

Performance Impact Analysis:
Proposed Revisions to the Code of Conduct 2025-2026

I. Proposed Action

Student Relations along with the Behavior Management Committee annually review TUSD's Code of Conduct for any revisions that might be needed. The Behavior Management Committee, which is comprised of diverse stakeholders, met monthly to analyze student disciplinary data and meet with their respective stakeholders to compile what sections needed revisions to the current TUSD Code of Conduct. Representatives from the district EDI department, TEA Leadership, ELI leadership and one representative from Senior leadership make up the District Behavior Management Committee.

Based on feedback provided, Student Relations learned that some behaviors and descriptions were not specific enough and could have the potential to lead to disproportionate consequences. This PIA is being submitted to propose the following revisions to the SY2024-25 Code of Conduct: to change Guideline #2 of the Guidelines for Applying Actions, to Insert additional verbiage for added clarification in a few violation areas, and level changes for Tobacco and Alcohol share. If these changes are approved, they will be incorporated into an updated 2025-26 Code of Conduct.

These proposed revisions align to promoting a school culture that is focused on respect and safety, decreasing variability in how consequences are issued by providing a progressive discipline model for elementary, middle, and high school students and provide clarity and consistency when addressing violations district wide.

The following are the proposed revisions to the current code of conduct:

REVISION 1. Replace the verbiage in bullet number 2 of the section called 'Guidelines for Applying Actions' (Pg. 6 of SY2024-25 COC).

Current Description

2. "Principals and assistant principals (AP's) **must communicate with Student Relations** immediately before suspending a student (or to review the use of ISI and abeyances)."

Replace with Proposed Verbiage:

2. Regional Superintendents and the Director of Student Relations will continuously review all suspensions. In the case of some level 4 and 5 offenses it is critical that the regional superintendent be contacted:

- if law enforcement or school safety was contacted
- if the offense qualifies for expulsion

- If the violation is school interruption level 4
- if there are simulated firearms

It is critical that the Regional Superintendents be involved school processes surrounding exclusion. Current guidelines only mention the department of student relations and the responsibility of behavior management for schools is a shared responsibility between the Director of Student Relations and the Regional Superintendents.

REVISION 2. Insert an additional sentence or phrase (*see red text below*) into the current description of these four violations: *Defiance and Disrespect, Defiance or Disrespect Towards Authority and Non-Compliance, Bullying, and Dangerous Items.*

Page # of COC 2024-25	Violation	Violation Description
Pg. 12	Defiance and Disrespect	Engaging in repeated behavior including, but not limited to, refusing to follow directions, talking back, or engaging in socially rude interactions. <i>Engaging in intentional behavior with another student that insults one's disability, race, color, religion/religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, or national origin or current or former immigration status which is covered in policy AC Non-discrimination.</i>
Pg. 12	Defiance or Disrespect Towards Authority and Non-Compliance	Defiance: Engaging in socially rude interactions in which there is disrespect and resistance to a staff member's directive or request. Disrespect: <i>Engaging in intentional behavior with staff that insults one's disability, race, color, religion/religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, or national origin or current or former immigration status which is covered in policy AC Non- discrimination, as well as, appearance, professionalism, general insults, insults that involve curse words, throwing objects at the staff member, destroying classroom property belonging to the staff member.</i>
Pg. 27	Bullying	Intimidating students by the real or threatened infliction of repeated physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or emotional abuse, or through attacks on the property of another, or when such act(s) interfere with the authority of the school system to maintain order. It may include but not be limited to actions such as <i>Engaging in intentional behavior with another student that insults one's disability, race, color, religion/religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, or national origin or current or</i>

