

Suspension from Class by a Teacher

A suspension from class by a teacher is to be considered an in-school suspension. A teacher who suspends a student from class must promptly document and report the suspension to the principal (M.R. 92/2013).

Following the teacher's decision to suspend the student from class, the teacher will

- notify the principal, who will inform the parents of the reason and duration of the suspension, which may not exceed two days
- provide the principal with a written report outlining the antecedent event(s) and reason for suspension from class, and action(s) taken by the teacher
- arrange for a supervised learning environment and ensure appropriate educational programming continues
- discuss with the principal the re-entry process, as well as who will communicate this to parents
- meet with the student, principal, and parents prior to re-entry to communicate expectations and to develop strategies to repair the relationship

GUIDELINE 6: RE-ENTRY PROCESS

Policies must include a written process and procedures for student re-entry.

School division policy must identify a re-entry process for students who are suspended. The process should involve the student, parents, and appropriate school team members, include timelines, and ensure re-entry occurs on the day following completion of the suspension (MEECL, *Standards for AEP: Student Discipline*, 2022).

The purpose of a re-entry process is to

- provide an opportunity to debrief
- review the reason for the suspension
- reflect upon the incident and circumstances
- clarify expectations
- work towards addressing relational problems, if applicable
- plan for the student to rejoin the classroom/school community
- restore a sense of safety and belonging for all

Suspension leads to a disruption in learning, routine, and connections. Schools are expected to use a restorative approach, which places focus on accountability, empathy, and healing.

Re-entry Meeting

Re-entry meetings are an opportunity to bridge and repair relationships. A meeting prior to the student's return to school is especially important to the re-entry process. The student, parents, and appropriate school/division team members should be in attendance.

Students will feel safe when they see the adults from school and home come together to focus on their interests. When teachers and parents communicate regularly and work collaboratively, they are more likely to develop a degree of trust (Manitoba Education and Training, *Provincial Code of Conduct*, 2017).

Parents are valued partners in education. To ensure the ongoing participation and support of parents in the education of all students, it is important that they are involved in meaningful ways. For some parents, this could mean being provided with an interpreter or, for others, having a supporting person accompany them to school meetings (MEECL, *Standards for AEP*, 2022).

If a parent is unable or refuses to attend the re-entry meeting, schools must document the reasons for refusal and/or actions undertaken by the school to obtain consent and/or resolve concerns.

The discussion at the re-entry meeting should

- review the school's code of conduct
- restore a sense of safety and belonging (i.e., establish a connection with an adult in the building who provides daily check-ins for positive feedback and problem-solving)
- structure transitions, resources, and environmental considerations to be in place for a safe return
- determine programming needs (e.g., academic support, increased opportunities to attend to social-emotional learning and regulation)
- review planning needs if a student-specific plan is already in place
- develop a student-specific plan for a student who has been suspended out of school more than two times during a school year (MEECL, *Standards for AEP*, 2022)
- determine whether individual counselling and/or divisional supports are needed (i.e., determine and support student's protective factors)
- refer to community-based/agency supports, as appropriate
- reaffirm goals for personal and/or school success, respecting the student's right to be heard, and participate in decisions that affect them
- designate staff to case manage (i.e., ensure planning needs are met and follow-up is embedded for ongoing support)

- review recommendations and update plans as necessary
- encourage the repair of relationships with those who may have been harmed or affected and who also should be treated with courtesy, compassion, and respect for their dignity and privacy (YCJA)

- ✗ The completion of schoolwork must not be used as a condition of re-entry.
- ✗ Suspension must not be prolonged due to the parent's inability to be present at the re-entry meeting.

GUIDELINE 7: APPEAL PROCESS

Policies must include written procedures for an appeal process for suspensions.

Appeal processes protect the rights of students and parents, and address differences of opinion about the education of students. "A school's code of conduct must include the disciplinary consequences, in as much detail as is reasonably possible, of violating the code of conduct, and the process for appealing disciplinary decisions" (Manitoba Education and Training, *Provincial Code of Conduct*, 2017, p. 6). The appeal process for the school division must be developed and made accessible to parents. It is always important that the partnership between schools and parents is strong and that issues are resolved at the local level whenever possible (MEECL, *Standards for AEP: Dispute Resolution*, 2022).

Students and parents must follow the established appeal process. Typically, this process involves an appeal to the teacher if they made the disciplinary decision, then to the principal if not resolved, then to the superintendent of schools if not resolved, and finally to the school board. Exceptions are suspensions in excess of five days.

In the case of a student who has been suspended more than five days, the school board must permit the student and their parent(s) to make representations to the school board about the suspension. The school board may confirm the suspension, modify it, or reinstate the student (M.R. 92/2013; Manitoba Education and Training, *Provincial Code of Conduct*, 2017).