



# Student Rights & Responsibilities Guide

## 2016-17



A guide to Camden City School District's Code of Conduct for students, parents, and guardians

**OUR GOAL**  
is to...



... create  
a positive  
and supportive  
culture in every  
District school

# Message from Superintendent Rouhanifard



Follow us online!

**facebook**

[www.facebook.com/  
camdenpublicschools](http://www.facebook.com/camdenpublicschools)

**twitter**

@CamdenSchools  
@TeachCamden

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

Welcome back to the 2016-17 school year!

I believe that schools should be welcoming environments where students feel supported and look forward to attending. Students' positive behavior should receive encouragement, and our goal should be to keep students in school and learning as much as possible.

In the past, our discipline policy did not make all students feel welcome or supported. Discipline was handed out too quickly at times, and too many students were suspended, often for up to 10 days at a time.

While student misbehavior needs to be addressed, especially serious incidents involving violence, our focus needs to remain on creating positive school cultures that keep kids in school.

This *Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities* is our effort to emphasize that focus. We created this new code of conduct with feedback from students, parents, teachers, and school leaders. We are learning from our mistakes in the past and planning for a more successful future.

My hope is that the rights and responsibilities outlined in this code of conduct will significantly reduce the number of situations where we need to resort to consequences. I ask for your help in this work—our students bring to school many habits they learn at home. Please reinforce positive habits.

If you believe your student is receiving a consequence that is different from what is included in this guide or that your school does not have a positive learning environment, I encourage you to talk with your Family and Operations Coordinator and, if needed, your school leader. Changing our school cultures will take time, but it is a necessary and important change.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Paymon Rouhanifard  
Superintendent

# The Rights & Responsibilities Guide

This guide explains rights that are guaranteed for all members of the school community, and the rules that all students should follow in order to be respectful, responsible, and safe.

*The Camden City School District is committed to providing a **safe** and **positive** learning environment for every student. All students, teachers, staff, and visitors are expected to:*



**Treat** others the way you want to be treated  
**Use** professional, academic and positive **language**  
**Behave** in a way that helps you and others **learn**



**Be** in school, **on time**, ready to learn every day  
**Follow** all **school rules** (including the electronics policy)  
**Complete** all work with **honesty** and **integrity**



**Solve** problems **peacefully** and with **empathy**  
**Be** drug and **alcohol free**  
**Keep** the school community **clean** and **safe** for others

# Code of Conduct:

## Students' Rights & Responsibilities

In order to build a respectful, responsible, and safe school for all students, all members of the school community—students, parents, families, teachers, and staff—must work together. All members of the school community have both rights and responsibilities.

### Students have the **RIGHT** to...

- 1) Receive a free and appropriate public education from ages 5-21, as provided by law
- 2) Feel safe at school
- 3) Be treated fairly at school
- 4) Be respected as an individual and treated with respect by other students and school staff
- 5) Express their opinions verbally or in writing
- 6) Take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, religion, religious practices, sex, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, ethnic group, political affiliation, age, marital status, or disability
- 7) Have access to information about infractions and consequences
- 8) Have access to objective information concerning drug and alcohol abuse
- 9) Have access to individuals or agencies capable of providing direct assistance to students experiencing personal challenges
- 10) Be guaranteed confidentiality in counseling

### Students have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to...

- 1) Be respectful, responsible, and safe at all times
- 2) Aim to make the school community better for all
- 3) Understand how to make the most of the educational opportunities at school
- 4) Ask questions about Student Rights & Responsibilities when needed
- 5) Speak honestly about situations when the rules are broken
- 6) Follow all school policies (including electronics, attendance, dress code, and bullying/harassment)
- 7) Be responsible about completing missed school work after being absent

