

Policy 320 – Student Suspension / Exclusion

The Board of Education recognizes and accepts its obligation to provide an educational program to all school age students resident in the district. Further, the Board accepts its obligation to ensure due process in the management and discipline of students. Due process demands that each school develop a code of conduct consistent with District Policy, the School Act, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Code of Conduct shall be communicated to students and parents and also posted to the school's website.

The Board of Education acknowledges that in some circumstances, schools may need to suspend students from attendance at school in order to maintain the integrity of the educational program, or the health, safety, and welfare of students and staff. In such circumstances, the Board recognizes its responsibility to continue to make available an educational program to that student.

Guidelines

In accordance with the School Act, the Board of Education delegates authority to the Principal, Vice-Principal, or designate to suspend or exclude a student in a manner consistent with legislation, District Policy, and school code of conduct, who:

- a) Fails to comply with the school's code of conduct;
- b) Is suffering from a communicable disease, or other physical, mental, or emotional condition that would endanger the health or welfare of other students; or,
- c) Is of school age and fails to participate in an educational program as defined in the School Act.

1. Student Suspensions

- a. A student may be suspended only after a thorough investigation by the Principal or designate;
- b. A student may be suspended for a period not to exceed five days without prior consultation with the Superintendent or designate;
- c. When a student is suspended, a letter of suspension is to be sent to the parents/guardians, with a copy to:
 - i. The Superintendent of schools, with a supplementary letter, if necessary, to provide additional information
 - ii. The student's personal file
 - iii. The District Principal of First Nations Education (for suspensions involving First Nations Students)
 - iv. The Director of Instruction – Student Support Services (for suspensions involving students with special needs)
- d. In addition to the letter, every reasonable effort shall be made to report the suspension in person to the parents/guardians. If arrangements cannot be made to meet face to face, parents/guardians are to be contacted by phone as soon as possible;

- e. In no case, shall a student be sent home prior to the end of the school day unless the parents/guardians have been notified and the safety of the student has been assured;
- f. Parents/guardians shall be advised of their right to appeal a decision in accordance with the Board's Procedural Bylaw B2706; and,
- g. The Principal shall ensure that parents/guardians are fully aware of any action which the school requests they take before the student can return to school.

2. Suspension of Students with Special Needs

In addition to the above, when considering the suspension of a student with special needs, the Principal must ensure that;

- a. Such students have been adequately assessed;
- b. Appropriate interventions are applied prior to suspension;
- c. Grounds for suspension are clear and appropriate;
- d. Meaningful education programs or interventions are offered during the period of suspension; and,
- e. That planning is undertaken for successful re-entry.

3. Exclusion from School (Suspension in excess of five days)

Occasionally a suspension arises from circumstances that are of a serious nature, where the Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent or designate, may deem it necessary to suspend the student in excess of five days. In such cases, the student shall be considered excluded from school. **In addition to guidelines in Section 1. Student Suspensions, the following shall apply:**

- a. At the time of an exclusion, the Principal shall forward to the Superintendent a copy of the letter of suspension and any other pertinent correspondence together with recommendations for action;
- b. During the exclusionary period, a student may not register or attend classes at any other school in the District;
- c. Without the expressed permission of the Principal, an excluded student may not attend any function at any school in the district, nor be found on school property, including school bus, from one hour before and one hour after regular school hours, until the expiration of the exclusion; and,
- d. Review Committee - parents/guardians and student will be required to attend a Review Committee to determine the status of the exclusion.

4. Exclusion under the School Act (Medical)

"If the school medical officer considers that the health condition of any student is such as to endanger the health or welfare of the students of a school or the employees of the Board, the school medical officer must so report to the Board, giving the name of the student concerned."

In the event of an exclusion under the School Act, parents/guardians must be advised and consulted before the student is excluded and an additional copy of the letter of exclusion must be sent to the School Medical Officer who is appointed by the Minister of Health in accordance with the School Act.

5. Access to Educational Program

Students must have access to an educational program provided by the school during a period of suspension or exclusion. An educational program, in this instance, is defined as a set of organized learning activities providing the student with the opportunity to progress towards the achievement of learning outcomes equivalent to those of the instructional program from which the student has been denied access.

- a. While a suspension (exclusion) is in effect, school assignments will be provided initially to all students, and will be provided on a continuing basis when previously assigned work is satisfactorily completed and returned to the school; and,
- b. The satisfactory completion of school work assigned can be made a condition of return to school following a suspension or exclusion.