

## **BCMS Code of Conduct**

### **Falcon P.R.I.D.E.**

All members of the Branchburg Central Middle School Community follow Falcon PRIDE on the way to and from school, at school and at all school-sponsored events.

Falcon PRIDE encompasses the behaviors and characteristics that exemplify proper conduct at school:

### **Falcon PRIDE:**

- P- Preparedness - be prepared for class by having all supplies and materials and by completing all assignments.
- R- Responsibility - be responsible for your actions, belongings and assignments, clean up after yourself, no gum chewing, take credit for your successes and consequences for your mistakes.
- I -Integrity - do the right thing, even when no one is watching. Be kind to yourself and others.
- D-Diligence - Always try your best, don't give up.
- E- Exhibit Respect (to self, others and school) treat others the way you want to be treated, use school facilities and equipment correctly, follow directions from adults, treat your body well by not using tobacco, drugs, or alcohol.

When a student does not meet PRIDE expectations, the result will be consequences. The school rules are enforced by teachers and administrators. If rules are broken, the students will be subject to consequences that include: warnings, conferencing with a teacher, Guidance Counselor, and/or the Principal, contacting parents, taking privileges away, confiscating items, assigning detention, in-school suspension, or suspension from school.

Consequences are determined based on frequency and the severity of the student's infraction. A re-entry conference for suspended students will be scheduled with the school administrator after the suspension period is served to discuss the incident and the future behavioral expectations.

The rules apply to all school-sponsored events, including those activities that take place on school grounds before or after regular school hours and for all activities that take place off school grounds.

The principles apply to all school-sponsored activities, including those activities that take place on school grounds before or after regular school hours, all school activities that take place off school grounds and for time transporting on school vehicles.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES** - This Code of Conduct is designed to:

1. Maintain a safe and productive learning environment
2. Teach responsibility and decision-making skills
3. Support students' social-emotional development
4. Recognize that behavioral missteps are opportunities for growth
5. Repair harm when mistakes occur

TIERS OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION

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Our approach recognizes that middle school students are developing their decision-making abilities and self-regulation skills. Consequences are designed to be educational and restorative while maintaining appropriate boundaries.

### **INFRACTIONS**

Infractions are broken down by category and severity level which are each described below. Each infraction is then written in student-friendly language to assist with student understanding of what happened and why it is important to the operations of the school building.

| Severity Level | Label            | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1              | Minor Offense    | These low-level infractions are typically handled within the classroom, often resulting in a warning or lunch detention. If repeated, they may lead to brief administrative follow-up.                                                            |
| 2              | Moderate Offense | Behaviors that interfere with school operations or expectations initially start with being handled in the classroom, but they will result in a referral to the office, potentially leading to detention or short-term in-school suspension (ISS). |
| 3              | Serious Offense  | These more disruptive or harmful actions require an immediate referral to the office for administrative follow-up, which may include detention, ISS, restorative responses, or possible out-of-school suspension (OSS).                           |
| 4              | Major Offense    | The most severe infractions, such as threats, violence, or safety violations, will lead to an immediate referral to the office for administrative follow-up, often involving OSS, referrals to law enforcement, and formal reentry procedures.    |

### **IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES**

The below framework serves as a guideline for upholding classroom expectations and assignment of consequences via the code of conduct, with the understanding of the following principles:

1. Individual Consideration: All incidents will be considered individually, taking into account context, student history, and developmental factors.
2. Parent/Guardian Partnership: Parents will be involved as partners in supporting positive behavior.
3. Restorative Practices: When possible, students will be given opportunities to repair harm caused by their actions.
4. Skill Development: Interventions will focus on teaching skills needed for success.
5. Support Services: Students with repeated behavioral concerns will be connected with appropriate support services

