



August 2011
Student Rights and Responsibilities
Regulation 2601.25P

A Parent's Companion Guide

Things You Need to Know About:

Dress Code
Cell Phone Use
Rules of Conduct
Respecting Others
Expressing Yourself
Your Right to Appeal
Alcohol and Other Drug Use Violations
Weapons
Things Schools Must Report to the Police
& Other Important Topics

Grades 4-12

For additional information, refer to the current version of Regulation 2601
or contact Student Safety and Wellness Office at 571-423-4270





INTRODUCTION

Fairfax County Public Schools is committed to creating a safe, welcoming school community that stimulates intellectual curiosity, fosters respect for individual differences, inspires and enables students to achieve high academic success, lead ethical lives, and be responsible citizens. The information in the Student Rights and Responsibilities (SR&R) booklet helps students understand the right of all students to be educated in a safe environment, as well as the expectations for proper behavior. This *Parent Companion Guide to the SR&R* was developed to help guide your conversations with your child about the rights and responsibilities he or she has as a member of the school community. It is a supplementary tool, and is not intended to replace the SR&R. Please be sure you take the time to also read the full SR&R at the beginning of the year and keep it for your reference.

We invite you to work closely with your child's school so that together we can help your child learn to live and work with others. If you have questions about any of the information in this parent guide, please do not hesitate to talk to your child's teacher or principal. Additional resources can also be found at www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/ssaw/SRR.

STUDENT RIGHTS

Right to Safe Learning Environment

Students have the right to expect a safe school environment and to belong to a community that values and promotes learning.

Right to Respect

Students have a right to expect courtesy, fairness, and respect from members of the school staff and other students. They have a right to expect that their property will be safe and will not be damaged. Problems in this area should be reported to the teacher or school administrator.

Right to Expression

Students have the right to exercise freedom of expression and to address policies publicly or privately through speech, assembly, petition, and other lawful means. Students may advocate change in any law, policy, or regulation. (For additional details, check out the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R, page 11.)

If your child would like to display literature around school, he or she must go through their student government. (Get the details on step-by-step procedures in the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R, page 12.)

Right to Complain

If students believe that conditions of the school or decisions made by school staff members are not in the best interest of students, they may present complaints to teachers, counselors, or school administrators, who shall make themselves available or schedule appointments to hear these complaints. (For additional details, check out the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R, page 15.)

Right to Appeal

If a student, or a parent or guardian disputes a school decision to suspend a student they have the right to appeal to the school principal. If the student is recommended for expulsion, appeals are heard by the Hearings Office and sometimes by the School Board. (For additional details on short- and long-term suspension and expulsion, check the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R, page 28-31.)

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have the responsibility...

- To let school staff members know of any behavior that may cause danger to anyone.
- To respect the authority of all staff members.
- To respect the rights and property of all students and staff members.
- To not use words or pictures that are obscene, violent, or disruptive to the school environment.
- To resolve problems with other students in a **calm** and **peaceful** manner. Students can use conflict resolution or peer mediation for this purpose.
- To follow and comply with all rules and regulations for behavior at all school-sponsored activities.
- To follow the complaint procedures outlined in the current version of Regulation 2601, *Student Rights and Responsibilities*, SR&R.
- To attend school. Students must come to school on time and follow their assigned daily schedules, unless properly excused by the principal or authorized representative. If a student accumulates five unexcused days of absence in a school year, the student will be referred to the attendance officer. (Additional details can be found on the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R, page 10.)
- To be respectful during the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence. Students are expected to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and to observe one minute of silence on a daily basis at the direction of the principal, unless they or their parents or guardians object to participation in such activities. (Additional details can be found on the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R, page 10.)





Dress Code

Wearing clothing to show off the latest styles and trends may not be appropriate during school hours. Students and parents and/or guardians should review the following dress code about what to wear to school so that a student's wardrobe does not violate School Board policy.

Students are expected to dress appropriately for a K-12 educational environment. Any clothing that interferes with or disrupts the educational environment is unacceptable. Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene, or clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct, such as gang symbols, the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia; or clothing that contains threats is prohibited. (See page 19, section II.A.2.I. for additional information regarding gang-related clothing.) Clothing should fit, be neat and clean, and conform to standards of safety, good taste, and decency. Clothing that exposes cleavage, private parts, the midriff, or undergarments, or that is otherwise sexually provocative is prohibited. Examples of prohibited clothing include, but are not limited to, sagging or low-cut pants, low-cut necklines that show cleavage, tube tops, halter tops, backless blouses or blouses with only ties in the back, studded belts, chain belts, clothing constructed of see-through material, and head coverings unless required for religious or medical purposes.

