

Englewood Cliffs Student Handbook/Code of Conduct

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Englewood Cliffs School District to strive for excellence in the academic, personal/social, and creative development of each individual student. This will be accomplished through the positive collaboration of our entire school learning community.

The educational community will create a safe, nurturing environment that honors the cultural diversity of our students and our society. Our students will develop character and moral values that help them become productive members of our society. The educational family will develop responsible citizens that will respect and take pride in our national heritage.

Vision Statement

It is the vision of the Englewood Cliffs School District to become a community of learners. Working collaboratively, we will unite students, parents, staff, and the community in the creation of a safe and nurturing educational environment that will foster academic achievement and stimulate a life-long love of learning. Our district will encourage self and social awareness, promote character development and honor diversity in order to prepare students to contribute responsibly to the advancement of our democratic society.

Leadership

The district recognizes that effective leadership is essential to the success of our mission. Administrators will work collaboratively with staff to establish a trusting relationship. Motivational and transformational methods will encourage teachers to exercise their instructional leadership and focus upon the success of our mission. Effective leadership and development of our support staff is also important to the successful operation of our schools.

Instruction and Curriculum

It is the expectation of this school district that all pupils achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards at all grade levels.

The district emphasizes the fundamental importance of the classroom teacher in both the development and delivery of instruction. Professional development will occur on a regular basis to extend the skills of our faculty. Ample time will be provided in the schedule for staff to work collaboratively in team and grade level meetings in order to construct and implement our program of instruction.

The district's curriculum shall be the comprehensive plan for providing equal access for all children to high quality instruction based on research and best practices. The Balanced and Aligned Curriculum Development Process will be used in the development and revision of curriculum and will enhance the participation of staff in the development of the program of instruction. This process allows teachers to balance their own ideas and professional expertise with other educational resources and requirements including: the existing curriculum, New Jersey Student Learning Standards, the content and format of standardized assessments, textbooks, technological resources and the views of educational experts.

The curriculum will also be aligned to Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning to foster the development of higher order thinking skills. The instructional program shall further recognize and address the multiple intelligences and different learning styles of our students.

The curriculum must be crafted to create specific opportunities for students to develop interpersonal and social skills, explore their creativity, experience the diversity of our community and understand the importance of our national heritage.

The efforts of our district to develop a quality program of instruction must be preserved on a continuous basis and be readily accessible to all members of the educational community.

Individuality

Respect, compassion, and appreciation for the unique qualities of each individual member of our academic community will be encouraged. Teachers will provide relevant experiences that are not only intellectually challenging but also engender a sense of joy and wonder as students discover themselves, their society and the world around them. Social responsibility and caring will be encouraged through Character Education and our staff shall recognize the importance of their positions as models of enlightened and compassionate conduct.

Community

The district will foster public awareness and respect for education within the community through a program of communication, participation and understanding. This will serve to complete the assembly of our collegial educational environment, will foster student achievement and develop responsible and caring life-long learners that perceive no boundaries or limits to their achievement.

Community Resources

A current list of community-based health, social service provider agencies, and legal resources available to serve the community are provided below. Please contact Supervisor of Guidance Colin Winch at cwinch@englewoodcliffs.org with any additional questions or concerns.

Bergen County Department of Human Services- (201) 336-7474
Careplus NJ- (201) 986-5000
Psychiatric Emergency Screening Program(PESP)- (201) 262-HELP
Vantage Health System- (201) 567-0059
New Jersey’s System of Care (Children’s Mobile Crisis Response)- 1 (877) 652-7624
Bergen County Rape Crisis Center- (201) 487-2227
New Jersey Family Care- 1 (800) 701-0710
Bergen One-Stop Career Center- (201) 329-9600
Bergen Regional Medical Center- 1 (800) 730-2762
Englewood Hospital- (201) 894-3000
Hackensack University Medical Center - Social Services- 1 (551) 996-2100
Division of Child Protection and Permanency- (201) 996-8900
High Focus- (201) 291-0055

New Pathways- (201) 436-1022
Four Winds- 1 (914) 763-8151

Attendance

Students are expected to be in school on a regular basis in accordance with NJSA 18A:38-25 through 31 as well as NJAC 6A:16-7.8. The following attendance expectations are intended to allow all students the opportunity to thrive academically and socially without disruption.

- Students should arrive to school on time so they are seated in homeroom and prepared to start their day at 8:15 a.m. for Upper School students, and 8:20 a.m. for North Cliff students.
- Students should arrive to each and every class prior to the late bell to maximize their academic opportunities.
- If a student will be absent for any reason, the parent/guardian must call the school to report the absence and account for the student.
- Students absent from school for any reason are responsible for the completion of assignments missed because of their absence.
- Prolonged or repeated absences, excused or unexcused, from school or from class, deprive the student of the classroom experience deemed essential to learning and may result in retention at grade level.