		former immigration status which is covered in policy AC Non-discrimination. Verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, including ethnically based or sex or gender-based verbal put-downs, and extortion of money and/ or possessions. Bullying can be physical in form (e.g., pushing, hitting, kicking, spitting, stealing); verbal (e.g., making threats, taunting, teasing, name-calling); non-verbal/ cyber-bullying (e.g., text messages, email, social networking-such as, but not limited to “Twitter”); or psychological (e.g., social exclusion, spreading rumors, manipulating socialrelationships). Knowingly submitting a false report of bullying shall subject the student to discipline.
Pg. 40	Dangerous Items	Possessing a knife with a blade length of less than 2.5 inches (this does not include a butter knife). laser pointer, letter opener, mace/pepper spray, razor blade/box cutter, simulated knife, tear gas, firecrackers, smoke or stink bombs, gas, lighter fluid, or other dangerous items (anything under the circumstances in which it is used, attempted to be used, or threatened to be used is readily capable of causing death or serious physical injury). Mandatory report to law enforcement if under the circumstances in which it is used, attempted to be used is readily capable of causing death or serious physical injury.

Currently in the COC, knives with a blade of 2.5 inches or less is considered a level 3 violation. A common butter knife is approximately 2.5 inches. We are recommending that a butter knife be excluded from the dangerous item category. We have had multiple school sites where students qualified for suspension because they brought a butter knife to school so they could literally butter bread.

REVISION 3: Lowering the Action Level for 2 Tobacco Share and Alcohol Share

Student Relations proposes that Tobacco Share and Alcohol Share violations be lowered from the current level 5 to a level 4 violation. Lowering these two violations aligns with the District’s efforts to support less exclusionary disciplinary practices.

Violation	Current Level	Recommended Level	Grade Level(s)
Tobacco Share (Pg. 11, 22, 33)	5	4	All
Alcohol Share (Pg. 11, 22,33)	5	4	All

Lowering the level of Tobacco and Alcohol share would then match marijuana sharing which is a level 4. This recommendation was made because currently if a student shares an illegal substance, it is a level 5 violation and expulsion can be recommended, and the student can be suspended for 180 days. In the spirit of providing support for our students, as they struggle with substance misuse, it is critical that we get them engaged with school as much as possible. Being long term suspended for a level 5 violation is more punitive than supportive. 4, we have the option to decrease the days of suspension and therefore take a more supportive approach to assisting the students with substance misuse.

REVISION 3: Increasing the Action Level for Truancy

Violation	Current Level	Recommended Level	Age Level(s)
Truancy (Pg.34)	1	2	6 th grade-12 th grade

Stakeholders have requested that we revisit the truancy violation, and that the offense have consequences that progress to consecutive In school Intervention days. There is no opportunity in progression with this change in level for out of school suspension without district approval. The AIM is to provide consequences for truant behavior and still keep students in school.

II. Issues

Stakeholders have asked the District Behavior Management Committee to revisit certain violation areas for potential revisions. Revisions are necessary because certain violation levels and wording in the current code of conduct do not sufficiently provide what is needed for students and staff to feel safe and supported in our schools.

Stakeholders have requested that the District Behavior Management Committee address tardy and truancy policy. Our high-risk learners continue to struggle with chronic absenteeism. By creating a separate consequence progression chart, we hope to both ensure students stay on campus with appropriate consequences for their actions.

The use of Derogatory slurs has been of concern to our parent and staff. The student-to-student defiance and disrespect violation language did not specifically name the use of derogatory slurs as part of the violation. Neither did the level 3 violation for defiance and disrespect for staff. By aligning the language in the code of conduct with policy AC we are able specifically name the behaviors that constitute derogatory slurs.

III. Objectives

- A. Objective:** Decrease the number of violations in the areas of derogatory slurs and tardies and truancy for all students.

Why: Stakeholder groups expressed concerns in both the area of tardies and truancy and derogatory terms. The use of derogatory slurs falls under the violation of defiance and disrespect. This is the 3rd highest violation that occurs in the district. School sites still struggle with the level 2 tardy and truancy violation in terms of enforcement.

