

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

POLICY

The Fitzgerald School District recognizes its responsibilities to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students. We further recognize that misuse, abuse and dependency on Illegal Substances, as defined under the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, is a serious problem in society and among our youth. Since drug related problems interfere with school behavior, student learning and the fullest possible development of each student, it is believed that schools must share in the responsibility along with the home, society and the individual in seeking solutions.

Recognizing that chemical dependency is a progressive illness, the Board deems it appropriate:

1. To provide as part of its curriculum programs designed to prevent the misuse and abuse of harmful, mind-altering chemicals which lead to such dependency.
2. To acknowledge its responsibility to intervene and offer assistance to students displaying signs of harmful involvement.
3. To provide support groups for students who are affected by chemical dependency to the extent that such group facilitators are available.

The Board also recognizes that the possession, trafficking in, sale and/or use by a student or students of alcohol or Illegal Substances on school property or at a school-sponsored event is wrong and harmful and is a direct violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will be dealt with accordingly. Depending on the nature and/or severity of the situation, a student involved in the possession, trafficking in, sale and/or use of an Illegal Substance or substances may be referred for appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion under the terms and conditions set forth in the Student Code of Conduct.

Health problems are primarily the responsibility of the home and community. However, because substance abuse problems interfere with school behavior and student learning, the following guidelines have been established.

GUIDELINES

I. Role of the Building Administrator and Special Education Director

- A. The role of the building administrator and special education director will include:
 1. Acting as a contact person for those wishing to express concern about a student.

2. Working with mental health staff (social worker, psychologist, counselor) to provide appropriate interventions.
3. Coordinating curriculum

II. Training Sessions

The district shall provide training sessions for appropriate district personnel to encourage awareness about and prevention of chemical dependency among students and the problems students may have as a result of chemical dependency in their families.

III. Curriculum

- A. Recognizing that chemical dependency is an illness, curriculum stressing prevention of chemical dependency shall be continued or instituted in all divisions: elementary, middle and high school.
- B. The curriculum shall be reviewed on a regular basis and modified when needed.

IV. Intervention

A. Definition

If a student is referred for possible chemical abuse or dependency or if a family's chemical dependency affects a student's overall school performance, the Building Administrator or Special Education Director and other designated personnel shall meet to determine whether and what intervention is appropriate.

B. Courses of Action

1. Collection and review of all pertinent information.
2. A meeting to share concerns with the student, family or guardian to encourage action.
3. Presentation to parents of information regarding agencies conducting assessments, individual and/or family counseling agencies and other outside agencies that provide help.
4. Informing other school personnel when appropriate.
5. Notification of appropriate outside agencies such as police, Department of Social Services, Children's Protective Services, etc.

V. Violation

A. If a student is apprehended violating the Board Policy on Illegal Substances in a manner other than set forth in Section V(D), below, the following will occur:

1. Suspension

The student will be suspended from school for a period of up to ten (10) days.

2. Readmission

The length of the suspension will be reduced if the student and his/her parents agree to an assessment at an agency designated by the school, a release of information, and follow-up treatment, if recommended.

B. Chemical Awareness Program, Referral

If an in-school chemical awareness program is appropriate and available, the student will be required to participate or serve the remainder of the suspension.

C. Second or Further Violation of Policy

1. Expulsion

Upon a second violation of the policy on Illegal Substances other than as set forth in Section V(D), below, the student will be expelled from school for thirty-five (35) school days or for the remainder of the semester; whichever time period is greater, to be readmitted under the procedure outlined below.

2. Readmission

- a. Submitting to assessment, a release of information and, if recommended, treatment will be required for readmission to school.
- b. The student must remain in treatment until released by the treatment center.
- c. Appropriate law enforcement agencies will be notified.
- d. Support groups - The District will provide appropriate support groups for students who are affected by chemical dependency to the extent that group facilitators are available.

D. Sale, Distribution, Purchase or Trafficking in Illegal Substances

1. First violation – expulsion for thirty-five (35) school days or for the remainder of the semester; whichever time period is greater.
2. Second violation - expulsion for remainder of year up to permanent expulsion.
3. Note: For any infraction involving Illegal Substances, depending on the nature and/or severity of the infraction, the student or students involved may face immediate referral for severe disciplinary consequences up to and including expulsion.

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