# Parents and Guardians’ Rights & Responsibilities

## Parents and Guardians have the **RIGHT** to...

- 1) Be actively involved in their children’s education
- 2) Feel safe when attending school events
- 3) Be treated fairly by school community members
- 4) Be respected as an individual and treated with respect by students and school staff
- 5) Express their opinions verbally or in writing
- 6) Take part in school events on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, religion, religious practices, sex, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, ethnic group, political affiliation, age, marital status, or disability
- 7) Get regular updates about their child’s academic and behavioral progress (including but not limited to report cards, behavior progress reports, and conferences)
- 8) Receive information from school staff about ways to improve their children’s academic or behavioral progress (including but not limited to counseling, tutoring, after-school programs, academic programs, and mental health services)
- 9) Have access to information about infractions and consequences
- 10) Have access to objective information concerning drug and alcohol abuse
- 11) Have access to individuals or agencies capable of providing direct assistance to students experiencing personal challenges
- 12) Be guaranteed confidentiality in counseling and peer mediation
- 13) Receive information about services for students with disabilities and English language learners, when applicable
- 14) Receive communication through provided translation when needed

## Parents and Guardians have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to...

- 1) Be respectful, responsible, and safe at all times
- 2) Aim to make the school community better for all
- 3) Communicate with school leaders and teachers about the needs of their children
- 4) Ask clarifying questions about Student Rights & Responsibilities when needed
- 5) Support their children in following the school policies including electronics, attendance, dress code, and bullying/harassment
- 6) Make sure their children attend school regularly and on time and, when children are absent, let schools know why in advance
- 7) Provide updated contact information to their child’s school
- 8) Make every effort to give their children a space to complete their homework, or allow participation in an after-school program that permits the completion of homework

# Teachers and School Staff's Rights & Responsibilities

Teachers and school staff have the **RIGHT** to...

- 1) Be part of a school community that values student safety and success
- 2) Feel safe at school
- 3) Be respected as an individual and treated with respect by students and other school staff
- 4) Communicate concerns and suggestions to the Camden City School District
- 5) Take part in school events on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, religion, religious practices, sex, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, ethnic group, political affiliation, age, marital status, or disability
- 6) Have access to information about infractions and consequences
- 7) Receive timely and applicable feedback after classroom observations
- 8) Be able to refer students to individuals or agencies capable of providing direct assistance to students experiencing personal challenges
- 9) Receive information about how to provide services for students with disabilities and English language learners
- 10) Receive supportive professional development and training

Teachers and school staff have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to:

- 1) Model respect, responsibility, and safety at all times
- 2) Aim to make the school community better for all
- 3) Work towards building a positive learning environment for all students
- 4) Be knowledgeable about the Student Rights & Responsibilities Guide and enforce the Code of Conduct fairly and consistently, including documenting Tier I and II violations
- 5) Clearly and proactively communicate information about students' choices and their consequences to students and their families, in a language they understand
- 6) Actively practice conflict resolution as appropriate in the classroom before student discipline infractions are escalated, as appropriate
- 7) Attend work daily, and be punctual
- 8) Use well-planned, creative and engaging instructional plans every day
- 9) Provide work for students who are absent due to illness or suspension in a timely manner

# Principals and Administrators' Rights & Responsibilities

Principals and District Administrators have the **RIGHT** to...

- 1) Be part of a school community that values student safety and success
- 2) Feel safe at school
- 3) Be respected as an individual and treated with respect by students and other school staff
- 4) Communicate concerns and suggestions to the Camden City School District
- 5) Take part in school events on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, religion, religious practices, sex, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, ethnic group, political affiliation, age, marital status, or disability
- 6) Receive supportive professional development and training
- 7) Have access to information about best practices for addressing student infractions
- 8) Be able to refer students to individuals or agencies capable of providing direct assistance to students experiencing personal challenges
- 9) Receive information about how to provide services for students with disabilities and English language learners

Principals and District Administrators have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to...

