

SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION OF STUDENTS

Background:

Suspension and/or expulsion of students are serious consequences that may be used in order to encourage student self-discipline and responsible behaviour and/or to improve the school environment for other students and staff. The *Education Act* designates the authority to suspend beyond one class to the Principal. Only in the event that the Principal is out of the building may the Acting Principal make a decision on behalf of the Principal regarding any student suspensions.

Definitions:

Suspension

means to remove a student from:

- (i) school;
- (ii) one or more class periods, courses or educational programs; or
- (iii) riding in a school bus.

Out-of-School Suspension

means the Principal may suspend a student from school. The suspension shall be served outside the school for a period of up to five school days.

In-School Suspension

means the Principal may suspend a student from one or more class periods, courses or programs. The suspension shall be served within the school for a period of up to five school days.

Class Suspension

means a teacher may suspend a student from one class period. The suspension shall be served within the school under supervision of a staff member.

Bus Suspension

means the Principal may suspend a student from transportation. The suspension shall be for a period of up to five school days.

Suspension with the Recommendation for Expulsion to the Board

means the Principal shall recommend the Board expel a student suspended from school or transportation if the student is not to be reinstated after five school days from the date of the suspension.

Expulsion

means to remove a student from school; one or more class periods, courses or programs; or

riding the bus for a period of more than 10 school days. A student may be expelled for a term-certain period or indefinitely.

Re-enrolment

means the Board may re-enrol a student who has been expelled.

Procedures:

1. Suspension

- 1.1. Suspension is applicable in instances where in the opinion of the Teacher/Principal:
 - 1.1.1. the student has failed to comply with section 31 of the *Education Act*;
 - 1.1.2. the student has failed to comply with the Division's code of conduct;
 - 1.1.3. the student's conduct, whether or not the conduct occurs within the school building or during the school day, is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school; or
 - 1.1.4. the student has distributed an intimate image of another person who did not consent to the distribution.
- 1.2. A teacher may suspend a student from one class period. A principal may suspend a student from one or more class periods, courses or programs for a period of up to five school days.
- 1.3. Under Section 36 of the [Education Act](#), teachers and principals are specifically delegated the responsibility for suspensions, therefore, they are not appealable to the Superintendent nor the Board of Trustees.
- 1.4. Suspension may be deemed appropriate in instances where the student:
 - 1.4.1. repeatedly refuses to follow the directions of a staff member;
 - 1.4.2. habitually neglects their duty;
 - 1.4.3. uses inappropriate, profane or abusive language or gestures;
 - 1.4.4. smokes, vapes or uses tobacco;
 - 1.4.5. distributes, sells, possesses or is under the influence of drugs or alcohol;
 - 1.4.6. possesses paraphernalia related to the use of drugs or alcohol;
 - 1.4.7. demonstrates irregular attendance without justification;
 - 1.4.8. engages in the inappropriate use of technology;
 - 1.4.9. engages in wilful destruction of property or acts of vandalism;
 - 1.4.10. demonstrates behaviour that is a danger to persons or property;
 - 1.4.11. tampers with fire equipment;
 - 1.4.12. is found to be (or admits to being) a party to a serious offense;
 - 1.4.13. engages in behaviours including, but not limited to, fighting, harassment, sexual abuse or assault, intimidation, or verbal or physical abuse of students or staff; or
 - 1.4.14. demonstrates behaviour that is disruptive or threatens to disrupt the orderly functioning of school activities.
- 1.5. Prior to suspending a student, the Principal may consider alternatives such as:
 - 1.5.1. interventions and consequences as established in the student behaviour plan;

- 1.5.2. a supportive program that may include:
 - 1.5.2.1. in-school counselling and/or suggestion of the use of a family school liaison worker, psychological or psychiatric assistance;
 - 1.5.2.2. the student returning home with a parent/guardian for the remainder of a day as part of a behavioural plan;
 - 1.5.2.3. attendance in a drug/alcohol, learning strategies or group counselling program;
 - 1.5.2.4. a class change, program adjustment, alternate program or transfer to another school;
 - 1.5.2.5. involvement with social service agencies such as Children Services, Alberta Health Services (Addictions and Mental Health), and Family and Community Services;
 - 1.5.2.6. consultation with Supports for Students staff; and/or
 - 1.5.2.7. distance learning or outreach programming.
 - 1.6. When suspending a student, the Principal shall:
 - 1.6.1. inform the student's parent/guardian of the suspension;
 - 1.6.2. report in writing to the student's parent/guardian all the circumstances respecting the suspension; and
 - 1.6.3. provide an opportunity to meet with the student's parent/guardian—and the student, if 16 years of age or older—to discuss the suspension.
 - 1.7. At the conclusion of an out-of-school suspension, the Principal shall hold a reinstatement meeting with the student and parent/guardian to review conditions of return to class and expectations for conduct.
 - 1.8. The Principal shall take steps to ensure no student spends an excessive amount of time in suspensions.
 - 1.9. Suspension may be considered for student behaviour and conduct beyond the hours of school operation or off school property, if the behaviour is detrimental to the well-being of others and the safe and caring environment of the school.
2. Class Suspension
 - 2.1. A teacher who suspends a student from a regular class period of a class shall immediately inform the Principal, and:
 - 2.1.1. inform the student of the consequence and its reasons;
 - 2.1.2. at the earliest possible opportunity, notify the student's parent/guardian of the circumstances of the class suspension; and
 - 2.1.3. ensure any supervision required for the student during the actual suspension is arranged.
3. In-School Suspension
 - 3.1. When a student is suspended from one or more class periods, courses or programs, the Principal shall:
 - 3.1.1. inform the student of the consequence and its reasons;
 - 3.1.2. inform the student's parent/guardian of the suspension;
 - 3.1.3. report in writing to the student's parent/guardian all the circumstances of the suspension;

