

## **Student Assistance Program**

The district recognizes that students can experience a number of personal, behavioral or medical problems that can have an adverse effect on their academic performance, attendance, and behavior in school. Such problems could include learning disabilities, physical illness or problems, emotional and psychological problems, family or legal problems and alcohol and other drug abuse problems. The school becomes concerned when a problem which may involve a student or family member, repeatedly and definitely interferes with a student's school performance or jeopardizes the health, safety, welfare, educational opportunity or rights or other students or personnel.

### **Definition**

A Student Assistance (SA) Program is an umbrella organization that oversees services provided in the schools designed to improve the quality of students' personal lives to enhance their chances for academic success.

Therefore the district establishes a Program for Prevention and Assistance to Students (PPAS) to handle problems arising from behavioral/medical problems. It will function within the following guidelines:

1. The responsibility to maintain a satisfactory or acceptable level of academic performance and general conduct remains with the student at all times, whether in school, at school-sponsored events or on school grounds. When school performance falls below satisfactory or acceptable levels, the student may be given the choice of improving conduct or performance, accepting the appropriate disciplinary action or accepting referral to the staff resources of the district's program.
2. Students may be referred to the SA Program by any staff member who is aware of a student who exhibits a pattern of definite and repeated unacceptable or unsatisfactory performance; who violates a school rule, or state or federal statute; or who manifests any signs, symptoms, or indications of the presence of a behavioral/medical problem.
3. The SA Program coordinator and staff resources will attempt, by consulting with the student, to arrive at the probable cause of the performance or behavior problem. They may not counsel, provide or otherwise treat the student in the absence of a professional diagnosis and evaluation. They may recommend referral to an appropriate source of care in consultation with the SA coordinator, teacher, student, or student and her/his parent.
4. At all times, it is the prerogative to the student to accept referral to the SA Program staff or to professional assistance or to reject it. A student may refuse referral to or from the SA Program. If a student accepts or rejects assistance, it still remains his/her responsibility to bring performance up to satisfactory or acceptable levels or to face such disciplinary action as may be warranted.

Professional assessment may be required by the principal as a condition of continuing in the normal school program.

5. If a student accepts referral and treatment, the fact will be regarded as it would for any illness, with respect to benefits or privileges. So long as a student is involved with the SA Program, and is cooperatively and/or successfully addressing his/her problem, the student may remain in school. The SA Program Coordinator will collaborate with referral resources on students who are referred. For that reason, all students will sign releases of information for to allow communication with the referral resource.
6. No records of a student's involvement with the SA Program will be kept in her/his personal academic file. The minimal records kept are considered of a medical nature and will be maintained separately. No record of conversations a student may have with a member of the SA Program will ever become part of the student's personal file or cumulative record. The fact of a student's participation in the SA Program, in addition to specifics, will remain absolutely confidential and subject to state or federal regulations governing confidentiality and the release of information.
7. An essential feature of the SA Program is that students who think they have a behavioral/medical problem, including alcohol and other drug abuse may contact the SA Program staff resources voluntarily with the same assurance of confidentiality. In the case of issues involving harm to self or other, protection of student health may supercede the normal assurance of confidentiality.
8. The district also recognizes that a student can be adversely affected by the stress resulting from a family member with a behavioral/medical or personal problem including alcohol and other drug abuse. Therefore, help under the SA Programs extended to all students and their immediate family members, at the request of either.
9. The awareness and support of parents for a student with a behavioral/medical or personal problem is extremely important. However, should either students or parents not wish to cooperate in improving school performance, or in making assistance available, the student's status in school will be re-evaluated. Of consideration will be the best interests of the student, the nature of the problem and the health, safety, welfare, educational opportunity and rights of the other students or personnel.
10. It is against Board policy for anyone — students or staff — to be in school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities under the influence of alcohol or other unlawful drugs. Federal and state laws also prohibit the possession, use, sale or delivery of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances. The district recognizes its responsibility to inform and involve the appropriate law enforcement officials of violations.
11. Prescription medications are construed as exceptions to this policy when used by the individual for whom they are prescribed and in the manner prescribed.

12. It is the responsibility of each building administrator and/or designee to use procedures consistent with this policy. Nothing in this policy is intended to result in any special regulations or exceptions from standard administrative practices regarding student discipline.

END OF POLICY

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**Legal Reference(s):**

[ORS 332.107](#)

Kelson v. Springfield, 767 F.2d 651 (9th Cir. 1985).