- 1) Strive to be respectful, responsible, and safe at all times
- 2) Aim to make the school community better for all
- 3) Create and implement policies and procedures that encourage safe and orderly schools for all students and school staff
- 4) Protect the legal rights of school staff, students, and parents or guardians
- 5) Work towards building a positive school climate that celebrates student successes
- 6) Clearly and proactively communicate information to students and families about students' choices and their consequences
- 7) Actively practice conflict resolution as appropriate before problems are escalated
- 8) Meticulously document Tier I-IV violations of the Code of Conduct
- 9) Support teachers and staff members in carrying out the Code of Conduct
- 10) Make reasonable attempts to communicate with family members about unexcused absences

# Code of Conduct: Infractions and Consequences

When a student makes a choice that impacts the learning community, consequences that reflect the severity of the infraction may be assigned. All consequences should balance the District's goals of minimizing school disruptions and maximizing each student's learning time.

When appropriate, discipline will be **progressive**. This means that a student's first infraction will usually have a consequence of a lesser degree than repeated infractions. However, in cases where a student's conduct is dangerous or threatens the safety of others, a more severe form of discipline may be used. Review the chart below, and on the following page, to understand the four tiers of infractions, and recommended consequences for each.

Tier	Infraction Examples	Recommended Approaches
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tier 1 Infractions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tardy to class</li> <li>• Uniform violation</li> <li>• Unauthorized use of a cell phone or other electronic device</li> <li>• Talking out of turn in class</li> <li>• Speaking to a school community member or guest with disrespect</li> <li>• Excessive noise in the hallway</li> <li>• Missing class materials</li> <li>• Using profane or offensive language</li> <li>• Making profane or lewd gestures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal correction, reminders and/or redirection</li> <li>• Provide class/area wide redirection to the entire class</li> <li>• Provide praise to other students in the area</li> <li>• Re-teach or review expected behavior</li> <li>• Loaner uniform provided</li> <li>• Confiscation of the electronic device where applicable</li> <li>• 30 minutes of classroom community service (not during student's instructional time)</li> <li>• Written reflection or apology</li> <li>• Seat change</li> <li>• In-class time out</li> <li>• Loss of classroom privileges</li> <li>• Parent phone call</li> <li>• Lunch or after-school detention</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tier 2 Infractions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skipping class (on campus)</li> <li>• Persistent or excessive absence from school or individual class periods</li> <li>• Excessive use of profanity (including profanity directed at a school community member)</li> <li>• Academic dishonesty/plagiarism</li> <li>• Intentional damage to personal property</li> <li>• Failure to respond to school staff questions or concerns</li> </ul>	<p>All Tier 1 approaches, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict mediation</li> <li>• Pair student with a peer</li> <li>• One hour of school community service (not during student's instructional time)</li> <li>• Parent conference with teachers</li> <li>• Change in schedule or class</li> <li>• Daily progress report</li> <li>• Lost opportunity to participate in co-curricular activities</li> <li>• Office referral</li> </ul>



# Infractions and Consequences

Tier	Infraction Examples	Recommended Approaches
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tier 3 Infractions</b></p>	<p>Any of the following on school grounds or during school hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sale, possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Gambling</li> <li>• Stealing</li> <li>• Vandalism</li> <li>• Setting off / dismantling fire alarm inappropriately</li> <li>• Gang activity</li> <li>• Leaving campus without permission</li> <li>• Physical fighting or assault</li> <li>• Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB), including reprisal and retaliation for HIB, cyber-bullying, and sexual harassment</li> <li>• Physically threatening a member of the school community</li> <li>• Extortion: taking or attempting to take from another by threat of force, expressed or implied</li> <li>• Trespassing/unauthorized school visitation<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Possession of a weapon other than a firearm or explosive device (weapon not in use)<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Intentional damage to personal property (generally exceeding \$150 in value)</li> </ul>	<p>All Tier 1 and 2 approaches, plus (principal assigned):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required referral to school nurse and drug/alcohol counseling/treatment (if infraction is drug/alcohol-related)</li> <li>• Required conflict mediation</li> <li>• Functional Behavioral Assessment</li> <li>• Referral to community organizations</li> <li>• Parent conference with administrative team</li> <li>• Parent or guardian accompanies the child to school</li> <li>• Saturday detention</li> <li>• In- or out-of-school suspension for up to 5 days</li> <li>• Referral to Camelot Transitional Academy (grades 7-12)</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tier 4 Infractions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bomb threat</li> <li>• Starting a fire</li> <li>• Possession or use of a firearm or explosive device</li> <li>• Use of a weapon</li> </ul>	<p>Tier 4 infractions require each of the following consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10-day out-of-school suspension</li> <li>• Referral to expulsion hearing</li> <li>• Notify District and police</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> If a student is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, s/he must immediately be referred to the school nurse for evaluation. After the nurse has evaluated the student's situation, the principal may assign interventions and consequences, as appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> Trespassing is defined as: 1) breaking into school after school hours; 2) a student going to a campus that is not his/her school of record without permission. Students *may not be cited* for trespassing if they are attending their school during school hours.

