

SECTION 545 DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

The Board of Education of Portage Community Schools recognizes that the district has a responsibility to provide an educational environment that is safe and promotes the intellectual, emotional, and physical development of its students. The Board further recognizes that alcohol and other drug use and abuse has a significant negative impact on the school environment, the student's ability to learn, and the ability of the district to achieve its mission. Providing education about the consequences of alcohol and other drug use is a part of the process of maintaining an environment conducive to learning. So too is enforcement of laws and rules prohibiting adults and students from using, possessing, selling, delivering, manufacturing, distributing or any act involved in the distributing, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, pharmaceuticals (either prescription or over-the-counter medications) used other than prescribed by a physician or according to the manufacturer's directions for treatment of a medical condition, or use of other substances (such as inhalants) for the purpose of altering the person's physical or mental state while at school or a school event. The district may play a supportive role for students who may need education or interventions to assist them with addressing a problem with alcohol or other drug use, but also will vigorously enforce federal, state, municipal, and school laws, ordinances, and rules.

REGULATIONS and CONSEQUENCES for VIOLATIONS of this POLICY:

The following actions are expressly prohibited by students on school property or when a school event is taking place, on buses being used by the school or other school vehicles, and at or in transit to and from events that are sponsored by or in which the student is participating as a student of the district:

No student shall manufacture, possess, sell, use, distribute or any act involved in the distributing or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or intoxicants, inhalants, "look-alike" drugs (represented as a drug or to have drug-like effects), other substances used as a drug to produce an altered state, anabolic steroids or other "performance enhancing drugs", prescription or over-the-counter medications (except under provisions to be delineated), drug paraphernalia, material covered by the Controlled Substances Act or other federal, state, or local laws pertaining to controlled substances, or tobacco, while on property owned or leased by the school district, on school buses or other vehicles owned, contracted or used by the school, or while involved in any school related activity. Consequences for such offenses are spelled out within the disciplinary rules of the individual schools contained in student handbooks (which are approved by the Board of Education and therefore have the status of Board Policy) and include such consequences as:

- a. Parent notification
- b. Referral to the building administrator for disciplinary action
- c. Referral to police for possible citation or prosecution
- d. Suspension
- e. Expulsion

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If a student is suspected or found to be manufacturing, possessing, selling, distributing or any act involved in the distributing with the intention of exchanging, or selling illegal drugs or intoxicants while on property owned or leased by the school district, on school buses or other vehicles owned, contracted or used by the school, or while involved in any school related activity.the following procedure is to be followed:

1. The student will be immediately referred to the principal or designee who will quietly call for and escort the student to the office. No accusations will be made at this time.
2. A thorough investigation will follow during which the student's locker will be subject to search by school administrators. Any illegal drugs or intoxicants confiscated will be turned over to the police, and the student's parents will be notified as soon as possible.
3. Suspension from school will follow, as outlined in the individual school's disciplinary rules and regulations.
4. Expulsion procedures may be initiated following suspension.

Adults or youth who are not students of the district who are offenders of this policy will be referred to civil authorities for prosecution.

Additional rules, regulations, and procedures for addressing violations or suspected violations of this policy may be contained in student or faculty handbooks for the High School, Junior High School, and Elementary Schools which are approved by the Board and therefore are extensions of Board policy. In general, the level of consequence applied for violations of this policy will relate to the severity of the infraction and number of infractions with the more severe consequences applied in cases of manufacture, sales or other delivery, or repeated offences by an individual. Exceptions to the policy will be made for those who have prescribed medications or over-the-counter medications when these are used as prescribed or directed and when procedures for possession and use of such medications that may be described in building level regulations and any applicable state or federal laws are followed. Students may be required to leave any such approved medications in the office or other designated location to be dispensed by school personnel.

In addition to this policy, students involved in extra curricular programs are also required to abide by the provisions of the district's extra curricular code of conduct pertaining to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and are subject to both this policy and the code and their respective requirements and consequences for violations.

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ASSISTANCE for STUDENTS:

In addition to the important role of enforcing rules related to alcohol or other drug use, the district also offers assistance to students who may have a problem with use or abuse of, or dependency on, alcohol or other drugs. Students may self-refer or school personnel may refer students whom they suspect have a problem related to alcohol or other drug use to the district's Pupil Services staff (Guidance Counselors, School Psychologists, or School Nurses) or to the building administrator(s). Parents may also contact Pupil Services staff or administrators if they have concerns about their child's alcohol or other drug use. Support for the student may be offered within the school and/or the student may be given information on assistance outside the school setting that may go beyond the scope of help that can be offered by school personnel. Applicable rules related to confidentiality rights of the student will be followed. Additional procedures related to support services and referrals for assistance may be included in student or staff handbooks.

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