If a student requires accommodation for religious beliefs, disabilities, or other good causes, the student or parent or guardian should contact the principal.

Students not complying with this code will be asked to cover the noncompliant clothing, change clothes, or go home. Repeated infractions will result in disciplinary action. The current version of Regulation 2613 provides additional details.

Important note

- **Certain violations of the SR&R also violate Virginia laws (for example, those involving alcohol, drugs, weapons, assaults, etc.) and will be reported to the Fairfax County Police Department. (For additional violations of law that must be reported to police, see the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R, page 26.)**

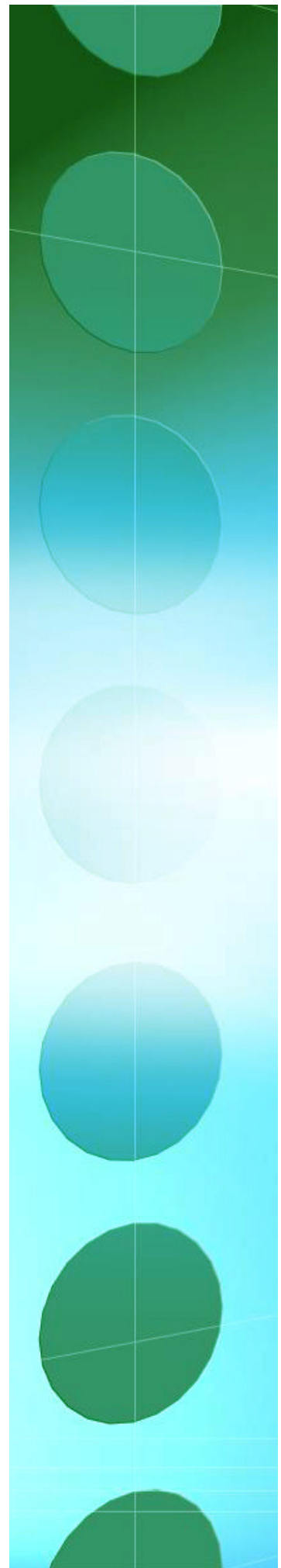
The following items cannot be brought onto school property. If a student violates this School Board policy, he or she will be disciplined as stated in the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R, with possible suspension or expulsion.

Refer to SR&R page

• Fireworks	19
• Tobacco products	20
• Alcohol or nonalcoholic beer	21
• Over-the-counter medication (must be kept in clinic)	20
• Inhalant	21
• Drug paraphernalia	22
• Prescription drugs (must be kept in clinic)	22-23
• Marijuana, imitation marijuana, synthetic marijuana	22-23
• Any controlled substances	22-23
• Any imitation controlled substances	22-23
• Any weapon	24-25
• Any item intended to be used as a weapon	25-26
• Any look-alike gun or look-alike weapon	26

If a student is involved in the following activities, the student will be disciplined by school officials:

- ◆ **Cursing, gesturing, harassing, or verbally abusing anybody**
A student cannot insult anyone for **any** reason including:
 - ☆ race
 - ☆ religion
 - ☆ gender
 - ☆ creed
 - ☆ national origin
 - ☆ personal or physical attribute
 - ☆ disability
 - ☆ intellectual ability
 - ☆ matters related to sexuality, including sexual orientation
- ◆ **Illegally using or accessing computers** or software, telecommunications, and related technologies; being involved in willful acts that cause physical, financial, or other harm; disrupting information technology in any manner
- ◆ **Fighting** or displaying behavior that endangers others (If a student stops to watch or encourage someone to fight, that student will be disciplined too.)
- ◆ **Speaking or writing vulgar, profane, obscene, or patently offensive language**
- ◆ **Participating in forgery, cheating, plagiarism, or other types of dishonest behavior**
- ◆ **Willfully disrupting school or school-sponsored activities**
- ◆ **Defying the authority** of any staff member by talking back or being disrespectful
- ◆ **Bullying behavior**
- ◆ **Threatening others** orally, nonverbally, electronically (e-mail, text messaging, etc.), or by any other means
- ◆ **Gambling in any form**
- ◆ **Participating in gang activity including** trying to get someone to join a gang (recruiting); organizing gang activities; displaying hand signs; assisting, facilitating, or promoting gang-related activities
- ◆ **Assaulting or threatening to assault a student, a staff member, or any other person on school property**
- ◆ **Hazing**



KEEP THIS IN MIND...

