "sale" also refers  
to any kind of giving, dispensing, or  
transmission.)

\*Confiscation  
\*Parental involvement  
\*Referral for evaluation for counseling  
\*Immediate 5-day external suspension  
\*Curtailment of pass privileges

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Involvement of law enforcement</li> <li>*Superintendent's hearing</li> </ul>
<p>Use or possession of weapons ("Weapon" means a firearm as defined in 18 USC S921 for purposes of the Gun-Free Schools Acts. It also means any other gun, BB gun, pistol, revolver, shotgun, rifle, machine gun, disguised gun, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto, switchblade 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 that can cause physical injury/death when used to cause physical injury or death.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Confiscation of weapon for law enforcement</li> <li>*Up to 5 days of external suspension dependent upon severity</li> <li>*Parental involvement</li> <li>*Involvement of law enforcement</li> <li>*Superintendent's hearing</li> </ul>
<p>Vandalism or theft of school property</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Restitution for damages or return of property</li> <li>*Parental involvement</li> <li>*Internal or external suspension, depending on severity</li> <li>*Curtailment of pass privileges</li> <li>*Involvement of law enforcement, depending upon severity</li> </ul>
<p>Theft or destruction of personal property</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Detention 2 or 3 days for the first offense</li> <li>*Return of property or restitution for damages</li> <li>*Parental involvement</li> <li>*Curtailment of pass privileges</li> <li>*Involvement of law enforcement, depending upon severity</li> </ul>
<p>General or spontaneous use of crude and abusive language (dependent upon severity)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Reprimand</li> <li>*Detention</li> <li>*Parental involvement</li> <li>*In-School Suspension</li> <li>*Suspension</li> </ul>
<p>Crude and/or abusive language or gestures directed toward a staff member. (dependent upon severity)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Immediate 1-5 day suspension</li> <li>*Parental involvement</li> <li>*Superintendent's hearing</li> </ul>
<p>Intimidation/harassment (includes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Warning</li> </ul>

bullying, sexual harassment, and threatening behavior)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Detention</li> <li>*Mediation</li> <li>*Parental involvement</li> <li>*Referral for evaluation for counseling</li> <li>*Suspension</li> <li>*Involvement of law enforcement</li> </ul>
Cheating/plagiarism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Zero on assignment/test</li> <li>*Detention</li> </ul>
Fighting: The administrator will take steps to determine the aggressor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Immediate suspension up to 5 days</li> <li>*Parental involvement</li> <li>*Referral for evaluation for counseling</li> <li>*Involvement of law enforcement</li> </ul>
Refusal to follow a directive or a request from a staff member (depending upon severity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Reprimand</li> <li>*Parental involvement</li> <li>*Loss of specific privileges</li> <li>*Performance of specific assistance duties or reflective assignments</li> <li>*Detention</li> <li>*Suspension</li> </ul>
Failure to report to main office after being sent out of class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Detention</li> <li>*Parental Involvement</li> <li>*Internal Suspension</li> <li>*Out of School Suspension</li> </ul>
Vehicle use violations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Detention</li> <li>*Internal Suspension</li> <li>*Parental involvement</li> <li>*Loss of parking privileges</li> <li>*Involvement of law enforcement</li> <li>*Verbal reprimand</li> <li>*Curtailment of pass privileges</li> </ul>

## **PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

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 investigate, to the extent necessary, the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the 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.

### **1. Detention**

Teachers, Principals, or their designees, and the Superintendent may use after school detention as a penalty for student misconduct in situations where removal from the classroom or suspension would be inappropriate. Detention at the Sharon Springs Central School District shall be held either during lunch or after school. After school detention shall be held Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. It is the responsibility of the student to notify his/her parent that he/she is required to stay after school. In addition, any teacher may choose to keep a student after school on any given day.

### **2. 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 administrative aide or Assistant Principal's attention. Students who become a serious disciplinary problem may have their riding privileges suspended by the 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. Should the suspension from transportation amount to a suspension from attendance; the district will make appropriate arrangements to provide for the student's education.

A student subjected to a suspension from transportation is not entitled to a full 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 Principal or his/her designee to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

### **3. 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 full 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.

### **4. 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."

It is the responsibility of the student to check with teachers relative to all work and tests missed. Students are denied all extra-curricular activities (athletics, practices, contests, concerts, dances, clubs) for the day of **In-School** suspension.

A student subjected to an in-school suspension is not entitled to a full 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.

#### **5. Alternative-to-Suspension (tobacco violations only)**

In light of scientific evidence that the use of tobacco is hazardous to health, students may be allowed to participate in an Alternative-to-Suspension program. Student participation in a tobacco cessation program and/or tobacco education class may be allowed as an alternative to discipline. Parent will be notified of violations involving their child and subsequent action taken by the school.

#### **6. 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 exercising good classroom management. Unfortunately behavior challenges occasionally require techniques at the extreme end of the behavioral management continuum. 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 in an alternative setting. Such practices may include, but are not limited to: (1) short-term "time out" in an elementary classroom or in an administrator's office; (2) sending a student into the hallway briefly; (3) sending a student to the Principal's office for the remainder of the class time only; or (4) sending a student to a guidance counselor or other district staff member for counseling. Time-honored classroom management techniques such as these do not constitute disciplinary removals for purposes of this code.

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 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 two days. The removal from class applies to the class of the removing teacher only. In the case of an

elementary school teacher this removal may be up to the remainder of that school day and the next consecutive school day.

If the disruptive student does not pose a danger or ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, 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.

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 he or she was removed from the classroom and give the student a chance to present his or her version of the relevant events within 24-hours.

The teacher must complete a district-established disciplinary removal form and meet with the Principal or his or her 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 or another district administrator designated by the Principal must notify the student's parent 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 his/her designee to discuss the reasons for the removal.

The Principal may require the teacher who ordered the removal to attend the informal conference.

If at the informal meeting the student denies the charges, the Principal or his/her designee 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 or his/her designee may overturn the removal of the student from class if he/she finds any one of the following:

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

The Principal or his/her designee 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 or his/her designee makes a final determination, or the period of removal expires, whichever is less.

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 his/her class. The Principal must keep a log of all removals of students from class.

Removal of a student with a disability, under certain circumstances, may constitute a change in the student's placement. Accordingly, no teacher may remove a student with a disability from his or her class until he or she 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.

## 7. Suspension from School

Suspension from school is a severe penalty, which may be imposed only 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 their respective Principal that a student be suspended. All staff members must immediately report and refer a violent student to the Principal or his/her designee 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.

The Superintendent, Principal, or their designee, upon receiving a recommendation or referral for suspension or when processing a case for suspension, shall gather the facts relevant to the matter and record them for subsequent presentation, if necessary.

