

FORMAL INTERVENTION AND SUSPENSION OF STUDENTS

Background

The effective management of student discipline is a necessity in establishing safe, caring and orderly school environments that foster student learning needs. Prevention and intervention strategies taught at the school level and supported at the district level are the foundations of a successful discipline program. When student misconduct occurs, the school and district must respond fairly, quickly, and effectively, imposing a disciplinary consequence that is appropriate to the circumstances and that reinforces for the student involved and students generally, appropriate standards of student behaviour.

Responsibility for an effective discipline program is shared among many partners including the district, schools, students, parents/guardians, community groups, social agencies and the police. The Board promotes understanding and acceptance of the interactive roles required to achieve safe, caring and orderly schools.

The Principal has overall responsibility for the maintenance of student discipline and school rules. Under the auspices of the School Act, the general supervision and delegation of the Superintendent, and subject to this Administrative Procedure, a Principal and/or Vice Principal, has the authority to suspend or remove a suspension imposed on a student.

There are three levels of suspensions, set out in the Procedure. Before a suspension is imposed, the Principal and/or Vice Principal will conduct an investigation and consider all relevant information and circumstances including the seriousness of the infraction, the prior disciplinary record of the student, the impact of conduct on the school community, and any expression of remorse demonstrated by the student. The Principal and/or Vice Principal will determine the level at which a student is to be suspended. Serious breaches of conduct that threaten the safety and welfare of others may be referred directly to a Level Three District Level Intervention and Suspension for resolution by the Student Suspension Review Committee.

Fair Notice: In addition to this Intervention and Suspension Process, a student threat risk assessment will be initiated by the school's multi-disciplinary Violent Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) team when a behaviour includes, but is not limited to serious violence, or violence with intent to harm or kill, verbal/written threats to harm/kill others, internet/social media threats to harm/kill others, possession of weapons (including replicas), bomb threats and fire-setting.

Procedures

1. Consistent with the provisions of the School Act, School Act Regulations, Board Policy 17 "District Code of Conduct for Students", Policy 18 "Violence, Intimidation, and Possession of Weapons" and the individual school Codes of Conduct, the district process for handling the suspension of students is outlined below.

- 1.1 The Principal and/or Vice Principal have the authority to suspend a student up to and including a referral directly to Level Three for resolution by the Student Suspension Review Committee.
- 1.2 The Principal and/or Vice Principal shall report the suspension to parents/guardians in writing, including a brief statement of the reason for the suspension and the level at which the student has been suspended. A copy of this letter will be sent to the Assistant Superintendent responsible for student suspensions and the Assistant Superintendent responsible for the school.
- 1.3 A student will not be sent home during the school day unless the Principal and/or Vice Principal has contacted the student's parents/guardians and informed them of the action being taken and the general reasons for those actions.
- 1.4 At all levels of the formal intervention and suspension process, parents or students may seek assistance from an adult advocate.
- 1.5 The school district will provide an educational program to the student during the student's suspension.
- 1.6 These procedures do not apply to informal in-school removal from classes and activities, or to informal arrangements made with parents/guardians for a full or partial day home educational program.

2. Level One: School Level Formal Intervention and Suspension

- 2.1 A Level One School Level Formal Intervention and Suspension is a student suspension from school for a specific period up to five days. "Suspension Day" is "day 0" the day of suspension communication to the parents, with each subsequent school day counting as one day of the suspension.
- 2.2 During the period of suspension the Principal and/or Vice Principal will work with parents/guardians, school staff or district staff, and/or any relevant external agency to facilitate a successful return to school. If necessary, the Principal and/or Vice Principal will call upon the assistance of school and district support staff, or involve external agencies in an effort to intervene and resolve the suspension.
- 2.3 The decision to impose a suspension at the school level may be appealed by the student and/or parents/guardians of the suspended student first to the Assistant Superintendent overseeing interventions and suspensions and if unresolved, under Board Policy 13 (Appeals Regarding Student Matters).

