

PREVENTION OF CHEMICAL ABUSE

The Board recognizes alcohol/drug abuse and dependency to be a serious social problem; furthermore, the Board recognizes the dependency stage of chemical use to be a primary physical illness.

Health problems of youth are primarily the responsibility of the home and community; however, schools share in that responsibility as the community's youth spend a major portion of their time therein and chemical abuse problems often interfere with school behavior, student learning, and the fullest possible development of the individual. The schools then should have a major part in early detection of chemical use, abuse, and dependence; the protection of students from the promotion and sales of alcohol and nonprescribed drugs; and a partnership role with families and other institutions in seeking treatment for the chemically dependent person. Toward this goal, the board is committed to achieving an environment of high risk for those who would use or abuse all nonprescribed chemicals. This goal, however, cannot be achieved by the schools alone, regardless of funding, staffing ability, or program development. The family, religious organizations, police, community health services, mental health and treatment centers, and concerned citizens must also play a role if our goal is to be accomplished. A community action team may be formed of school and community people. It will serve as a source of advice and support to the substance abuse program as it functions within the school.

The school does have and will perform specific functions, such as notifying parents of behavioral signals which may indicate a student's use or abuse or dependency on alcohol or chemicals and of approved disciplinary procedures.

In the case of recognized behavioral symptoms, a representative of the school trained in substance abuse intervention will meet with the student and parent(s) to discuss the nature and extent of the observable problem and recommend remedial action. In the case of a student's possession, sale, or use and/or being under the influence of an unprescribed chemical during school or a school-related activity, the student may be suspended, counseled in school, referred to an outside agency, and/or reported to the proper law enforcement authorities. The specific course of action will depend upon the attitude of the student, the cooperation of the parents, the seriousness of the offense, and the frequency of such offenses. The District will also supply the families (of chemical-using and -abusing students) a list of resources as well as other support services.

The District's schools will also service the community as an informational resource with regard to chemical abuse and dependency. This will be done in a variety of ways including adult education programs regarding chemical abuse, making staff members trained in substance abuse intervention available through a speaker's bureau, and facilitating the training of interested community members.

Within the limits of available funds, the staff and student body will be invited and encouraged to develop skills in identifying and working with the substance abuse program. Additionally, it is expected that the community will do likewise. In promoting such, the Board believes that education offers one of the most effective tools to counter a potentially deadly problem; further, the Board supports combining and coordinating efforts and recognizes that this problem neither begins at the school door nor is contained within the geographical limits of the District. This problem will be resolved only to the degree that every element of the society which it wounds cooperates to effect a solution.

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