### a. Short term (five days or less) Suspension from School

When the 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 or their designee, must immediately notify the

student orally. If the student denies the misconduct, the suspending authority or their designee, 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 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. The Principal or designee shall advise the parents that if they are not satisfied with the decision and wish to pursue the matter, they must file a written appeal to the Superintendent within five business days, unless they can show extraordinary circumstances precluding them from doing so. The Superintendent shall issue a written decision regarding the appeal within 10 business days of receiving the appeal. If the parents are not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision, they must file a written appeal to the Board of education with the District Clerk within 10 business days of the date of the Superintendent's decision, unless they can show extraordinary circumstances precluding them from doing so. Only final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education within 30 days of the decision.

b. Long term (more than five days) Suspension from School

When the Superintendent or Principal determines that a 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 him or her and the right to present witnesses and other evidence on his or her behalf.

The Superintendent shall personally hear and determine the proceeding or may, in his or her 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 that 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 10 business 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 of Education within 30 days of the decision.

c. Permanent suspension

Permanent suspension is reserved for extraordinary circumstances such as where a student's conduct poses a life-threatening 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.

## **Minimum Periods of Suspension**

### **1. 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:

- a. The student's age.**
- b. The student's grade in school.**
- c. The student's prior disciplinary record.**
- d. The Superintendent's belief that other forms of discipline may be more effective.**
- e. Input from parents, teachers and/or others.**
- f. Other extenuating circumstances.**

A student with a disability may be suspended only in accordance with the requirements of state and federal law.

## **2. 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 parent 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 parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for a hearing given to all students subject to a long-term suspension. The Superintendent 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.

## **3. Students who are repeatedly substantially disruptive of the educational process or repeatedly substantially interferes 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. If the proposed penalty is the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parent 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 parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for a hearing given to all students subject to a long-term suspension. The Superintendent 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.

### **Alternative Instruction**

When a teacher removes a student of any age from class or a student of compulsory attendance age is suspended from school pursuant to Education Law §3214, the district will act promptly to provide alternative means of instruction for the student.

### **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.

#### A. Authorized Suspensions or Removals of Students with Disabilities

1. 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 and 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/herself or others.

An "IAES" means a temporary educational placement for a period of up to 45 days, other than the student's current placement at the time the behavior precipitating the IAES placement occurred, that enables the student to continue to progress in the general curriculum, although in another setting, to continue to receive those services and modifications, including those described on the student's current individualized education program (IEP), that will enable the student to meet the goals set out in such IEP, and include services and modifications to address the behavior which precipitated the IAES placement that are designed to prevent the behavior from recurring.

2. School personnel may order the suspension or removal of a student with a disability from his or her current educational placement as follows:
  - a. The Board, the district (BOCES) Superintendent of Schools or a Principal may order the placement of a student with a disability into an IAES, another setting or suspension for a period not to exceed five consecutive school days and not to exceed the amount of time a non-disabled student would be subject to suspension for the same behavior.
  - b. The Superintendent may order the placement of a student with a disability into an IAES, another setting or suspension for up to 10 consecutive school days, inclusive of any period in which the student has been suspended or removed under subparagraph (a) above for the same behavior, if the Superintendent determines that the student has engaged in behavior that warrants a suspension and the suspension or removal does not exceed the amount of time non-disabled students would be subject to suspension for the same behavior.
  - c. The Superintendent may order additional suspensions of not more than 10 consecutive school days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct, as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement.

- d. The Superintendent may order the placement of a student with a disability in an IAES to be determined by the committee on special education (CSE), for the same amount of time that a student without a disability would be subject to discipline, but not more than 45 days, if the student carries or possesses a weapon to school or to a school function, or the student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function.
  - (1) "Weapon" means the same as "dangerous weapon" under 18 U.S.C. § 930(g)(w) which includes "a weapon, device, instrument, material or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury, except...[for] a pocket knife with a blade of less than 2 1/2 inches in length."
  - (2) "Controlled substance" means a drug or other substance identified in certain provisions of the federal Controlled Substances Act specified in both federal and state law and regulations applicable to this policy.
  - (3) "Illegal drugs" means a controlled substance except for those legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under the Controlled Substances Act or any other federal law.
3. Subject to specified conditions required by both federal and state law and regulations, an impartial hearing officer may order the placement of a student with a disability in an IAES setting for up to 45 days at a time, if maintaining the student in his or her current educational placement poses a risk of harm to the student or others.

## **B. Change of Placement Rule**

1. A disciplinary change in placement means a suspension or removal from a student's current educational placement that is either:
  - a. for more than 10 consecutive school days; or
  - b. for a period of 10 consecutive school days or less if the student is subjected to a series of suspensions or removals that constitute a pattern because they cumulate to more than 10 school days in a school year and because of such factors as the length of each suspension or removal, the total amount of time the student is removed and the proximity of the suspensions or removals to one another.
2. School personnel may not suspend or remove a student with disabilities if imposition of the suspension or removal would result in a disciplinary change in placement based on a pattern of suspension or removal.

However, the district may impose a suspension or removal, which would otherwise result in a disciplinary change in placement, based on a pattern of suspensions or removals if the CSE has determined that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, or the student is placed in an IAES for behavior involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances.

### **C. Special Rules Regarding the Suspension or Removal of Students with Disabilities**

1. The district's Committee on Special Education shall:
  - a. Conduct functional behavioral assessments to determine why a student engages in a particular behavior, and develop or review behavioral intervention plans whenever the district is first suspending or removing a student with a disability for more than 10 school days in a school year or imposing a suspension or removal that constitutes a disciplinary change in placement, including a change in placement to an IAES for misconduct involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances.

If subsequently, a student with a disability who has a behavioral intervention plan and who has been suspended or removed from his or her current educational placement for more than 10 school days in a school year is subjected to a suspension or removal that does not constitute a disciplinary change in placement, the members of the CSE shall review the behavioral intervention plan and its implementation to determine if modifications are necessary.

If one or more members of the CSE believe that modifications are needed, the school district shall convene a meeting of the CSE to modify such plan and its implementation, to the extent the committee determines necessary.

- b. Conduct a manifestation determination review of the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior subject to disciplinary action whenever a decision is made to place a student in an IAES either for misconduct involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances or because maintaining the student in his current educational setting poses a risk of harm to the student or others; or a decision is made to impose a suspension that constitutes a disciplinary change in placement.
2. The parents of a student who is facing disciplinary action, but who has not been determined to be eligible for services under IDEA and Article 89 at the time of misconduct, shall have the right to invoke applicable procedural safeguards set forth in federal and state law and regulations if, in accordance with federal and state statutory and regulatory criteria, the school district is deemed to have had knowledge that their child was a student with a disability before the behavior precipitating disciplinary action occurred. If the district is deemed to have had such knowledge, the student will be considered a student presumed to have a disability for discipline purposes.
  - a. The Superintendent, Principal or other school official imposing a suspension or removal shall be responsible for determining whether the student is a student presumed to have a disability.
  - b. A student will not be considered a student presumed to have a disability for discipline purposes if, upon receipt of information supporting a claim that the district had knowledge the student was a student with a disability, the district either:

- (1) conducted an individual evaluation and determined that the student is not a student with a disability, or
- (2) determined that an evaluation was not necessary and provided notice to the parents of such determination, in the manner required by applicable law and regulations.

If there is no basis for knowledge that the student is a student with a disability prior to taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be subjected to the same disciplinary measures as any other non-disabled student who engaged in comparable behaviors.