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| Offense                                                        | Severity Level | Student-Friendly Explanation                                                                                                   | 1st Offense                                        | 2nd Offense                                                 | 3rd Offense                                                       | Restorative Action (As Appropriate)                                            | Potential Loss of Privileges at Administrator's Discretion            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tardy to Class                                                 | 1              | Being late to class without a valid excuse disrupts your learning and affects the flow of the school day.                      | Warning                                            | Conference                                                  | 1 day lunch detention                                             | Reflection on responsibility and the impact of lateness                        | Possible loss of open seating at lunch or class incentives            |
| Tardy to School<br>BOE Policy 5240                             | 1              | Being late to school without a valid excuse disrupts your learning and affects the flow of the school day.                     | 1st-4th warning                                    | 5th: lunch detention<br>Student conference                  | 7+: lunch detention<br>parent conference<br>Action plan           | Reflection sheet on punctuality and student goals                              | Possible loss of open seating at lunch or class incentives            |
| Dress Code                                                     | 1              | Wearing something that doesn't follow the school dress code does not support a respectful and distraction-free environment.    | Warning, change of clothes                         | Warning, change of clothes                                  | Lunch detention, change of clothes                                | Conference on school-appropriate attire and its impact on school culture       | Possible loss of open seating at lunch or class incentives            |
| Possession of Electronic Device<br>(cell phone or smart watch) | 1              | Using your phone when you're not supposed to during the day distracts from learning and can violate privacy.                   | Device turned in, returned at day's end to student | Device turned in, returned to parent/guardian at end of day | Device turned in and returned to parent/guardian after conference | Reflective writing on responsible technology use; optional check-in with staff | Possible loss of open seating at lunch or class incentives            |
| Disruptive Behavior<br>(minor to major)                        | 1-3            | Behaving in a way that disrupts class and prevents others from learning creates a negative learning environment.               | 1-3 days detention                                 | 1-3 days detention or 1 day ISS                             | 1-3 days detention or, 1-3 days ISS                               | Restorative conversation with affected peers or teacher; behavior reflection   | Loss of media center access, recess, or eligibility for school events |
| Disrespect<br>(minor to major)                                 | 1-3            | Showing disrespect to a peer or staff member through words or actions damages relationships and trust in our school community. | 1-3 days detention                                 | 1-3 days detention or 1 day ISS                             | 1-3 days detention or, 1-3 days ISS                               | Restorative conversation with affected peers or teacher; behavior reflection   | Loss of media center access, recess, or eligibility for school events |

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| Offense                                    | Severity Level | Student-Friendly Explanation                                                                                                                                               | 1st Offense                                       | 2nd Offense                                           | 3rd Offense                                                  | Restorative Action (As Appropriate)                                                                                                | Potential Loss of Privileges at Administrator's Discretion                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inappropriate Language or Gestures         | 1-2            | Using inappropriate or offensive language or gestures makes others feel unsafe or disrespected.                                                                            | 1-3 days detention                                | 1-3 days detention or 1 day ISS                       | 1-3 days detention or, 1-3 days ISS                          | Restorative conversation with affected peers or teacher; behavior reflection                                                       | Loss of media center access, recess, or eligibility for school events                                                               |
| Academic Integrity (Cheating, plagiarism)  | 2              | Cheating on assignments or tests, copying someone else's work without giving them credit, or using unauthorized help to complete schoolwork is dishonest in your learning. | Re-do assignment for reduced credit or no credit. | Failing grade on assignment/ test. 1-2 days detention | Failing grade on assignment/ test. 1-3 days detention        | Academic integrity counseling/coaching, reflection on the importance of honest work, creating an action plan for future integrity. | Ineligibility for academic awards or distinctions, restrictions on participation in certain academic competitions or opportunities. |
| Cutting Class(es)                          | 2              | Skipping class without permission disrupts your learning and affects the flow of the school day.                                                                           | 1 day after school detention                      | 1-3 days after school detention                       | 1 day ISS                                                    | Reflection sheet and conversation about the importance of being present                                                            | Loss of media center access, recess, or eligibility for school events                                                               |
| Cutting Detention                          | 2              | Not showing up to detention you were assigned affects the safety, order, and fairness expected in our school.                                                              | Reschedule 1 detention                            | Reschedule 1 detention and additional detention       | Reschedule 1 detention and additional detention or 1 day ISS | Apology note to staff and completion of missed detention                                                                           | Loss of media center access, recess, or eligibility for school events                                                               |
| Disruptive Behavior During Emergency Drill | 2              |                                                                                                                                                                            | Conference with administration                    | 1-3 days detentions                                   | 1-3 days detention or, 1 day ISS                             |                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                     |
| Inappropriate Bus Behavior                 | 2              | Misbehaving on the school bus affects the safety, order, and fairness expected in our school.                                                                              | Detention and/or seat change                      | Detention and/or loss of bus privileges               | Detention/ ISS and loss of bus privileges                    | Assigned seat reflection and bus expectations conversation                                                                         | Loss of media center access, recess, or eligibility for school events                                                               |

