

Regional School District No. 17 6000 Series

6114.7(a)

Instruction

Safe Schools

The Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education is committed to the prevention of violence against people or property in the schools or at school activities, whether by students, staff or others. While committed to the protection of each person's constitutional rights, including due process rights, the Board does not condone lawlessness. Any individual committing violent acts in or on school property will be disciplined according to applicable Board policy and regulations.

Staff members who implement this or any other Board policy will receive the full support of the Board and the administration.

The Board shall ensure that an advisory committee exists to review specific policies, regulations, plans and procedures in order to ensure a comprehensive and effective program to prevent and punish vandalism and violence occurring in the schools and on district property. Simultaneously with the work of the committee, the Superintendent of Schools and appropriate school administrators shall review the practices at each school and shall submit a separate report to the Board including any findings and recommendations on the implementation of committee suggestions on these and other policies, regulations, plans and procedures concerning safety. Members of the advisory committee may include a Board member, the Superintendent of Schools, appropriate school personnel, a student representative, parents, and other community representatives.

The advisory committee shall examine the policies, regulations, plans and procedures concerning:

1. student conduct and discipline;
2. the maintenance of public order on school property;
3. the banning of weapons on school property;
4. drug and alcohol abuse;
5. school emergency management;
6. coordination efforts with law enforcement agencies;
7. searches and seizures by school officials;
8. training for staff and students in conflict resolution and violence prevention; and
9. building security measures including procedures governing visitors to the schools and access to school buildings.

The advisory committee shall review these and other policies, regulations, plans, and procedures, as directed, to ensure that they are:

1. consistent with law and regulation;
2. clear, complete and enforceable; and
3. appropriately disseminated to students, staff, parents and are available to the general public.

The advisory committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the Board prior to public release. Final reports shall be delivered to the Board at a meeting scheduled by the Board to receive the report.

Any official policy level action is the sole discretion of the Board. The Board is in no way obligated to follow committee recommendations. The Board has the right to accept, reject or modify all or any part of a committee recommendation.

*Districts may also want to use shared decision-making committees for conducting this review in individual school buildings.

Regional School District No. 17
6000 Series

6114.7(b)

Instruction

Safe Schools (continued)

Charge to the Advisory Committee on Safe Schools

The Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education welcomes the participation of all committee members in an effort to ensure a safe, healthy and wholesome environment for students and staff in which respect for the rights and property of others is fostered.

Your charge is to review and make recommendations on specific policies, regulations, and practices of the district directed at preventing or controlling vandalism or violence in the schools. Your efforts shall assist the Board in establishing a system-wide anti-violence program.

Each of the identified policies, regulations, plans and procedures shall be reviewed to ensure that they are:

1. consistent with law and regulation;
2. clear, complete and enforceable; and
3. appropriately disseminated to students, staff, parents and are available to the general public, upon request.

Issues for Review

The General Assembly has long required that school districts, at least annually, inform parents and students of policies governing student conduct and discipline. (CGS 10-233a et seq.)

I. Student Conduct and Discipline

Board should adopt student conduct and discipline policies which include:

1. a student bill of rights and responsibilities;
2. a discipline code for student behavior; and
3. a range of penalties that may be imposed for violation of the discipline code, including suspension and expulsion.

In addition to the above, the Committee shall also review the district's policies and procedures governing student drug and alcohol abuse, vandalism, as well as student conduct on school buses and at interscholastic events. The advisory committee should ensure that:

1. there are written codes of expected behavior communicated to students and parents;
2. the discipline policies include warnings that anyone engaging in violent acts on school property risks serious penalties;
3. due process and appeal procedures are clearly stated and provided;
4. parents and students are fully aware of the district's policy on drug and alcohol abuse and that there are procedures in place for referring student for treatment; and
5. students and parents are held financially liable for willful acts of vandalism.

Regional School District No. 17
6000 Series

6114.7(c)

Instruction

Safe Schools

Issues for Review (continued)

II. Public Order on School Property

State statutes governing student discipline requires the school district to adopt rules and regulations for the maintenance of order on school property and to provide a program for the enforcement of such rules.

