

SUBJECT: **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

Supersedes: Policy 6.11 (2001)

Effective: January 8, 2009

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Approved by: Detroit Board of Education

1.0 Policy

The Detroit Public Schools are concerned about society's increased violence, which has filtered into many schools and workplaces throughout the United States. It is the intention of the District to provide as safe and non-violent an environment for its employees, students, parents, and visitors as is possible. To this end, the District strives to maintain an environment free of threats, harassment, intimidation, physical and verbal abuse, and coercion. This means that all people shall be treated with respect and consideration. This policy will define inappropriate conduct and will establish a framework for crisis intervention and the investigation of complaints.

1.1 ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE

It is the policy of the Detroit Public Schools to expressly prohibit any acts or threats of violence by any employee or former employee against any other employee in or about its facilities or elsewhere at any time. The District will not condone any acts or threats of violence against its employees, students, parents, or visitors by any individual on DPS premises at any time or while such individual is engaged in business with or on behalf of DPS, on or off DPS premises.

1.2 THE DISTRICT'S COMMITMENT

In keeping with the spirit and intent of this policy and to ensure the District's objectives are attained the District is committed to the following:

- a. providing a safe and healthful work environment, in accordance with DPS policies on safety and health;
- b. taking prompt corrective action up to and including termination against any employee who engages in any threatening behavior or acts of violence or who uses any obscene, abusive, or threatening language or gestures;
- c. taking appropriate action when dealing with students, former employees and student, parents, guardians, or visitors to District facilities who engage in such behavior. Such action may include notifying the police or other law enforcement personnel and

- prosecuting violators of this policy to the maximum extent of the law;
- d. prohibiting employees, former employees, students, parents, guardians, and visitors from bringing unauthorized firearms or other weapons onto Detroit Public Schools' premises; and
 - e. establishing viable security measures to ensure that District facilities are safe and secure to the maximum extent possible and for properly dealing with access to DPS facilities by the public, off-duty employees, students outside of school hours, and former employees and students.

1.3 EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

In order to minimize the risk of violent or threatening incidents, District staff, including all persons having supervisory responsibility, have a responsibility to be educated and aware of potential signs and signals of violent or threatening behavior in their employees, students, parents, visitors and others.

1.4 CONSEQUENCES OF PROHIBITED CONDUCT

1.4.1 Conduct By Employees

Any employee who displays a tendency or propensity to engage in violent, abusive, or threatening behavior as defined herein, or who otherwise engages in behavior that DPS deems offensive or inappropriate will be referred to the EAP for counseling or other appropriate treatment. Such employees will also be subject to corrective action, up to and including discharge. *See also appropriate collective bargaining agreement.*

1.4.2 Conduct By Students

Any student who displays a tendency or propensity to engage in violent, abusive, or threatening behavior as defined herein, or who otherwise engages in behavior that DPS deems offensive or inappropriate will be referred to counseling or other appropriate treatment. Such students will also be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion.

1.4.3 Conduct By Others

Any parent, guardian, visitor or other person who displays a tendency or propensity to engage in violent, abusive, or threatening behavior as defined herein, or who otherwise engages in behavior that DPS deems offensive or inappropriate will be asked to leave the premises, with or without security or police assistance, and may be prohibited from returning. A criminal complaint may also be filed.

1.5 DUTY TO REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY OR THREATS

In furtherance of this policy, employees have a duty to report to their building administrator (i.e., Principal, Director, or other high-ranking building administrator) and building security any suspicious workplace activity, threatening or violent situations or incidents that they observe or know of that involve other employees, former employees, students, former students, parents, guardians, visitors or others. If a principal, assistant principal, supervisor, manager or any other person learns of an employee's suspicions or knowledge of such a situation, that person too has the responsibility to report the information to building security and the District's Department of Public Safety. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employee reports made pursuant to this policy will be held in confidence, to the maximum extent possible. The Detroit Public Schools will not condone any form of retaliation against any employee who, in good faith, makes a report under this policy.

1.6 INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS AND DPS' RESPONSE

Complaints of violent and/or threatening behavior will be promptly investigated and if found to be valid, immediate and appropriate action will be taken. Threats and violence are serious offenses. Any District employee who is found to be responsible for any threatening and/or violent conduct will be subject to immediate and appropriate disciplinary action, up to an including expulsion and the filing of a criminal complaint. Any guest or visitor of the Detroit Public Schools who is responsible for any threatening and/or violent conduct will be subject to immediate removal from the premises and/or the filing of a criminal complaint.

1.7 PHYSICAL HOSTILE ACTIONS

A physical hostile action is an action that places a person in reasonable apprehension of harmful contact. Any physical hostile actions made by or against an employee, student, parent, guardian, or visitor on District property should be responded to immediately by calling on-site security. If a physical hostile action is made by or against an employee or student off-premises where an employee or student is working or learning off-site, local law enforcement authority of 911 emergency shall be contacted immediately

1.8 THREATS/VIOLENCE BY EMPLOYEES

Confrontational threats while at school should be dealt with by the supervisor and building security through an immediate meeting with the individuals involved. If a represented employee is involved, the meeting shall also include the employee's union steward or other union representative. Depending on the seriousness of the conduct, actions may be taken against the employee making the threat, including

but not limited to, suspension pending investigation, suspension without pay, or termination.

For any such employee suspended or terminated, security must be notified, the employee's identification badge retrieved and made inoperable, and the employee escorted out of the building.

The use of the Public Safety Department or local law enforcement personnel should be considered at all times as appropriate and necessary.

1.9 THREATS AGAINST INDIVIDUALS RECEIVED BY DPS

If the Detroit Public Schools becomes aware of a threat made to or against one of its employees or students, or other person on its property, the District, in an effort to provide protection to the person receiving the threat, will take all reasonable measures to facilitate the protection of the individual while on District premises. The District will inform the person, his or her supervisor, and building security of the threat. Additionally, the Public Safety Department will make a crisis assessment. This crisis assessment will assist DPS in determining the type of response required. Factors to consider are:

- a. the nature of the threat;
- b. the need for immediate action;
- c. the circumstances preceding the threat;
- d. the assurance that the individual making the threat will not be able to enter the facility;
- e. the nature of ongoing communications with the individual making the threat;
- f. notification of law enforcement authorities; and
- g. possible legal action.

1.10 DOCUMENTATION

In all situations and in all circumstances a complete and detailed log of events will be maintained by the principal or other building administrator, building security and District Public Safety Department and reviewed on an ongoing and as-needed basis.

1.11 APPEALS

Disciplinary action and termination decisions, as well as voluntary resignation determinations made as a result of violations of this policy may or may not be appealable through a collective bargaining agreement's appeal or grievance procedure or other method of alternative dispute resolution. See the specific collective bargaining unit agreement for more information.

Attachments to Policy 7.60: None

See also: *Undesirable Incident Report (Form 63)*

Legal References: None

Labor Contract References: All labor contracts should be consulted