If a student damages school property, the student **and** his or her parents or guardians will be required to pay for the damage.

The principal will take disciplinary action if student is involved in the following:

- Vandalism, setting fire, making a false threat to bomb, burning, damaging, or destroying school property.
- Stealing school property.
- Stealing another person's property or money by force, fear, or other means.
- Stealing or attempting to steal another student's prescription medication.
- Are on school property without permission or fail to leave when asked to do so by a school staff member.

CELL PHONES

A student may possess a cell phone on school property, including a school bus, during the school day and while in after-school activities; however, the cell phone must be **OUT OF SIGHT AND TURNED OFF**. Only the principal or the principal's designee can give a student permission to use the phone during the school day. FCPS does not assume responsibility for any personal items brought to school, including cell phones, except for those that the school confiscates. Damage or loss are the responsibility of students and their parent(s) or guardian(s).

CELL PHONES CANNOT BE USED ON SCHOOL BUSES WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION!!!

For additional details, refer to the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R, page 19.

This booklet is a shortened version of Regulation 2601, *Student Rights and Responsibilities*, SR&R. All students are governed by the detailed information found in the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R. In the event of a conflict between this document and the SR&R, the SR&R shall be controlling in all cases.

As noted in the letter to parents and/or guardians on the front of Regulation 2601, parents and/or guardians should review the Rules of Conduct listed in the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R.

For additional information concerning items in this booklet, refer to the current version of Regulation 2601, SR&R, or you may refer to the following web site:

<http://www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/ssaw/SRR>

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

Keep in mind that a school principal may impose a short-term suspension and recommend a long-term suspension and/or expulsion in any situation involving prohibited conduct. In addition, the specific facts and circumstances (including the number and nature of prior violations) might alter the consequences imposed in a given case.

Discretion of the Principal

(Consequences range from an intervention without suspension to a recommendation for expulsion.)

- Threat to assault a staff member; threat or assault of another student
- Disruption, disobedience, insubordination, defiance of school officials
- Endangering well-being of others; fighting, bullying
- Possession or display of obscenity; indecent exposure
- Cursing, verbal abuse, including gestures
- Fireworks: use or possession
- Forgery, cheating, plagiarism, dishonesty
- Gambling
- Improper touching
- Unauthorized or illegal use or disruption of information technology
- Unauthorized laser devices
- Gang-related activities
- Portable communication device
- Attendance violations
- Use or possession of nonprescription drugs
- Vandalism of school property; bomb threats
- Unauthorized presence
- Tobacco violations
- Hazing
- Harassment based on race, disability, sexual preference, etc. (See page 19 of SR&R for

Suspension of Up to Ten Days

- Use, possession, or under the influence of alcohol, inhalants, or nonalcoholic beer
- Under the influence of marijuana or other controlled substance (first offense)
- Possession of drug paraphernalia (first offense)

Suspension of Ten Days and Mandatory Recommendation for Expulsion

- Physical assault on staff member or members with injury
- Sexual assault or battery
- Mob assault
- Distribution or manufacture of alcohol or inhalants
- Possession of marijuana, imitation marijuana, synthetic marijuana or an imitation controlled substance*
- Being under the influence of prescription drugs not prescribed to user, within 12 months of a prior offense
- Distribution or manufacture of a controlled or imitation controlled substance, marijuana, imitation marijuana, synthetic marijuana, or drug paraphernalia
- Unauthorized possession of a statutory weapon or any object used as a weapon
- Under the influence of marijuana or other controlled substance within 12 months of a prior offense
- Illegal use of prescription drugs (first offense)

*Note: A student found in possession of his or her own prescription medication, a review shall be conducted by the school principal who may determine that special circumstances exist and a disciplinary action other than a recommendation for expulsion is appropriate.

