



# Maple Hills Elementary PTA 2.6.15

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## Volunteer Code of Conduct

Participation as a volunteer in the activities of the Maple Hills PTA (including all leadership roles) is subject to the observance of this Volunteer Code of Conduct, including the Grievance and Conflict Resolution Process.

### **PTA MISSION STATEMENT**

Maple Hills PTA will advocate for every student to reach full potential by partnering with our school and district to provide educational and community-building opportunities for students and their families.

### **DEFINITIONS**

The following terms are used as defined below throughout this Code:

**“Civility Policy”** means that policy adopted by the Issaquah School District as Policy No. 5282, as amended from time to time. A copy of this policy is attached hereto for ease of reference.

**“District”** means Issaquah School District No. 411.

**“PTA” or “our PTA”** means our local unit: Maple Hills PTA 2.6.15.

**“PTA Executive Committee,” “PTA Board of Directors,” “Vice President,”** and terms of similar import shall have the meanings ascribed to them in the then-current Standing Rules of the Maple Hills PTA.

**“School”** means Maple Hills Elementary.

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH SCHOOL**

Our PTA partners with our school’s staff and administrators to achieve many of the PTA’s goals. When PTA volunteers are present in the school, they are guests of the school and must follow school policy with the approval and supervision of the school Principal, who has the legal duty to oversee the care and protection of the students. Likewise, PTA volunteers must work cooperatively and under the direction of staff and administrators, particularly when a volunteer is present in a staff member’s classroom.

**Staff lounge and other similar areas meant for staff are not to be used by volunteers without prior permission.**

All volunteers for a PTA activity must have complied with the District’s procedures governing volunteers, including the appropriate screening.

### **BEHAVIOR: Sustaining a Culture of Integrity**

#### **PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

Our PTA is an all-volunteer organization. Despite this, it is considered a business due to its organization as a corporation and its status as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. As such, all PTA Board members, program chairs, members and volunteers should conduct themselves in a professional manner. We continually should ask ourselves the following questions: What actions would you take, how would you handle a problem, and what type of correspondence would you send if you were working for pay in a professional environment?

We earn credibility with our community by keeping our commitments, using good judgment, and honoring our core values of integrity, respect, collaboration, inclusivity, accountability and commitment. A volunteer can demonstrate these values by following a few simple rules:

1. A volunteer will act in a professional and civil manner in his/her relations with students, staff, and other volunteers.
2. A volunteer will find out how he/she best can serve the activity for which he/she has volunteered, and will commit to doing what he/she can fulfill.
3. A volunteer will remember that he/she is a helper in the school and will work cooperatively and under the direction of those in charge.
4. A volunteer will remember that students, staff, and other volunteers are relying on his/her commitment to an activity on a regular and consistent basis.
5. A committee chairperson will follow the processes and procedures in the Chair Handbook in planning and managing his/her activity, and will enlist that number of volunteers necessary for adequate supervision and watchfulness over the activity.
6. A volunteer must contact the committee chairperson directing the activity if he/she is unclear about his/her role or expectations, and must contact the chairperson and/or the teacher, as appropriate, if he/she is unable to fulfill his/her commitment.
7. A volunteer will maintain confidentiality with respect to the students, the staff, and the school.
8. Except when acting in accordance with the PTA's Grievance and Conflict Resolution Process, a volunteer will discuss grievances and suggestions relating to our PTA only with the appropriate PTA chairperson, or a member of the PTA Executive Committee. A grievance or suggestion arising from a PTA activity but related to a topic outside the purview of the PTA (such as school or student safety) should be discussed only with the school Principal, or Principal designee.
9. A volunteer will remember that the rewards for volunteer service do not include special treatment or special consideration for himself/herself or his/her children.

## **TRAINING**

Our PTA's officers have state PTA-mandated training requirements that must be satisfied annually. We encourage all PTA members to take advantage of the many training opportunities offered by the regional, state, and national PTA organizations, including PTA and the Law, Legislative Assembly, and Convention. Art docents who work with the school kiln must annually attend kiln training and sign a receipt of the Kiln Guidelines. We strongly encourage all volunteers to attend trainings where appropriate.

## **STUDENT SUPERVISION**

During all PTA activities, the following two rules apply:

1. Adequate Supervision. A committee chairperson may determine the meaning of "adequate supervision" for his/her activity, but we recommend that at least three (3) adult volunteers be present at all times during an activity. A chairperson or the PTA Executive Committee may reschedule, modify, or cancel an activity if the activity is not expected to be adequately staffed, or if the activity cannot reasonably be expected to be conducted in a safe and appropriate manner.
2. Rule of Three. For the protection of both the students and our PTA volunteers, a volunteer should never be alone with a single child (except the volunteer's own child) where the volunteer cannot be observed and/or interrupted by others. Our PTA follows the "rule of three," which specifies that there should always be at least three people present - i.e. one volunteer and two or more children, or two volunteers and one child. Three or more unsupervised children do NOT meet the "rule of three" criteria.

