

COMPREHENSIVE POLICY
CONCERNING ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

The Board of Education of South Colonie Central School District is committed to the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and other substance use/abuse. This policy describes the philosophy of the District and the program elements South Colonie will use to promote healthy life styles for its students and staff and to inhibit the use/abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other substances.

No person may use, possess, sell, be under the influence of, or distribute alcohol or other substances, nor may use or possess drug paraphernalia, on school grounds or at school-sponsored events, except drugs as prescribed by a physician. The terms "alcohol and other substances" includes, but is not limited to, alcohol, tobacco, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, lookalikes, and any of those substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs". The inappropriate use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs shall also be prohibited.

Philosophy

The District will use the following principles as guides for the development of its substance use/abuse prevention efforts and for any disciplinary measures related to alcohol and other substances:

1. Alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and other substance use/abuse is preventable and treatable.
2. Alcohol and other substance use/abuse inhibits us from carrying out our central mission of educating students.
3. The behavior of the Board of Education, the administration, and all school staff should model the behavior asked of students.
4. Successful prevention will be accomplished only through coordinated, collaborative efforts with parents, students, staff, and the community as a whole.

Primary Prevention

The intent of primary prevention programming is to prevent or delay the onset of alcohol, tobacco, and other substance use by students. The components of this programming shall include:

1. A sequential K-12 prevention curriculum that provides for:
 - a. Accurate and age-appropriate information about alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and other substances, including the physical, psychological, social, and legal consequences of their use/abuse.

- b. Information about the relationship of alcohol and other substance use/abuse to other health-compromising behaviors such as AIDS, teenage pregnancy, eating disorder, child abuse, suicide, and dropping out of school.
- c. Helping students develop appropriate life skills to resist the use of alcohol and other substances and to promote healthy life styles.
 - a. Helping students identify personal risk factors for alcohol and other substance use/abuse and the steps needed for risk reduction.
 - d. Helping students develop a positive self-concept.
 - e. Helping students identify when they are under stress and how to manage or reduce stress through non-chemical means.
2. Training parents and guardians to use the information and skills necessary to reinforce the components of this policy in the home and community.
3. Community education about the issues of alcohol, tobacco, and other substance use/abuse as a basis for providing a consistent message to South Colonie youth.
4. Positive alternatives to alcohol and other substance use/abuse, such as peer leadership programs, service projects, and recreational and extra-curricular activities. Such activities will be planned collaboratively with students, parents, community members, and agencies.

Intervention

The intent of intervention programming is to eliminate any existing use/abuse of alcohol and other substances, and to identify and provide supportive services to Kindergarten through Grade 12 students at high risk for such use/abuse. The components of such programming shall include:

1. Providing alcohol and other substance use/abuse assessment and counseling services for students.
2. Developing a referral process between South Colonie Schools and community providers.
3. Identifying and referring students to appropriate agencies when their use/abuse of alcohol and/or other substances requires counseling and/or treatment.
4. Providing services to students in or returning from treatment to assure that the school environment supports the process of recovery initiated in the treatment program.

5. Educating parents on when and how to access South Colonie's intervention services.
6. Respect for appropriate confidentiality.

Employee Assistance Program

The Board of Education recognizes that the problems of alcohol and other substance use/abuse affect every segment of society. The Board, in collaboration with South Colonie's collective bargaining units, will maintain an Employee Assistance Program that will provide appropriate, confidential prevention, intervention, assessment, referral, support, and follow-up services for South Colonie staff who seek assistance with alcohol and other substance use/abuse related problems, emotional problems, mental illness, and other human problems. All staff will be informed about the services they can receive through the Employee Assistance Program.

South Colonie recognizes that it has no right to intervene unless employees' personal problems adversely affect their job performance. When unsatisfactory performance does occur, the District's supervisory personnel will encourage employees to manage and move toward a resolution of their problems on their own or with the help of the Employee Assistance Program.

Disciplinary Measures

Disciplinary measures for students found to have used or to be using, in possession of, selling, or distributing alcohol and/or other substances and for students possessing drug paraphernalia are outlined in South Colonie's policy on Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are disciplined for any of these infractions will be mandated to participate in the intervention services established by this policy.

Disciplinary measures for District staff are addressed in, among other statutes, Education Law §§ 1711(5)(e), 2508(5), 3031, 3020-a, and 913. Where the requirements of Drug-Free Workplace legislation apply and in other situations deemed appropriate by the Superintendent, South Colonie staff will be referred to the Employee Assistance Program.

Staff Development

The Board recognizes that if the administrative, instructional, and support staff are to be responsible for implementing and modeling this policy, they must be trained about the components of an effective alcohol and other substance prevention program. Staff training will be an ongoing process including the following:

1. For All Staff: Awareness of personal risk factors for alcohol and other substance use/abuse so that they may identify personal use/abuse problems and seek assistance; and their role in implementing this policy, including how to identify students who exhibit behaviors or who are using/abusing alcohol and other substances, and how to refer these students to the appropriate services established by this policy.

2. For Teachers: The knowledge and skills necessary to implement South Colonie's K-12 alcohol and other substance prevention curriculum.
3. For Intervention Staff: Appropriate staff training for those identified to carry out the intervention function to assure that their assessment, individual, group, and family counseling and referral skills support the needs of high risk, using, and abusing youth.

Implementation, Dissemination, and Monitoring

The Board of Education charges the Superintendent to collaborate with staff, parents, students, community members, organizations and agencies, including alcohol and other substance abuse service providers, in developing the specific programs and strategies necessary to implement this policy.

Upon adoption, copies of this policy will be distributed to and reviewed with all South Colonie staff, students, and parents annually and will be disseminated to the community through its organizations.

The Superintendent is responsible for providing the Board with an annual review of this policy, the programs and strategies implementing it, and recommendations for revisions in the policy.

Reference: Education Law §§ 1711(5)(e), 2508(5), 3031, 3020-a, 913

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