



## **STATEMENT OF Practice**

Connected Circles bases its discipline policy on trauma-informed practices, positive behavioral supports, and collaborative problem solving. Every effort is made by Connected Circles staff to manage the learning environment, maintain consistency, and minimize predictable triggers of students' emotional/behavioral outbursts. Students and staff use therapeutic interactions which provide for emotional regulation, identification, empathy, and support to utilize prosocial behaviors. Connected Circles staff annually receive training on the Handle with Care Behavior Management System and on the maintenance of the safe, orderly, civil, and positive learning environment.

Connected Circles develops behavior support and intervention protocols for each student, in partnership with the student's team and with support from therapeutic consultants.

A student's plan will include:

- Student's strengths and calming strategies
- Goals for resiliency building
- Triggers or antecedents that may dysregulate a student
- Preferred staff/activity when dysregulated

## **Potential Violations**

### **Vandalism**

Connected Circles expects students and staff to be respectful of each other and of property belonging to others. Damage to school property or the personal property of others creates an environment that does not feel safe and harms relationships. As part of their self-regulation plans, students are actively involved in making repairs to any damage caused during incidents to property or relationships.

### **Weapons**

Weapons of any sort, including any item defined as a weapon by the Gun Free School Act, are strictly prohibited while participating in any program or activities of Connected Circles. "Weapons" means any item that could harm, disable, maim or terminate another person(s). Examples of these weapons would be firearms or guns of any sort including parts of guns, knives or sharp objects designed for or potentially used as a weapon, bombs or bomb making material of any sort. This list would include but not be limited to any item deemed by staff to be a risk to personal safety.

Weapons are strictly forbidden by all on the Connected Circles campus, including the parking lot and outbuildings, or otherwise possessing them during school hours. If a student is in possession of a weapon, the weapon will be appropriately secured and confiscated by a staff member or administrator. In the case of minor students found to be in possession, the Department for Children and Families (DCF) must be

notified. If a threat were to occur involving a weapon, Connected Circles would follow the threat drills/procedures laid out in our Emergency Operations Plan.

If a designated school activity requires the use of a knife, (e.g. camping, fishing, biology dissection) the knife will be provided by school staff and used under close supervision.

### **Dress and Appearance**

Style of dress and appearance is a personal choice as long as it is appropriate for the Connected Circles setting and respectful of others. The following are the guidelines:

Clothing free of references to alcohol or drugs, free of lewd or suggestive messages, reflect political neutrality, and will be appropriate for time and place, at the discretion of the director or designee.

### **Distracting Items**

Student use of cell phones should be limited during school hours. An agreement with input from the students will be developed. If phones continue to be too much of a distraction during the day, the option to move to not allowing them at school may be exercised.

Families are asked to not communicate with their students during the day. If there is an emergency and a need to be in contact with a student, the main school number can be reached at 802-828-7120. If there is an emergency with a student during the day, we will call families.

Students are prohibited from accessing or posting visual depictions that are violent, obscene or that constitute pornography, including child pornography. “Obscene” and “child pornography” are terms that are specifically defined by federal statutes. “Violent” means any depiction of violence that is other than for academic purposes, e.g., the study of history, or for clinical reasons, e.g., an article concerning the effects of physical abuse. In the context of in school computer use, including email, students do not have free speech rights or an expectation of privacy.

### **Administrative Plan**

At the discretion of the director or their designee the plan to be implemented may include the following:

1. One-on-one discussion with student;
2. Open communication with families/caregivers;
3. Notification of sending school case manager;
4. Restorative conversations with peers or staff;
5. Repair work to physical space;
6. Off-campus programming;
7. Coordinating with sending school on due process procedures and a manifestation determination review if deemed necessary.