For full district policy regarding attendance please see Policy 5200: Attendance, on the district website. Additionally, please see Policy 5752 regarding student rights to attendance irrespective of marital status or parenthood.

Pupil Rights

The Board of Education recognizes that pupils possess both the right to a free public education and the rights of citizenship. In granting pupils the educational opportunities to which they are entitled, the Board shall provide them with the nurture, counsel, and custodial care appropriate to pupils' ages and maturity. At the same time, the Board will respect the right of each pupil to equal treatment and equal access to the educational program, the due process of law, freedom of expression and association, and the privacy of his/her own thoughts.

Due Process

Students will be afforded due process as outlined in district policies and state statutes to present witnesses to incidents or to have their perspective and point of view heard prior to implementation of consequences as outlined in the Code of Conduct. For additional information please use the following link, and if needed please reach out to Administration to begin this process:

<https://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/sedp/>

Upper School Cell Phone/Smart Watch Policy

The following procedures are expected to be met regarding any electronic device that can send/receive calls, text messages, emails, or any other form of electronic communication.

- Cell phones must be **turned off** and placed in school bag, or placed in student's locker in the morning prior to attending homeroom (8:15 a.m.).
- Students should not remove the cell phone from the school bag or locker until the end of the school day (2:43 p.m.).
- Any student observed using or carrying a cell phone on their person outside of their school bag, or misusing any other electronic device such as a smart watch, will have it confiscated until the end of the day.
- Multiple instances of confiscation will result in parent/guardian responsibility to retrieve device from the Main Office, as well as possible disciplinary consequences.

Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying (HIB)

Englewood Cliffs district has a policy in place regarding potential instances of Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying (or HIB), and the procedures to be followed whenever such incidents may occur. Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying means any gesture, written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students. Students who may have perpetrated or been the victim of an HIB case will go through an investigation by the Anti-Bullying Specialists and HIB Coordinator. Depending upon the results of the investigation, students may also be subject to disciplinary consequences and remedial measures as per the district Code of Conduct. Full policy and procedure information for HIB investigations can be found on our school's website.

Physical Restraint

The district assures that physical restraint and seclusion techniques on students with disabilities are only used in an emergency in which the student is exhibiting behavior that places the student or others in immediate physical danger in accordance with the provisions at N.J.S.A. 18A:46-13.4. Please see Policy 5561 for district restraint policies.

Disciplinary Practices

Promoting positive student behavior and social-emotional learning is a basic component of our school's program of universal prevention for all students. Our schools seek to take a proactive role in nurturing students' pro-social behavior by providing a range of positive behavioral supports, as well as meaningful opportunities for social-emotional learning. Our goal is to reward and acknowledge the many positive contributions our students make to our district, while supporting and addressing student's behavioral needs. The ultimate goal of our discipline policies is to provide a "teachable moment" and prevent undesired behavior by helping students learn from their mistakes. Students should:

- Understand why the behavior is unacceptable and the harm it has caused;
- Understand what they could have done differently in the same situation;

- Take responsibility for their actions;
- Be given the opportunity to learn pro-social strategies/skills to use in the future; and
- Understand the progression of more stringent consequences if the behavior reoccurs

For full policy details regarding suspensions and expulsions, please see Policy 5610 and Policy 5620 respectively. This includes the students' rights to advance notice of behaviors that result in suspensions or expulsions that have been identified (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-2), as well as students' rights to parent notification consistent with the policies and procedures established pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.2 (b)3, and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2 through 7.8.

Discipline Procedures/ Upper School Points System

Should disciplinary consequences be required, the school has adopted a disciplinary/points system to help students, parents, and staff monitor behavior and accountability. In order to accurately and fairly assess a student's behavior and conduct while attending Englewood Cliffs Public Schools, a points based behavior monitoring policy is being put into place. The system will seek to accurately and fairly reflect each student's conduct as an individual and as part of our Englewood Cliffs School communities to ensure school rules and regulations are being followed.

1. Warning by Teacher or Administration – No points assessed

Englewood Cliffs staff has the right to give students a warning without assessing detention/points if the behavior is not regular or repetitive. Positive behavioral counseling and mediation will be implemented to reduce chance of recurring behavior.

2. Recess Detention – 1 point assessed per day

Students are expected to report to the designated room at the start of their recess period, where they will check in with the teacher and begin work or study. All detention will be served the day after the incident is assigned and reported.

3. Full Period Detention – 2 points assessed per day

Students who have been repeatedly assigned recess detention or did not attend an assigned detention are subject to a full period detention during lunch and recess. Students will be given the opportunity to obtain their lunch, and then will be expected to report to the designated detention room to eat and work. All detention will be served the day after the incident is assigned and reported.

