

I was surprised to find how few zero-tolerance policies Buford middle school had in effect. Of course fighting is the main zero-tolerance policy. We also have a zero tolerance policy for having lighters and for having laser pointers. The most obvious zero-tolerance policy is for drugs, weapons, alcohol use on campus. I agree with all these zero-tolerance policies because of the ramifications it could mean if students use these items during school hours.

Lighters and laser pointers hold a serious safety issue for students and staff at school. If you shine a laser pointer in someone's eye, you could cause blindness. Many Middle school students are not mature enough to know this fact they may use the laser pointer incorrectly. Lighters offer a serious fire hazard to any classroom or place in the building. If a student has these items, the administration will suspended the student from school. I think it sends a message to the parents who may not think these items cause a serious safety hazard.

Fighting has been a zero-tolerance offense since I have been a student in Georgia schools. Fighting is very prevalent at the middle school age due to an immature ability to deal with conflict. It is very easy for middle school students to resort to violence to solve their problems but as adults, they cannot do that without serious consequences. It is very important that students in middle school and in any school learn that fighting is not a reasonable way to deal with conflict.

The last zero-tolerance policy deals with the use of weapons, drugs and alcohol in school. It is very important that students not use alcohol or drugs during school hours. Not only are their bodies not mature enough to process alcohol, but illegal drug use at this young age can have serious effects on the future of the students. The use of drugs and alcohol may be the first indicator of a more serious issue dealing with depression abuse in the household or any number of issues that could seriously affect students and the students around them. I think it is very important that schools and communities crackdown on the underage use of weapons, drugs, and alcohol.

If a child displays signs of abuse, staff members are mandated reporters and must report the incident to the administration or school counselor. The administration then reports the incident to the school social worker. I agree with the procedures because social workers have teams who specialize in child abuse and are more qualified to identify abuse than teachers are due to limited training.

All these zero-tolerance policies have a minimum consequence of suspension. The use of weapons, drugs and alcohol or a severe fighting incident could allow the administration to expel a student from school for up to a year. I agree with all the policies and I think that they help to establish a positive learning environment in which students feel safe and the staff and teachers will feel safe.