



STUDENTS: Students’ Responsibilities and Rights

Students’ Responsibilities and Rights

I. Purpose

To implement Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) Policy 5600, *Students’ Responsibilities and Rights*, by establishing and guiding student responsibilities and rights.

II. Definitions:

- A. *Students’ Responsibility* – Expectations Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) has of students regarding rights and accepting consequences for action taken in schools and at all off-site school-sponsored activities.
- B. *Students’ Rights* – Expectations students have of BCPS regarding freedoms that may be exercised in schools and while participating in all off-site school-sponsored activities.
- C. *School-Sponsored Activity* – An activity that is sponsored, approved, conducted, planned, and/or supervised by school personnel, regardless of whether the activity takes place on or off school property or occurs during regular instructional hours.

III. Attendance

A. Rights

- 1. All individuals, five years old or older, and under 21, who are domiciled with a parent/guardian in Baltimore County, shall attend a public school in Baltimore County free of charge.
- 2. For individuals with disabilities who require special education and related services, a free appropriate public education will be provided from birth through the end of the school year in which the student turns 21 years of age.

B. Responsibilities

- 1. Students enrolled in BCPS are required to be in school or attending a school activity each day school is in session.

2. Students are responsible for complying with Board policies, Superintendent's rules, and school procedures and standards that address attendance and enrollment.

IV. Disciplinary Action

A. Rights

1. Students have the right to information regarding disciplinary procedures and their proper application.

B. Responsibilities

1. Students are responsible for complying with the Board's code of student conduct, school routines and procedures, and exhibiting behavior required by the code of student conduct and other applicable policies and rules.

V. Due Process

A. Rights

1. Students have the right to due process when discipline is imposed. Additional procedures may apply to students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and Section 504 Plans.
2. Due process includes:
  - a. Notice to the student and parent(s) of the allegation(s).
  - b. An explanation of the evidence.
  - c. An opportunity for the student to respond.
  - d. Timely written notice to the parent(s) of the detention, exclusion, expulsion, or suspension.

B. Responsibilities

1. Students are responsible for exercising their due process rights concerning proceedings and/or appeals in a manner that is timely and adheres to the prescribed process.

VI. Appeal

A. Rights

1. Students have the right to a timely response to a proper appeal.

B. Responsibilities

1. Students are responsible for exercising the right to an appeal in a manner that is timely and adheres to the prescribed process.

## VII. Privacy of Records

### A. Rights

1. Students and parents have the right under federal and state law to inspect and review the student's educational records, to expect the school to maintain those records confidentially, and to have any school record inaccuracies corrected.
2. Students who have attained the age of majority have the right to request to inspect and review their educational records, to provide attendance information, to access those records confidentially, and to have any school record inaccuracies corrected.

### B. Responsibilities

1. Students and parents are responsible for providing accurate school records and working cooperatively for the reasonable collection of data.
2. Students and parents are responsible for making appropriate use of available school counseling and related services, as needed.

## VIII. Student Expression

### A. Rights

1. Students have the right to freedom of speech, religion, and the right to assemble peaceably, but speech and behavior that are disruptive can be prohibited.
  - a. School-sponsored Publications and Productions
    - (1) The right to prepare written communication for school-sponsored publications is subject to the reasonable restrictions of school authorities that are based on legitimate educational concerns.
  - b. Distribution of Literature
    - (1) The right to distribute literature is subject to school authorities having the right to restrict the time, place, and manner of such activities to maintain the orderly operation of schools.
  - c. Assembly

- (1) The right to assemble is subject to school authorities setting reasonable limits regarding the time, place, and manner in which students may assemble.
  - d. Symbolic Expression
    - (1) Students have the right to symbolic forms of expression to the extent that the symbolic expression does not substantially disrupt school activities.
  - e. Dress and Appearance
    - (1) Students have the right to select their dress apparel in accordance with individual school practice. BCPS may only regulate the dress and/or the appearance of students to the extent that the dress and/or appearance interferes with the educational process.
    - (2) Dress apparel must not cause disruption, be a safety or health hazard, or a hindrance to the educational process. Public schools do not regulate the dress and/or the appearance of students, unless the dress and/or appearance interferes with the educational process.
  - f. Patriotic Exercises
    - (1) Students have the right not to participate in patriotic exercises but shall not interfere with the right of other students to participate in such exercises.
  - g. Religion
    - (1) Students have the right to voluntary prayer or bible reading to the extent that it does not interfere with school activities required of the students.
- B. Responsibilities
- 1. Students are responsible for controlling their conduct while exercising their right to expression. Student expression can neither infringe upon the rights of others nor disrupt classroom or school procedures.
  - 2. Students are responsible for recognizing the right of others to have opinions which may differ from their own.

IX. Student Activities, Student Governance, Student Use of School Facilities

A. Rights

1. Students have the right to participate in extracurricular activities in accordance with Board Policies, Superintendent's Rules, and individual school procedures.
2. Subject to the required procedures and approval by school officials, school-sponsored student organizations and clubs may conduct activities on school property.

B. Responsibilities

1. Each organization's activities must be open to all students.
2. Students are responsible for using school facilities safely, responsibly, and in accordance with school system procedures.

X. Personal Property Searches

A. Rights

1. BCPS' students have the right to maintain personal property at schools subject to reasonable searches of students and their possessions on school premises or school-sponsored trips.

B. Responsibilities

1. Students shall not possess any items prohibited under federal or state laws and regulations and/or BCPS' policies and rules.
2. Students have the responsibility to cooperate with school officials who conduct reasonable searches and seizures under federal and state laws and regulations and BCPS' policies and rules.

XI. Non-discrimination

A. Rights

1. Students have the right to be free from discrimination, bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation.

B. Responsibilities

1. Students are responsible for respecting the rights of others.

XII. Notifications

- A. School administrators shall disseminate the responsibilities and rights of students periodically to all members of the school community, including students, administrators, teachers, and parents/guardians.

- B. The Office of School Safety will disseminate the responsibilities and rights of students annually in the *Student Handbook*.

Legal Reference: COMAR 13A.08.01.10, *Guidelines for Students' Responsibilities and Rights*

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 0100, *Equity*  
Board of Education Policy 1300, *Use of Facilities*  
Board of Education Policy 5120, *Attendance and Excuses*  
Board of Education Policy 5150, *Residents and Nonresidents*  
Board of Education Policy 5320, *Student Organizations and Clubs*  
Board of Education Policy 5460, *Searches*  
Board of Education Policy 5500, *Code of Student Conduct*  
Board of Education Policy 5510, *Positive Behavior*  
Board of Education Policy 5520, *Student Dress Code*  
Board of Education Policy 5550, *Disruptive Behavior*  
Board of Education Policy 5580, *Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation*  
Board of Education Policy 5610, *School-Sponsored Publications and Productions*  
Board of Education Policy 6202, *Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP) for Students*  
Board of Education Policy 6306, *Prayer and Religious Literature*

Rule

Superintendent of Schools

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