

Performance Impact Analysis:

Proposed Revisions to the Code of Conduct 2026-2027

I. Proposed Action

Student Relations, along with the District's Behavior Management Committee, annually reviews 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 with recommendations for two revisions to the current code of conduct for clearer language. If these changes are approved, they will be incorporated into an updated 2026-27 Code of Conduct.

The purpose of the proposed revisions is to promote a school culture that is more focused on respect and safety, decrease 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. Clarification of Descriptor Language The following descriptors are changes in language to the **aggression in** the Code of Conduct. By adding additional language in the descriptions in the progression of aggression violations will be more coherent and defined.

Current Description:

"Intentionally or knowingly engaging with physical contact that has a reasonable risk of resulting in **physical injury.**"

Examples: pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, slapping, and **punching with no physical injury etc.**

Similar conduct not meeting the definition of Other Aggression shall be treated as the level 2 offense of Minor Aggressive Act

Proposed Verbiage:

"Intentionally or knowingly engaging with physical contact that has a reasonable risk of resulting in **physical injury without documented injury or only with minor injury.**"

Examples: pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, slapping, and **punching.**

Revision 2: Addition of MTSS Guidelines to COC

Currently we do not have any language in the code of conduct that describes our MTSS process and procedures.

Proposed Additional Language:

MTSS is an integrated framework that uses positive interventions and supports responsive to whole child student needs. Every student receives universal classroom instruction (Tier 1). Some students need additional instruction (Tier 2), most often in small groups. A fewer number of students need more intensive interventions and supports (Tier 3).

How Does TUSD Implement MTSS?

Identifying student needs

Schools use consistent information, such as academic data, attendance, and behavior records, to determine which students may benefit from extra support. Using the same criteria across the district helps ensure fairness and equity for all students.

Providing targeted support

Once a student is identified, the school puts specific supports in place based on the student's needs. These supports are research-based and designed to help the student improve.

Checking progress regularly

The school checks the student's progress every 1–2 weeks. This helps staff see what is working, make changes if needed, and ensure the student is making steady improvement.

Team communication and collaboration

School teams meet regularly to talk about student progress and make decisions together. This shared approach helps ensure students receive consistent and coordinated support. In alignment with TUSD's district wide MTSS intervention practices, the following can be utilized within a behavioral student support plan:

- **Tier 2:** Check In Check Out, Mentor Support Program, Behavior Charts/Contracts/Packets, Character Education Curriculum, Counselor Small Groups, Restorative Practices, Student Support Specialist, Behavior Intervention Specialist, PIC rooms, ASPIRE program interventions.
- **Tier 3:** Increased frequency and intensity of tier 2 interventions, Individual sessions with counselor/social worker, Change in schedule/environment if needed, District Alternative Education options, Student Service Departments, collaboration with district approved outside behavioral health agencies, ASPIRE program interventions.

II. Issues.

Stakeholders have been asking for a change in particular violation areas that have impacted students to the extent that stakeholders have asked the district behavior management committee to revisit them 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.

Safety on our campuses is our top priority. It is important to clearly distinguish between actions that constitute an assault and other aggressive behaviors to ensure students are not assigned a Level 4 assault with more severe consequences when the incident involves minor injury and more appropriately meets the criteria for a Level 3 “other aggression” violation, which results in a short-term suspension.

In the code of conduct we describe many processes that support our district wide behavior programming. It is critical that we include our MTSS program as mentioned in the Code of Conduct behavior progression chart. Describing for staff, community, parents and students the system we utilize to create intervention plans and monitor intervention data for students is critical.

III. **Objectives.**

Stakeholder supported objectives for the revisions in the code of conduct are:

A. **Objective:** Decrease variable in issuing consequences when there has been an injury. Without specific language addressing minor injury in the other aggression violation and specifically with language in the other aggression violation that says no injury, it left only the violation of assault to be assessed when issuing consequences where there was an injury.

- **Why:** Stakeholder groups expressed concerns that we may be over assigning the violation of assault even when minor injury was present because of the current. “No Injury language. “Adding the wording pertaining to minor injury will allow for the increase in level 3 consequences for minor injury and a decrease in level consequences for assault. Resulting in decreased student suspensions.
- **Measurement:** This will be measured through Synergy reporting of incidents involving the violations of other aggression level 3 and assault level 4.

B. **Objective:** Adding tiered MTSS intervention information and MTSS description to the Code of Conduct.

- **Why:** Currently we describe PIC, PBIS, and Restorative practices. These are board approved behavioral support systems utilized across all TUSD schools. Our MTSS system monitors critical benchmarks for students in the areas of attendance, behavior and academics. It asks MTSS coordinators who are placed at every site to work with students, families and staff to create plans for students that are at risk in the areas of behavior, attendance, and academics. These plans are required for students in the code of conduct as part of their interventions as behaviors progress. This program and processes should be articulated in the code of conduct.
- **Measurement:** MTSS coordinators track and monitor the plans per student per site throughout the school year and high risk lists are generated every 5 weeks through Synergy.

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.

In June 2018, the GSRR was renamed and revised to the new Code of Conduct which focused the district's approach to the five violations that lead to the most incidents of exclusionary discipline: fighting, drug possession, drug use, alcohol possession, and alcohol use. Rather than suspending students as punishment for these violations, the district expanded their focus on prevention and rehabilitation by providing mediation as an alternative to suspension for fighting, and substance abuse workshops as an alternative to suspension for drug or alcohol use or possession. The new Code developed for SY2019-20 included several changes designed specifically to reduce exclusionary discipline for all students.

