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A. Generally

Suspensions are used only as a last resort in disciplining students. The suspension period is normally for three (3) days in most instances. Short-term suspensions, however, may vary from one (1) day to ten (10) days. All suspensions for periods longer than ten days must be approved by the Student Discipline Committee of the school board.

B. Student Discipline Committee of the School Board

The Student Discipline Committee of the school board will be comprised of three school board members appointed by the chairman of the school board with the approval of the school board.

C. Notice of Suspension

Copies of the notice of suspension must be 1. given to the student, 2. mailed to the parent or legal guardian, 3. sent to the director for student services, and 4. retained in the school in the student's record in accordance with the Management of Student Records Guidelines. An effort must be made to contact the parent by phone on the day of the suspension.

The space on the suspension notice designated for the principal's statement must include:

1. Charges or reasons for suspension
2. Summary of evidence to support charges
3. Length of suspension
4. Date of readmission conference

D. Appeals

A student or parent must be informed of the right to appeal a suspension (see Regulation 7-6). Should notice of an appeal be presented, the student would remain in school until the outcome of the appeal has been determined, unless the situation is deemed dangerous or disruptive to the school environment by the building principal.

Further, these guidelines do not preclude the right of the principal to remove a

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student from the school premises because of a flagrant violation which would require immediate action.

E. Application of Suspensions

1. A student's initial suspension is usually an overnight suspension pending the return of a parent or guardian for a reentry conference. This will not be the case where more serious acts are involved such as violence, vandalism, drugs, or thievery.
2. A student's second suspension is usually for no more than three days.
3. A student's third suspension is usually for no more than five days.
4. A student's fourth suspension is left to the discretion of the principal.
5. Suspensions of more than 10 days must be approved by the Student Discipline Committee of the school board.
6. Prior to a suspension, the student and/or his parents will be informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond to the charges. After the suspension, a parent or guardian has the right to appeal a suspension if he/she is not satisfied with the decision of the principal. The student may be reinstated pending the appeal outcome.
7. Recommendations by the superintendent to the school board for long term suspension will be expected in cases of particularly serious infractions of the rules as well as cases involving repeated suspensions for less serious infractions.
8. Probationary status may be assigned when, in the opinion of the principal, a student's behavior has created serious concern regarding the student's continued enrollment in school. The terms of the probationary status will be clearly defined, in writing, to the student and his parents. Generally, such status will remain in effect until the end of the school year or until revoked by the principal.

F. Suspension (and Expulsion) of Students with Disabilities

Federal and state laws require that in the following two cases students with disabilities must be treated differently:

1. If the proposed action substantially changes the student's individualized education program (IEP); and

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2. If the proposed action denies the student a free appropriate public education.

Court cases have provided direction and established conditions and procedures to follow when either of the above actions become necessary:

1. All students have the right to procedural safeguards when being disciplined:
 - a. The right to know what specific rule he has violated;
 - b. The right to know how the administration knows he has violated the rule;
 - c. The opportunity to respond to the accusations; and
 - d. The right to have an investigation conducted if there is contradictory information.
2. Short-term suspension is for 10 or fewer days and long-term suspension is for more than 10 days.

Where a disciplinary action involving long-term suspension or expulsion of a disabled child is being considered, a determination must be made as to whether or not there is a direct causal relationship between the student's handicap disability and the misconduct. This determination must be made by a specialized, knowledgeable group of persons pursuant to the change of placement procedures as outlined in Policy 7-19, Section F.

In emergency situations involving disabled students, short-term suspension should be imposed, and the required special education procedures, necessary for long-term suspension, set up as soon as possible. The following situations can be considered as emergencies:

- a. The student is uncontrollably violent.
- b. The student appears to present an actual danger to himself or others.
- c. The student appears to pose a threat of harm to himself or to others.
- d. The student is so disruptive that normal school activities cannot continue.
- e. The student is physically or verbally abusive to others.

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Regulatory Authority: (1997) See legal references to school board policy # 7-19.

Approved by School Board: July 15, 1980

Revised by School Board: September 18, 1984

Revised by School Board: September 3, 1985

Revised by School Board: September 7, 1994

Revised by School Board: November 11, 1997