

# **UTICA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **SUMMARY – CODE OF CONDUCT**

***NOTE THAT A COMPLETE COPY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT IS AVAILABLE FROM THE SCHOOL, FROM CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE, OR ON THE DISTRICT WEBSITE***

Dear Parent/Guardian/Student:

The Utica City School District is committed to providing all students, teachers, district personnel, and visitors with a safe and pleasant environment. Our purpose is to offer a quality education in an environment free of discrimination, harassment and bullying. The Utica City School District recognizes that a positive school climate is an important factor in effective student management. A positive school climate helps to foster high levels of personal student growth and academic achievement and is predicated on the principles of safety, trust and effective communication among all stakeholders including parents, students, teachers and the entire school community. In addition, all students have the right to access educational and extracurricular activities on an equal basis.

Therefore, we have adopted a “Code of Conduct” that applies to everyone involved in our schools. You should also know that New York State’s Safe Schools Against Violence in Education Act and Section 100.2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education require that each school district in the State have such a Code.

Our Code was developed by administrators, teachers, parents, students, and others involved in the schools. It explains the rights and responsibilities of all who utilize our facilities or ride our buses. The guiding principles are those of politeness, respect for each other, tolerance, and honesty. We especially ask students to help us maintain a safe and orderly environment, to ask questions if there is anything they don’t understand, and to ask for help with problems. We also expect them to accept responsibility for what they do or do not do. Therefore, our Code focuses on respect for the rights and property of others and on the safety of everyone.

Students who refuse to follow the rules by being disorderly, insubordinate, disruptive, or violent or who place others in physical or moral danger will be disciplined. This discipline could range from a warning to permanent removal from school.

Discipline will be based on the following categories. (the complete list appears in the Code of Conduct):

**Category 1** – includes disorderly conduct, insubordination, false identification, possession of electronic devices (i.e. cell phones, iPods, etc.), harassment, academic misconduct, and misconduct on the bus.

**Category 2** – includes vandalism, endangering safety, health, or welfare of others (including bullying and cyber bullying), fraud, forgery, sexual harassment, and chronic insubordination.

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**Category 3 (Zero Tolerance)** – includes violent conduct, possession of drugs and/or alcohol, conduct endangering the safety, health, or welfare of others, and sexual misconduct.

Students are expected to report any school related violations of the Code to a staff member immediately. Remember that we are all responsible for the health, safety and well being of everyone.

Students who violate the Code will be subject to a consequence. Typically, consequences become more severe if the misbehavior continues or if a Zero Tolerance offense has been committed. Consequences range from an oral warning to permanent suspension from school. A complete list appears in the Code.

We would like to remind parents/guardians and students that transportation is a privilege of the student, not a right, and that the school district is not mandated to provide transportation. Pupil actions and behavior will be addressed in relation to the severity and frequency of the misconduct. The Code of Conduct of the Utica City School District extends to the transportation system of the District. Continued misconduct will result in the removal of bus privileges.

We expect all students, parents/guardians, visitors, and members of the staff to dress neatly and appropriately for all school activities and functions. We also expect all students to pay attention to personal cleanliness.

Our Dress Code is explained in detail in the complete Code, but it requires students dress in a manner that will not interfere with the main purpose of school education. Any student who is not dressed properly will be asked to correct the problem. Anyone who refuses will be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension from school.

Students and parents have rights. Students are to be informed of the reason for any consequences and will have an opportunity to explain their version of the event that led to the disciplinary action. Parents have the right to be informed also. In extreme cases, such as Category 3, the school official may be required to request a Superintendent's Hearing. The Code includes information on specific rights of parents/guardians and students, including the right to counsel.

Finally, in accordance with New York State Law, visitors to the school must report to the main office to request permission to visit anyone in the building. Visitors may be asked to show identification. The principal or his/her designee may or may not grant such permission. If permission is granted, the visitor is to sign a register and will be issued a pass, which must be worn until departure. All visitors to any school, regardless of the purpose of the visits, must behave in a polite and respectful manner. Violators of this policy may be restricted from school property and/or prosecuted.

Thank you for your anticipated support and cooperation.