

April 19, 2017

Dear Families,

Ensuring that your child learns in safe, supportive, and inclusive schools is our top priority. To improve school culture and climate, we use preventive approaches that address the real causes of a conflict. We believe it is important to reinforce positive behaviors through teachable moments. At the same time, we hold students accountable for their actions. We want them to reflect on their behavior and repair any harm done.

To build a strong base on which students can grow and thrive, today our schools are adopting an updated *Citywide Behavioral Expectations to Support Student Learning* (Discipline Code). Changes include the use of guidance interventions, support measures, and progressive discipline tailored to a student's social and emotional development. All updates are a result of a public review process that included hearings and feedback from community members like you.

I encourage you to review the Discipline Code and become familiar with the standards of behavior—and the consequences if these standards are not met. Please also discuss the standards with your child. The full Discipline Code is available in 10 languages on the Department of Education's (DOE) website (schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/DisciplineCode/default.htm) and in hard copy at school. The standards outlined in the Code apply to behavior that occurs:

- At school, before, during, and after school hours;
- While traveling on vehicles funded by the DOE;
- At school-sponsored events; and,
- Off school premises when the behavior has a negative effect on learning or endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the school community.

The Discipline Code is divided into two sections: Section A is for grades K–5 and Section B is for grades 6–12. Each section describes five levels of infractions and the range of guidance interventions and disciplinary responses that school staff can take. Possible guidance interventions include counseling, mediation, and guidance conferences. Disciplinary responses include parent conferences, detention, or suspensions, depending on the misconduct.

The Discipline Code applies to all students. It includes a Bill of Student Rights and Responsibilities as well as the Procedural Safeguards Notice. The Code also addresses protections for students with disabilities, including students presumed to have a disability.

Family engagement is an essential part of all our work, and is key to building strong schools. We value your partnership in maintaining safe and inclusive learning environments for all. Thank you for helping to make our school community better, stronger, and safer for our children. If you have any questions, please call your school administrator.

Sincerely,



Carmen Fariña
Chancellor