

# School Disciplinary Procedures

## **DISCIPLINE IS NOT ABOUT BUSTING**

The biblical term suggests that discipline is a process of turning someone toward a better way. In the WCHS community, we believe that God is most pleased when all matters of discipline result in the one being subject to discipline growing closer to God, parents, friends and school staff as a result of the problem. "While no discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful," all desire that it would "produce a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11 NIV). See Proverbs 12:17, 15:32. Often times, the process of discipline involves the application of artificial, short term consequences in order to help a person change. When change occurs, the person will not have to experience the sad and undesirable long term natural consequences of continued poor choices. (Proverbs 15:10)

At WCHS, a matter of discipline is understood as any violation of the Community Life Together Covenant.

In all matters of discipline, the student must take full responsibility for his or her own actions, regardless of the choices of others.

In all matters of discipline, the faculty and administration must treat those who have erred with a grace, kindness, and firmness that looks toward restoration. WCHS must comply with local, state and federal law. In some cases, the school is required by law to inform local law enforcement agencies of certain illegal activities. Yet even in such situations, the WCHS community still values restoration and will work toward it.

When necessary, students, faculty, and administration will partner with parents, leaders of the student's local church, and law enforcement agencies in those situations where the severity of the problem would require that those parties be involved in order to facilitate the best healing and restoration.

## **WHEN THERE IS A MATTER THAT REQUIRES DISCIPLINE, THE FOLLOWING WILL OCCUR:\***

- The problem will be discussed with the student by the teacher or administrator who observed the offense.
- The next step may require that the teacher inform the principal of the problem, and the principal will then assume the key role in the process.
- At this point in the process, parents will then most likely be contacted and their input sought. Then, under the guidance of the administration, an appropriate plan for any discipline and restoration will be worked out. This could include requiring counseling, mentoring by a youth leader, local church and home accountability, detention, in-school or out-of school suspension, academic penalties, athletic or extra-curricular ineligibility and in some extreme cases, expulsion.
- The nature of some offenses requires that the administration inform the faculty and/or student body of the offense and the steps taken related to its resolution. This is done in order to avoid the rumors that spread and ultimately hinder

restoration. The appropriate faculty will be notified of probations and of any other disciplinary action that will impact the student's academic life.

- Parents, students and faculty must understand that just as no two people are exactly alike, not all discipline will be exactly alike. Factors such as previous offenses, response to previous discipline, confession vs. "being caught" are all taken into consideration. Discipline will differ from person to person, even in the case of similar offenses. The goal is to see a heart changed by an encounter with the Word of God ministered by the people of God. It is possible for grace to be abused and for unprincipled people to take advantage of the process. That is a risk that the WCHS community is more than willing to take because that is the same risk Jesus took. The very ones Jesus sought to redeem were the very ones who caused His suffering and shame.

### **FOR SOME THINGS THERE CAN BE NO DISCUSSION (AUTOMATIC CONSEQUENCES)\***

Because of their very nature, some breeches of the Covenant, require discipline with automatic consequences (e.g. detention, in-school or out-school suspension, academic penalties, athletic or extra curricular ineligibility, probation, or expulsion) will occur regardless of the circumstances. Such offenses include, but are not limited to: violation of the honor code, the possession, sale, or use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and their related products or paraphernalia, sexual harassment, overt or obscene sexual behavior, the use of or possession of weapons (real, toy, or replicas), the use or possession of explosives of any kind (including firecrackers), hazing, acts or threats of violence against another person, theft, hacking into or misusing school computers, setting fires or turning in false alarms.

### **DETENTIONS AT WCHS**

Just as the possibility of a traffic ticket encourages us to drive according to the rules of the road, so also detentions are a negative incentive to be diligent in matters pertaining to promptness, dress and basic school conduct. They are negative consequences that are attached to certain actions or patterns of action. They are not designed to address matters of the heart. The discipline process above is designed to do that. Few people in the history of the world have gone without a detention or two during their high school careers. All of us get careless in our habits and patterns. Detentions, like traffic tickets, help to remind us when we have grown overly careless.

All detentions must be served the day that they are issued OR on the next detention day. Detention days are Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday. Detentions begin promptly at 3:10 and end at 3:55. There is no late admittance without a pass. If a student receives a detention on Monday, then it must be served on either Monday or Tuesday. If a student receives a detention on Wednesday, it must be served either Wednesday or Monday. If a student receives a detention on Thursday or Friday, it must be served on Monday. Other arrangements may be made, but they will necessitate serving an additional detention as well.

