

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

No. 218.1

Section: 200 Pupils

Title: Weapons

Adopted: August 24, 2011

Revised: January 27, 2022

218.1 WEAPONS

Purpose

The Board of Education (“Board”) is committed to making every School District of Philadelphia (“District”) school a safe, welcoming, and healthy place. The purpose of this policy is to prohibit the possession of weapons in the school setting, as it is a threat to the safety of students and staff and is prohibited by law.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, terms are defined as follows:

Weapon: Any object, device, or instrument, which, in its inherent and functional purpose, is intended to be a weapon. This includes, but is not limited to, firearms, whether loaded or not; pellet or BB gun; knives; cutting instruments; nunchaku; brass knuckles; electronic shock devices; or mace and any other tool, instrument, or object used or intended to be used to inflict serious bodily injury to another. [1][2][3]

Possession: A student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student's locker; or under the student's control while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is traveling to or from school, including any District or public conveyance providing transportation.

Authority

As required by Pennsylvania Public School Code, the Board prohibits students from possessing and bringing weapons into any District buildings, onto school property, to any school-sponsored activity, and onto any District or public conveyance providing transportation to or from any school or a school-sponsored activity. [2][3]

The Board shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law and Board policy. The Superintendent, or their designee, shall review each incident and recommend modifications of such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis, with the critical goals of equitable treatment and mitigating the impact of historical patterns of discipline, so that the impacted student(s) may maintain the opportunity for educational continuity, achievement, and inclusion in the school community. [2][4] Factors that will be considered include, but are not limited to, intent to use, disability status, and mental health needs.

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the District shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement, and Board policies. [2][5][6][7][8][9][10]

The Board authorizes the administration to conduct searches of students or their belongings to aid in the detection of weapons in accordance with Board [Policies 226 - Searches](#) and [817 - Use of Scanning Equipment to Detect Weapons](#). [11][12]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Board directs the Superintendent or their designee, through the Office of School Safety, to react promptly to information and knowledge concerning possession of a weapon on school property. Such action shall be in compliance with state law and regulations and with the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement officials, Board policies, and the District's emergency preparedness plan. [10][13][14][15][16][17]

The Superintendent, Office of School Safety, or designee shall immediately report incidents involving weapons on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement, and Board policies. [2][10][13][15][16][17]

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving weapons as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as possible. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document the attempts made to reach the parent/guardian. [18]

In accordance with state law, the Superintendent, or their designee, shall annually, by July 31, report all incidents involving possession of a weapon to the Pennsylvania Department of

Education Office for Safe Schools using the required form. [10][15] On a regular basis, the Office of School Safety will evaluate all weapons incidents, to inform safety and security operations.

Mandatory Regulatory Procedures

The District shall annually inform staff, students, and parents/guardians about the Board policy prohibiting weapons and about their personal responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare of the school community.

Legal References:

1. [24 P.S. 1301-A](#)
2. [24 P.S. 1317.2](#)
3. [Philadelphia Code of Ordinances - Title 10, Section 10-833](#)
4. [Policy 233](#) - Suspension and Expulsion
5. [22 PA Code 10.23](#)
6. [20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq](#)
7. [Policy 103.1](#) - Nondiscrimination - Qualified Students With Disabilities/Protected Handicapped Students
8. [Policy 113.1](#) - Discipline of Students With Disabilities
9. [Policy 113.2](#) - Behavior Support
10. [Policy 805.1](#) - Relations With Law Enforcement Agencies
11. [Policy 226](#) - Searches
12. [Policy 817](#) - Use of Scanning Equipment to Detect Weapons
13. [24 P.S. 1302.1-A](#)
14. [Policy 805](#) - Emergency Preparedness
15. 24 P.S. 1303-A
16. [22 PA Code 10.2](#)
17. [22 PA Code 10.21](#)
18. [22 PA Code 10.25](#)

Related Information:

[22 PA Code 403.1](#)

[18 Pa. C.S.A. 912](#)

[18 U.S.C. 921](#)

[18 U.S.C. 922](#)

[20 U.S.C. 7114](#)

[20 U.S.C. 7151](#)

[34 CFR Part 300](#)

[Policy 218](#) - Student Conduct and Discipline

[School District of Philadelphia Code of Conduct](#)

[Philadelphia Code of Ordinances - Title 10, Sections 10-810, 10-816, 10-825, 10-826](#)

Memorandum of Understanding between the Philadelphia Police Department and the School District of Philadelphia