However, if a request for an individual evaluation is made while such non-disabled student is subjected to a disciplinary removal, an expedited evaluation shall be conducted and completed in the manner prescribed by applicable federal and state law and regulations. Until the expedited evaluation is completed, the non-disabled student who is not a student presumed to have a disability for discipline purposes shall remain in the educational placement determined by the district, which can include suspension.

3. The district shall provide parents with notice of disciplinary removal no later than the date on which a decision is made to change the placement of a student with a disability to an IAES for either misconduct involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances or because maintaining the student in his/her current educational setting poses a risk of harm to the student or others; or a decision is made to impose a suspension or removal that constitutes a disciplinary change in placement.

The procedural safeguards notice prescribed by the Commissioner shall accompany the notice of disciplinary removal.

4. The parents of a student with disabilities subject to a suspension of five consecutive school days or less shall be provided with the same opportunity for an informal conference available to parents of non-disabled students under the Education Law.
5. Superintendent hearings on disciplinary charges against students with disabilities subject to a suspension of more than five school days shall be divided into a guilt phase and a penalty phase in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Commissioner's regulations incorporated into this code.
6. 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.

7. 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 incorporated into this code.

#### **D. Expedited Due Process Hearings**

1. An expedited due process hearing shall be conducted in the manner specified by the Commissioner's regulations incorporated into this code, if:
  - a. 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 his or her 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 his or her current educational placement during such proceedings.
  - b. 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.
    - (1) 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.
    - (2) 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.
2. 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 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.

#### **E. Referral to law enforcement and judicial authorities**

In accordance with the provisions of IDEA and its implementing regulations:

1. 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.
2. 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. The District has existing policy and procedures related to this topic.

## **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, nor are school officials required to contact a student's parent before questioning the student. However, school officials will tell all students why they are being questioned.

**In addition, the Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools, Building Principals or his/her designee, 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.**

**An authorized school official may conduct a search of a student's belongings that is minimally intrusive, such as touching the outside of a book bag, without reasonable suspicion, so long as the school official has a legitimate reason for the very limited search.**

An authorized school official may search a student or the student's belongings based upon information received from a reliable informant. Individuals, other than the district employees, will be considered reliable informants if they have previously supplied information that was accurate and verified, or they make an admission against their own interest, or they provide the same information that is received independently from other sources, or they appear to be credible and the information they are communicating relates to an immediate threat to safety. District employees will be considered reliable informants unless they are known to have previously supplied information that they knew was not accurate.

Before searching a student or the student's belongings, the authorized school official should attempt to get the student to admit that he or she possesses physical evidence that they violated the law or the district code, or get 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.

### **A. 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.

### **B. Documentation of Searches**

The authorized school official conducting the search shall be responsible for promptly recording the following information about each search:

- 1. Name, age and grade of student searched.**
- 2. Reasons for the search.**
- 3. Name of any informant(s).**
- 4. Purpose of search (that is, what item(s) were being sought).**
- 5. Type and scope of search.**
- 6. Person conducting search and his or her title and position.**
- 7. Witnesses, if any, to the search.**
- 8. Time and location of search.**
- 9. Results of search (that is, what items(s) were found).**
- 10. Disposition of items found.**
- 11. Time, manner and results of parental notification.**

The Principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for the custody, control and disposition of any illegal or dangerous item taken from a student. The Principal or his/her designee shall clearly label each item taken from the student and retain control of the item(s), until the item is turned over to the police. The Principal or his or her designee shall be responsible for personally delivering dangerous or illegal items to police authorities.

### **C. 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:

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

Before police officials are permitted to question or search any student, the Principal or his/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. The Principal or his/her designee will also be present during any police questioning or search of a student on school property or at a school function.

Students who are questioned by police officials on school property or at a school function will be afforded the same rights they have outside the school. This means:

- 1. They must be informed of their legal rights.**
- 2. They may remain silent if they so desire.**
- 3. They may request the presence of an attorney.**

#### **D. 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 Principal or his/her designee. The Principal or his/her designee shall set the time and place of the interview. The Principal or his/her 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 not 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.

#### **DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT**

It is the policy of the State of New York, as set forth in the Dignity for All Students Act (“DASA”) as well as federal civil rights statutes, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and all subsequent amendments, to afford all students in public schools an environment free from discrimination and harassment.

In order to foster an environment which promotes and supports students’ ability to learn and to meet high academic standards in the Sharon Springs Central School District, the Board of Education is dedicated to ensuring the District promptly addresses any conduct which is inconsistent with the District’s educational mission or which detracts from a healthy and positive school climate, including discriminatory or harassing behaviors as defined by the Dignity for All Students Act or related federal civil rights statutes set forth above. The Board of Education is committed to providing all its students with an environment free from discrimination and harassment and shall take steps to prevent harassment and discriminatory behaviors through educational measures designed to promote tolerance, respect for others and to promote awareness and sensitivity to discrimination or harassment to encourage civility and a climate of mutual respect, equality and dignity for all students on school grounds and at all school sponsored activities, programs or events. Harassment against any student by any student or employee that creates a hostile environment by conduct will not be tolerated.

By combining prevention with education, the District’s goal is to decrease incidents of discrimination and harassment while simultaneously increasing awareness among students and staff to be sensitive and alert to the warning signs of bullying and harassment as well as their obligation to report or act when such acts occur. Essential components of this effort shall include:

- Instruction and strategies which identify early warning signs and precursor behaviors which, if left unaddressed, may lead to discrimination, harassment or bullying;
- Gathering information related to harassment, discrimination or bullying from students, parents, school staff and the community;
- Establishing school wide and classroom rules that clearly prohibit discrimination and harassment.
- Providing instruction to students in civility and tolerance designed to promote a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students.
- Providing professional development and school wide training to staff to be able to identify, respond sensitively and consistently to incidents of harassment and bullying as well as to promoting tolerance and respect for all.
- Providing adequate adult supervision, particularly in less structured areas such as hallways, cafeteria and playground, as applicable.
- Notification to Parents as to District and school-wide efforts to become involved in preventing and addressing prohibited conduct and promoting a positive and healthy school environment.

The Board directs the Superintendent to establish a district-wide task force on to develop administrative procedures to promote the early identification of bullying and harassment; to develop training and implementation educational programs and professional development for students and staff and to develop other preventive strategies and interventions. The Board of Education will appoint a Dignity Act Coordinator for each school. The task force, in conjunction with the DAC shall develop procedures and forms for district-wide use for reporting, investigation, remediating, tracking and preventive actions taken to discourage reoccurrence instances of harassment or discrimination. In addition, the District will submit and report to the State on an annual basis material incidents of discrimination and harassment on school grounds or at school functions, using the VADIR reporting form developed by the State Education Department.

The Board of Education recognizes the need to clearly define expectations for acceptable conduct on school property by staff and students and to identify the possible consequences of unacceptable conduct, to ensure that discipline is administered promptly and fairly when necessary. To this end, the Board adopts this code of conduct. Unless otherwise indicated, the code of conduct applies to all students, school personnel, parents and other visitors when on school property or at school functions.

