

Civility in the Workplace

The Sequim School Board believes finds that a safe, civil environment of mutual respect and orderly conduct contributes to a quality educational environment. Conversely, uncivil conduct, interferes with employees' ability to accomplish their work and a school's ability to educate its students.

The board commits the district to the core value of mutual respect for each person regardless of individual differences or characteristics. The district expects this value to be manifested in the daily behavior of all constituents. When differences exist, stakeholders will use clear, concise, and courteous communication with the goal of arriving at a goodwill solution. Uncivil conduct on district property or at district-sponsored activities by school directors, staff, parents, volunteers, contractors, or visitors is prohibited.

Expectations of Stakeholders (Board of Directors, Employees, Parents, Volunteers, Contractors, and Visitors)

In support of this policy, the board requires its members and all stakeholders to:

- Treat each other and students with dignity and respect;
- Exercise reasonable, good judgment in handling interpersonal disputes;
- Exercise respect, courtesy, and concern for the dignity and cultural background of others;
- Refrain from abusive language;
- Model respectful problem-solving;
- Abstain from actions or behaviors that may provoke fear, anger, frustration, or alienation;
- Use clear, concise, and courteous oral and written communication to arrive at goodwill solutions to disagreements;
- Extend common courtesy to others such as saying please and thank you;
- Practice civility in all conversations and behavior;
- Be respectful of others even when in a disagreement;
- Address incivility when it is observed; and
- Seek to understand others' points of view and cultural perceptions.

Definition of Uncivil Conduct

For the purposes of this policy, "uncivil conduct" includes but is not limited to, the following:

- Using vulgar, obscene or profane gestures or words;
- Using insulting or disrespectful nonverbal behaviors toward or in connection with another;
- Taunting, jeering, or inciting others to taunt or jeer an individual;
- Raising one's voice at another individual, and/or repeatedly interrupting another individual who is speaking;
- Using personal epithets or slurs,
- Gesturing or behaving in a manner that puts another in fear for their personal safety, including invading the personal space of an individual after being directed to move away, physically blocking an individual's exit from a room or location, remaining in a

district area or school area after being directed to leave, or other similar disruptive conduct.

“Uncivil conduct” does not include:

- The expression of controversial or differing viewpoints that may be offensive to some persons, so long as (1) the ideas are presented in a respectful manner and at a time and place that are appropriate, and (2) such expression does not materially disrupt, and may not be reasonably anticipated to disrupt, the educational process.
- Regular supervisory-subordinate interactions, including but not limited to, corrective action, discipline, unsatisfactory evaluations, plans for improvement, or probation.
- Professional communications between school staff and parents or guardians regarding students, including but not limited to, attendance, academic performance, discipline/conduct, or health.

Addressing Uncivil Conduct

Stakeholders are expected to:

- Calmly and politely caution or warn any speaker who is engaged in uncivil conduct. If the conduct does not cease, politely end the conversation;
- Attempt to resolve differences with another stakeholder first in a private conversation. If that is not feasible or successful, request an appropriate administrator to conduct a private conference with all parties of concern;
- Resolve complaints with a decision or action by requesting a problem-solving conference with the originator of the action or with their supervisor.
- Persons who observe or experience uncivil behavior have an obligation to intervene, share their reflection with the offender about the impact of that behavior, or report the uncivil behavior to a responsible person.
- Employees have an obligation to address reports of uncivil behavior.

Employees who engage in uncivil behavior may be subject to corrective action or discipline. Other stakeholders who engage in uncivil behavior may be subject to limitations on their access to district facilities and programs. Retaliation against those reporting allegations is also a violation of this policy.

Cross References:

1620 – The Board – Superintendent Relationship
2023 – Digital Citizenship and Media Literacy
4200 – Parent Access and Safe and Orderly Learning Environment
4220 – Complaints Concerning Staff or Programs
5010 – Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action
5011 – Sexual Harassment of District Staff Prohibited

Legal References:

RCW 38A.330.100 Additional powers of board

Management Resources: 2023 - April Policy Issue

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