

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 general supervision of the Superintendent and subject to these Administrative Procedures, 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 Procedures. Before a suspension is imposed, the Principal and/or Vice Principal will assess all relevant 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 suspended. The level at which a student is suspended will depend upon all the circumstances. Serious breaches of conduct that threaten the safety and welfare of others will be referred directly to Level Three for resolution by the Student Suspension Review Committee.

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 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 office of the Superintendent, the Assistant

Superintendent responsible for student suspensions, the Zone Assistant and the Director of Instruction, Student Services.

- 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 or emergency contact and informed them of the action being taken and the general reasons for those actions.
- 1.4 At all levels of the formal 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 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 Formal Suspension

- 2.1 A Level One Suspension is a suspension for a specific period up to five days. "Suspension Day" is "day 0", with each subsequent school day counting as a day of suspension.
- 2.2 During the period of suspension it is expected that the Principal and/or Vice Principal will work with parents/guardians and school staff 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 in an effort to resolve the suspension.
- 2.3 The decision to impose a suspension at Level One may be appealed by the student and/or parents/guardians of the suspended student under Board Policy 13 (Appeals Regarding Student Matters).

3. Level Two Formal Suspension with Principal of Alternate Programs Involvement

- 3.1 A Level Two Suspension is imposed where the conduct of a student is more serious, when the consequences of that conduct are more serious, or when the prior disciplinary record of the student indicates that a suspension at Level One is inappropriate. A Level Two Suspension is an indeterminate suspension until the Principal of Alternate Programs has determined the educational program to be offered to the student and the conditions to be imposed upon the ending of the student's suspension.
- 3.2 Where a suspension at Level Two is imposed, the Principal of Alternate Programs will work with school and District support staff, community agencies, and parents/guardians and will determine the educational program to be offered to the student, including whether that educational program will be offered through the school, through a different school or through an alternate or outreach program, and will determine the conditions to be imposed upon the student upon the ending of the suspension.
- 3.3 It is expected that the Principal of Alternate Programs' determination will normally be made within ten days of the start of the suspension.

- 3.4 The Principal of Alternate Programs will advise the parents/guardians of the suspended student in writing of his or her determination and will forward a copy to the school level Principal, the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent responsible for student suspensions, the Zone Assistant and the Director of Instruction, Student Services.
 - 3.5 The decision to impose a suspension at Level Two, and the determination of the Principal of Alternate Programs may be appealed by the student or the parents/guardians of the suspended student under Board Policy 13 (Appeals Regarding Student Matters).
4. Level Three Formal Suspension with Referral to the Student Suspension Review Committee
- 4.1 A Level Three Suspension is imposed where the conduct of a student is more serious, where the consequences of that conduct are more serious, or when the prior disciplinary record of the student indicates that a suspension at Level One or Two is inappropriate. A Level Three Suspension is an indeterminate suspension until the Student Suspension Review Committee ("SSRC") has determined the educational program to be offered to the student and the conditions to be imposed upon the ending of the student's suspension
 - 4.2 The SSRC shall be comprised of the Principal of Alternate Programs, an Assistant Superintendent, and a school administrator.
 - 4.3 The Chair of the SSRC shall be the Assistant Superintendent responsible for student suspensions.
 - 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.
 - 4.6 The decision to impose a suspension at Level Three, and the determination 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)