

SUBSTANCE USE PROCEDURES

1. Introduction

Role of school

Substance use and abuse is one of society's most pervasive problems and it increasingly affects children and adolescents. Any pattern of use affects each user's community, family, peer relationships, and academic performance. A police record or a school discipline report can effect college admissions, job searches, and CORI investigations. Our hope is to prevent these issues following you throughout your life.

We believe the entire community including the individual, his or her family, peers, and the school is responsible for addressing this. Only by working together can we create a safe and positive learning environment for our students.

Pentucket's goal is to intervene early in a student's use or suspected use of substances in an effort to stop the progression of a potentially harmful set of behaviors. We have established a course of action involving members of the teaching staff, counseling department, and administration, whose primary goal is to maintain a positive and safe learning environment. The Director of Guidance and Health Services is the program administrator but any staff member or peer leader can assist.

Voluntary admission of a substance abuse problem

The school will strongly support any student who comes forth to voluntarily seek help for a substance abuse problem. The program coordinator will assist the student in formulating an appropriate treatment program, arrange for access to community resources when necessary, and provide support and information for Parents/guardians.

While it should be noted that no disciplinary action will be taken in the case of a student asking for help in overcoming a substance problem, the standard policies and procedures outlined will be followed for any substance use following this admission. A student may not voluntarily admit to use as a means to circumvent the disciplinary procedures. An admission and request for assistance must **precede** a disciplinary investigation.

Role of parents

Pentucket expects that Parents/guardians want to know of the school's concern and, furthermore, expects the cooperation of the family in overcoming a suspected problem. Therefore, when school personnel suspect that a problem with substance use exists for a student, it is the school's policy to notify Parents/guardians of this concern. It should be noted that if the parent/ guardian fails to cooperate with school authorities at any point in this process, the school may find it necessary to pursue a child in need of services (CHINS) process or other care and protection actions.

When needed, a member of the staff will also make recommendations to the student and his or her family to formulate an appropriate treatment program and to provide support and information for Parents/guardians.

In all cases, Parents/guardians will be fully apprised of the situation throughout the intervention and disciplinary process. The school will assure that the principles of due process are observed at every stage.

II Prohibited Actions

Items included in these procedures

The table below defines the items included in this policy.

Item	Definition
Illegal Drugs / Alcohol	Any controlled substance not legally obtained, and prescribed drugs not being used in the prescribed dosage or for the prescribed purpose, including drugs prescribed legally, but for someone other than the student. The term further refers to other substances (e.g. mail- order stimulants or pills, nitrous oxide, glue) that are used for something other than their intended purpose.
Paraphernalia	Paraphernalia associated with substance abuse (e.g. tobacco rolling papers, rolling machines, pipes, "roach" clips) will be viewed by as evidence of a student's intention to use illegal drugs and will be dealt with as a suspected substance use problem
Prescription and Non-Prescription Medications	To ensure the safe use of medication by students, ALL medication is to be kept in the Health Center and dispensed under a nurse's direction. Students are not to have prescription or non- prescription medication such as Aspirin, Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, No-Doz, Nyquil, diet pills, laxatives, or any products containing Ephedra or Creatine in their personal possession. Possession, use, or distribution of such medications by a student is viewed as a serious health and safety concern by the school.
Household cleaning solutions	The misuse of common household cleaning solutions or air fresheners creates a clear and present danger to the health and safety of students. Therefore, in accordance with our substance policies, any student found to be misusing such items will be in violation of our substance abuse policies.

Prohibited actions at school

The following actions are strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action:

- Students use of illegal drugs, narcotics, and/or alcohol on school property, on school buses, at school bus stops, and/or at school-sponsored or school-related functions.
- Student possession of illegal drugs, narcotics, alcohol and/or drug paraphernalia on school property, on school buses, at school bus stops, or at school-sponsored or school-related functions.
- Being under the influence of illegal drugs, narcotics, and/or alcohol on school property, on school buses, at school bus stops, or at school-sponsored or school-related functions.
- Student sale, distribution, or attempted sale or distribution of illegal drugs, narcotics, and/or alcohol on school property, on school buses, at school bus stops, or at school sponsored or school- related functions.

Knowingly being in the presence of illegal substances

A student who is present where he/she knows illegal substances are being used will be deemed at risk for substance use. Therefore, a student caught knowingly in the presence of substance use will be referred to the principal or vice-principal and the situation may be treated as a first offense.

Possession, sale, or distribution of illegal substances and police involvement

Students found in possession of, selling or distributing illegal drugs, narcotics, or drug paraphernalia while on school property, on a school bus, or while attending school-sponsored or school-sanctioned functions will be reported to the police.

