

No. 11500 The Howard County Board of Education Board Policy TITLE: CIVILITY

### **I. Policy Statement**

The Board of Education of Howard County values diversity and commonality and is committed to a culture that fosters free and open communication. The Board believes that an environment of mutual respect and civil conduct between and among students, school system employees, parents, volunteers, and the general public is critical to the achievement of students and staff. The Board is committed to maintaining a culture that recognizes the worth and dignity of the individual in support of academic achievement and social development.

### **II. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to set clear expectations for civil behavior that support a safe, welcoming, and nurturing environment on school property and at school-related activities.

### **III. Definitions**

- A. Civility – Mutual respect and consideration reflected in language, attitudes, and behaviors.
- B. Harassment and Intimidation (bullying) – Conduct, including verbal conduct, that creates a hostile environment by substantially interfering with an individual’s educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with an individual’s physical or psychological well-being, and is motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic such as race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or disability, or is threatening or seriously intimidating.
- C. School Property – Any property owned or leased by the Howard County Public School System. The concept of property shall extend to school activities such as field trips, use of parks and recreation facilities, proms at hotels, etc. This means that when a facility is scheduled for student use, it will be considered an extension of school property.
- D. School-related Activity – On or off premises activity in which a student directly participates (e.g. field trip, school system-sponsored athletic event, or class/graduation activity), or in which the student does not directly participate, but represents the school or student body simply by being there (e.g. spectator at a school system-sponsored event).

#### **IV. Standards**

- A. Expected behaviors include but are not limited to:
  - 1. Respect and courtesy in language, demeanor, and actions
  - 2. Moderate tone and volume of voice
  - 3. Active and respectful listening
  - 4. Respectful acknowledgment of cultural differences
  - 5. Respect for the personal, civil, and property rights of others
  - 6. Appropriate and courteous use of telephone, public address systems, two-way radios, and any other verbal communication device
  - 7. Appropriate and courteous written communication, including notes, letters, email, and text messages.
- B. Unacceptable behaviors include but are not limited to:
  - 1. Rude, insulting, or demeaning language and/or actions
  - 2. Persistently unreasonable demands
  - 3. Intrusive and/or interruptive behavior
  - 4. Displays of temper
  - 5. Harassment and intimidation
  - 6. Threatening and/or abusive gestures and behavior.
- C. Incidents of uncivil behavior should be resolved cooperatively with the individual(s) most directly involved.

#### **V. Compliance**

- A. Each individual is responsible for behaving in a civil manner and for cooperating in resolving incidents of uncivil behavior.
  
- B. The Superintendent/designee is responsible for determining whether an incident occurring on school property violates an existing board policy and for responding appropriately.
  
- C. The Superintendent/designee will provide for annual notification of this policy to students, staff, parents, and community members.

#### **VI. Delegation of Authority**

The Superintendent is authorized to develop appropriate procedures for the implementation of this policy.

**VII. References**

A. Legal

The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Subtitle 26, School Security, Sections 101 and 102

The Annotated Code of Maryland, Criminal Law Article, Subtitle 6, Trespass, Section 409

B. Other Board Policies

Policy 1005 Ombudsman

Policy 1811 Discipline

Policy 1815 Sexual Harassment

Policy 1408 Employee Discipline

Policy 3121 High School Grievance Procedure

Policy 3412 Trespassing and Willful Disturbance

Policy 3414 Student Assault and/or Battery on School Staff

Policy 3431 Discipline

Policy 3441 Student Rights and Responsibilities

Policy 3445 Violence and School Safety

Policy 11111 Use of School Facilities by Non-School Groups

Policy 11200 Public Hearings

Policy 11400 Parent and Community Involvement

C. Other

Student Code of Conduct

ADOPTED: September 7, 2006

AMENDED:

EFFECTIVE: January 23, 2007