### **Prevention and Training:**

The Board of Education directs training for employees, including school and district administrators, and instructional and non-instructional staff designed to promote a safe and supportive school climate while discouraging discrimination or harassment against students by students or school employees, including the use of safe and supportive school climate concepts in the curriculum and classroom. The Board will review and approve training guidelines developed by the district-wide task force consistent with this training policy. This training may be provided in conjunction with existing professional development training or any other training for school employees.

Staff members and students will be educated to help create a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion or religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity or expression, actual or perceived) or sex which will help strengthen student's confidence and promote learning. Staff shall also be trained to recognize that under federal civil rights laws and regulations, students are protected from harassment by school employees, other students and third parties. They shall also be trained to understand that some student misconduct which violates or falls under the District's anti-discrimination or anti-harassment policies may also implicate one or more of the federal civil rights laws enforced by the Office of Civil Rights of the Education Department.

In addition, Staff members will be provided training to raise awareness and sensitivity to potential acts of discrimination or harassment directed at students that are committed by students or school employees on school property or at school functioning. Staff members will be trained to recognize and respond to incidents of discrimination and harassment and to timely report incidents of discrimination and harassment that they witness or that are brought to a staff

member's attention. Through training, staff will learn to address personal biases that may prevent the equal treatment of all students in the school or classroom setting and to promote and maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students to strengthen student's confidence and to promote learning. Teachers and administrators will receive district-wide professional development. All staff with direct student contact will receive district-wide instruction on promoting a positive school environment free from discrimination and to discourage and respond to incidents of discrimination or harassment. The Superintendent and the Professional Development Coordinator will incorporate training to support this anti-discrimination and harassment policy into new teacher orientation and the annual professional development plan.

### **Student Instruction:**

Students shall receive instruction in patriotism and citizenship as required by Section 801 of the Education Law. In addition, students shall be instructed to raise awareness and sensitivity to discrimination or harassment and to promote civility in the relations of people of different races, weights, national origins, ethnic groups, religions, religious practices, mental or physical abilities, sexual orientations, genders, gender expressions or identities and sexes. Curricular materials related to the above topics will be included in the instructional program for grades K-12. The District will use a variety of means to set forth clear expectations for student conduct and behavior, including a bill of rights and responsibilities for students which focuses on positive student behavior and the goal of promoting a safe and supportive school climate and learning environment for all students.

### **Dignity Act Coordinator:**

The Board will designate at least one staff member in every school to serve as the Dignity Act Coordinator. The Role of the Dignity Act Coordinator ("DAC") is to coordinate and enforce this policy. The DAC shall be thoroughly trained 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, gender identity and expression and sex. The DAC shall be responsible for coordinating employee training, supporting implementation of district policy, ensuring inclusive curriculum to reinforce and promote tolerance and a harassment free environment. The DAC shall also serve as an accessible resource to students and staff related to this policy or prevention and response strategies.

In the event that a DAC vacates his or her position, another school employee shall be immediately designated for an interim appointment as the DAC, pending approval of a successor DAC by the Board of Education within thirty (30) days of the date the position was vacated. In the event a DAC is unable to perform the duties of the position for an extended period of time, then another school employee shall be immediately designated as an interim appointment as the DAC, pending the return of the previous DAC to their duties.

To promote the communication between parents, teachers, students and other educational professionals and to publicize the availability of the DAC as a resource at each school, the name, designated school and contact information for each DAC shall be available on the district's

website; included in the plain language code of conduct summary provided to all parents and students before or at the beginning of each school year; included in at least one district or school mailing per school year and if the DAC changes, in at least one subsequent mailing as soon as practicable thereafter; by posting the contact information in highly visible areas of the school buildings and by making the contact information available at the District and school-level administrative offices.

### **Intervention:**

Intervention at the earliest stage possible is key to preventing escalation of harassment and discrimination and to encourage proactive resolution to promote a positive learning environment for all students. Intervention efforts will emphasize measured, balanced and age-appropriate responses to the discrimination and harassment of students by students and/or employees focusing on education and should be designed to discourage another occurrence of the behavior. Successful intervention may involve remedial measures. Remedial responses to bullying and harassment include measures designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the behavior and protect the target of the act. Remediation may be targeted to the individual(s) involved in the harassing or discriminatory behavior or may include environmental approaches which are targeted to the school or district as a whole. Individual-focused remedial measures may include, but are not limited to peer support groups; corrective instruction or other learning or service experience; supportive interventions; behavioral assessment or evaluation; behavioral management plans with closely monitored benchmarks; student counseling and parent conferences. Environmental remediation strategies may include supervisory systems that empower school staff with prevention and intervention tools to address incidents of bullying and harassment; strategies for determining the conditions contributing to discriminatory behaviors; adoption of research-based, systemic harassment prevention programs; modification of schedules; adjustment in hallway traffic and other student routes of travel; targeted use of monitors; staff professional development; parent conferences; involvement of parent-teacher organizations and peer support groups.

In addition to addressing the discriminatory or harassing conduct, intervention shall also include support and assistance to the student that was the target of the harassment as well as identification of prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the harassment; to eliminate any hostile environment and to prevent such conduct from reoccurring. When harassment has occurred, staff, in conjunction with the DAC, the parents and the student, as appropriate, shall review whether the student requires counseling support, accommodations or other services to remedy the effects of the harassment and if there is a need, shall provide such services or supports. Accommodations and on-going supports provided to a target of harassment shall be reviewed, as needed, to ensure that any safety concerns have been addressed and to determine whether accommodations or supports should be continued, adjusted or discontinued.

### **Reporting and Investigation:**

The District recognizes its ongoing commitment to provide a safe and positive educational climate free from bullying and harassment and will publicize its policies and reporting expectations for incidents of harassment or discrimination. To ensure effective and timely

redress to incidents of bullying and harassment, students who have been harassed, students or staff who have witnessed what they believe to be an incident of bullying or harassment are encouraged and expected to promptly make a written or verbal complaint to school personnel in a manner consistent with publicized school-wide practices and guidance as soon as possible after the incident.

The district can't effectively address harassment or bullying if incidents are not reported. All school personnel have a duty to report incidents of student to student or staff to student harassment which they observe to their supervisor, the building administrator or the DAC. If school personnel receive any reports of incidents of harassment against a student by staff or other student(s), they must promptly relay the report to their supervisor, the building administrator or to the DAC as set forth in the implementing procedures for this policy. If a staff member is unfamiliar with the reporting procedure, it is their obligation to inquire about the process from their supervisor and to act accordingly. An employee who fails to report an observed incident, regardless of whether the student complains, may be deemed to have permitted unlawful discrimination or harassment.

Once the school knows of an alleged incident of harassment, there must be a timely investigation to determine what occurred. Complaints shall be handled and documented in accordance with regulations and procedures developed by the district-wide task force in conjunction with the DAC. The results of the investigation shall be reported back to both the target and the individual accused of harassing or discriminatory behavior or conduct. If either of the parties disagrees with the results of the investigation, they can appeal the findings in accordance with the procedures established by the district-wide task force to implement this policy.