Measurement: This will be measured through Synergy reporting of incidents involving the violations of defiance and disrespect and bullying. Tardy and truancy numbers will be tracked both through the MTSS attendance system and violations involving tardies and truancy to gauge impact.

- B. Objective:** Re-level violations for alcohol and tobacco sharing to match the level 4 violation of marijuana share.

Why: Currently students receive more days of exclusion for alcohol and tobacco share which is currently a level 5 than they do for the share of marijuana.

Measurement: Monthly suspension rates will be monitored for violations for illicit drug share to determine district wide impact.

- C. Objective:** Eliminate the wording of the use of a butter knife under dangerous weapons to not increase exclusionary consequences for students who have no intent to harm others.

Why: Administrators have utilized suspension for students who have had butter knives and had no intent to harm others and simply wanted to butter their bread. This is exclusion unnecessarily since it is not truly a dangerous weapon.

Measurement: Monthly suspension rates will be monitored for dangerous items level 3 to determine district wide impact.

- D. Objective:** Create guidelines for administrators to follow in which both the Department of Student Relations and the regional superintendents monitor and provide guidance on all suspensible offenses.

Why: By creating a guideline in which the Department of Student Relations and the regional superintendents work together, site administrators are supported and

guided in a more comprehensive manner which in turn supports a safe student environment at our schools.

Measurement: Regional Superintendents will continue to receive disciplinary reports every week from the Department of Student Relations and the Director of Student Relations will meet with regional superintendents a minimum of once a month.

IV. USP Program Background

Section VI. A of the Unitary Status Plan, entered by the Court in 2013, called upon the district to create an inclusive and supportive environment in its schools, keep students in classroom settings as often as practicable, and reduce discipline disparities by race/ethnicity. The bulk of the district's student disciplinary policy and practice was embedded within the student handbook, "Guidelines for Student Rights and Responsibilities" (GSRR). The GSRR design and format originally was introduced in the 2008-09 school year. A new code of conduct was approved in SY2018-19 along with a name change from GSRR to Student Code of Conduct. The following year, several changes were made - specifically to address and reduce exclusionary discipline for all students, but particularly for African American students who experienced the greatest levels of disproportionality. Minimal changes were made to the Student Code of Conduct until SY 2022-23.

In Fall of SY2022, a Code of Conduct Committee was formed to start an official process to improve the Code of Conduct based on stakeholder input, which would include surveys and public forums. This process included the voices of 9,647 stakeholders and 22 representatives of a Code of Conduct Committee. As a result of this process, revisions to the Code of Conduct were adopted by the Board in June of 2023. Since then, the Student Code of Conduct has been reviewed annually, to revise for language change or clarifications and/or level changes for specific violations which Student Relations and the District Management Committee deemed necessary.

V. Impact Analysis: Impact on Protected Classes.

A. Impact on Effectiveness of USP Program or Activity

The anticipated impact of the revisions to the code of conduct should be positive in decreasing subjectivity in how consequences are issued, support a less punitive approach to specific disciplinary violations and create a consistent discipline practices district wide and promote a safe and productive learning environment in our schools.

Impact 1. Decrease the subjectivity in issuing consequences and therefore also decrease implicit bias for race when issuing exclusionary consequences affecting risk ratios for students of all ethnicities.

The attached report shows the top violations for students' district wide and shares the risk ratio for all ethnicities.

https://tusd1my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/melanie_chiappini_tusd1org/EfBApanxqPpPvQcXZxVKHX8BlZFTfr20DHLUTl2VtfDN2g?e=N4aTAW

Risk ratios for Hispanic students, Native American students, and Asian Pacific Students have been consistently proportional with some variation each quarter to White/Anglo students in terms of participation in incidents district wide.

Risk ratios for African American students have not increased significantly from the school year 2023-2024 compared to 2024-2025. In fact, we have seen a consistent decrease and there have been multiple weeks where there has been no risk ratio for African American student's district wide.

This is the first year we have had instances in which there has been no risk ratio for African American students.