<sup>3</sup> A weapon is defined as any instrument used to cause bodily harm, including but not limited to razors, knives, or mace.

# More Information

Here is some more information about a few important policies

## Attendance

The best way for each student to make the most of his/her education is to be **present** and **on time** every day. Parents and guardians should notify the school as soon as possible if their children need to be absent for an excused reason (such as illness or a family emergency). Notes from parents/guardians will be accepted for up to 15 days after the absence. Doctors' notes will be accepted at any time.

**School administrators** will make an effort to be in contact with families of absent students to find out why the student was absent, and what supports the student needs when s/he returns to school.

**Attendance officers** will visit families with students who have **unexcused** absences:

- After **one** unexcused absence, the school will call the student's family.
- After **three** unexcused absences, an attendance officer will visit the family to see what supports the student needs in order to return to school.
- After **five** unexcused absences, the attendance officer will visit again, and bring an official letter to notify the family of the student's excessive absences.
- After **eight** unexcused absences, the attendance officer will visit a third time, and bring a second official letter to notify the family of the student's excessive absences.
- After **ten** unexcused absences, the student is considered truant. New Jersey state law requires that the District refer the student and his/her parents or guardians to court once a student is considered truant. You can avoid this by communicating with the school about absences as soon as possible, and providing notes when appropriate.

After a student has earned three tardies in a semester, every three tardies after that will be counted as one unexcused absence. This means that attendance officers will work with some students who might never have missed a full day of school, but who are often late.

## HIB (Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying)

**Harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB):** Any act (written, verbal, or physical) that seems to take place because of any of the following characteristics: race, color, creed, sex, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and disability. This act has the effect of physically and/or emotionally harming a student.

**If you see HIB,** it's important to report it right away. You can report harassment, intimidation, and bullying anonymously through an online form (click on "Report Bullying" on your school's homepage). You can also fill out a paper form. Just visit your school's Main Office to get one. Paper forms can be handed to the Principal or to the school's Anti-Bullying Specialist (listed on each school's website).

# More Information

## **HIB (Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying) (cont'd)**

**Within 10 days of receiving the report**, the school's Anti-Bullying Specialist will complete an investigation. During those 10 days, the Anti-Bullying Specialist will interview everyone with information about the incident to determine whether or not this case counts as HIB. The Superintendent will see the results of the investigation and decide what actions to take.

**Five days after the next Board meeting**, the District will send a letter with information about the investigation to all parents whose children were involved in the case. The letter will include information about what type of investigation took place, whether or not the District found evidence of HIB, and what was done to address the incident.

Even if the investigation does not find an official HIB violation, school staff will work with all involved students to make sure they feel safe and respected.

## **Out-of-School Suspensions**

"Out-of-school suspension" is defined as any time a student is asked to leave the campus because of an infraction. These suspensions may be for part of a day (e.g. the student is sent home early by a school staff member) or a full day.

A student who contributed to a Tier 3 infraction may be placed on in-school suspension for up to 5 days. If the school does not have an in-school suspension program, the student may be placed on out-of-school suspension for between 1 and 5 days.

