

STUDENT SUSPENSIONS

Background

Every student has the responsibility to comply with school rules, Administrative Procedure 104 – District Code of Conduct and all other relevant Board policies and the administrative procedures of the District.

In those unfortunate situations where a student's conduct necessitates the suspension of the student's right to participate in school or school-related activities, principals are authorized to suspend students in accordance with the provisions of the *School Act*.

The District expects the Superintendent or designate to ensure that the suspension of any student is done only after all alternative actions which the Principal has at his/her disposal are exhausted.

Further, the District expects that once a student suspension has been effected, all available District and community resources are sought as quickly as possible to help resolve the problem that necessitated the student's suspension.

Procedures

1. General Procedures

- 1.1 Principals and teachers shall ensure that students and parents/guardians are aware of Administrative Procedure 104 – District Code of Conduct and that the steps of progressive discipline are understood.
- 1.2 The Principal shall ensure that unacceptable student behaviour is documented to include dates of incidents; preventative or remedial actions taken by the school; and, any communications that have taken place between the home and the school.
- 1.3 All student suspensions shall be documented in a letter of suspension to the parent/ guardian with a copy sent to the Superintendent.
- 1.4 The Principal must consult the Associate Superintendent or Director of Instruction prior to any suspension in excess of five (5) school days. If such a suspension is warranted, the Principal must inform the Superintendent.
- 1.5 The Principal shall determine the location where the suspension shall be served.
- 1.6 The Principal shall arrange for homework to be provided for the student. The student shall be expected to continue his/her studies while under suspension.
- 1.7 The Principal shall arrange for the student's progress and/or behaviour to be monitored upon return to school and for support services to be provided if required.

Student Suspensions Five (5) or Fewer Days

- 1.8 The Principal shall discuss the reason(s) for the student's suspension and its duration with the parents/ guardians. The need for a student re-entry meeting shall also be discussed and arranged. Provisions for the on-going education of the student shall also be discussed.
- 1.9 The Principal shall follow with a letter of suspension. The letter of suspension shall include:
 - 2.2.1 The reason(s) for the suspension;
 - 2.2.2 Reference to the *School Act* (Section 85), Administrative Procedure 355 - Student Suspensions and Administrative Procedure 104 - District Code of Conduct;
 - 2.2.3 Any previous behaviours related to the incident;
 - 2.2.4 Preventative or remedial actions taken by the school;
 - 2.2.5 The condition(s) determining the return to school of the student on a specified date; and,
 - 2.2.6 The plan for sending work home during the suspension.A copy of the suspension letter shall be sent to the Superintendent.
- 1.10 The Principal shall convey all documented information about the incident to the parent/ guardian at the re-entry meeting and a plan for the student's readmission to school shall be established.
- 1.11 If it is deemed necessary to alter the suspension (e.g. that the student attend school on a partial program), the Principal shall consult the Associate Superintendent or Director of Instruction before making such a determination. If deemed appropriate, an Expanded School Based Team meeting may be held with the Associate Superintendent or Director of Instruction (and other resource staff as required) to review the student's educational programming needs.

2. Student Suspensions in Excess of Five (5) School Days

- 2.1 Student suspensions in excess of five (5) school days may or may not be considered for students with identified special needs depending on each individual circumstance. In cases where suspensions in excess of five days are being considered for student with identified special needs, the Principal shall consult with the Associate Superintendent or Director of Instruction. If warranted the student may be suspended in excess of five (5) school days. The Principal shall inform the Superintendent and shall alert the office of the Superintendent that a District Review Committee shall need to be convened.

If it is determined by the Principal and Associate Superintendent of Director of Instruction that students with identified special needs shall not be suspended in excess of five days, students may need to be absent from school until such time as the Individual Education Plan, Positive Behaviour Support Plan and/or Staff Safety Plan is reviewed. An expanded School Based Team meeting may be held which may include the teacher(s) and support staff along with an Associate Superintendent/Director of Instruction and other resource staff as required to review the student's educational programming needs. A letter shall be sent home to the parents clearly documenting the reason for the student's non-attendance at school.

