

## **AP 3309: Student Suspensions**

### **Background:**

Students are expected to comply with Administrative Procedure 3000 - District Code of Conduct and the School Code of Conduct authorized by the principal.

Generally speaking, student suspensions occur only after all preventive activities have taken place in the school. It is recognized, however, that there are times when the behaviour of a student is such that a suspension will occur even though there has been no previous offense or other preventative measures were undertaken.

It is expected that the following information and procedures will exist in every school.

### **Procedures:**

#### **1. Pre-Suspension Procedures:**

- 1.1. Schools will file a copy of their school code of conduct with the Superintendent and post it on their school website.
- 1.2. Principals, in accordance with Policy 310 - Code of Conduct, will acquaint students with the school code of conduct and inform them of misconduct that could result in suspension.
- 1.3. Principals will clarify the Pre-Suspension and Suspension Procedures with students.
- 1.4. Teachers and teacher counsellors or administrators will make early contact with the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) outlining the student's behaviour where it is placing the student in an "at risk" position.
- 1.5. Where feasible, early preventative strategies with the student and the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) should be undertaken with specific plans for behaviour support.
- 1.6. Principals, where appropriate, should ensure changes to the learning environment are initiated.
- 1.7. The following will be documented:
  - 1.7.1. All unacceptable student behaviour according to the School Code of Conduct;
  - 1.7.2. All pertinent dates of incidents;
  - 1.7.3. Actions taken by the school staff; and,
  - 1.7.4. Any written communication which has taken place with the parent(s)/legal guardian(s).

- 1.8. The Assistant Superintendent is to be consulted prior to suspension of all elementary students and all over-five (5)-day suspensions.
- 1.9. In a situation where a suspension may be necessary to protect the student and/or other students, there may have been no previous history or previous contact with the parent(s)/legal guardian(s). In such cases the principal may use their authority to suspend.
- 1.10. The Director of Instruction - Indigenous Education and Learning Service must be contacted for all students with Indigenous ancestry.

## **2. Suspension Procedures:**

### **2.1. Suspensions - Five (5) or Fewer School Days**

- 2.1.1. The principal shall inform the student and the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the reasons for suspension, the duration of such a suspension and the process for appeal at the school level through the principal. This shall be carried out either in person or by telephone.
- 2.1.2. The principal shall document the incident and then send a letter of suspension to the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and a copy to the Assistant Superintendent.
- 2.1.3. The letter of suspension shall include:
  - 2.1.3.1. the reason(s) for the suspension;
  - 2.1.3.2. any previous behaviours that have had a bearing on the suspension;
  - 2.1.3.3. preventative or remedial action taken by the school;
  - 2.1.3.4. the condition(s) upon which the return of the student to school is predicated; and,
  - 2.1.3.5. the school-level appeal process.
- 2.1.4. The principal shall provide homework to students during their suspension period in accordance with the School Act 85 (2)(c)(ii) and (2)(d). The student is expected to continue their studies at home, and shall be maintained on the school register.
- 2.1.5. The principal shall monitor the student's progress and behaviour upon the student's return to school.
- 2.1.6. The principal may find it necessary to suspend a student for a period of fewer than five days on more than one occasion. An accurate record of the number of days suspended in the district shall be kept and when an excess of 15 days in one school year is reached, the case shall be referred to the District Review Committee.

### **2.2. Suspension Over Five (5) Days**

- 2.2.1. The principal will consult with the Assistant Superintendent and in the case of a student with Indigenous ancestry, the Director of Instruction - Indigenous Education and Learning Services.
- 2.2.2. The principal will meet with the student and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to inform them of the reason(s) for the suspension, and of the District Review Committee's structure and process as outlined in 2.3. below.
- 2.2.3. A letter and email with the information outlined in 2.2.2. will be sent to the parent(s)/legal guardian(s).
- 2.2.4. A copy of the suspension letter shall be emailed to the Assistant Superintendent, or designate, who will convene a suspension hearing with the District Review Committee within a reasonable time period.
- 2.2.5. The principal shall prepare a presentation with full documentation for the suspension hearing with the District Review Committee. (See AP Appendix 3309 A for documentation checklist).