Impact 2. In our monthly violation report, we anticipate showing a trend in which recidivism for consequences related to tardies, truancy, derogatory slurs and illicit drug use decrease.

B. Impact on Other District Programs or Obligations under the USP

- 1. Compliance:** Revisions in the Code of Conduct will continue to comply with USP requirements.
- 2. Student Assignment:** No impact is anticipated.
- 3. Transportation:** No impact is anticipated.
- 4. Admin/Certified Staff:** The recommended revisions should positively impact retention and recruitment because specific revisions specifically support a respectful school climate for staff and students. If the impression of future TUSD Educators is that we promote a safe and supportive learning environment for teachers and students, it can be easier to recruit staff as well.
- 5. Quality of Education:** The revisions in the Code of Conduct should positively impact students' quality of education. Consistent and clear protocols, procedures, and actions that address student behavior provide a more safe and academically focused learning environment. When students feel safe on their campus, achievement improves.
- 6. Discipline:** These revisions will decrease variability in how consequences are issued and provide clarity and consistency when addressing violations district wide which positively impacts a school culture that focuses on respect and safety.
- 7. Family and Community Engagement:** No impact is anticipated.
- 8. Extracurricular Activities:** No impact is anticipated.

9. Facilities and Technology: No impact is anticipated.


10. Accountability and Transparency: No impact is anticipated

C. Data Sources

The following are the key data sources (links) used to support the need for the revisions detailed in this PIA.

[2023 Code of Conduct Survey Results \(staff\)](#)

 [C o C Proposed Revisions SY24.25](#)

 [District Behavior Management Team Survey final 3.pdf](#)

[Student Forum Feedback](#)

D. Assumptions.

The assumptions underlying the revision recommendations for the Code of Conduct are:

- consistent protocols, procedures, and actions are specifically outlined for how to address student behavior will positively impact safe and academically focused learning environments.
- variability in practice will decrease which will positively impact safe and academically focused learning environments.
- Utilizing a consequence progression model will decrease decisions made with implicit bias.
- Incidents of student conduct remain similar year to year.

E. Research Based Sources

The following are neighboring school district's links to their Code of Conducts that were reviewed for ways they described violations and action levels.

[Tucson Unified School District Code of Conduct](#)

[Flowing Wells Unified School District Student Handbook](#)

[Amphitheater School District](#)

[Sunnyside School District](#)

[Marana Unified School District Handbook](#)

Educational Articles Reviewed:

These articles provided the department of student relations with information that could be shared with stakeholders.

[The Impact of Codes of Conducts on Stakeholders by Wayne R. Newman](#)

[Students Code of Conduct: Background](#)

[https://edsource.org/wp-](https://edsource.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Noltemeyer_Ward_2015_Meta-Analysis.pdf)

[content/uploads/2018/09/Noltemeyer_Ward_2015_Meta-Analysis.pdf](https://edsource.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Noltemeyer_Ward_2015_Meta-Analysis.pdf)

Equity in Education:

These articles provided the department of student relations with strategies that could be utilized in framing discipline practices for all students.

[Educational Equity Definition — National Equity Project](#)

[9 Ways to Promote Equity in K-12 Schools | Edutopia](#)

[OECD | Equity in Education: The foundation for a more resilient future](#)

https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2023-08/2019_discipline_equity_guidelines_final.pdf

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8277150/pdf/nihms-1706891.pdf>

<https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/handle/1794/25366>

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0002831214541670>

<https://escholarship.org/content/qt7hm2456z/qt7hm2456z.pdf>

VI. Conclusion

These set of revisions focus the Code of Conduct practices in a space of collaboration with regional superintendents via our new proposed guidelines, changing levels to focus on holding students accountable while also ensuring we are supporting them to stay in school, and taking adding language that promotes positive culture and climate in school by assign specific consequences for derogatory names.

Date: 5/2/25

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Reviewed and Approved: _____