

School Response to Off-Campus Substance Abuse by SMC Students

Dear Parents of Sr. High Students,

Our schools have an important part to play regarding the issue of under-aged drinking and substance abuse. Our parents, of course, play an especially crucial role in this area.

Our school policy regarding alcohol and other drugs, found in the Student Handbook, clearly defines consequences, it also defines a scope—where and when the policy and consequences apply. The scope includes official reports of Minor In Possession and Driving Under Influence; the reason these are included are because these are public and provable, and because they harm the reputation of our school (just as our students' positive actions help the reputation of our school). Also, illegal or immoral conduct by our students violates school codes and our Covenant. There are other means, besides police reports, of illegal or immoral actions becoming public and provable, this is what I am hoping to address in this letter and why I feel a change to our policy is necessary.

Our high school administrators and coaches cannot be policemen and will not go searching for students doing bad things. But if student activity which is illegal or immoral is brought to the public forum (MIP, DUI, Facebook pictures, cell pictures), we will take action, in order to:

- Assess if there is an addiction of any sort—to protect the student and others
- Uphold the values of our school, illustrated in the covenant and mission, and
- Protect the reputation of our schools and student body.

We will do this by:

- Meeting with the student and parents
- Informing the student's coach or activity or club sponsor
- Possibly requiring attendance at meetings with a counselor or regular drug/alcohol testing
- Suspending for 24 hours (in-school suspension); this is 24 hours from the time administrators verify, whether this be the day after or a week after.
- Suspending from all school-sponsored activities for one week (exactly 7 calendar days from the time administrators verify); noting that if a student is suspended and therefore misses afternoon classes, the student may not attend or participate in activities that evening.

The Limitations for this policy will be:

Administrators will not act on rumors, innuendo, or anonymous letters.

Administrators will not act on proof that is more than 30 days old (other than to inform parents and question addiction).

Consequences for on-campus or school-sponsored events are illustrated in the Student Handbook.

Consequences for a 2nd violation of illegal or immoral off-campus behavior will result in a two day suspension (in school) and two week suspension from activities. Counseling and regular alcohol/drug testing will be mandatory.

Consequences for a 3rd violation may result in either temporary or permanent expulsion from SMC.

Please direct questions regarding this policy to kraus@smcschools.org or gorman@smcschools.org.