The committee shall review all discipline policies to ensure that they comprehensively define the conduct that is prohibited and the enforcement program. The committee should further ensure that the policy is disseminated to appropriate persons.

III. Training for Students and Staff

The committee shall establish whether or not students and staff are receiving training and, if so, whether it is effective. Training for students should be provided in an age appropriate manner, addressing non-violent means for handling frustrations.

Teachers and administrators should receive instruction to assist them in the early identification and handling of discipline problems, covering such issues as the methods for breaking up fights and obtaining help in a hurry.

IV. Searches and Seizures

The district should have a policy stating its right, in certain instances, to conduct a search of a student and his/her possessions for a weapon (or other contraband) and seize it. Particular attention should be given to determining whether the policy provides sufficient direction to staff to protect them from being charged with violating a student's constitutional rights. The committee should also ensure that staff is receiving adequate training in this area.

V. Emergency Management Plans

The committee should review whether the district adopted an emergency plan; whether the district reviews the plan annually and revises as necessary; and whether the plan provides adequate direction in the case of violence in or near a school.

VI. Weapons on School Property

The committee should ensure that the district has a policy banning dangerous weapons in school which is sufficient and properly enforced, containing adequate penalties for its violation, and about which students are informed.

Federal and state law require school districts to expel for at least one calendar year, any student who is determined to have brought a weapon to school. (The penalty may be modified by the Board on a case-by-case basis.)

Regional School District No. 17
6000 Series

6114.7(d)

Instruction

Safe Schools

Issues for Review (continued)

VII. Involvement of Parents and Community

Parents and the community may serve as valuable resources in helping to make the anti-violence program work. The committee shall determine whether parents and the public are made aware of the district's policies, regulations, and practices in preventing violence and are involved in the program as appropriate.

VIII. Coordination with Appropriate Law Enforcement Agencies

The committee should also examine whether the district's program is coordinated with local authorities to ensure adequate police protection at district events and quick police response when necessary. Efforts may also be made to see if the district should work with members of the local police to help students understand how law enforcement agencies work to prevent violence.

IX. Building Security

The committee should examine the school's security measures including procedures governing access to school buildings, student dismissal precautions and visitors to the schools.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

4-176e through 4-185 Uniform Administrative Procedure Act.

10-19 Teaching about alcohol, nicotine or tobacco, drugs and acquired immune deficiency syndrome. Training of personnel.

10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules.

10-233a through 10-233f re in-school suspension, suspension, expulsion. (As amended by PA 95-304, An Act Concerning School Safety).

52-572 Parental liability for torts of minors. Damage defined.

53a-3 Firearms and deadly weapons.

53-206 Carrying and sale of dangerous weapons.

53a-217b Possession of firearms and deadly weapons on school grounds.

PA 94-221 An Act Concerning School Safety.

PA 95-304 An Act Concerning School Safety.

PA 97-290 An Act Enhancing Educational Choices and Opportunities.

GOALS 2000: Education America Act.

Regional School District No. 17
6000 Series

6114.7(e)

18 U.S.C. 921 Definitions.

Title III - Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Sec. 314 (Local Control Over Violence).

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended by the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994.

New Jersey v. TLO., 469 U.S. 325; 1055. CT. 733.

NCLB

(cf. 5131 - Conduct at School and Activities)
(cf. 5131.5 - Vandalism)
(cf. 5131.6 - Drugs/Alcohol and Tobacco)
(cf. 5131.8 - Out of School Misconduct)
(cf. 5131.9 - Gang Action by or Association)
(cf. 5132 - Dress and Grooming)
(cf. 5146 - Child Abuse and Neglect)
(cf. 5142 - Student Safety)
(cf. 5147 - Suicide Prevention)
(cf. 5143 - Student Health Assessments and Immunizations)
(cf. 5144 - Administering Medications)
(cf. 5145 - Communicable and Infectious Diseases)
(cf. 5114 - Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion/Removal)
(cf. 6114 - Emergencies)
(cf. 6161.11 - Drugs/Alcohol and Tobacco)

Regulation approved:
1/00

rev. 3.31.06