The District will make a bullying complaint form available on its website and at the main office in each building to facilitate reporting. The district will promptly and equitably investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written. In order to assist investigators, individuals should document the bullying as soon as it occurs and with as much detail as possible including: the nature of the incident(s); dates, times, places it has occurred; name of perpetrator(s); witnesses to the incident(s); and the target's response to the incident.

If, after appropriate investigation, the district finds that a student, an employee or a third party has violated this policy, prompt corrective and possibly disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the code of conduct, applicable collective bargaining agreement, district policy and state law. If the reported behavior constitutes a civil rights violation, the complaint procedure associated with related anti-discrimination policies will be followed, as applicable. If either of the parties disagrees with the findings of the initial investigation, an appeal may be made to the Superintendent in accordance with the guidance procedures developed by the district wide task force.

To the extent possible, all complaints will be treated in a confidential manner, although limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation. The District will balance its legal obligation to conduct its investigation, to take necessary action to resolve the complaint and to provide procedural rights to the individual(s) accused of the harassment or discrimination through the investigation. Individuals responsible for investigating complaints will discuss any

concerns or issues related to confidentiality with the individuals involved. Complainants must be informed that the District's need to respond effectively to the harassment and to prevent reoccurrence is a critical part of the investigation. All complainants shall be advised that district policy and federal law prohibit retaliation against complainants and witnesses. If the complainant, witness or reporting staff member believes that they have experienced retaliation, they need to report this issue as soon as possible to the District for appropriate responsive action to address and to prevent retaliation from recurring, if applicable.

The reporting mechanism used for identifying instances of discrimination and harassment should be used to compile relevant information which may assist in assessing the school climate and the effectiveness (or challenges) related to interventions; staff training; guidance and forms or student educational programs.

### **Disciplinary Consequences/Remediation:**

Even with prevention and education, instances of discrimination or harassment may still occur. Should such an instance arise, the individual engaging in the harassing or discriminatory conduct must be advised that their actions and conduct will not be tolerated and that their behavior must be changed immediately. Students who engage in harassing or discriminatory conduct will receive guidance on making positive choices and support to understand how their actions have negatively impacted other student(s) and must not continue. As appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken by the building principal or other authorized administrator in accordance with the district's Code of Conduct. If the discriminatory or harassing behavior rises to the level of criminal activity, law enforcement will be contacted.

Progressive discipline consequences will be considered in response to instances of discrimination or harassment and the individual imposing consequences shall consider the nature and severity of the misconduct, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors, prior interventions and the student's response and must be imposed in a manner consistent with the district's Code of Conduct.

In addition to disciplinary measures, remedial responses should be considered to discern why the discrimination or harassment occurred and should be targeted to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the behavior and protect the target of the act. Remedial measures may be appropriate on an individual or school-wide basis, depending on the nature of the underlying misconduct.

### **Non-Retaliation for Reporting or Participating in an investigation when acting in good faith:**

Any person who has reasonable cause to suspect a student has been subject to discrimination by an employee or student on school grounds or at a school function who reports such information to school officials, the Commissioner or law enforcement, who reports and acts in good faith, shall be immune from civil liability from making such a report.

In addition, all complainants; those who participate in the investigation of a complaint in conformity with state law and district policies, or who are required to testify, participate or assist

in the investigation procedure shall be free from retaliation of any kind and who have acted reasonably and in good faith, have the right to be free from retaliation of any kind.

## STUDENTS ATTENDANCE

### A. Age of Entrance

In accordance with the regulations of the Sharon Springs Central School BOARD OF EDUCATION, students will be admitted to Kindergarten in September only if they have reached or will reach the age of five years on or before December 1 of the school year in question. Any child reaching the age of five years after December 1, must wait until the following September to enter Kindergarten.

### B. Regularity of Attendance

#### 1. The State Education Law (3205) (3202) 1 requires that:

- a. Children who turn six (6) on or before December 1 of the school year must attend school from the start of classes in September of that school year. Children who turn six (6) after December 1 must begin school no later than the first day of session the following September.
- b. Children who turn seventeen (17) during the school year must remain in school until the end of that school year.
- c. Children should be entering or leaving school at the beginning or end of a school year. (Chapter 198 of the Laws of 1992).
- d. Under New York State Education Law, Section 3205, parents are responsible for the regular attendance of their children for instruction. **In accordance with NYS Law, after a student has been absent from school, a written excuse should be sent to the school upon his/her return.** New York State Law defines truancy as a student who is absent from school without the consent of a parent or guardian. Therefore, in order for a student not to be considered truant, parental contact must be established with the school nurse, or in extenuating circumstances, school administration. This may be in the form of a note or a phone call. A phone message may also be left on the nurse's voice mail. Even if an absence is unexcused, it will not be considered a truancy unless NO note or phone call has been received. If an absence is considered a truancy, it will be subject to disciplinary action.

#### 2. Absences and Excuses

If your child has a scheduled appointment with a physician or dentist, please inform the school prior to the appointment. After the appointment, please bring a note from the physician/dentist to the school nurse.

- a. **EXCUSES:** The law requires that upon return to school from an absence, an excuse be submitted. This is shown to the homeroom teacher and then

turned in immediately to the attendance office. The excuse should state the student's name, reason for his/her absence, days and dates absent from school and the signature of the parent/guardian. The excuse must be brought in within three (3) school days.

- b. **LEGAL ABSENCES:** The following are considered by the State of New York to be legal absences:
- sickness
  - serious illness or death in the family
  - impassable road or weather conditions
  - religious observance
  - quarantine
  - court appearance
  - attendance at health clinic
  - approved cooperative work program
  - approved college visits
  - approved education trips
  - military obligations.
- c. **ILLEGAL ABSENCES:** Most absences not mentioned in item 2b. are interpreted under the law as illegal absences. The two categories of illegal absence are unlawful detention and truancy.
- 1.) Unlawful Detention – Unlawful detention occurs when the pupil is absent with the knowledge and consent of his/her parent or guardian, for other than legal reasons (e.g. visiting, vacation, work, needed at home, etc).
- Parents should be advised that unlawfully detaining their children from school could result in the child not receiving credit for the work missed on the days of unlawful detention.
- 2.) Truancy – A student who is absent from school without the consent of a parent or guardian is considered to be truant. Truancy from school is assumed anytime a student is illegally absent for two or more consecutive class periods.

