

606 Suspension and Exclusion of Students from School

Revised: September 25, 2001

Revised: May 26, 2010

Suspensions: Policy

The school's responses to Code of Conduct violations will be rational, consistent, and fair. Disciplinary action, whenever possible, will be preventative and restorative, rather than merely punitive. The administration will take into account factors such as the severity and frequency of the offence(s), as well as the age, maturity, and ability of the student in question. In most cases, as students mature, there is the expectation of increased responsibility and self-discipline; therefore, progressively increasing consequences for inappropriate behaviour may apply. Considering these background factors, consequences may include, but may not be limited to, verbal warning, parental contact, restorative actions, written learning packages, detention, in-school suspension, community service, or out-of-school suspension. Contraventions of the *Criminal Code* (such as involvement with drugs and alcohol, violence, threats of violence, possession of a weapon or replica, vandalism, theft, causing a false emergency alarm etc.), as well as violations of the *B.C. Human Rights Code*, may involve suspension, and, if applicable, a Re-Entry Plan. In addition, these cases usually require the involvement of the police.

Sections 26 and 85 (2) of the *School Act* give the Board a principal, vice-principal or director of instruction of a school or the Superintendent of Schools authority to suspend a student from attendance at a school in certain circumstances. For example, the *School Act* authorizes the principal or vice-principal of any District school to suspend a student whose conduct has been judged to be in serious conflict with a safe and caring learning environment, the school's Code of Conduct and / or district policies, or when the school's progressive interventions have failed to correct inappropriate behaviour.

Guidelines for Suspensions

- A student is subject to the disciplinary authority of a principal throughout the school day, while at the school, on the way to and from school, and at school-sponsored activities both at the school or elsewhere, or in any other circumstances where engaging in an activity negatively affects the teaching and learning environment or reputation of the school, or the learning or welfare of one or more students and staff.
- A principal or vice-principal may suspend a student for a period not to exceed five (5) days without prior consultation with the Superintendent.
- When such suspension occurs, the principal or vice-principal, in accordance with due process, shall:
 - o Report the circumstances in a timely manner, in person or by telephone, to the parent or guardian
 - o Confirm the telephone or personal contact in writing. A copy of the written correspondence will be kept on file in the school.
 - o Consult with the student, appropriate district or outside agency personnel as necessary, and review the matter with the parent or guardian with the purpose of resolving the problem and preventing future infractions.

- o Provide for the continuance of an educational program for any student under the age of 16 years while under suspension.
- o Advise the student and parent of the expectations that the school has for the student upon re-admission to the school. These expectations may take the form of a Re-Entry Plan.
- o The purpose of the Re-Entry Plan is to provide a relevant educational experience encouraging responsibility and accountability for one's actions.
- o Re-admit the student at or prior to the expiration of the period of suspension, or arrange admission to another school, if the principal considers such action appropriate.

Exclusion from School: Policy

Under Section 85 of the *School Act*, The Board may refuse to offer an educational program to a student 16 years or older if that student has refused to comply with the code of conduct and / or other rules and policies of the Board or school, or has failed to apply himself or herself to his or her studies.

Exclusion of a student under Sections 85 of the *School Act* is considered a final step in a series of consultations and progressive interventions with a student and his/her parents.

The Board may exclude a student from attendance at any District school under the provisions of Section 85 (3) of the *School Act* provided that:

- the student is at least 16 years of age;
- the parent or guardian is informed as soon as possible of the circumstances leading to the exclusion and of the avenues for review of the decision to exclude;
- an attempt is made to contact the parent by telephone or by personal interview and telephone or personal contact is later confirmed by letter, or if contact is not possible, by registered letter.

Section 91 of the *School Act* also gives a principal, vice-principal, director of instruction of a school or the Superintendent of Schools the authority to exclude a student because of health issues, physical or mental, that would endanger students or staff at school. The student may be excluded from school until a certificate is obtained from the school medical officer permitting the student to return to the school. If a student is removed or excluded from school the Board must continue to make available an educational program for that student.

Process of Appeal

Appeal procedures for suspensions or exclusions of students are cited in Board Bylaw 906: School Act Appeals.

Resources

School Act
 BC Human Rights Code
 Criminal Code [<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/PDF/Statute/C/C-46.pdf>]
 See Policy website for resource links