*A detention is a negative consequence. During detentions, detainees may not talk, read or study. They may only sit quietly. From time to time, work details will be formed, and detainees will be required to serve on these details.*

*Inherent in a detention is inconvenience regarding after school practices, rehearsals, games and jobs. When activities and patterns that result in detentions are avoided, the inconveniences of detention cease to be an issue.*

The third detention in a semester lowers the “Community Life Grade” to **A-**. Both student and parents will be informed about the “Community Life Grade” grade reductions and the \$10.00 fines that will accompany further detentions (these fines go into the activity account and are used for things that benefit the school community). The sixth detention will be accompanied by disciplinary probation and a CLG of **D**. The seventh will result as a 3-hour Saturday school, a \$20.00 fine, and a CLG of **F**.

### **DISCIPLINARY PROBATION**

A student may be placed on disciplinary probation if he/she has received 6 detentions, or 9 dress code write-ups, or a grade of **D** or less for the “Community Life Grade” in a given semester. Other violations or offenses might also result in disciplinary probation.

The following conditions apply to students on disciplinary probation:

- The period of probation will begin the semester following the one in which the problems occurred. In the case of offenses or violations, the probation can begin immediately.
- The student and his/her parents are required to meet with the Director of Student Services to develop a plan for behavior improvement. Part of the plan may include the student’s removal from participation in extracurricular activities, including sports.

During the probation period, the student will be monitored by the teachers and Director of Student Services in various ways, that may include such things as:

- Monthly behavioral reports from teachers/administrators.
- Meeting with counselors to discuss behavioral issues that arise.

Repeated placement on disciplinary probation might indicate that the student’s needs may not be able to be met by WCHS. If a student is placed on disciplinary probation two consecutive semesters, an additional meeting with the Director of Student Services and principal will be required. Alternative educational plans for the student might be discussed at that time. In some cases, after due consideration of the student’s performance, effort and/or, special needs, a student may be asked to withdraw from WCHS.

## **SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS\***

A **suspension** is like having one's driver's license taken away for awhile. It is a negative consequence, more severe than a detention. Suspensions make a "louder" statement about the seriousness of the problem. "In-School" or "Out-of-School" suspensions usually carry a 1% per day reduction of the grading period grade for each class missed. Missed work may be made up, but the grade of each assignment or test will be reduced by 35% (thus, the highest grade that can be earned on any assignment is 65%.) Teachers are not obligated to give personal instruction for material missed.

Suspensions also result in an automatic C for the Community Life Grade. The student may return to class at the close of the suspension period. When a student is suspended, s/he **may not** participate in any school events (including commencement) that occur during the suspension period.

An **expulsion** is a far more serious matter. A student who has been expelled may or may not have the option of returning to school during subsequent school years. Expulsions are a result egregious or habitual violation of the Covenant, the honor code, or the law. Decisions about expulsions are based not only the presenting offense, but also on the student's attitude and pattern of conduct over the course of his or her WCHS experience.

## **APPEALS\***

From time to time there will be disagreement about the course of a disciplinary action. When such is the case, the student AND his or her parents, may appeal the decision using the procedures in the Biblical Problem Solving section that follows in this handbook. Students may not make an appeal without their parent's cooperation, nor may parents make an appeal without their student's cooperation.

## **SEEKING HELP VS. "GETTING CAUGHT" -- THERE IS A DIFFERENCE!!\***

Often, many students who find themselves in moral or spiritual difficulties or stuck in sinful patterns desire to seek help, but are not sure if "seeking help" will be its own punishment. Students are encouraged to seek help with problems or sinful patterns in their lives by seeking discipleship that will lead to help and healing. Students may seek this discipleship by talking with a teacher or the Biblical counselor. When such help is sought, the teachers and Biblical counselors are under legal obligation to report matters of alleged or suspected sexual and physical abuse to Franklin County Children's Services (or to the county of the student's residence.)<sup>1</sup> Otherwise, the student should see this method of seeking help as "safe." Names will not be shared with any one unless the student or another person's life or health is in danger. If however, over time, a student fails to resolve the problem, other steps may need to be taken and other people, including parents, may need to be informed, and more formal discipline might also need to be imposed.

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<sup>1</sup> The law does not give mandatory reporters (teachers, administrators, counselors, religious workers etc.) the option of adjudicating the validity of the report or allegation.