### **C. School Attendance Regulations (grades 6-12)**

The Administration and Faculty of Sharon Springs Central School believe that regular attendance in classroom instruction is an essential part of the learning process. The insistence on good attendance provides students with a clear reminder of the importance of classroom instruction and its relationship to academic achievement. Therefore, to receive credit for courses at Sharon Springs Central School students must fulfill the necessary academic requirements of the course and comply with the following attendance requirements:

1. A pupil must be in attendance a minimum of eighty-five percent (85%) of the total number of days a course is in session during an academic year in order to receive credit for that course.
2. The eighty-five percent (85%) rule of attendance means that:
  - a. In a full year, one credit course, a student must not be absent from class more than twenty-seven (27) days (either legally or illegally).
  - b. In a full year, one-half (1/2) credit course, a student must not be absent more than fourteen (14) days (either legally or illegally).
  - c. In a half-year, one-half (1/2) credit course, a student must not be absent more than fourteen (14) days (either legally or illegally).
  - d. In Physical Education, a student must not be absent more than fourteen (14) times when scheduled every other day (either legally or illegally).
3. Each absence from a specific class will be considered individually for that class and will determine whether a student fulfills the attendance criteria for that specific class. Not fulfilling the attendance criteria in a specific class will result in a student not receiving credit for that specific course.
4. Any student who is absent from school but is enrolled in a school approved tutorial program shall be considered as present for instruction. The tutorial program will operate with the same attendance regulations as all other classes. Parents who know that their child will be absent for a prolonged period of time (two weeks or more) should immediately submit a notice from the child's physician stating the nature of the illness and the duration so that the student will be marked legally absent. Parents of any student absent for any prolonged period of time must request home tutoring in writing from the principal. Students who are absent and wish to request missed work must do so by 8:30 a.m. Work may be picked up after 2:00 p.m. on the day of request. Any request received after 8:30 a.m., may not be filled until the following day. In this instance students will be considered absent but will still have the opportunity to fulfill their assignment criteria for the course(s).
5. Excessive absences will result in the Administration conducting an attendance hearing. The parties invited may include the student, his/her teachers, counselor, parent(s) and administrator. This will likely occur after the 20<sup>th</sup> absences for full-year classes and 10<sup>th</sup> absence for semester based courses.

The outcome(s) of the attendance hearing may result in:

- a. A determination if extenuating circumstances justify the excessive absences or if course credit should be denied.

- b. A discussion of the responsibility of student and parents in regard to future pupil attendance and to plan for makeup provisions in accordance with Commissioner's Rulings if needed.
- c. An establishment of consequences for future absences
- d. A discussion of intervention strategies
- e. A discussion of a PINS Diversion petition being filed if student is under the age of 17 or of an Educational Neglect Report.

Should the student exceed the 85% attendance rule and course credit is denied, the student will receive a "No Grade" for his/her class. The student will remain in the scheduled class as an audit, and participate as deemed appropriate by the teacher. The student who successfully audits the course will receive a minimum grade of 55, per remaining quarter, for the purpose of not prohibiting admission to summer school. If the course has a Regents exam attached, the student will be allowed to take the Regents exam if he/she has met all requirements to do so.

### C. Outstanding Attendance Awards

1. Category 1: Perfect Attendance- No minutes missed...no absences, tardiness, or early dismissals for any reason with the exception of a school sponsored field trip or college visitation.
2. Category 2: No absences. All tardiness and/or early dismissals excused because of medical or dental appointment(s). A written excuse from the doctor or dentist must be supplied upon return.
3. Category 3: A combined 1-3 absences, tardies and/or dismissals, regardless of reason. A student may also submit a written appeal to be recognized for this award if his/her absence is due to an extenuating medical condition.

**Health Services:** New York State Law mandates Physicals for grades 4, 7, 10 and all new entries into the district regardless of grade. The exam will be done at school by the school physician unless a copy of the exam is furnished to the health office by October 1st. Sports physicals are done periodically throughout the year, usually in August, October, December, February, and May. Please contact the health office for specific dates. A private physical is only acceptable if done by a provider licensed in the state of New York and administered not more than 12 months prior to the start of the school year. Sports physicals are valid for a period of 12 months – through the last day of the month in which the physical was done. Please remember that the sports season includes tryouts and practice.

**Screenings:** New York State Law mandates Vision and hearing screenings for grades 5, 7, 10 and all new enterers into the district. These screenings will be done at school unless a copy of a recent exam is furnished to the health office. Scoliosis is mandated for all students in grades 5 through 9 and is done in the health office by the school physician.

Fluoride: A fluoride program is offered to all students in grades 4-8. Students receive a fluoride rinse once each week. Consent forms for receiving fluoride are sent home with your child the first week of school. Please return the consent to your child's teacher by September 15<sup>th</sup>.

Health History: If there are any changes in your child's health status from the previous year, please contact the health office.

### **School Insurance Policy:**

School insurance is ACCIDENT insurance only. All students are covered under this policy for accidents or injuries that are incurred during the course of the school day or while participating in or attending scheduled activities, which are organized, sponsored and supervised by the school and school employees.

Someone who witnessed the incident fills out an accident report. This is then forwarded to the school nurse. The school nurse, upon request from a parent or guardian, will complete an accident claim form.

Parent/Guardian:

Request the insurance form from the school nurse.

Complete reverse side (Part B) of insurance form.

Attach explanation of benefits from own insurance company to school insurance form.

Mail all forms to:

Commercial Travelers, Mutual Insurance Company

Commercial Travelers Building

Utica, NY 13502

School insurance will only pay medical expense benefits AFTER the student's own insurance has paid their part of the claim.

### **Medication in School:**

New York State Education Law prohibits the giving of internal medication in school unless a written doctor's order for that medication and a written parental request to give that medication is brought to the school nurse. This law also includes over-the-counter medication such as aspirin, acetaminophen, cold preparations, etc.

A parent must personally bring to the nurse all medications in the bottle with the original prescription on the label. This also includes over-the-counter medication, which needs to be in the original manufacturer's container/package with the student's name affixed to the container.

If your child needs medication at school, please obtain the appropriate form from the nurse's office for medication administration in school. The form must be filled out and signed by a parent/guardian and then taken to the physician's office for completion. It then must be returned to the nurse's office.

A pharmacy label on a prescription DOES NOT constitute a written order and CANNOT be used instead of a written order from a licensed per scribe.

If a student wishes to self-administer medication at school, an additional form is required with the licensed per scribe's order that the student be allowed to carry her/his medication and self-administer.

Medication CANNOT be administered at school unless all of these procedures are followed.

## **LIBRARY RULES AND PROCEDURES**

The library is an academic place of inquiry, where students and faculty are encouraged to come to obtain information or read and study without distraction. In order to provide this studious atmosphere, the following guidelines are enacted:

1. Students are encouraged to come to the library when they show a need for information and desire further study about a topic. They should also use the library as a place for recreational reading and make the best use of the variety of literary sources available to them.
2. Students may receive passes from the study hall teacher or from individual classrooms to come to the library when the need presents itself.
3. Students are asked to sign themselves in with their first and last names when they arrive at the library, and be sure to sign out when leaving with the time of departure. They should also have their passes signed before leaving.
4. Students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately while in the library facility so they are not a disruption to others. A student may be asked to leave the library and/or lose library privileges if they cannot conduct themselves in this manner.
5. There is a designated area for students and staff to eat and/or drink while in the library. This is offered with the understanding that individuals will responsibly clean up after themselves.
6. Books are circulated for a period of three weeks and may be renewed if no one else is waiting for them. Students with overdue materials will not be allowed to take out other library items until those materials are returned. Students who receive overdue notices are expected to respond to them as soon as possible, and may renew titles as need upon request.