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| Offense                                  | Severity Level | Student-Friendly Explanation                                                                                                                                                                            | 1st Offense                            | 2nd Offense                            | 3rd Offense                                     | Restorative Action (As Appropriate)                                          | Potential Loss of Privileges at Administrator's Discretion                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Physical Contact                         | 2              | Making unwanted physical contact with another person violates personal boundaries and school safety.                                                                                                    | 1-3 days detention                     | 1-3 days detention or 1 day ISS        | 1-3 days ISS                                    | Restorative conversation with affected peers or teacher; behavior reflection | Loss of media center access, recess, or eligibility for school events                                                        |
| Selling Items                            | 2              | Selling things at school without permission. This breaks school rules and can create unsafe or unfair situations for others.                                                                            | Warning                                | 1 lunch detention                      | 1-3 days detention                              | Return of items and apology; discussion on respecting school space           | Possible loss of open seating at lunch or class incentives                                                                   |
| Violation of Acceptable Use Policy       | 2-3            | Using school computers inappropriately distracts from learning and can violate privacy.                                                                                                                 | Detention and/or 1-week Loss of device | Detention and/or 2-week Loss of device | Detention and/or suspension + parent conference | Tech agreement and reteach session on digital responsibility                 | Loss of technology accessibility including Chromebook. Loss of media center access, recess, or eligibility for school events |
| Harassment                               | 3              | Harassment is when someone repeatedly acts in a mean or unwelcome way that makes another person feel uncomfortable, scared, or unsafe, making it hard for them to feel good or be themselves at school. | 1-2 days detention or 1-2 days ISS     | 2-3 days detention or 1-3 days ISS     | 2-3 days suspension                             | Restorative circle (if appropriate); empathy-building activity               | Loss of school trips, club participation, or special events                                                                  |
| Inappropriate Language Directed at Staff | 3              | Using rude or inappropriate language toward a teacher or staff member disrespects others and creates a negative learning environment.                                                                   | 1-2 days detention or 1-2 days ISS     | 2-3 days detention or 1-3 days ISS     | 1-3 days suspension                             | Apology letter and restorative meeting with the staff member                 | Loss of multiple privileges including extracurriculars and field trips                                                       |

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Insubordination                                                     | 3              | Refusing to follow directions from adults at school affects the safety, order, and fairness expected in our school.                                                                                         | 1-2 days detention or 1-2 days ISS                           | 2-3 days detention or 1-3 days ISS         | Up to 10 days suspension            | Restorative conversation about following directions; student commitment plan    | Loss of school trips, club participation, or special events                                                                                                        |
| Instigation/ Complicity                                             | 3              | Encouraging or helping others to break the rules affects the safety, order, and fairness expected in our school.                                                                                            | 1-3 days detention<br>Up to 2 days ISS/OSS                   | 3-5 days detention<br>Up to 5 days ISS/OSS | Up to 10 days ISS/OSS               | Mediation or discussion on how actions influenced others                        | Loss of school trips, club participation, or special events                                                                                                        |
| Taking Photos or Recording Others Without Permission<br>Policy 5516 | 3              | Taking pictures, videos, or audio recordings of other people or their conversations without their clear permission, especially in private or sensitive situations, or then sharing those images/recordings. | Deletion of content<br>1-3 days detention or up to 1 day ISS | Deletion of content<br>1-3 days ISS        | Deletion of content<br>1-3 days OSS | Education on digital citizenship and privacy, apology to affected individuals   | Exclusion from school events where personal devices are common (e.g., dances, field trips), restriction from using personal devices on campus during school hours. |
| Possession of lighters/ matches/ fireworks                          | 3              | Bringing lighters, fireworks, or other dangerous items to school creates safety concerns and can lead to accidents or potential harm.                                                                       | Deletion of content<br>1-3 days detention or up to 1 day ISS | 1-3 days ISS                               | 1-3 days OSS                        | Safety discussion and reflection on why these items are not allowed             | Loss of school trips, club participation, or special events                                                                                                        |
| Threatening Language                                                | 3              | Using words that make someone feel scared, unsafe, or worried that you might hurt them or others.                                                                                                           | 1-3 days detention                                           | 1-3 days detention or 1 day ISS            | 1-3 days ISS                        | Conflict resolution, mediation, written or verbal apology, reflection activity. | Exclusion from extracurricular activities, school events, or designated free-time areas.                                                                           |