- 3.1.4. ensure the student’s teachers are informed of the suspension and work is provided to the student by the teachers for work that will be missed;
 - 3.1.5. log the suspension information on PowerSchool and upload a copy of the suspension letter to PASI if it is more than one day in length;
 - 3.1.6. attempt to resolve the problem leading to the suspension through involvement of school personnel (for example, teachers, counsellors, parent/guardian) and use of supportive programs;
 - 3.1.7. provide an opportunity to meet with the student’s parent/guardian—and the student, if 16 years of age or older—to discuss the suspension;
 - 3.1.8. ensure the suspension does not exceed five school days; and
 - 3.1.9. provide for the supervision of the student.
4. Out-of-School Suspension
- 4.1. The Principal shall ensure the provisions in 3.1.1 – 3.1.8 are followed, as well as:
 - 4.1.1. within five school days of the suspension:
 - 4.1.1.1. reinstate the student;
 - 4.1.1.2. make recommendation for expulsion to the Board if not reinstating the student; or
 - 4.1.1.3. where age appropriate, accept the student’s withdrawal from school.
 - 4.1.2. hold the student responsible for completing the schoolwork provided during suspension; and
 - 4.1.3. consider a counselled withdrawal or Principal-initiated transfer only when the Principal, Division Principal and parent/guardian all agree the decision is in the best interests of the student.
5. Expulsion
- 5.1. The Principal may recommend the Board expel a student if:
 - 5.1.1. the student has displayed an attitude of wilful, blatant and repeated refusal to comply with section 31 of the *Education Act*;
 - 5.1.2. the student has displayed an attitude of wilful, blatant and repeated refusal to comply with the Division’s code of conduct;
 - 5.1.3. the student’s conduct, whether or not the conduct occurs within the school building or during the school day, is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school; or
 - 5.1.4. the student has distributed an intimate image of another person who did not consent to the distribution.
 - 5.2. Students may be immediately suspended with a recommendation for expulsion to the Board for the following:
 - 5.2.1. trafficking alcohol/drugs;
 - 5.2.2. possession or use of weapons;
 - 5.2.3. bomb/shooting threat;
 - 5.2.4. physical or sexual assault;
 - 5.2.5. verbal, written or online threats;
 - 5.2.6. breach of the [Student Responsible Technology Use Agreement](#) (Form 140-1) and/or school technology code of ethics; or

- 5.2.7. any other actions for which expulsion would be supported under the *Education Act*.
- 5.3. The Principal shall inform the student's parent/guardian and report in writing all the circumstances of the suspension to the parent/guardian with copies to the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent of Supports for Students, Division Principal and the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent or designate.
- 5.4. Within two days of the Superintendent receiving a copy of the suspension with a recommendation for expulsion letter, the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent or designate shall:
 - 5.4.1. inform the parent/guardian, by phone, of the date for the hearing;
 - 5.4.2. send a hearing confirmation letter to the parent/guardian by the most expedient and appropriate manner possible; and
 - 5.4.3. inform the parent/guardian of the procedures at the hearing, so they can prepare a response.
- 5.5. As per [Board Policy 13: Appeals and Hearing Regarding Student Matters](#), the Student Expulsion Committee shall, within 10 school days after the initial day of suspension, conduct a hearing into the case. At that time, a decision shall be made to reinstate or to expel the student from school, and/or permit enrolment in another school/alternate program.
- 5.6. The Principal shall prepare a report relating the specific circumstances which led to the suspension with a recommendation for expulsion to the Board and other pertinent data regarding the student which may assist the Student Expulsion Committee in reaching a fair and just decision. Following the Division's expulsion hearing [template](#), the report shall also include:
 - 5.6.1. background information on the student;
 - 5.6.2. current academic performance;
 - 5.6.3. a summary of attendance;
 - 5.6.4. a list of behavioural interventions and parent contact within the current school year;
 - 5.6.5. all relevant corrective interventions, counselling and assistance provided to the student;
 - 5.6.6. all suspensions three years prior to the recommendation for expulsion;
 - 5.6.7. a summation of past and present behaviour issues;
 - 5.6.8. the Principal's recommendation and rationale for the recommendation;
 - 5.6.9. copies of relevant documentation; and
 - 5.6.10. evidence of student and parent/guardian awareness of the school rules and consequences (for example, student agenda, school code of conduct).
- 5.7. A copy of the report shall be made available to the parent/guardian one day prior to the date of the expulsion hearing, with additional copies provided to all parties at the expulsion hearing.
- 5.8. The Student Expulsion Committee hearing shall proceed as follows:
 - 5.8.1. A Board member shall act as Chair for the hearing.