In October 2020, Student Relations formed a Code of Conduct Committee to start an official process to improve the Code of Conduct based on stakeholder input, which would include surveys and public forums. Based on the extensive input gathered, the new 2022-2023 Code of conduct was adopted by the board. 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:

Two key areas of positive impact are anticipated for the effectiveness of the USP program and its activities because of the Code of Conduct revisions: first, reduced subjectivity in how consequences are issued; and second, provide clear guidance on how the MTSS process functions district wide.

Impact #1: Reduce subjectivity in issuing consequences, thereby minimizing the influence of implicit racial bias in exclusionary discipline and improving equity in risk ratios across all student groups.

The attached report shows the top violations for students' district wide and shares the risk ratio for all ethnicities. TUSD1 SY25.26 Risk Ratio

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 decreased during the 25/26 school year from the 24/25 school year. In fact, TUSD has had a cumulative risk ratio in the green category (under 1.49) for African American students from February 2026 – May 2026.

Impact #2. Monthly violation reports are expected to show a decrease in assault violations because of the proposed new language for the other aggression level 3 violation.

This will positively impact all students by increasing their access to education by decreasing exclusion and ensure that all students feel safe on campus.

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

1. **Compliance:** All revisions in the Code of Conduct will continue to comply with USP requirements.

2. **Student Assignment:** The district does not anticipate any impact on student assignment programs according to the USP.

3. **Transportation:** The district does not anticipate any impact on transportation programs according to the USP.

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:** Revisions to the Code of Conduct are expected to improve students' access to advanced learning opportunities, GATE programs, and advanced academic courses. Removing the phrase "no physical injury, etc." from Aggression > Other Aggression allows incidents involving minor injuries to be classified appropriately, rather than as Aggression > Assault. This supports the district's goal of reducing punitive responses by emphasizing clearer definitions and supportive measures when conflicts occur. As a result, fewer students will receive long term exclusionary consequences such as out-of-school suspension, which often disrupts academic progress and limit eligibility for programs like summer school, Freshman Academy, GATE, and advanced coursework. By reducing time out of school, these revisions help expand students' opportunities to participate in and succeed in these programs.

6. **Discipline:** Student discipline will be impacted by the revisions to the code of conduct because this revised document continues to allow administrators to be consistent throughout the district when giving out discipline.

7. **Family and Community Engagement:** The district does not anticipate any impact on family and community engagement programs according to the USP.

8. **Extracurricular Activities:** The district does not anticipate any impact on extracurricular programs according to the USP.

9. **Facilities and Technology:** The district does not anticipate any impact on facilities and technology programs according to the USP.

10. **Accountability and Transparency:** The district does not anticipate any impact on accountability and transparency programs according to the USP.

C. Data Sources: MTSS data

<u>Grade Band</u>	<u>Number of Behavior Plans</u>
<u>K-5</u>	<u>776</u>
<u>6-8</u>	<u>306</u>
<u>9-12</u>	<u>143</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>1,225</u>

The above chart represents the number of Multi tiered system of support plans that exist district wide in relation to behavior. As the data chart shows, we have many students and families engaged in the MTSS process with behavior plans and it is therefore important to include within the code of conduct an explanation of the MTSS process. Having an MTSS plan can also be found in the consequence progression charts within the code of conduct. The presence of an MTSS plan as an anchor point for discipline progression makes it even more important to include why we have the plans and what they are.

Aggression data:

	Assault Incidents:	Other Aggression Incidents:
2025-2026 school year	266	782
2024-2025 school year	278	838
2023-2024 school year	384	660

As seen by the table above, Incidents of assault have decreased over the past three years while other aggression violations have fluctuated. We are hoping by clarifying the level of injury in the other aggression category we can continue to decrease the number of assault injuries because they will be more correctly labeled as other aggression because the injury is minor.

D. Assumptions.

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

- Consistent protocols, procedures, and actions that specifically outline how to address student behavior can positively impact academically focused learning environments.
- Variability in practice will decrease which will positively impact safe and academically focused learning environments and safety.
- 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 for Code of Conduct Revision Process

- **Code of Conduct Link:**
[Tucson Unified School District Code of Conduct](#)
- **Code of Conduct Data Links:**
[The Impact of Codes of Conducts on Stakeholders by Wayne R. Newman](#)
[Students Code of Conduct: Background](#)
[I Combed Through 81 Studies on School Discipline. Here's What Educators Need to Know](#)
[Equitable Discipline: Ensuring Fairness and Consistency Across Your School](#)
[Educational Equity Definition — National Equity Project](#)
[How To Create Equitable, Affirming Codes OF Conduct](#)
[2023 Code of Conduct Survey Results \(staff\)](#)
[2026 Code of Conduct Revisions DBMT Voting](#)
[Student Forum Feedback](#)
[SY 26.27 Recommended Code of Conduct Changes](#)

VI. Conclusion

With the recommended revisions to the Code of Conduct we hope to reduce long term assault suspension incidents and provide clarity to our community about MTSS processes. Both revisions will support students by providing clarity and knowledge to our administrators, staff, students and families.

Prepared by: Anna Warmbrand **Date:** 5/2/25