**SCHOOL SAFETY** *Policy Code:* **4200/7270/1510**

Safe schools are critical to creating a learning environment in which scholars can succeed. Staff and scholars share the responsibility for taking reasonable precautions and following established safety measures to create and maintain a safe school. The following safety measures must be implemented at NERSBA.

1. **Supervision of Scholars**

Scholars must be reasonably supervised while in the care and custody of the school . This supervision must occur throughout school hours, including during class, between classes, during lunch periods; during authorized school field trips; and on school buses. Reasonable precautions should be taken to protect the safety of scholars on school grounds and on buses before, during, and after school.

Scholars who are subject to policy 4260, Student Sex Offenders, and are receiving educational services on school property must be supervised by school personnel at all times.

1. **Supervision of Visitors**

School administrators shall strictly enforce policies 5015, School Volunteers, and 5020, Visitors to the Schools.

1. **Safety of School Buildings and Grounds**

The principal shall comply with all duties set out in G.S. 115C-288(d) and G.S. 115C-525 to minimize fire hazards. The principal is required by law to inspect school buildings, playgrounds, and equipment for health, fire, and safety hazards on a regular basis and to provide timely notification to the board of unsanitary conditions or repairs needed to meet safety standards.

Any employee who observes any potential hazards must notify the principal immediately.

All warning systems must meet building and equipment codes required by law and must be properly maintained. When necessary, proper signs indicating potential hazards or recommended safety precautions must be posted.

1. **Establishing Processes to Address Potential Safety Concerns and Emergencies**
   1. Responding to Student Altercations and Other Threats to Safety

All school employees have a duty to be alert at all times to situations that may pose a threat to the safety of scholars, employees, or visitors on school property, at school events, or in other situations in which the scholars are under the authority of school employees.  All employees are expected to make an immediate report to the principal if the employee observes or has reason to suspect that a situation poses a threat to safety.

Teachers, teacher assistants, coaches, and other employees with responsibility for supervising scholars will use appropriate student behavior management techniques to maintain order and discipline on school property, at school events, and anywhere that scholars are under the employees’ authority. Such employees must enforce the Code of Student Conduct and address student behavior in accordance with the school plan for management of student behavior (see policy 4302, School Plan for Management of Student Behavior).

When employees with responsibility for supervising scholars have personal knowledge or actual notice of a student altercation or other situation that poses an immediate threat to safety, they shall use their professional judgement to determine how best to address the situation to protect the safety of everyone in the vicinity. Emergency procedures identified in a student’s Behavior Intervention Plan shall be followed to the maximum extent possible under the circumstances. For minor threats or altercations, the employee shall intervene directly to end the fight or address the safety threat if the employee can do so safely. An employee who encounters a situation that cannot be managed safely and effectively by that employee immediately shall request assistance from other employees or administrative staff and shall take steps to remove bystanders from the area. Only the degree of force or physical control reasonably necessary shall be used to re-establish a safe environment.

Employees should take further action as appropriate in accordance with any response protocols established by the principal. All employees are responsible for knowing and following such protocols to the fullest extent reasonable under the circumstances at the time.

The principal shall provide notice to parents, faculty and the executive director who shall notify the board when significant student altercations and threats to safety at NERSBA occur.

* 1. School Rules

The principal or designee shall develop rules to help prevent accidents in school buildings, on school buses, and on school grounds.

* 1. Training for Staff and Scholars

Staff training must include detailed instruction on how to respond to a variety of emergency situations. In addition, staff should be able to recognize and respond to behavior, information, and related indicators that warn of impending problems. School personnel must teach and review with scholars (1) safety procedures, including fire safety procedures; (2) precautions for handling chemicals or potentially dangerous equipment; and (3) appropriate responses to threats to school safety.

* 1. Safety Equipment

School employees shall provide scholars with safety equipment as required by law and shall enforce school rules pertaining to wearing safety equipment. School employees shall wear and use appropriate safety equipment as required for the safe performance of their specific job assignments.

* 1. Planning for Emergencies and Conducting Fire Drills and Other Emergency Drills

The board, in coordination with local law enforcement and emergency management agencies, will adopt a school risk management plan relating to incidents of school violence for the school. The executive director must provide the Department of Public Safety’s Division of Emergency Management (Division) with emergency response information it requests for the school risk management plan and updated emergency response information when such updates are made. The executive director must also provide the Division and local law enforcement with schematic diagrams, including digital schematic diagrams, of all school facilities and updates of the schematic diagrams when the school makes substantial facility modifications, such as the addition of new facilities or modifications to doors or windows. Schematic diagrams must meet any standards established by the Department of Public Instruction for the preparation and content of the diagrams. In addition, the executive director shall provide local law enforcement with (1) either keys to the main entrance of all school buildings or emergency access to key storage devices for all school buildings and (2) updated access to school buildings when changes are made to the locks of the main entrances or to the key storage devices.

At least one school-wide tabletop exercise and drill that meets the requirements of state law and is based on the procedures documented in the school risk management plan will be held annually.

The principal shall conduct fire drills as required by law.

* 1. Reporting Suspicious Behavior

Scholars should notify any staff member of any acts of violence, harassment, or bullying or any other unusual or suspicious behavior that may endanger safety. Ongoing student education efforts will aim at minimizing any fear, peer pressure, embarrassment, or other impediments to scholars reporting potential problems.

Maintaining a safe school environment that is conducive to learning requires staff to be proactive in dealing with violence, harassment, and bullying. Staff members must report immediately to the principal any information regarding unusual or suspicious behavior or acts of violence, harassment, or bullying.

The principal is required to investigate and act upon any report of such behavior, including, when appropriate, reporting criminal activities to law enforcement and the State Board (see policies 1710/4021/7230, Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying, 1720/4015/7225, Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Procedure, and 4335, Criminal Behavior).

* 1. Potential Threats of Registered Sex Offenders

The principal shall register with the North Carolina Sex Offender and Public Protection Registry to receive e-mail notification when a registered sex offender moves within a one-mile radius of the school. The principal shall share such notification with the faculty and staff.

* 1. Student Behavior Standards

Scholars are expected to meet behavior standards set forth in board policies.

Legal References: G.S. 14-208.18; 115C-36, -47, -81.4, -105.49, -105.53, -105.54, -166, -288, -289.1, -307, -390.3, -391.1, -521, -524, -525; State Board of Education Policies HRS-A-000, TCS-P-005

Cross References: Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (policy 1710/4021/7230), Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Procedure (policy 1720/4015/7225), School Improvement Plan (policy 3430), Student Sex Offenders (policy 4260), Student Behavior policies (4300 series), School Volunteers (policy 5015), Visitors to the Schools (policy 5020), Registered Sex Offenders (policy 5022), Weapons and Explosives Prohibited (policy 5027/7275), Public Records – Retention, Release, and Disposition (policy 5070/7350), Relationship with Law Enforcement (policy 5120), Occupational Exposure to Hazardous Chemicals in Science Laboratories (policy 7265), Staff Responsibilities (policy 7300), Security of Facilities (policy 9220)

Other Resources: *Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities*, U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (January 2007), available at <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/crisisplanning.html>

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