## **UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT**

PTA volunteers shall not, in the performance of their duties, by words or conduct, demonstrate prejudice or bias based on race, sex, religion, age, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation, and will not allow members of their committee or those under their influence to do so. We will not tolerate in any form defamation, insubordination, or any conduct that falls within the definition of “uncivil conduct” as set forth in the District’s “Civility Policy.”

If the PTA Executive Committee recognizes a problem of unacceptable conduct emerging, the Executive Committee will follow our Grievance and Conflict Resolution Process and has the right to address and end conflicts accordingly.

## **ETHICAL CONCERNS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

All PTA members and volunteers should feel comfortable to share their opinion, particularly with respect to civility, ethical concerns, and conflicts. If you feel a person or an activity you are involved with is not honoring this Code, it is important for you to address your grievances with the other party, or with the appropriate PTA chairperson or the PTA Executive Committee, and to be willing to meet to reconcile the differences.

If reconciliation is unattainable, and if the violation of this Code causes a significant disruption to an activity or to the school, or prevents the PTA Executive Committee from reasonably being able to anticipate that the activity will be conducted in an appropriate manner, then the PTA Executive Committee may reschedule, modify, or cancel the activity, and may ask one or more of those involved in the violation to step off of the activity. In no situation will disruptive or insubordinate behavior be tolerated.

The PTA Executive Committee, or its designees, shall act in conjunction with school and/or District administrators to support any school or District directed action involving our volunteers or programs.

**If you witness any unacceptable conduct or an incident that violates the District’s Civility Policy, you must immediately report it to the Maple Hills Elementary Principal, in person or in writing (including via an electronic format such as e-mail).**

**If you witness any unacceptable conduct or if an incident occurs at a PTA-sponsored activity, you also must immediately report it to the Maple Hills PTA President in person or in writing (including via an electronic format such as e-mail).**

In deciding whether to report a complaint about someone, you first should ask:

- Will this conduct hurt Maple Hills in the long run? Will it cause Maple Hills PTA to lose credibility with its students, families, staff and/or teachers? -OR-
- Will this conduct hurt other people such as other volunteers, staff, teachers, students, or families? –OR-
- Will this conduct subject me, my co-volunteers, or the organization to fines, legal action, or criminal charges?

**If the answer to any of the above questions is “yes” or “maybe,” please see the Maple Hills PTA Grievance and Conflict Resolution Process (attached).**

# MAPLE HILLS PTA

## GRIEVANCE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

Our PTA is committed to resolving conflicts and grievances raised by our volunteers in a professional, fair, consistent, appropriate, and timely manner. Our PTA will follow the steps and procedures set forth below.

1. *Informal Stage.* A party who has a grievance against another PTA volunteer, or a grievance regarding the conduct or administration of any PTA activity (the “complainant”), should begin by discussing the issue(s) directly with the person(s) of concern by the complainant, or with the appropriate committee chairperson. If the complainant is not satisfied with the initial response, or if the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, then the grievance should be discussed with the appropriate Board Member, or other applicable PTA leader, as appropriate. *Every attempt should be made to resolve grievances as soon as possible, at the lowest level possible.*

2. *Formal Stage.*

A. Executive Committee Review. If the issue still is not resolved to the satisfaction of the parties after the informal proceedings, then the grievance and the requested resolution should be presented, in writing, by the complainant to the Executive Committee for investigation/mediation/ arbitration. A complainant may present a grievance only on his/her own behalf; he/she may not complain on behalf of another party. The Executive Committee will make such investigation of the grievance as the Executive Committee, in its discretion, determines is warranted. Investigation of grievances will be conducted in a fair, impartial, and transparent manner that accords respect to all parties. The Executive Committee will require any member to recuse themselves if they are interested parties in the grievance before the committee to ensure equitable treatment during the review.

Within fourteen (14) days after presentment of the grievance, the Executive Committee will decide how to resolve the grievance, and will offer to review the grievance and the resolution with all parties involved. This time frame for decision-making may be suspended during any period that the same or a substantially similar grievance is being considered by school or District personnel, or by another agency with jurisdiction, and during any time that a complainant fails to cooperate with the investigation process. The Executive Committee will record its decision in whatever manner it deems appropriate, and shall keep a copy the grievance and its disposition in its permanent records.

B. Final Appeal to Board of Directors. Any party who is not satisfied with the resolution may make a final appeal of the Executive Committee’s decision to the Board of Directors, which will have a ballot vote on the decision at its next regularly-scheduled meeting.

3. If a grievance relates to the Executive Committee, or the Board of Directors as a whole, such that there are no disinterested persons on the Executive Committee or Board of Directors who are able to investigate and decide the grievance, a request for assistance shall be made to the V.P. Elementary – South of the Issaquah PTSA Council 2.6.

### CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING AND NO RETALIATION

Reports and complaints will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law and by the PTA’s need to properly investigate the situation and to communicate its decision. PTA volunteers must cooperate fully in any investigation relating to the PTA, and be truthful at all times. PTA volunteers may never interfere with or obstruct an investigation conducted by the Executive Committee, the school or District, or any governmental or other agency with jurisdiction. Our PTA prohibits retaliation against volunteers who, in good faith, submit, or participate in the investigation of, any complaints.

## **Issaquah School District Civility Policy (5282)**

**Purpose:** The Issaquah School District believes that a safe, civil environment is essential to high student and staff achievement, to the free exchange of ideas central to a quality educational process, and to the development of youth as thoughtful participants in our democracy. Conversely, uncivil conduct, like other forms of disruptive behavior, interferes with a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students.

The Issaquah School District Board of Directors encourages administrators, faculty, staff, students, volunteers, parents, and other community members to participate in maintaining a clear expectation of civil conduct and problem-solving throughout the school district. The Board is committed to providing training and resources to support this expectation and refuses to condone uncivil conduct on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities, whether by staff, students, parents, volunteers, or other District visitors.

The basic purpose of this policy is three-fold:

- 1) To promote a work and learning environment that is safe, productive and nurturing for all staff and students, and to encourage the free flow of ideas without fear or intimidation;
- 2) To provide our students with appropriate models for respectful problem-solving; and
- 3) To reduce the potential triggers for violent conduct, such as fear, anger, frustration and alienation—especially by making problem solving procedures and alternatives to violence readily accessible to both youth and adults who need them.

**Definitions:** For purposes of this policy, "uncivil conduct" includes the following: directing vulgar, obscene or profane gestures or words at another individual; taunting, jeering, inciting others to taunt or jeer at an individual; raising one's voice at another individual, repeatedly interrupting another individual who is speaking at an appropriate time and place; imposing personal demands at times or in settings where they conflict with assigned duties and cannot reasonably be met; using personal epithets, gesturing in a manner that puts another in fear for his/her personal safety, invading the personal space of an individual after being directed to move away, physically blocking an individual's exit from a room or location, remaining in a classroom or school area after a teacher or administrator in authority has directed one to leave, violating the privacy of another individual's belongings (except for lawful searches by school officials conducted in connection with the administration of school rules and applicable laws), or other similar disruptive conduct.

"Uncivil conduct" does not include the expression of controversial or differing viewpoints that may be offensive to some persons, so long as (1) the ideas are presented in a respectful manner and at a time and place that are appropriate, and (2) such expression does not materially disrupt, and may not be reasonably anticipated to disrupt, the educational process.

**Expectations:** In support of this policy, the Superintendent shall be responsible for the development of District training, written and oral communications, resource lists and other tools for the use of staff, students and community members in achieving the purposes of this policy. Specific procedures appropriate to the needs of staff, students, and parents/community members will be available to all persons who have legitimate business within the District.

In all cases, individuals who perceive they have been treated in an uncivil manner will be urged to resolve their concerns through simple, direct or assisted communication with the person(s) at the source of the concern. When this is not possible or appropriate, any person who needs help in identifying and/or using appropriate problem-solving procedures may seek assistance from the school principal, principal designee, or work site administrator. Individuals are encouraged to work out issues of concern promptly—and preferably no later than two (2) days after an incident has occurred. No retaliation will be tolerated against individuals for working in good faith under this policy and its related procedures to resolve concerns.

Site Councils are encouraged to guide, support, and evaluate local efforts to establish and reinforce a culture of civility and respect for all. This policy seeks to promote a school culture of respect and civility. Severe or persistent acts of uncivil conduct may, however, violate other school rules, such as the District's policies against harassment and sexual harassment, or specific conduct codes. Violation of such policies may result in **further action, such as** discipline, adverse employment action, or criminal charges, as applicable. Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with the ability of school officials to maintain order and discipline in the schools or to enforce school rules and applicable laws. The Superintendent and appropriate staff shall review this policy annually.

**Severability Clause.** If any part of this policy or its related procedures is found to be unlawful or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect to the full extent permitted by law.

### **Cross References/ Related Policies and Procedures**

- 4312 Parent Complaint
- 3214 Harassment (students)
- 3213 Sexual Harassment (students)
- 5014 Harassment (personnel)
- 5013 Sexual Harassment (personnel)
- 3205 Civility – Students (identical language)**
- 4011 Civility – Community Relations (identical language)**

Adopted: September 25, 2001



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### 2020-2021

I have read and understand the Maple Hills PTA Volunteer Code of Conduct and Grievance and Conflict Resolution Process.

Board Member/Committee Chair Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Board Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_