2.2 Student suspensions in excess of five (5) school days shall not be considered for students in Kindergarten through to Grade 7. In such situations, the Principal shall consult with the Associate Superintendent or Director of Instruction. In exceptional circumstances it may be deemed appropriate for an Expanded School Based Team meeting to be held with the Associate Superintendent/Director of Instruction, teachers and support staff and other resource staff as required to review the student's educational programming needs.

2.3 Student suspensions in excess of five (5) school days may be considered for students in Grades 8 through 12 (except in specific circumstances involving students with identified special needs).

Prior to any suspension in excess of five (5) school days, the Principal shall consult with the Associate Superintendent or Director of Instruction. If warranted, the student may be suspended in excess of five (5) school days. The Principal shall inform the Superintendent and shall alert the office of the Superintendent that a District Review Committee shall need to be convened.

2.4 When a student is suspended in excess of five (5) school days, the Principal shall discuss the reason(s) for the student's suspension with the parents/ guardian. The Principal shall explain the role of the District Review Committee and inform the parents/ guardian that the Office of the Superintendent shall contact them with the date and location of the District Review Committee meeting. Provisions for the on-going education of the student during the suspension shall be arranged.

2.5 The Principal shall provide the parents/guardian with a letter of suspension. The letter of suspension shall include:

- 2.5.1 The reason(s) for the suspension;
- 2.5.2 Reference to the *School Act* (Section 85), Administrative Procedure 355 - Student Suspensions and Administrative Procedure 104 - District Code of Conduct;
- 2.5.3 Any previous behaviours related to the incident;
- 2.5.4 Preventative or remedial actions taken by the school;
- 2.5.5 The plan for sending work home during the suspension;
- 2.5.6 That the Office of the Superintendent shall contact the parents/ guardian to set the date and location for the District Review Committee meeting.

A copy of the suspension letter shall be sent to the Superintendent.

2.6 The District Review Committee shall be convened in a timely manner (usually within three (3) days of the suspension). The composition of the District Review Committee may vary depending upon the nature of the incident and the educational needs of the student. Most often the District Review Committee shall be comprised of:

- 2.6.1 Superintendent or designate;
- 2.6.2 Associate Superintendent;
- 2.6.3 Director of Instruction, or designate;

The function of the committee is to review written documentation from the Principal regarding the incident or any other related matters that led to the in excess of 5 (five) school days' suspension and to hear oral submissions from school staff, the parents/guardian and the student. After consideration of all aspects of the incident, the District Review Committee shall arrive at a decision.

Note: When possible, sufficient time is to be given in advance of the District Review Committee meeting for members of the committee to review the written documentation from the Principal regarding the incident.

Note: The parents/ guardian may choose to be accompanied by a support person of their choice at the District Review Committee meeting. Where language may be a barrier, interpretation services may be provided upon request.

2.7 The District Review Committee Chair shall verbally inform the Superintendent of the outcome of the District Review Committee (in cases where the Superintendent is not the Chair) which may include the:

- 2.7.1 Student's re-admission to school and under which conditions;
- 2.7.2 Student's transfer to another program or school;
- 2.7.3 Student's expulsion from school (if older than 16 years of age);
- 2.7.4 Suspension being upheld (e.g. until further information is received);
- 2.7.5 Suspension being altered (e.g. a partial school program).

2.8 A summary letter is sent to the parents/ guardian outlining the decision of the District Review Committee. Parents are informed of their right to appeal the decision of the District Review Committee under Board Policy 13 – Appeals Bylaw. If it is deemed that the student is to re-enter school on an altered suspension (e.g. partial program) or that the suspension be upheld (e.g. delayed re-admission to school), the District Review Committee letter must: Outline the reason(s) for the partial program or delayed re-admission to school; and,

2.8.1 Indicate exactly when the situation shall be reviewed.

2.9 The Superintendent shall inform the Board of all suspensions in excess of five (5) school days, and the outcome of these suspensions, at the next in-camera meeting of the Board.

Reference: Sections 6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 22, 26, 65, 79, 85 School Act

SD No. 40 (New Westminster)

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