4. Home Suspension – 4 points assessed per day

Students are not permitted on school grounds during home suspension, nor may they take part in school-sponsored activities on those days. All work will be made available online to allow students to keep pace with their class work.

Monitoring Point Accumulation

Conduct points can always be viewed via genesis. Notification of excessive conduct points will be sent home at the conclusion of each marking period. A meeting can be requested at any time to discuss concerns.

Accumulation of 25 Points

If a student accumulates twenty-five or more conduct points, they will forfeit their right to participate in any extra-curricular activity, school trip, or function and the parent/guardian will be notified. No refund will be given for any trip or activity should the student be excluded for disciplinary reasons.

Point Reduction

With the understanding that students should be given the opportunity to correct their behavior and learn from any previous incidents, students will have the ability to reduce their point total. A student may reduce his/her discipline point record by one (1) point for every calendar month s/he does not receive a conduct notice.

Level I Infractions: Behavior that impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with orderly operations of the school

1. Classroom disturbance (with teacher or substitute) / exclusion from class
2. Inappropriate language
3. Travel during class time without a pass or permission
4. Late to class/school without a written excuse
5. Failure to follow school rules and/or staff member directives
6. Eating or drinking outside of lunch periods when prohibited
7. Inappropriate use of electronics
8. Violation of the dress code
9. Gum chewing on school property
10. Horseplay/inappropriate behavior
11. Littering
12. Failure to submit required paperwork on time

13. Bystander/observer of theft or aggressive act

14. Failure to wear student I.D.

Consequences of a LEVEL I infraction:

- a. Warning by staff member
- b. Assigned recess detention for 1-3 days
- c. Positive behavioral counseling and mediation

Level II Infractions: misbehavior whose frequency/seriousness disrupts the climate of the school

1. Continued LEVEL I misbehaviors
2. Throwing objects /materials
3. Forgery of notes or fraud
4. Cheating in any academic (includes plagiarism) or extra-curricular activity
5. Non-attendance of assigned detention
6. Violation of computer use policy (suspension of computer privileges)
7. Willful disobedience/ insubordination/lying to staff members
8. Excessive horseplay
9. Unintentionally causing injury
10. Inciting a fight

Consequences of a LEVEL II infraction:

- a. 2 – 4 days full period detention
- b. 1 – 3 days suspension for repeated offenses
- c. Positive behavioral counseling and mediation

Level III Infractions: acts directed against persons or property but whose consequences do not seriously endanger the health or safety of others

1. Continued LEVEL II misconduct
2. Throwing objects/materials that result in a minor injury
3. Abusive and/or indecent language and/or gestures directed at school employees or students
4. Truancy/unauthorized absence from school
5. Fighting between students and/or aggressive physical act
6. Harassment of any type
7. Intimidation, bullying, extortion or coercion
8. Graffiti of any type
9. Theft/vandalism/unauthorized destruction or possession of property
10. Any threat or perceived threat made against a student, teacher, or other staff member
11. Violating staff members' or students' privacy
12. Possession/distribution of obscene/violent/inappropriate materials
13. Smoking/use, possession, distribution, and/or sale of tobacco/nicotine (including any and all electronic cigarettes) or a substance that the individual believes or represents to be tobacco
14. Indecent exposure of self or others
15. Disruption of secure testing site
16. Intentionally causing injury
17. Recording violent/lewd act or any activity on school grounds and/or sharing/posting it

Consequences of a LEVEL III infraction:

- a. 3 – 5 days detention
- b. 1 – 5 days Home Suspension
- c. Positive behavioral counseling and mediation

Level IV Infractions: Any acts that pose a direct threat to the safety and security of others at school

1. Continued LEVEL III misconduct
2. Possession, use or threatened use of a (perceived) dangerous weapon
3. Any violent or sexual act against a student, teacher, or other staff member
4. Use, possession, distribution, and/or sale of illegal/dangerous drugs, alcohol, or a substance which the individual believes or represents to be such drugs or alcohol
5. Possession and/or use of fireworks or any explosive/flammable device
6. Arson
7. Activation of a false alarm, bomb threat or other disaster alarm
8. Discrimination against an individual or group on the basis of gender, race, religion, culture, creed, sexual orientation, nationality, etc.
9. Commission of any conduct that constitutes a crime

Consequences of a LEVEL IV infraction:

- a. 1 -10 days Home Suspension
- b. Loss of privileges (extra-curricular events, dances, games, etc.)
- c. Other consequences as determined by Board hearing or law enforcement up to and including expulsion
- d. Positive behavioral counseling and mediation