3. Level Two: District Level Formal Intervention and Suspension: Referral to the District Principal School Services and Alternate Education

- 3.1 A Level Two District Level Formal Intervention and Suspension is imposed when the conduct of a student is more serious, when the potential consequences of that conduct are more serious, or when the prior disciplinary record of the student indicates that a suspension at the school level is inappropriate. Resolution of the suspension at this level involves the District Principal School Services and Alternate Education. A Level Two District Level Formal Intervention and Suspension is of indeterminate length and is

unresolved until the educational program to be offered to the student, and the conditions to which a student must adhere upon return to an educational program is finalized.

- 3.2 Where a Level Two District Level Formal Intervention and Suspension is required the District Principal School Services and Alternate Education will work with school and district support staff, community agencies, and parents/guardians - to determine the educational program to be offered to the student. Options may include whether an educational program at the current school, at a different school, at an alternate school, outreach program or a program through continuing education is appropriate. District Principal School Services and Alternate Education will also determine the conditions to which the student must adhere upon return to an educational program and the end of the suspension.
 - 3.3 District Principal School Services and Alternate Education's decision will normally be made within ten days of the start of the suspension.
 - 3.4 District Principal School Services and Alternate Education will advise the parents/guardians of the suspended student in writing of the decision and will forward a copy to the school level Principal, the Assistant Superintendent responsible for student suspensions, and the Zone Assistant
 - 3.5 The decision to impose a suspension at Level Two District Level, and the decision of the Principal of Alternate Programs may be appealed by the student or the parents/guardians of the suspended student first to the Assistant Superintendent overseeing interventions and suspensions, and if unresolved, to the Board of Education, under Board Policy 13 (Appeals Regarding Student Matters).
4. Level Three: District Level Formal Intervention and Suspension: Referral to the Student Suspension Review Committee
- 4.1 A Level Three: District Level Formal Intervention and Suspension is imposed when the conduct of a student is more serious, when the potential consequences of that conduct are more serious, or when the prior disciplinary record of the student indicates that an intervention and suspension at Level One or Two is inappropriate. A Level Three Suspension is a suspension of indeterminate length and is in effect until the Student Suspension Review Committee ("SSRC") has determined the educational program to be offered to the student and the conditions to which the student must adhere upon return to an educational program.
 - 4.2 The SSRC shall be comprised of the District Principal School Services and Alternate Education, the Assistant Superintendent who oversees student suspensions or designate, and a school administrator.
 - 4.3 The Chair of the SSRC shall be the Assistant Superintendent.
 - 4.4 The Chair of the SSRC shall convene a meeting of the SSRC within ten school days of being notified that a student has been suspended to Level Three. The suspended student and his/her parents/guardians will be notified in writing of the meeting. The parents, the student, and the school administration will be given the opportunity to be heard at this meeting.

- 4.5 The SSRC will consider all the information and make its determination as to the educational program to be offered to the student and the conditions to be imposed upon the ending of the student's suspension. The Chair of the SSRC will communicate that determination in writing to the parents/guardians of the suspended student. The SSRC will work with the student, parents/guardians, school and district staff, and/or community agencies to determine an education program for the student. A program may be available at the student's current school, at a different school, at an alternate school or through an outreach program or continuing education. In extreme cases, a student who is 16 years old or older, may also lose the privilege of attending an educational program in SD43, as per the School Act.
- 4.6 The decision to impose a Level Three Formal Intervention and Suspension, and the decision of the SSRC may be appealed by the student or the parents/guardians of the suspended student under Board Policy 13 (Appeals Regarding Student Matters).

Reference: Section 26 and 85, School Act
Policy 13 (Appeals Regarding Student Matters)
Policy 17 (District Code of Conduct for Students)
Policy 18 (Violence, Intimidation and Possession of Weapons)

Last revised: June 2019