Suspicion of substance use or abuse

In cases where there is suspicion, but no irrefutable evidence of drug or alcohol use, the school reserves the right to take certain actions on behalf of the suspected student(s). Such actions may include any or all of the following: intervention by faculty members known to be close to the student(s), interview by a counselor, participation in a counseling program, etc.

Response to substance use or abuse outside of school

Pentucket reserves the right to discipline students for drug or alcohol-related actions or offenses, which are committed by the student during non-school time, on property other than school property, and/or at functions or events which are neither sponsored by, nor related to, the Pentucket School District. This right will be exercised at any time decreed appropriate by the Pentucket Regional School District.

III. Intervention / Consequences

Investigation process

When a student is believed to have violated the district's substance abuse policy, the following events will occur.

Stage	What happens
1	The student will be referred to the Principal or the Assistant Principal.
2	The administrator may contact the school nurse concerning the case. If the nurse or other medical professional determines that physical symptoms may be present after speaking with the student and evaluating the symptoms, the nurse or other medical professional will make recommendations to the referring administrator.
3	The Principal or Assistant Principal will, if reasonably possible, notify the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
4	The Principal or Assistant principal will inform the student, in the presence of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) if reasonably possible, of the conduct prohibited in which the Principal or assistant Principal believes the student has engaged.
5	The student will have the opportunity to respond to the Principal or Assistant Principal.
6	After considering the evidence, if the Principal or Assistant Principal believes a violation has occurred, the Principal or Assistant Principal will suspend the student. The length of the suspension will be based on number of factors, including whether this is a first offense. The offense will be reported to local police authorities.
7	Following the meeting with the Principal or Assistant Principal, the student will be released from school, and as a general rule, will be released only into the care and custody of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or other responsible adults designated by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
8	The student will serve his or her suspension or other consequences as determined by the Principal or Assistant Principal.
9	Prior to the student's return to school, and as a condition of his/her return to school, the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) and the student must meet with the Principal or Assistant Principal and/or other staff for the purpose of determining a specific plan of intervention and/or support services.

Parental involvement: Should the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) fail to cooperate with the school authorities at any point in this process, the school authorities may find it necessary to pursue a CHINS or a care and protection action.

Consequences for violating policy

Any student determined to be in violation of Pentucket’s substance abuse policy will be required to take the following steps.

Offense status remains in effect for 12 months from the date of the infraction.

1. The student will serve an in-house suspension for 1-10 consecutive school days.

During this time, the student

- will not be able to participate in the regular day-to-day routine, including classes, athletics or other extra-curricular activities.

Note: At the discretion of the Principal or Assistant Principal, a student may be suspended from athletic and other student activities for up to 45 days. The factors used to determine this will include whether this is a first time or repeat offense and whether there is an agreed upon parental/student treatment plan.

- will be assigned community service at the school.
- will be required to make up missed class work in a structured study hall. Any sleeping or outright refusal to work throughout the day will result in make-up of that day by extension of the suspension period.

2. During the in-house suspension, the student may volunteer for a work detail. This could involve cleaning, grounds maintenance, or other work around the school community. Work details are voluntary. No student will be mandated to do a work detail.

3. Upon the student's return from suspension, he/she will be required to complete an interview with a Pentucket school counselor. The purpose of this initial interview will be to determine the level of potential involvement with substances and to provide the family with recommendations as to any further need for intervention.

IF the initial assessment...	THEN the student will be ...
Does not indicate substance dependence	Monitored by school personnel as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicates substance dependence • Indicates behavior that is a high risk 	Referred to a substance abuse counselor for additional assessment and follow up.

Repeat offenses

The policy and process listed above apply to all violations of this policy.

If a student violates this policy more than once, the school may also require the student and parents to agree to a treatment plan. The school may also monitor the student for up to 18 months to ensure that this plan is successful.

IV. The PRSD Policy applies to all students inclusive of all extracurricular activities and athletics. Please note that for athletes, the PRSD consequences exceed these minimum standards from the MA Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) as listed below.

MIAA Chemical Health Rule: Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs

During the season of practices or play, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol, any tobacco product, marijuana, steroid, or any controlled substance. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her physician.

The MIAA Rule will be in effect during the school day and at all extra-curricular and school sponsored activities. School is considered to be any location where a school sponsored activity is taking place. The prescribed penalties, listed below, will commence for the "out-of-school" student-athlete at the start of his/her athletic season.

In season athletes

The Minimum Penalties are: (PRSD Exceeds these minimum standards)

- **First Violation:** When the Principal or Assistant Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next 2 consecutive interscholastic events, or 2 weeks of a season in which the student is a participant whichever encompasses the greater number of contests. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation.
- **Second and Subsequent Violations:** The student shall lose eligibility for the next 12 consecutive athletic events or 12 consecutive weeks, whichever encompasses the greater number of contests in which the student is a participant.