## **2.3. District Review Committee Procedures:**

- 2.3.1. The District Review Committee shall include the Assistant Superintendent or designate, the District Principal - Inclusive & International Education, Principal or Vice Principal of the attending student's school, the Manager of Safe Schools, the Director of Instruction - Indigenous Education & Learning Services if the student is Indigenous, and other applicable staff members as required.
- 2.3.2. Referral to the District Review Committee occurs when the incident is deemed to be extremely serious and/or severe such as:
  - 2.3.2.1. serious and/or premeditated assaults;
  - 2.3.2.2. repeated offenses of aggressive, assaultive behaviour and/or substance abuse;
  - 2.3.2.3. weapons offenses;
  - 2.3.2.4. drug trafficking;
  - 2.3.2.5. ongoing documented incidents of extreme and inappropriate behaviour(s), as well as interventions the school has attempted; and,
  - 2.3.2.6. repeated acts of racism or discrimination.
- 2.3.3. The District Review Committee shall convene a suspension meeting to hear a presentation from the suspending principal and inform the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) that they and their child must be present for this hearing.

2.3.4. All materials provided to the District Review Committee will also be given to the parent and student prior to the suspension hearing;

2.3.5. Upon conclusion of the suspension hearing, the District Review Committee will offer recommendations to the suspending principal:

2.3.5.1. the suspension will be lifted and the student will be reinstated in the school from which they were suspended; or

2.3.5.2. the suspension will be lifted and the student will be placed in a different school; or

2.3.5.3. the suspension will be lifted and the student will be placed in an alternate program in the district; or

2.3.5.4. the suspension will be upheld for a specified period of time.

2.3.6. In all cases, the District Review Committee will determine and submit final recommendations.

2.3.7. The Assistant Superintendent or designate will inform the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and the student of the District Review Committee's final decision and inform them of their right to appeal the decision in accordance with Student/Parent Appeal Bylaw #1. Written confirmation of the above shall be made to the parent(s)/legal guardian(s).

## **2.4. District Review Committee Intervention Procedures (Suspensions over Five (5) Days):**

2.4.1. An intervention course (supportive learning course or optional suspension activities) may be determined by consultation between referring school principal and district staff (e.g. Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent, Manager of Safe Schools, Director of Indigenous Education & Learning Services).

2.4.2. Referral for Intervention may occur when:

2.4.2.1. the incident the student was involved in results in an over five day suspension;

2.4.2.2. all school-based interventions have been attempted;

2.4.2.3. a return to referring school or a new secondary school placement is possible;

2.4.2.4. placement in another program such as an alternate program is an option;

2.4.2.5. the student, their parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and the Assistant Superintendent have been consulted on the outcome.

2.4.3. Intervention Procedures:

- 2.4.3.1. an intervention course may occur when the referring school principal, parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and the Assistant Superintendent all agree that the suspension may be dealt with through the intervention of district personnel (e.g. Assistant Superintendent, Director of Indigenous Education & Learning Services) and designates.
- 2.4.3.2. consideration for an intervention course will be discussed between the referring school's principal and the Assistant Superintendent or their designate;
- 2.4.3.3. options for intervention will be discussed with referring school's principal and parent(s)/legal guardian(s).
- 2.4.4. Possible Outcomes of Intervention:
  - 2.4.4.1. return to home school with recommendations/conditions (e.g. designation, I.E.P. development, Safety Plan, behaviour plan, developing and implementing support(s));
  - 2.4.4.2. transfer to another secondary school (full or part-time) with specified conditions;
  - 2.4.4.3. referral to an alternate program;
  - 2.4.4.4. referral to SD8 online learning school (Elev8 - Homelinks, Elev8 - DESK)
- 2.4.5. A letter summarizing the recommendations and decisions is forwarded to the Assistant Superintendent, referring school principal, parent(s)/legal guardian(s), student and if applicable, new placement principal.
- 2.4.6. A student package of information must be prepared and submitted to the Assistant Superintendent prior to intervention meeting.