- 5.8.2. The Principal or Acting Principal shall provide a report as per 5.6. Where appropriate, an assistant principal may accompany the Principal.
- 5.8.3. The student and parent/guardian shall be given opportunity to speak and/or make written representation regarding the suspension.
- 5.8.4. Once the expulsion hearing concludes, the Board Committee shall make—without administration, parent/guardian(s) or the student present—a decision to reinstate or to expel the student from school, and/or to permit enrolment in another school/alternate program.
 - 5.8.4.1. The Executive Assistant to the Superintendent or designate shall be allowed to remain in the room during the decision process.
 - 5.8.4.2. Once the Board Committee has reached a decision, they may consult with the Division Principal regarding appropriate alternate programming. This may include, but is not limited to, alternate schooling arrangements, another school site, outreach or distance learning.
- 5.8.5. The Board Committee may expel a student for a period longer than 10 days if, on considering the report presented to it and any representations made to it:
 - 5.8.5.1. the Principal has recommended the Board expel the student; and
 - 5.8.5.2. the student will be offered another education program by the Board.
- 5.8.6. When distance learning is determined to be the alternate program for the student:
 - 5.8.6.1. the Division shall provide appropriate compulsory materials and the referring school shall provide information in order to establish appropriate courses for the student;
 - 5.8.6.2. the Principal shall designate a teacher(s) to provide assistance by phone to the expelled student at reasonable and mutually agreeable times and dates, to a maximum of two times per week; and
 - 5.8.6.3. it shall be communicated to the parent/guardian in the decision letter that they have responsibility to initiate contact with the Principal to make such arrangements.
- 5.8.7. The costs of materials and support for an alternate program may be shared between Central Services and the referring school. A Central Services designate may also assist the student, parent/guardian and school in arranging the alternate program.
- 5.8.8. The Associate Superintendent of Supports for Students shall communicate the Board Committee's decision to the student's parent/guardian by telephone and confirm in writing. Copies of the letter shall be sent to the Superintendent, Division Principal, Principal of the referring school and Principal of the receiving school (when applicable).

- 5.8.9. If the student is expelled, a letter shall be sent to the parent/guardian—and the student, if 16 years of age or older—providing notification of:
 - 5.8.9.1. the expulsion and any rules or conditions that apply to the student; and
 - 5.8.9.2. the right to have the matter reviewed by the Minister of Education.
- 5.8.10. Copies of the letter shall be sent to the Superintendent, Division Principal, Principal of the referring school and Principal of the receiving school (when applicable).
- 5.8.11. The Division may hear requests for a student who has been expelled to be re-enrolled in a subsequent school year. Conditions for reinstatement may include, but are not limited to, evidence of academic progress, proper conduct and counselling/treatment.

6. Suspension Letters

- 6.1. Principals shall use the Division's In-School Suspension, Suspension, Bus Suspension, Suspension with a Recommendation for Expulsion or Bus Suspension with a Recommendation for Expulsion [template letters](#).
- 6.2. The following items shall appear in all suspension letters:
 - 6.2.1. the student's name, birth date and grade level;
 - 6.2.2. that the student is being suspended according to the *Education Act* and administrative procedures;
 - 6.2.3. the specific number of days the student is being suspended, including the appropriate dates;
 - 6.2.4. specific details of the incident leading to suspension;
 - 6.2.5. reference to further disciplinary consequences if the specific misbehaviour or other misbehaviours continue;
 - 6.2.6. that the student while under suspension shall not frequent any Division school grounds or ride school buses;
 - 6.2.7. the title or designation of individuals who are receiving copies of the letter;
 - 6.2.8. the date and time of the reinstatement meeting;
 - 6.2.9. a school contact person and phone number should the parent/guardian or the student require further information regarding the suspension; and
 - 6.2.10. the Principal's signature.
- 6.3. In addition to the items in section 10, the following shall also appear in all letters of suspension with recommendation for expulsion:
 - 6.3.1. that the Principal has recommended to the Board the student be expelled from the school;
 - 6.3.2. that the Board has the authority to reinstate or expel the student from the school, permit enrolment in another school/program or expel the student from all schools in the system; and
 - 6.3.3. that arrangements for the expulsion hearing will be communicated by the: Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, or designate
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- 6.4. The Principal shall ensure the suspension letter is delivered to the parent/guardian of the student by the most expedient and appropriate manner possible. If the letter is sent via email, a request for confirmation of receipt must be included in the message. In the case of a suspension with the recommendation for expulsion, a copy of the letter shall also be sent to the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent of Supports for Students, Division Principal and the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent.
- 6.5. The Principal shall inform the Director of Student Transportation of all out-of-school suspensions/expulsions as soon as possible.

Reference:

Section 8, 11, 31, 32, 33, 36, 37, 42, 43, 44, 52, 53, 196, 197, 222 *Education Act*
Board Policy 13: Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters