

BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT PROCEDURE

PROCEDURE CODE C15P: STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Summary

BSD utilizes restorative approaches whenever possible to respond to challenging student behaviors. This procedure provides guidelines for how these behaviors should be addressed and links to other relevant policies and procedures about student conduct. BSD seeks to foster an environment of kindness, respect, integrity, and accountability for all. We hold students to high expectations while offering them appropriate levels of support to reach these expectations, and explicitly teach these expectations to students.

Appropriate Behavior

BSD uses a [Restorative Code of Conduct](#) to outline expectations for all students, staff, and community members of BSD. It is the responsibility of students to:

- Exercise and practice self-awareness.
- Understand and follow school expectations, including the Cell Phone Policy, Restorative Code of Conduct, and their school's Student Handbook.
- Behave in a manner that focuses on academic success.
- Be responsible and accountable for meeting school expectations.
- Take care of school property.
- Help build a positive community

Inappropriate Behavior

Certain behaviors may result in a student being suspended from school. For a list of suspendable offenses, please see [Section V of the Restorative Code of Conduct](#); please note that these are behaviors that could warrant a suspension but do not always automatically result in a suspension. Not all unexpected behaviors warrant a suspension. When possible, building administrators will utilize alternatives to suspension for behaviors that do not require a suspension.

There are specific policies and procedures outlining expectations and consequences for the following: Suspension Procedures; Prevention of Harassment, Hazing & Bullying of Students Procedures; Prevention of Sexual Harassment As Prohibited by Title IX; Tobacco-Prohibition; Firearms Procedure (currently in DRAFT form); BSD Behavioral Threat Assessment Procedure (currently in DRAFT form). Please see [BSD's Policies and Procedures](#) page for more information.

Interrogations and Searches

School officials may search a student, a student's locker, or a student's property for contraband or evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or school rules, only upon reasonable suspicion.

Searches of a student's outer clothing, pockets, book bags, cars, and purses may be conducted if reasonable suspicion that the student has violated a law or school rule exists. Areas such as lockers, which are owned by the District and jointly controlled by the District and the student, may be searched if reasonable suspicion exists to believe that contraband or other evidence of violation of a law or rule is inside the lockers.

Police Involvement: If a search or interrogation is being conducted at the request or under the direction or control of law enforcement authorities, the search or interrogation shall be conducted by the law enforcement authorities themselves, under criminal law standards rather than under the provisions of this policy. (See H10 Relations with Law Enforcement for more details). Any sale of contraband shall be referred to the appropriate enforcement agency. The law enforcement authorities may be called in cases where the student may be a threat to themselves and/or to others, or where a criminal law may have been violated.

Seizure of Contraband: As used in this procedure, the term “contraband” shall include items which are inherently illegal (e.g., illicit drugs) and items possessed in contravention of law or school rules (for example, stolen items or weapons). If a search yields contraband, such materials shall be confiscated and turned over to the proper authorities for ultimate disposition. Seized contraband will not be returned to the student or parent/guardian.

Student Substance Use Policy

Please refer to Policy [C2 Student Alcohol and Drugs](#).

Corporal Punishment

The use of corporal punishment, that is, the intentional infliction of physical pain for purposes of discipline, is expressly prohibited. The use of necessary and reasonable force to restrain and/or to protect the student, other persons, property, and, when necessary, to quell a disturbance, is not prohibited. In the event of any incident in which any employee has allegedly administered corporal punishment to a student, principals and directors shall send a report to the superintendent. After receiving the report, the Superintendent shall investigate the matter and administer appropriate action. Part of the investigation will include an interview with the employee concerned. Results of the investigation will be discussed with the employee concerned. BSD also follows the AOE guidance around using the Form 4500 for any incidents of restraint or seclusion of a student.

Property Damage and Vandalism

For minor instances of vandalism and/or intentional property damage under \$400, students should engage in a restorative process to determine how they will repair the damage through restorative reparative work. When possible, this should be done in conjunction with directly affected parties, such as Property Services staff. This should be determined through a planning meeting held with the family, building administrator, student, and case manager (as applicable). Students should begin their restorative work no longer than a week following the incident, and a set number of hours should be agreed upon during the planning meeting. **Restorative reparative hours will not count towards high school community service requirements.** If a student refuses to engage in the restorative meeting and/or process, suspension may be utilized. All parties involved are equally culpable and should be held equally accountable. If there is a continued pattern of behavior, escalating consequences will be utilized.

In instances of major intentional property damage and/or vandalism over \$400, the student will be suspended. For damage over \$1,500, the student will be suspended and BSD will refer the case to law enforcement. The superintendent will be informed of damage over \$1,500 and will be included in determining the plan for re-entry. As part of re-entry for suspension related to property damage or vandalism, a plan for restorative reparative work must be established, and a safety plan developed.

Property Services must be immediately notified of damage over \$1,500 to assess the damage, make a written estimate of the cost of the damage, and take photos/documentation of the damage.

If a student presents an immediate danger to themselves or others while engaging in major property damage, law enforcement will be contacted.

Every incident of intentional property damage must be documented in the school’s referral form. For damage over \$1,500 or for any incident where outside agencies are contacted, the incident must be followed up with a Critical Incident Report as well as documentation in the school’s referral form.

In incidents where a student damages personal property of BSD staff or other students intentionally, the person who has been impacted may file a police report and/or work with the school administration to offer restorative options such as reparative work.

Clerical Information

BSD Version:	<i>BSD C15 Student Conduct and Discipline Procedure</i>
Date Adopted:	<i>July 10, 2026</i>
Legal Reference(s):	<i>16 V.S.A. §1161a (discipline) 16 V.S.A. §1162 (suspension and expulsion) 20 U.S.C. §§1400 et seq.(IDEA) 29 U.S.C. §794 (Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) VT State Board of Education Manual of Rules & Practices §4311, §4312, §4313; § 2120.8.12, §2122.1, §4500.</i>
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