## **INTERNET REGULATIONS**

### Privileges:

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. Each student who receives access at Sharon Springs Central School will participate in a discussion with the appropriate staff members as to the proper use of the network. The teacher will deem what is inappropriate use and their decision is final. The district may deny, revoke, or suspend specific user access. District personnel are authorized to use Internet and computing resources only in accordance with the educational and administrative

goals of the district. Responsibility for activity initiated through the District computer account is the sole responsibility of the adult who accessed the Internet.

### Etiquette:

Computer users are expected to abide by the general accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Be polite. Messages should not be abusive to others.
2. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other language deemed inappropriate.
3. Do not reveal personal information. Do not reveal the personal addresses and/or phone numbers of fellow students or colleagues.
4. Illegal activities or inappropriate sites not intended for educational-related research are strictly forbidden.
5. Do not use the network in any way that would disrupt network services for other users.
6. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.
7. Student e-mail accounts will be established by the District in extenuating circumstances. Students are reminded that web sites not related to the educational goals of the District are not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to; Instant Messenger, Chat rooms, Napster style services, etc.
8. Do not download software without authorization.
9. Employing the network for commercial purposes is not allowed.
10. No student owned hardware/software/CD's allowed in the computer lab.
11. District computers users are reminded that their computer usage is a privilege that will be monitored, and can be, if necessary, removed.

### Non-Liability:

Sharon Springs Central School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. Sharon Springs Central School District will not be responsible for any damages suffered. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via Sharon Springs Central School District is at the user's own risk. This includes inappropriate information obtained by accidental access through error. Sharon Springs Central School District is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained.

### Security:

Security on any computer system is a high-priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem on the Internet, you must notify a teacher who will in turn notify an administrator. Do not use another individual's account without written

permission from that individual. Attempts to login to Internet as system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to Internet.

#### Vandalism:

Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is deemed as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy hardware, software, icons or desktop setup, data of another user, Internet, or any agencies or other networks that are connected to Sharon Springs Central School District. This includes but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

#### Exception of Terms and Conditions:

All terms and conditions as stated in this document are applicable to Sharon Springs Central School District. These terms and conditions reflect the entire agreement of the parties and supersede all prior oral or written agreements and understandings of the parties.

#### Copyright and Software Compliance:

Because electronic information is volatile and easily reproduced, users must exercise care in acknowledging and respecting the work of others through strict compliance to copyright laws and software licensing agreements. The Sharon Springs Central School District strictly adheres to the intent, terms, and conditions of Federal copyright law and software licensing agreements with its vendors.

#### Software Licensed for District Equipment Only:

Software is installed on district computers **ONLY**. Any use of district owned software on equipment not owned by Sharon Springs Central School District without the expressed written permission from the publisher is in violation of the copyright law and is **ILLEGAL**.

#### Copying Software Prohibited:

Users are **NOT** authorized to transfer, copy, modify, or install copies of computer programs licensed to Sharon Springs Central School District on personal equipment to avoid paying additional license fees. Any other use of Sharon Springs Central School District owned software without the expressed written permission from the publisher is in violation of software compliance agreements and is **ILLEGAL**.

A copy of license for software should be on file in the Business Office.

### **BUS CONDUCT**

Be Courteous

Be Prompt

Be Patient

Be Proud

The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus students. All of the driver's requests must be complied with. Assigned seats should be taken as soon as the student enters the bus.

1. Students shall not be allowed to enter or leave the bus while it is in motion. Students should remain seated while the bus is in motion.
2. Students should enter and leave the bus in single file, without interfering with any other students.
3. While waiting for a bus, the student should stand off the road, in a driveway if possible.
4. Students must keep body parts in the bus, not out open windows. In addition, students will keep their hands and feet to themselves and refrain from touching or throwing objects at other students.
5. Students will not use loud or profane language. Ordinary conversation is encouraged.
6. Students will not signal cars in the rear to pass.
7. It is suggested that all students riding in a school bus wear their seat belts when available.
8. Waste paper and other rubbish is not to be thrown on the floor of the bus. Put such materials in their proper receptacles, either at home or at school.
9. The bus will be kept in good condition. Students will not deface it with pencils, knives, etc.
10. The driver of a school bus, when discharging or receiving pupils, who must cross the highway, shall instruct such students to cross the highway at a distance of ten (10) feet in front of the bus, to be in complete vision of the driver. The driver shall also keep the school bus halted, with red signal lights flashing, until such pupils have safely reached the opposite side of the highway.
11. Violation of these rules will be reported to the school principal, and a student can be barred temporarily or permanently from riding on the bus, following due process provisions.
12. Students will conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen of the Sharon Springs Central School.

### **Academic Eligibility Policy – Extracurricular Activities**

The purpose of the academic eligibility requirement is to enhance academic and extracurricular success, to emphasize the importance of quality academic pursuit, and to keep each student's academic participation in proper perspective. It relates directly to the vision of SSCS to "provide a supportive and creative learning environment, which challenges our students to achieve excellence as a way of life."

### **How does a student become Ineligible?**

A student who is failing two or more subjects (or has incompletes) at either the mid-point of the marking period or at the end of the quarter will be placed on *probation* for school related extracurricular activities for the next 5 weeks. Extracurricular activities include participation in clubs and band and chorus activities beyond the normal rehearsals and scheduled concerts, such as plays, field trips, county festivals, and what not. *The overall intent of the probationary period is to help the student get focused and back on track academically.*

### **Procedure for academic ineligible students:**

It is the responsibility of the student to obtain the Weekly Progress Sheet from the Main Office and circulate it to their teachers at the end of the week until the end of the next marking period or week period. Teachers at VOTEC and other educational placements must be included as well.

**High school** – High School Students (9-12) will be placed on academic ineligibility as a result of failure and or incompletes in two or more courses. Students on academic ineligibility as a result of incompletes shall be removed from ineligibility as soon as their work is completed and their courses passed.

Ineligible students will be allowed to participate in practices and games for the first week (5 school days) following the distribution of the progress report/ report card. The students will then be expected to circulate the Weekly Progress Report to their teachers by Thursday and submit it to the Athletic Director or Principal by no later than 3:00 Friday, or they will not be allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities and contests for the weekend or the next week. Also include are attendance at extracurricular events held on school nights.

Should a student be found to no longer be failing two or more classes, then they will be cleared for full participation and attendance at practices, games and events. Should a student be found to still be failing 2 or more classes at the end of the first week, then he/she will be declared ineligible for attendance at games and events, until the end of the next week when he/she can circulate another eligibility sheet. Again, during a period of ineligibility, a student may continue to attend practices, but not attend games or events held during the week. Students may attend, but not participate in, weekend events. It is recommended that the students take full advantage of extra help opportunities with their classroom teachers during this time.

**Middle School**-Middle school students (6-8) who wish to remain eligible may attend 2 hours of academic help after school each week. While it is recommended that students make an appointment to receive extra help from their classroom teachers, they may opt to remain in the academic extra help room on the days designated by the district. Students are expected to work diligently on their assignments during this period of time and to submit recorded documentation of their time on Friday by noon. If the probationary student continues to experience problems, the coach, club advisor, guidance counselor, and/or principal may arrange a conference with the student and parents to determine the extent, if any, of further participation in that sport or extracurricular activity.

