

The Role of the Parent...

- Parents/Guardians will be notified by a school official if their child is about to be suspended from school.
- Parents/Guardians will be requested to meet with the principal or vice-principal.
- Parents/Guardians will receive an educational program (homework & required assignments) for their son/daughter while away from school for any suspension.
- Parents/Guardians may ask to be contacted by e-mail regarding the student's educational program.
- Parents/Guardians are welcome to call the school for further clarification of the suspension process.
- Parents/Guardians and their child will be requested to attend a hearing with the **Principal of Alternate Education** for a Level 2 Suspension.
- Parents/Guardians and their child will be requested to attend a hearing with the **School District *Student Suspension Review Committee*** at the School Board Office, for a Level 3 Suspension.
- Parents/Guardians may seek assistance from an advocate.



When parents and educators work together on [student] improvement goals, positive results can be seen in both academics and behaviour.”

(Focus on suspension: A resource for schools, Ministry of Education, 1999, p. 29)

Further information and assistance is available through the following contacts:

Principal/Vice Principal of child's school

DPAC Advocacy Line: 604-939-0111

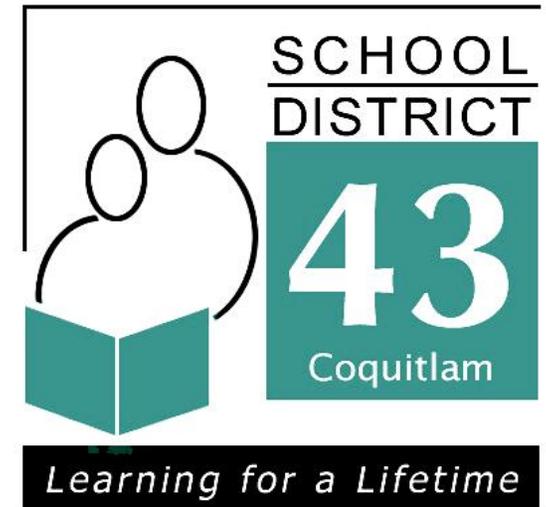
Family Resource Centre: 604-461-1167

SUCCESS: 604-936-5900

(This pamphlet is available in Mandarin, Farsi and Korean)



Revised December 2008



SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS *At a Glance*

***A Resource for Schools,
Parents and Students***

Student Services Department
School District No. 43 (Coquitlam)
1100C Winslow Avenue
Coquitlam, BC
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604-937-6386

Suspension

This outline is intended to provide parents and students with background information regarding the suspension process, to assist them in understanding the process and preparing for an effective resolution.

A Suspension is...

A suspension is a temporary removal from school due to a school District Code of Conduct for Students Violation (Board Policy 17). According to the British Columbia School Act, School Boards have the right to suspend [Section 85(2)(c)(d)]. The Board grants the authority to suspend a student to principals and vice-principals, under the supervision of the Superintendent of Schools.

Expulsion is a longer term removal of a student from the school system, usually for the remainder of the school term or the rest of the school year. Re-entry usually involves a formal district process.

It is important to note that parents/guardians may appeal a suspension at any level, in accordance with Appeals Regarding Student Matters (Board Policy 13.) A letter of appeal must be submitted to the Board within 30 days, for suspensions in excess of five consecutive days.

The suspension of a student is intended to provide both the student and the school staff an opportunity to review and adjust the service delivery for the student. It is a *time-out* to reflect upon what changes can be made to resolve and correct behaviours leading to suspension.

In School District No. 43 (Coquitlam), there are three levels at which a student may be suspended. The differences between the levels, and the involvement of students, parents and/or guardians are outlined as follows:

The 3 Levels of Suspension are...

Level 1

- Can be issued at the school administrator's discretion, from one to five days.
- May be *in-school* or *out-of-school*, or a combination of both.
- A student may be sent home, with a notice to the parent/guardian either accompanying the student or to follow by mail, once parent/guardian has been notified by telephone.
- Resolution may include a parent meeting with school administration to determine an appropriate course of action.

Level 2

- Is considered *unresolved*; that is, until a resolution meeting is held, the student does not return to school.
- May be the result of ongoing issues that have not been resolved, or a single incident that leads to the suspension.
- Student and parents/guardians are asked to contact a district staff person to arrange a resolution meeting which will include the school administrator.
- Outcomes may include:
 - return to school, with conditions
 - return to a different school, with conditions
 - return to an alternate setting, with conditions
 - refer to home schooling/distributed learning

Level 3

- Parent/guardian will be contacted by the office of the Assistant Superintendent in charge of Level 3 Suspension Review Process.
- Is issued when safety of anyone within the school community is jeopardized; may involve possession and/or use of weapons, drugs, threats, intimidation.
- *Unresolved* until student, with parent/guardian, attends resolution meeting of Student Suspension Review Committee.
- Student does not return to school until the Suspension Review Committee determines the resolution
- Outcomes may include:
 - return to school, with conditions
 - return to different school, with conditions
 - return to alternate setting, with condition
 - refer to home schooling/distributed learning

School suspension is one strategy in a more complex problem-solving process designed to support the student in changing inappropriate behaviour.

As much as possible, the intention of a suspension is to have students learn from the experience and take responsibility for their actions. As well, the unique needs of each student are considered along with the specific circumstances of the incident.

All suspensions are preceded by an investigation involving the principal or vice-principal, in an effort to fairly determine the issues/responsibility. Students suspended at the district level (Levels 2 or 3) will have an opportunity to present their side of the story to the adult in charge of the proceedings.