

Virtual Instruction Student Conduct and Discipline Policy

(To be added to the 2020-2021 District Handbook for Parents and Students effective January 1, 2021)

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, virtual instruction of students has become necessary through either the enrollment of students in the district's virtual school or through student participation in the hybrid model which has required student attendance both in-person and virtually. Students may be required to attend school virtually when schools are closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies. The St. Tammany Parish School Board adopts this Virtual Instruction Student Conduct and Discipline Policy in order to clarify expectations for student conduct in the virtual classroom and to provide notice of the possible consequences of inappropriate conduct in the virtual classroom setting.

Students who attend school virtually must maintain settings and behaviors that are conducive for instruction and which minimize distractions. Student conduct is governed at all times, and regardless of the model of instruction, by La. R.S. 17:416 and the Uniform Discipline Code of the St. Tammany Parish Public School System, as set forth in the District Handbook for Parents and Students.

STUDENT CONDUCT IN VIRTUAL WORK SETTINGS

Students and parents have a reasonable expectation of privacy with regard to what takes place in their home. However, in order to ensure that students and teachers are able to work and learn in a safe and orderly virtual environment, it is imperative that students have a quiet, well-lit classroom space which is, to the greatest extent possible, free of any and all items which may create distractions from teaching and learning.

Students are expected to have a designated work area in their home cleared of everything other than what they need for class. Work stations must be free of foreign objects that are not being utilized for instruction.

The recording device being used for instruction must be positioned to allow teachers to observe both the work space and student, especially during testing.

Eating and drinking are not allowed during virtual courses. This is hazardous to electronic devices and can also be distracting during instruction.

When possible, students are encouraged to work in areas that are isolated from other individuals and pets. If circumstances exist that do not allow complete seclusion, the parent or legal guardian may share this information separately with the instructor. Instructors will only require what the parent or guardian can reasonably provide.

Additional electronic devices should not be kept or used within the visible working area, unless they are being utilized for instruction and/or are teacher approved. This includes,

but is not limited to, the use of speakers, phones, earphones, and any other devices which may create distractions from teacher-led instruction.

Students will follow daily guidance from their teachers regarding best methods of communicating and participating during virtual schooling. Instructions regarding when and how to interact verbally and how to use audio and camera options will be dependent upon the design of instruction and direction of the teacher.

Students are to remain positively engaged in instruction and participate as deemed appropriate by their teachers.

STUDENT DRESS

Students are to wear appropriate dress that does not distract from the virtual learning process. Student dress and grooming are not to adversely affect any student's participation in virtual schooling. Extremes in style and fit in student dress and extremes in style of grooming will not be permitted. Styles of dress and grooming never should be such that they represent a collective or individual protest. Inappropriate attire, including but not limited to the following, are prohibited: pajamas or other nightwear; clothing that is transparent or overly revealing; and clothing with profanity, derogatory terms, racial slurs, or sexual content. School uniforms are not required to be worn for virtual schooling.

DISCIPLINE

Students should refrain from engaging in any of the behaviors identified in the Uniform Discipline Code of the St. Tammany Parish Public School System or as referenced in the District Handbook for Parents and Students while engaged in virtual schooling. The St. Tammany Parish Public School System has extended its normal behavior guidelines to the virtual classroom with several modifications which take into account the home setting of the student.

Behavior that could result in disciplinary actions for students attending school virtually include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Antagonistic, harassing or discriminatory language of any kind with regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender, intelligence, age, orientation, disability, socioeconomic status or any other legally protected characteristic or activity
- Bullying and/or cyberbullying
- Threats
- Habitual tardiness
- Wearing inappropriate clothing
- Use of obscene, degrading, or profane language (written, verbal, pictures, drawings, audio, video)
- Displaying pornography, nudity, or images of nudity
- Committing lewd or sexual acts

- Use and/or possession of weapons and/or look-a-like weapons
- Use and/or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, look-a-like substances or any controlled dangerous substances governed by the Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substance Law in any form
- Any criminal or other illegal activity
- Illegal posting, distribution, upload or download of copyrighted work of any kind
- Sharing assignments, questions/answers, or any other action that would violate any expectations or rules relative to academic honesty
- Posting personally identifiable information in any format other than via private message
- Intentional disturbance of an online class

Disciplinary measures will be determined in accordance with this Policy and the provisions of the Consequences of Student Misconduct and Acts of Misconduct/Possible Disciplinary Actions sections as set forth in the *District Handbook for Parents and Students* and identified within GROUP 1 – GROUP 5 of Acts of Misconduct.

Behavior that is disruptive to the virtual schooling setting will be addressed using progressive discipline measures. The seriousness of the offense, academic placement, attitude, age, pattern of misconduct, and degree of cooperation of the student, as well as any other aggravating or mitigating circumstances will be considered in determining which actions should be taken. The intent is to have progressive consequences as outlined below:

- Warning or Administrative Detention
- Administrative Detention or Suspension
- Suspension and/or Expulsion

SAFETY AND WELFARE CONCERNS

Conduct in the virtual classroom related to the use and/or possession of weapons or use and/or possession of drugs, or other conduct that raises legitimate concerns about the safety and welfare of a student, must be reported immediately to the School Resource Officer or School Officials in order to assess whether the matter must be reported to local law enforcement and/or the Department of Children and Family Services.

SUSPENSIONS

Out-of-school Suspension: When a student is suspended, he or she is temporarily removed/blocked from all internet usage that is not for instructional purposes on his or her assigned device. The student will only have access to the established online curriculum for student progression. Students will also be suspended from live sessions

and interactions with peers during the period of his/her suspension. Students are not allowed to attend school sponsored programs or activities during the period of their suspensions. Recommended expulsion will be reserved for serious discipline infractions but none that violate a student's constitutional rights in a home setting.

Parents of students who are recommended for expulsion but whose penalty is reduced to a suspension after due process may appeal to the school board and district court in the same manner as an expelled student.