A student who contributed to a Tier 4 infraction will be automatically placed on out-of-school suspension for 10 days. A student who has been referred for expulsion may be placed on out-of-school suspension for up to 30 days before the expulsion hearing.

*There are no 6-9 day suspensions.*

Absolutely all students who have been suspended must be given work to complete so they do not miss important learning time. A student on a short-term suspension (1-5 days) may be given work to complete independently. A student placed on a long-term suspension (10 days or more) must be placed on Administrative Home Instruction. A teacher will work with the student at home to make sure s/he does not fall behind academically.

A student who is being suspended, and his/her parents or guardians, must receive clear information from the Principal about why the suspension is taking place and the expectations for the student's return to school.

# More Information

## Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are expected to be respectful, responsible, and safe. Each student's IEP outlines the supports that the student needs in order to meet these expectations. It is important for teachers and school leaders to be familiar with these supports so that they can set students up for success.

A Tier 1 or 2 infraction, or a Tier 3 infraction that does **not** result in a suspension, may be handled in the same way as it would be for a general education student.

A student with a disability may **not** receive a long-term suspension **unless** a Manifestation Determination meeting is held with the Child Study Team and the student's family. For more information, contact the Child Study Team at your school.

## Have Questions? Need Support? Want guidance?

If you have general questions or comments about the District's Student Rights & Responsibilities policy, email [conduct@camden.k12.nj.us](mailto:conduct@camden.k12.nj.us) or call (856) 966-2000 ext. 38502.

If your child received a consequence not outlined in the District's Student Rights & Responsibilities policy, please first seek support from your school's Family & Operations Coordinator (*see contact list below*).

If you have questions about attendance, or need support improving your child's attendance, please call (856) 966-2000 ext. 38521.

If you have questions about HIB (Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying) policy, or feel your child has been a victim of bullying, please call (856) 966-2000 ext. 38502.

School Name	Family & Operations Coordinator	Email	Phone number
Bonsall	Kevin Blackshear	kblackshear@camden.k12.nj.us	856-375-3366
Brimm	Brittany Haley	bhaley@camden.k12.nj.us	856-448-2660
Camden Big Picture Learning Academy	Danielle Strand	dstrand@camden.k12.nj.us	856-448-5552
Camden High School	Mia Anderson Coles	manderson-coles@camden.k12.nj.us	856-448-5591
Creative Arts Morgan Village Academy	Fatimah Shakir	fshakir@camden.k12.nj.us	609-410-9549
Catto	Briana Smith Gibbs	bsmith-gibbs@camden.k12.nj.us	609-828-1460
Cooper's Poynt	Brian Gregg	bgregg@camden.k12.nj.us	856-298-9883
Cramer	Jose Ramos	jramos@camden.k12.nj.us	856-448-5543
Davis	Rebecca Arriaga	rarriaga@camden.k12.nj.us	609-314-2291
Dudley	Elizabeth Collazo	ewcollazo@camden.k12.nj.us	856-448-5546
ECDC	Alyssa Wilds	awilds@camden.k12.nj.us	856-448-5590
Forest Hill	Danene Woodford-Beckam	dwoodfordbeckam@camden.k12.nj.us	856-448-5599
HB Wilson	Rachel Smalls	rsmalls@camden.k12.nj.us	856-448-5584
RT Cream	Niesha Davis	neishadavis@camden.k12.nj.us	856-448-5596
Sharp	Tracey Allen	teallen@camden.k12.nj.us	856-448-5601
Sumner	David Faich	dfaich@camden.k12.nj.us	856-375-4538
Vets	Clayton Gonzalez	cgonzalez@camden.k12.nj.us	856-812-8395
Wiggins	Lidia Carrero	lmartinez@camden.k12.nj.us	609-828-4669
Woodrow Wilson High School	Janise Medina	jmedina@camden.k12.nj.us	609-206-6015
Yorkship	Rhonda Smalls	rhondasmalls@camden.k12.nj.us	856-448-5576