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| Theft                                                       | 3              | Theft is taking something that isn't yours without permission, intending to keep it which disrespects others' belongings and makes our school community feel less safe and trusting. | 1-3 days detention or up to 3 days ISS, restitution | 1-3 days ISS, restitution         | 1-3 days OSS, restitution + law referral | Restitution and apology to affected party                                   | Loss of school trips, club participation, or special events            |
| Vandalism/<br>Destruction of Property                       | 3-4            |                                                                                                                                                                                      | 1-3 days detention or up to 3 days ISS, restitution | 1-3 days ISS, restitution         | 1-3 days OSS, restitution + law referral | Restitution and apology to affected party                                   | Loss of school trips, club participation, or special events            |
| Physical Altercation/Fight                                  | 4              | Fighting or getting into a physical conflict. Physical violence is never acceptable and puts everyone at risk.                                                                       | 1-3 days ISS or 1-3 OSS + reentry                   | 2-3 days ISS or 2-3 OSS + reentry | 3-5 days ISS or 3-5 OSS + reentry        | Restorative chat with involved students; re-entry discussion with counselor | Loss of school trips, club participation, or special events            |
| Assault                                                     | 4              | Physically attacking someone. Physical violence is never acceptable and puts everyone at risk.                                                                                       | 3-10 days OSS + reentry                             | 5-10 days OSS + reentry           | 7-10 days OSS + reentry                  | Parent-student-admin restorative meeting; reflection on impact of violence  | Loss of multiple privileges including extracurriculars and field trips |
| Vaping/Smoking Policy 5533                                  | 4              | Using or having vapes or tobacco products. This is very serious because it puts your health and the safety of others at risk.                                                        | 2 days ISS + counseling                             | 4 days ISS + counseling           | 5 days ISS + counseling                  | Counseling session and reflection on healthy choices                        | Loss of school trips, club participation, or special events            |
| Drugs/Alcohol Possession or under the influence Policy 5530 | 4              | Having or using drugs or alcohol at school which puts your health and the safety of others at risk.                                                                                  | 3 days ISS, law referral                            | 5 days ISS, law referral          | 7 days ISS, law referral                 | Meeting with counselor and family to discuss choices; substance education   | Loss of multiple privileges including extracurriculars and field trips |

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|------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inciting biased remarks or acts<br>Policy 8465 | 4              | Saying or doing something racist, sexist, or discriminatory which makes others feel unsafe or disrespected.                                                                                                 | 1-3 days ISS + law referral  | 3-5 days ISS or 1-3 OSS + law referral | 3-5 days OSS + law referral  | Restorative circle with counselor; research on bias and its impact | Loss of multiple privileges including extracurriculars and field trips |
| Terroristic Threats                            | 4              | A terroristic threat is when someone says or does something that makes others genuinely believe they are going to cause serious harm or major disruption, especially to a group or a place like our school. | 1-10 days OSS + law referral | 3-10 days OSS + law referral           | 5-10 days OSS + law referral | Immediate removal from situation; restorative conference as needed | Loss of multiple privileges including extracurriculars and field trips |
| Weapons<br>Policy 8467                         | 4              |                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 3-5 days OSS + law referral  | 5-7 days OSS + law referral            | 7-10 days OSS + law referral |                                                                    |                                                                        |

## Discipline Appeal Process

In the event that a student or parent has a discrepancy with a staff member's decision regarding a disciplinary matter the appeal process is as follows:

Level 1 - Discuss the matter directly with the staff member who made the decision. If the matter is not resolved at this level, the student and/or parent may proceed to Level 2.

Level 2 - Meet with the Assistant Principal to seek a resolution to the matter. In the event the matter is not resolved, the student and/or parent may proceed to Level 3.

Level 3 - Meet with the Principal to review the circumstances relating to the incident. If, after careful consideration, the matter is still not resolved, the student and/or parent/guardian may proceed to Level 4.

Level 4 - Make an appointment with the Superintendent of Schools to explain the reason for the appeal and to seek resolution to the matter.