

**A Safe, Supportive
Learning Environment:
*Managing Student Conduct***

Bob Talley,
Director, Student Conduct and Pupil Placement
Chesterfield County Public Schools
June 23, 2009

Our purpose

- Implement School Board policy regulation 401.1, also known as Standards for Student Conduct
- Uphold high academic standards by assisting schools with providing a safe environment that is conducive to learning and free from disruptions
- Provide support services that address the needs of both internal and external publics with regards to implementing the Standards for Student Conduct

Keeping our students safe

- Research shows that there is a direct relationship between constant exposure to violence and future violent behavior.
- Exposure to violence is everywhere in our society (television, Internet, video games, movies and the daily news)

In the past

These are questions many students in previous generations faced when headed off to school:

- Will people like me?
- Where will I go to college?
- What will I major in?
- What kind of job will I have?
- How much money will I make?
- Who will I marry?
- How many children will I have?
- Will I be happy ?

Right here, right now

These are questions an increasing number of students attending school today have when heading off to class:

- Will I be safe?
- Will I be killed?
- Will my parents stay together?
- Will my parents be around?
- Will I ever know my father?
- Will I be able to make a living?
- Does anyone care about me?
- Where will my next meal come from?

About CCPS

- More than 58,000 students attend Chesterfield County Schools.
- Approximately 28 percent of these students live in a single parent household.
- Approximately 24 percent of the student enrollment receives free or reduced lunch.
- Incidents of school violence have decreased significantly between 2003 and 2008.

State reporting process

- School divisions are required by state and federal law to report incidents of discipline, crime and violence.
- Data collection is based on an “incident based” reporting system.
- Reporting structure is organized around events that may involve one or more offenses and one or more students.

Key terms to know

- **Incident** – an event that may involve one or more offenses and one or more students
- **Offense** – the problem behavior exhibited by a student
- **Disciplinary outcome** – the sanction imposed on a student for misconduct

Key abbreviations to know

- **ISS** – in-school suspension
- **OSS** – out-of-school suspension (1-10 days)
- **LTOSS** – long-term, out-of-school suspension (11-364 days)
- **Expelled** – Removed from school for 365 days
- **ATOD** – alcohol, tobacco or drugs

The reporting process

- The process of reporting data begins when a student violates the student conduct standards.
- It is the responsibility of the individual school administrator to determine the offense code based on established definitions and using the best information he or she has at that time.
- All incidents that result in an OSS or expulsion are required to be reported to the VDOE.

Codes

- There are approximately 150 codes, each supported by a specific definition.
- Fifty seven offenses are required to be reported to law enforcement.
- Twenty one offenses could lead to a school receiving an automatic caution related to Persistently Dangerous School classification.
- Incidents involving drugs, weapons and extreme violence require a recommendation for expulsion.

Beware of comparisons

- Caution should be exercised in attempting to compare one school division to another or even one individual school to another.
- What is the story behind the numbers ?
- School division policies vary and these differences affect the way offenses and disciplinary actions are counted and reported.

Beware of comparisons

- Individual school rules vary within school divisions. The differences are there because of identified needs of an individual school or community.
- Since 2001 there have been numerous changes in coding requirements brought about by policy revisions and changes in federal and state law.

Discipline categories

- Weapons – 15 codes
- Against person – 13
- Against student – 11
- Alcohol, tobacco or drugs – 11
- Against staff – 10
- Related to behavior – 10
- Related to property – 5
- Technology – 7
- Other – 5

Incidents by offense category

School year	Weapon	Vs. Student	Vs. Staff	Vs. Person	ATOD	Property	Behav.	Tech.	Other
2007-2008	151	464	195	3,157	635	572	11,045	448	1,907
2008-2009	147	550	178	2,751	605	548	10,912	800	2,800
Percent change %	(2.65)	19	(9)	(13)	(5)	(5)	(1)	79	47

A closer look

School Year	ISS	OSS (1-10)	LTOSS (11-364)	Expelled (365)
2007-08	10,293	9,832	212	45
2008-09	10,224	7,914	226	39
% Change	(0.067)	(19.5)	6.6	(13.3)

Services for suspended students

- Homebound labs at Meadowbrook, Bird and Matoaca high schools as well as Providence Middle School (serves 178 students)
- Traditional homebound services
- Connections Academy (82)
- Chesterfield Community Academy (up to 72)
- Spring Forward (15)
- Coordinated Studies

Services for suspended students

- Pre-GED through Adult Education
- Referrals made to school psychologist, counselors and social workers
- Quest Program (alcohol/drug awareness program)
- Referrals to Chesterfield County Mental Health based on the needs of the individual student and family

School-based prevention

- Al's Pals (elementary)
- Olweus Anti-Bullying (elementary)
- Second Step (elementary)
- Peer Mediation (middle and high)
- Success In Stages (middle and high)
- Talk About It (middle)
- Alternative Awareness Program (middle and high)
- Success Program (high)
- Class Action Class (SROs in middle and high)
- School Safety Officers (elementary)

School-based prevention continued

- Implemented Internet safety curriculum (K-12)
- Anti Bullying program in all elementary schools administered through guidance counselors.

Safe and supportive

- Supported schools in developing positive discipline strategies
- Implemented programs in order to prevent bullying and harassment
- Implemented anonymous tip line used by all middle schools
- Continued Chesterfield Community Academy (entering its third year)

Safe and supportive

- Continued Spring Forward, a program for under performing ninth graders entering its third year
- Met quarterly with principals to discuss discipline data and trends
- Provided training for all administrators in regards to discipline procedures and law

Results show progress!

- During the 2008-09 school year, 47,989 students did not receive an in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.
- During the 2007-08 school year, 47,706 students did not receive an in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.
- The result was a **decrease of 3.57 percent DESPITE** an increase in student enrollment.