

Board Policy

Code No. 404.1R1

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE REGULATION

The purpose and intent of the Professional Responsibilities and Employee Discipline Policy is to ensure that each employee is aware of his or her responsibility in accordance with supporting the mission, vision and beliefs of the district.

Professional Responsibilities:

Employees fulfill their Professional Responsibilities when they:

1. Report to work fit for duty and remain fit while on duty
2. Prepare for and diligently carry out all assigned duties as directed,
3. Comply with justifiable directives issued by duly recognized sources of authority,
4. Identify and control unsafe conditions and/or safety hazards and maintain safe and secure working and/or learning environments,
5. Demonstrate respect, fairness and dignity when interacting with students, staff, community members or others,
6. Comply with federal laws, state statutes and District policies that prohibit conduct that could reasonably be construed as coercive, retaliating, harassing, intimidating, bullying, discriminating or threatening,
7. Communicate truthfully and honestly with regard to any matter of interest to the District and ensure that all records, disclosures or other written communications are full, fair, accurate, timely and understandable,
8. Acquire, use, maintain and dispose of District assets in an ethical and responsible manner,
9. Maintain the confidentiality of information as required under federal laws, state statutes and District policies,
10. Use established protocols to intervene against and/or report actions or behaviors that may represent one or more violations of federal law, state statutes or District policy,
11. Refrain from activities outside of the contract day that may reasonably interfere with his or her ability to effectively perform duties as assigned or the legitimate operational interests of the District,
12. Comply with all established federal laws, state statutes and District policies as well as established operational routines or procedures.

Employee Discipline Process

It is essential that prompt, corrective action is taken whenever Professional Responsibilities are not being met by an employee. In situations where employee actions or behaviors are found to represent one or more violations, disciplinary action must be considered.

An overview of the Employee Discipline Process is as follows:

- A. Establishing grounds. The grounds for employee discipline must be determined.
- B. Verifying grounds. The grounds for employee discipline must be verified by an informal inquiry or a formal investigation conducted under presumption of innocence. If these grounds are substantiated, the specifics of a charge will be described in as much detail

as possible supported by all relevant evidence. Where applicable, a connection may be made for the employee between the charge and the mission, vision and beliefs of the district.

- C. Assessing the case facts. Prior to initiating or recommending a specific type of discipline to accomplish either course of action, both the aggravating and mitigating factors in the case must be considered.
- D. Determining a course of action. Only after the grounds for employee discipline have been substantiated will one of the following two general courses of disciplinary action be taken based on the specific violation involved and the presence or absence of the same or substantially similar disciplinary events in the past (where applicable): 1. Informal action (verbal warning) and 2. Formal action (official written reprimand, suspension and discharge).
- E. Considering the need for progressive discipline. A single occurrence of some actions and behaviors may be as grave as to warrant immediate formal action up to and including discharge; however, repetitive misconduct of a lesser nature may require progressive more serious sanctions. In such cases of chronic employee conduct, progressive action should be taken when it is evident that either: 1) Non-disciplinary strategies, where used, did not result in a modification or suppression of the employee's action(s); or 2) Previous disciplinary actions failed to correct a chronic violation.
- F. Documenting the action. It is important that accurate documentation is maintained before, during and after each disciplinary action to protect both the interests of the District and the rights of the employee involved.

Delegation of Authority and Disciplinary Options

Authority to issue verbal warnings and discuss corrective measures with the employee is delegated to those administrators and supervisors directly responsible for planning, directing and supervising the work of others. Authority to issue official written reprimands, suspensions and discharges will remain with the Superintendent/Superintendent designee (Director of Human Resources) and/or the Board of Directors. The disciplinary options are defined as follows:

- A. Verbal warning. A verbal warning is defined as an informal disciplinary conference between an administrator or supervisor and an employee. A verbal warning is the least severe type of employee discipline and is meant to alert the employee to the fact that a deficiency has been noted.
- B. Official written reprimand. An official written reprimand is defined as a formal disciplinary notice that is given to an employee when the grounds for employee discipline involved warrant an action that is more severe than a verbal warning but less severe than a suspension. An official written reprimand is meant to serve as a statement that the conduct is of such concern that a permanent record of the incident(s) needs to be established.

- C. Suspension. A suspension is defined as a formal disciplinary action whereby an employee is involuntarily separated from service on a temporary basis without pay for a finite time period when the grounds for employee discipline involved warrant action that is more severe than an official written reprimand but less severe than a discharge. It is the most severe type of formal employee discipline that is still compatible with continued employment and is meant to serve as a significant consequence for either a serious lapse of judgment or for misconduct of such concern that the district must ensure that the employee understands that a repeat incident is likely to result in discharge.
- D. Discharge. A discharge is defined as a formal disciplinary action whereby an employee is involuntarily separated from service on a permanent basis when the grounds for employee discipline involved warrant action that is more severe than a suspension. It is the most severe type of formal employee discipline and is typically taken when 1) the issue of employee remediation is either no longer valid or is otherwise irrelevant; 2) the misconduct involved is incompatible with initial or continued employment by the district.

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*Renumber**