

Building a Safe and Caring School Environment

School staff participate in on-going discussions and training pertinent to this topic. The Franklin Central School staff believes that the following expectations for behavior will help ensure that all children experience academic and social success while they are members of our school community.

Expectations for Behavior

- 1) Respect yourself**
- 2) Respect others**
- 3) Respect all property**
- 4) Always do your best**

Each individual is responsible for his or her own behaviors. There are consequences** for an inability to behave appropriately, but developing the inner acceptance of and responsibility for behavior is the goal of our program.

Level I

Fostering the above behaviors is a conscious effort on the part of all our staff. Classroom teachers, staff, and our guidance counselor work on social skills such as making friends, expressing anger appropriately, as well as explaining and modeling what it means to act respectfully toward others. Setting the standards for a schoolwide environment that is safe and caring is a responsibility of all individuals in the school building, students and adults alike. When student behavior is inappropriate in the classroom, during recess, or lunch, it is the responsibility of the adult in charge to, in the beginning, use this as a teaching opportunity. This means the adult will discuss with the student what was inappropriate about his/her behavior and what behaviors would be better in the future. Through this process the student makes a "verbal plan" to change the inappropriate behavior.

Following a verbal plan or two, a student who still behaves inappropriately, may be asked to take a time out. During recess this will be to stand near the school building. In the classroom this might mean a designated area within the classroom or in the classroom across the hallway. In the lunchroom, the timeout area may be in the library at a separate eating area. At this time the adult in charge may do a written plan with the student.

After these attempts to teach appropriate behaviors, (a verbal plan or two, a time out to reflect on behavior, and/or a written plan), if a student still continues to behave inappropriately, he or she will move to level II.

Level II

Ideally, behaviors can be managed in the classroom, on the playground, or in the lunch room setting. The teaching of social skills is as important to a child's education as his or her academic learning. However, when disruptive behaviors continue, a classroom teacher or adult in charge of supervision in other areas, may seek outside support. The classroom teacher or other adult is then free to focus his or her attentions on teaching or the larger group. In this case a student will be referred to the planning room to process his or her behavior with an adult. The planning room is meant to be a safe environment for problem solving around the inappropriate behavior. Students can learn to be reflective about their actions and they can be encouraged to choose more productive behaviors. The planning room is a place where that reflection and that learning takes place. During this time, the student will write a plan using the following questions as prompts.

- What is the problem?
- What happened because of what I did?
- What will I do to make things right with the people involved?
- What steps could I have taken?
- What are the consequences for my actions?
- If I continue to choose this behavior, I will earn the following consequences.

The classroom teacher will call parents if a student has been sent to the planning room to inform parents of the incident and the plan that was developed. Academic work missed while the student is in the planning room will be made up during the student's free time or for homework that evening.

Level III

There are some behaviors that are serious enough to result in an immediate referral to the principal for disciplinary actions. Some of these behaviors have consequences mandated by state law. Others are deemed serious enough to warrant intensified attention. These behaviors include but are not limited to:

- fighting
- theft
- possessing a weapon or explosive device on school property
- possessing or using drugs or alcohol on school property
- intentional physical aggression
- threatening the school with an explosive device
- threatening to seriously harm other individuals
- persistently violating behavior guidelines
- bullying
- harrassment

Incidences involving weapons, drugs or alcohol have mandated consequences that involve suspensions or expulsion governed by law or policy. Suspension/expulsion shall follow due process requirements. Other serious infractions including incidences of intentional physical aggression or serious threats of physical harm could result in suspensions. Parents will be notified if their child is involved in one of the above serious incidents.

**Consequences may include, but are not limited to, age appropriate warning, education, counseling, parent conference, logical consequences, loss of certain privileges, in-school suspension, out of school suspension. Escalating consequences may be necessary if initial steps are ineffective in changing the behavior.