

Administrative Guidelines for Student Suspensions

These guidelines have been developed to help ensure that student suspensions are addressed in a consistent manner throughout M.S.A.D. No. 3 and that appropriate communication is maintained between school administrators, students and their parents concerning disciplinary actions.

It is understood that there may be circumstances when deviations from these guidelines are advisable based on the facts of a particular case. In such cases, principals are expected to discuss the situation with the Superintendent.

Guiding Principles

Suspension from school is a serious consequence for students who disobey school policies and rules, disrupt the instructional process and/or pose a danger to persons or property. In general, suspensions are not to be used for very minor infractions for which other disciplinary alternatives may be available (such as detention). Since suspensions lose their effectiveness when they become a routine response to a student's misbehavior, the number of suspensions a student will receive prior to a recommendation for expulsion will be limited.

Suspensions of Students with Disabilities

Suspensions of students with disabilities are subject to specific federal and state legal requirements. Please refer to the attached copy of the Board's policy/procedure JKF – Disciplinary Removals of Students with Disabilities.

Duration of Suspensions

- a. Principals shall notify the Superintendent of any suspensions of three days in length as soon as practicable.
- b. Principals shall consult with the Superintendent before suspending a student for a period between four and ten days.
- c. Suspensions over ten days in length may only be authorized by the Board.

Considerations in Determining Appropriate Disciplinary Action

In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, the Principal may consider any relevant facts and circumstances, including but not limited to the nature of the misconduct, the student's grade level, the student's behavior accompanying the violation, the student's willingness to cooperate with the investigation and the student's prior disciplinary record.

Frequency of Suspensions

Generally speaking, a student will not be suspended more than three times in a school year before being referred to the Board with a recommendation for expulsion. However, one or two

incidents of serious misconduct and/or a student's prior disciplinary history may warrant a recommendation for expulsion. This decision will be made by the Principal in consultation with the Superintendent.

Suspension Procedure for Principals

Principals are expected to follow this procedure when suspending a student.

1. Determine whether the student receives special education services. If he/she does, contact the Special Education Director and follow the procedure in Board policy/procedure JKF.
2. Investigate the incident and determine evidence of misconduct.
 - ▶ **If the student poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the instructional process, he/she may be immediately removed from school and the following steps can be taken as soon as possible thereafter.**
3. If you anticipate suspending the student for more than three days or the student has already been suspended three times in the school year, consult with the Superintendent. In the case of a student who has been suspended three times, generally a recommendation for expulsion will be made.
4. Meet with student.
 - a) Explain the suspected misconduct and evidence you believe shows that the student engaged in the misconduct. This may include reports of other students, whom you need not identify to the student at this meeting.
 - b) Provide the student with an opportunity to present his/her version of the matter;
 - c) Inform the student of the length of the suspension (no longer than 10 school days) and other conditions (make-up work requirements; stay off school grounds; no participation in school activities). Document the meeting.
5. Notify the parent/guardian of suspension.
 - a) Contact the parent/guardian by telephone, if possible. Document the call or attempt to call.
 - b) Send a written notice to the parent/guardian. (Exhibits JKDA & JKDB)
6. Provide the Superintendent with a copy of the written notice to the parent/guardian.
7. Prior to readmittance.
 - a) First suspension: Contact the parent/guardian and discuss re-entry issues on the telephone or request a conference, as appropriate. If the suspension is for three

days or fewer, the Principal may address re-entry issues during the initial contact concerning the suspension.

- b) Second suspension: Contact the parent/guardian and request a conference to discuss re-entry issues. Refer the student to the Student Assistance Team.
 - c) Third suspension: A conference with the Superintendent is required.
- ▶ If a parent/guardian refuses to attend a conference, the student should not be prevented from returning to school at the conclusion of the suspension.