

CHAPTER 5

5.12 Substance Abuse Policy (Adopted November 30, 1989)

5.12.1 Philosophy (Revised November 30, 1989)

The Marshall County Board of Education recognizes that substance abuse among students is a serious societal problem. The Board also recognizes that the dependency stage of chemical use is a primary physical illness.

The use of chemical and other substances inhibits the achievement of the overall goals of the school system. The medical, physical and emotional problems created by the use of and dependency on chemical substances interfere with learning, development and safety of students.

While substance use and abuse by students is a societal problem brought to the school and results from factors present in the total community, the Marshall County Board of Education accepts the responsibility to work with the home, and community agencies to create a school environment free of chemical use, abuse and dependency within the student/staff environment.

In accepting this responsibility, the Board of Education reaffirms its policy that students determined to possess, use or sell chemical substances may be immediately suspended and recommended for expulsion as outlined in the Marshall County Suspension and Expulsion Policies. The superintendent retains the authority to handle disciplinary measures as deemed appropriate, but alternative measures to suspension/expulsion shall be available to provide assistance to students involved in chemical use, abuse and dependency.

The school system affirms its responsibility to offer guidance to chemically dependent students and their concerned families in seeking treatment.

The Board recognizes that these responsibilities cannot be fulfilled by the schools alone.

The assistance of other community agencies including the family, churches, law enforcement officials, health services, mental health agencies, treatment facilities and concerned citizens is solicited.

The Board further recognizes that drug abuse and dependency are progressive diseases. Intervention measures taken by the school shall begin with counseling and extend to referral to appropriate outside agencies including treatment centers and the courts.

Parents/Guardians may be notified of behavioral symptoms of chemical use and abuse noted in the student as defined by W. Va. Code 60A-5-504 (e)

1971-C.54 "C.21". Appropriate staff will meet with students and/or parents to discuss the nature and extent of the observable problem and to recommend remedial action to be recommended will be dependent on the attitude of the student, the cooperation of the parent(s) and the seriousness and frequency of the observable behaviors.

The administration will identify a team of key staff to develop appropriate strategies and procedures to fulfill the responsibilities enumerated above.

Within the funds available, staff, students, and other interested persons will be encouraged to develop skills for identifying and working with students, who have alcohol, drug use and dependency problems. Such training may include seminars, assemblies and workshops.

The search for solutions to the problems associated with substance use and abuse needs to be approached by society as a whole rather than by one institution. Therefore, the Board encourages and supports the sharing of approaches and programs with and among other districts and institutions.

5.12.2 Overall Goal (Revised November 30, 1989)

The main goal of Marshall County Schools Substance Abuse program is to systematically and professionally respond to student problems as they are manifested in the school in order to arrive at a caring school climate that will be conducive to education.

5.12.2.1 Specific Objectives (Revised November 30, 1989)

1. to provide public awareness and educational presentations to students which aim to inform students of dangers of drugs and also assist them in developing decision making skills and in promoting a positive self-esteem.
2. to provide identification and referral services, including consultation with appropriate community agencies.
3. to provide a continuum of counseling and intervention services.
4. to provide support groups in helping young people refrain from using alcohol and other hard drugs.
5. to provide co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
6. to build a team personnel to work on chemical abuse dependency, and prevention issues.

7. to provide continual support throughout the recovery process.

5.12.3 Procedure For Dealing With Suspected Chemical Abuse (Revised November 30, 1989)

When a staff member suspects chemical use or dependency due to certain behaviors or patterns shown by a student, a referral to the core team chairperson should be completed. Referrals may also be received from parents, other students, or concerned community members.

1. The core team will distribute referral forms to all teachers on the student's schedule. This form shall be a behavioral observation checklist to gather data on the student. It is not to be used as an accusation or opinion poll, rather a simple method of recording actual observed behavior.
2. After the referral forms are returned to the core team chairperson, the core team shall review the data, keeping all information confidential. After reviewing the information, the following may occur:
 - a. no action--insufficient data to make decision
 - b. further collection of data and follow-up
 - c. conference with student and/or parents/guardians to discuss behavior. An assessment will be arranged if needed, or inclusion of the student into the insight group or counseling contract.
3. After assessment, action will be taken based on the results and recommendations from the assessment. These actions may include but aren't limited to:
 - a. counseling contract with student--number of sessions to be determined by the counselor. At least one of the sessions may include the parents/guardians.
 - b. inclusion of the student into a school-based insight group.
 - c. referral to an outside agency for counseling, out-patient treatment, or inpatient residential treatment.
4. Upon re-entry of any student completing treatment, that student shall be included in the school-based student insight group. This will be an essential component in the recovery process.
5. Follow-ups will be completed periodically and progress monitored. Further support services will be developed as needed.

NOTE: Marshall County suspension and expulsion policies may be enforced. The student may choose to participate in the procedures outlined above in lieu of the complete disciplinary procedures at the discretion of the principal. The principal may waive a portion of the suspension if the student and parents agree to the alternatives of the student assistance.

5.12.4 School Core Teams (Revised November 30, 1989)

The school core team should consist of a counselor, a principal or designee, and other trained staff members. The core team shall elect a chairperson. The core team shall implement procedures to insure confidentiality of information which shall not be made available to anyone except other core team members, the principal, and counselor on a need-to-know basis.

Meeting times and frequency will be determined at the local school level. Every effort should be made to have a set day and time for core team meetings. Adjustments would be made as necessary to best meet the needs of the student and staff.

5.12.5 School Property Inspection

In the interest of health and safety, all school properties may be inspected by proper school authorities.

5.12.5.1 Student Lockers

Lockers assigned to students are considered as property of Marshall County Schools and as such may reasonably be inspected.

As far as possible, the pupil assigned to the locker, along with two school staff members, should be present for the inspection. If circumstances do not permit the presence of the pupil during the inspection, at least two members of the school staff should conduct the inspection.

5.12.5.2 Other Property

All other property of Marshall County Schools shall be subject to inspection as cited in 5.12.5.1 this chapter.