

# When Students Misuse Fire on School Grounds



*Excerpt from Portland Public School's "Guide to Policies, Rules, and Procedures on Student Responsibilities, Rights, and Discipline"*

## *Protection of Property*

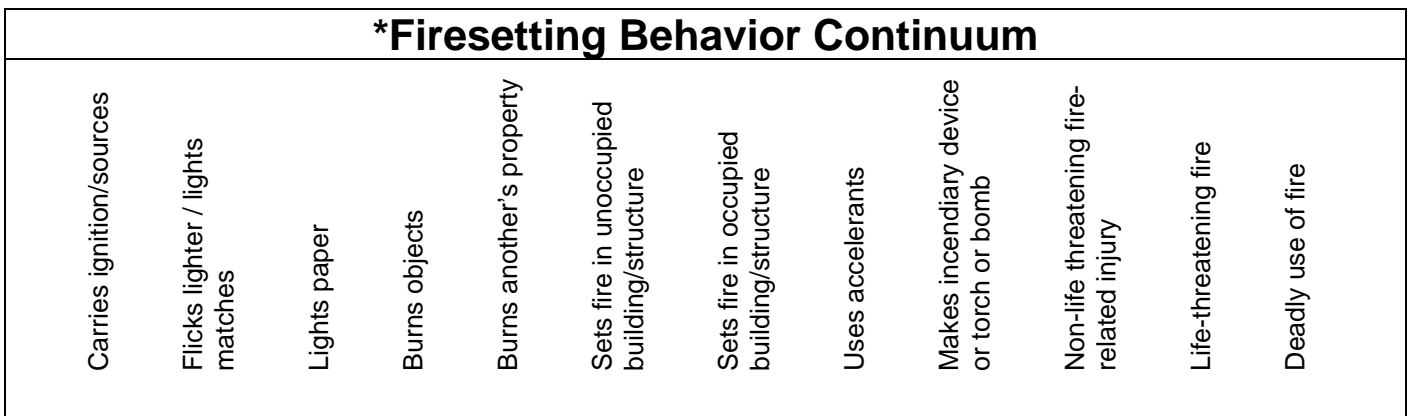
Examples of conduct which violates expectations and definitions:

- ARSON:** Action which may cause a fire, but none results, such as throwing a lighted match in a trash container which fails to ignite, or intentionally starting any fire or combustion on school property regardless of whether any damage occurs.
- FALSE ALARM:** Reporting a fire to school or fire officials or setting off a fire alarm without a reasonable belief that a fire exists.

Occurrence and Disciplinary Action from min-max:

- Minor/First:** Level 3: Suspension/Temporary Exclusion/Reassignment/Referral or  
Level 4: Expulsion/Delayed Expulsion/Reassignment/Referral
- Serious/Rep:** Level 4: Expulsion/Delayed Expulsion/Reassignment/Referral (for False Alarm)  
Level 5: Mandatory Expulsion (for Arson)

**Not all fires set by students result in a fire that requires an evacuation of the student body. Many firesetting behaviors are at-risk behaviors requiring intervention. These behaviors are red flags for more serious behaviors and should be taken seriously.**



\*Firesetting Behavior Continuum included in the Juvenile Firesetter Threat Response System developed by Salem Keizer School District

## Checklist for Responding to Youth-set Fires in Schools

- Upon discovery of ANY school fire, IMMEDIATELY call 911 and explain the situation.**  
Dispatch will notify Portland Fire & Rescue to determine an appropriate response. Responding firefighters will initiate a fire investigator response if the fire cause is undetermined or intentional. If the event is determined to be criminal in nature, arson detectives will also respond.
- Contact school resource officer and inform him/her of the fire incident.**
- After the building is deemed safe, take photos of the fire scene for documentation. All fire damage and related items should be considered part of a fire scene. NOTHING should be disturbed, altered, or cleaned up until cleared to do so by a fire investigator or school resource officer.**
- If students involved are on an IEP, notify building special education staff of the incident.
- Every student starting a fire at school needs to be screened to determine an appropriate safety and supervision plan. For a screening to be administered at school, contact Fire Safe Children and Families at 503-988-4982 or for a screening at the local fire department call 503-823-3806.
- Implement a school safety plan that includes increasing line of sight supervision of the youth at all times.
- Randomly check backpack, locker, pocket, purse, pockets, etc. for matches and lighters or accelerants.
- Pending the results of the screening, other safety measures and interventions may be required.
  - Other interventions include: \_\_\_\_\_
- Refer to community organizations to provide intervention that includes fire safety education, problem solving, accountability, relationship building, empathy and social skill training. (See Fire Safe Children and Families Brochure and Website [www.firesafe.us](http://www.firesafe.us) or call 503-988-4982).
- Referral for a mental health assessment.