**Notes:**

- ✓ Any “extenuating circumstances” should be appealed to the Principal, who along with input from the Athletic Director, Guidance Counselor, coach /club advisor / band director and classroom teachers will have the responsibility for the final decision in cases of ineligibility.
- ✓ For evaluation purposes a grade of “incomplete” is considered a failure; however, the incomplete can be altered to a “passing” grade at the discretion of the teacher, and full eligibility restored. A student with an incomplete as a grade may circulate the Weekly Progress Sheet at any point in order to be removed from “Probationary” status. If a student becomes ineligible while playing a sport, then they cannot begin a new sports season until they are no longer failing 2 or more classes.
- ✓ Again, it is the probationary student’s responsibility to ensure that all necessary paperwork and communication with teachers, coach and principal/designee is maintained.

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS**

The Board encourages parents and other district citizens to visit the district's schools 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/her 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:

- A. Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
- B. All visitors to the school must report to the office of the Principal upon arrival at the school. There they 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 to the Principal's office before leaving the building.
- C. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings are not required to register.
- D. 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.
- E. Teachers are expected not to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
- F. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the Principal or his/her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
- G. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in this code of conduct.

## **PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

The district is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of an environment, it is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school functions. For purposes of this section of the code, "public" shall mean all persons when on school property or attending a school function including students, teachers and district personnel.

The restrictions on public conduct on school property and at school functions contained in this code are not intended to limit freedom of speech or peaceful assembly. The district recognizes that free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the objectives of the district. The purpose of this code is to maintain public order and prevent abuse of the rights of others.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property.

## **A. Prohibited Conduct**

No person, either alone or with others, shall:

1. Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so.
2. Intentionally damage or destroy school district property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
3. Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs or other school activities.
4. Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school program.
5. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
6. Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
7. Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies.
8. Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles.
9. Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function.
10. Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers or except as specifically authorized by the school district.
11. Loiter on or about school property.
12. Gamble on school property or at school functions.
13. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
14. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code.
15. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or Board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

## **B. Penalties**

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

1. 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.
2. Students. They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant, in accordance with the due process requirements.
3. Tenured faculty members. They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Education Law § 3020-a or any other legal rights that they may have.
4. 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 as the facts may warrant in accordance with Civil Service Law § 75 or any other legal rights that they may have.

5. Staff members other than those described in subdivisions 4 and 5. They shall be subject to warning, reprimand, suspension or dismissal as the facts may warrant in accordance with any legal rights they may have.

### **C. Enforcement**

#### **The Principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for enforcing the conduct required by this code.**

When the Principal or his/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/her designee shall tell the individual that the conduct is prohibited and attempt to persuade the individual to stop. The Principal or his/her 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 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 removing the person.

The district shall initiate disciplinary action against any student or staff member, as appropriate, 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.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

#### **Notification of Title IX/Section 504 Grievance Procedures**

The Sharon Springs Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of gender, handicap, race, or age in its educational programs, activities, or employment as required by Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. The district will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, gender, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment services, extracurricular activities, or other school resources.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against on the basis of gender, handicap, race or age, you may make a claim that your rights have been denied. This claim or grievance may be filed with the District Superintendent, Title IX Compliance Officer or Stacey Alexander-Mann, Director of PPS, Section 504 Compliance Officer.

You may also file a complaint of illegal discrimination with the Federal Office for Civil Rights, United States Department of Education, Washington, DC, at the same time you file the district grievance, during or after the use of the district grievance process, or without using the district grievance process at all.

If you wish to discuss your rights under Title IX and/or Section 504, to obtain a copy of the full Title IX and/or Section 504 grievance procedure(s), or to obtain help in filing a grievance, please contact the District Superintendent, Title IX Compliance Officer or Stacey Alexander-Mann, Section 504 Compliance Officer at 284-2266.

## DISSEMINATION AND REVIEW

### A. Dissemination of Code of Conduct

The Board will work to ensure that the community is aware of this code of conduct by:

1. Providing copies of a summary of the code to all students at the beginning of each school year.
2. Making copies of the code available to all parents at the beginning of the school year.
3. Mailing a summary of the code of conduct written in plain language to all parents of district students before the beginning of the school year and making this summary available later upon request.
4. 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.
5. Providing all new employees with a copy of the current code of conduct when they are first hired.
6. Making copies of the code available for review by students, parents and other community members.

The Board will sponsor an in-service education program for all district staff members to ensure the effective implementation of school policy on ~~of the code of~~ school conduct and discipline, including but not limited to, guidelines for promoting a safe and supportive school climate while discouraging, among other things, discrimination or harassment against students by students and/or school employees, and including safe and supportive school climate concepts in the curriculum and classroom. The Superintendent may solicit the recommendations of the district staff, particularly teachers and administrators, regarding in-service programs pertaining to the management and discipline of students.

### B. Review of Code of Conduct

The Board will review this code of conduct every year and update it as necessary. In conducting the review, the Board 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.

Before adopting any revisions to the code, the Board will hold at least one public hearing at which school personnel, parents, students and any other interested party may participate.

The code of conduct and any amendments to it will be filed with the Commissioner of Education no later than 30 days after adoption.

## **Alma Mater**

Dear Schoolmates, ever loyal, true and faithful  
Gathering 'neath the maples on the hill;  
With courage, faith undaunted for our future;  
As we older grow we love thee still.

The Purple and the White shall wave forever  
Keep this emblem ever clean and bright.  
Oh, may the glorious folds be sullied never,  
Love for aye, the Purple and the White.

All hail to thee, our dear old Sharon  
Open wide your portals to the right.  
Still o'er the fields of conflict ever waving,  
Float for aye, the Purple and the White.

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of the 2012-13 Sharon Springs Central School Student Handbook. It is my understanding that I am responsible for making myself aware of its contents. Further, although the guidelines, rules and policies contained herein are current on this date. I am aware that any or all sections of this handbook may be altered or omitted and new sections added by action of the New York State Education Department, the Sharon Springs Central School Board of Education, and/or the Administration. When such changes are made, I expect to be informed by the Administration.

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Student's Signature

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Date

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Student's Name (please print)

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Parent or Guardian (If you are under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must read and sign the agreement.)

As a parent or guardian of this student, I have received and reviewed the Student Handbook. I have also read the Policy Provision for Internet access. I understand that individual access is intended for educational purposes and that the Sharon Springs Central School District has taken available precautions to eliminate controversial material. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the Sharon Springs Central School District to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the Sharon Springs Central School responsible for materials acquired on the network. Students should not have any expectations of privacy as their usage will be monitored and tracked. I understand that any "sharing" of individual passwords is a violation of this agreement. Further, I accept full responsibility if and when my child's use of the Internet is not appropriate in the school setting. I hereby give my permission to grant individual access for my child for the 2012-13 school year and certify that the information on this form is correct.

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Parent or Guardian (Please sign)

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Date

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Student's Name (Please print)