

311 STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Belief

MESC has expectations that reflect the four core values, in particular Wahkohtowin, for student conduct that honours and respects the collaborative relationship between parents, students and the school in establishing a safe learning environment as referenced in Administrative Procedure 307 – Student Conduct. This procedure is aligned with the MESC Board of Governors policy EL-1: Treatment of Students and Parents.

Guidelines

1. The Principal is responsible for administration of this administrative procedure and will inform the Superintendent, the Associate Superintendent of Learning Services and the Director of Counselling and Student Wellness of student discipline, including intervention, suspensions and expulsions.
2. It is the responsibility of the school staff to provide trauma-informed discipline in order to:
 - 2.1. Develop students' skills and attitudes that will allow them to become competent, confident and resilient Cree speaking students.
 - 2.2. Assist students to meet appropriate standards of respectful, responsible conduct;
 - 2.3. Provide effective classroom conditions using the collaborative response model which will contribute to effective teaching and learning, and to protect the health and safety needs of students and staff; and
 - 2.4. Contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging among all members of the school community.
3. Trauma-informed, restorative practices:
 - 3.1. Foresight, vigilance, and proactive early interventions (Collaborative Response Model) are employed in order to limit or preclude the advent or escalation of disciplinary issues.
 - 3.2. Student conduct or disciplinary issues will not be ignored and avoided.
 - 3.3. Student conduct and disciplinary issues will be addressed, and dealt with appropriately:
 - 3.3.1. Using discretion and prudent professional judgment in determining the appropriate consequence.
 - 3.3.2. Considering each situation will be based on the merits of each individual case, with provision for varying consequences depending on the student's age, maturity, individual circumstance, nature of the problem, and the people involved. Maskwacis Education Schools Commission Updated: September 15, 2022 23 Procedures

4. General Discipline

- 4.1. It is the primary responsibility of the teacher/instructor/bus driver to ensure an appropriate level of conduct in the classroom/bus, while the Principal is required to maintain order and discipline within the school and bus.
- 4.2. Discipline shall involve making rules of conduct known to all students, the initiation of learning experiences, giving recognition to students for proper conduct, and initiating disciplinary measures when required.
- 4.3. Expectations for student conduct and possible disciplinary actions shall be communicated by the Principal to students, staff and parents.
- 4.4. It is expected that restorative circles (including intervention hearings) between teachers, students, principals and parents, be employed as a means of bringing about acceptable conduct,
- 4.5. Normally, student conduct occurring off-campus and outside of school sponsored/approved activities are not subject to disciplinary intervention by staff members. Staff members observing such events are deemed as normal citizens with the same rights and responsibilities to advise appropriate authorities or respond in some other acceptable and prudent manner. However, the Principal may impose disciplinary measures relative to these behaviours provided that both of the following criteria are in place:
 - 4.5.1. The student's conduct is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school; and
 - 4.5.2. The conduct that occurs off-campus must be conduct which, if it occurred at school, would render the student liable to discipline.
- 4.6. In order to maintain an appropriate level of discipline in a school/bus it may, at times, be necessary to apply negative consequences. The following forms of negative consequences are permissible:
 - 4.6.1. Temporary removal from the classroom/bus;
 - 4.6.2. Assignment to an alternate activity;
 - 4.6.3. Withdrawal of classroom/bus, school or extracurricular privileges;
 - 4.6.4. In school suspensions;
 - 4.6.5. Suspensions from the class, school or bus for durations of five (5) or less school days; and
 - 4.6.6. Expulsion from school/bus.
- 4.7. Non permissible forms of discipline are:
 - 4.7.1. Physical aggression by school/transportation staff upon a student;
 - 4.7.2. Punishment of innocent persons, mass detentions and mass punishments aimed at unspecified individuals or groups.
 - 4.7.3. Verbal attacks such as sarcasm, racial or personal references; and
 - 4.7.4. Unreasonable actions that would subject a student to undue ridicule from classmates.

5. Suspension

- 5.1. Suspension refers to a temporary denial of a student's right to an educational service or transportation on the bus. The Principal or designate (vice-principal, acting principal) may suspend a student for five or less school days.
- 5.2. The suspension of a student is a serious punitive measure to be invoked when all other interventions have proven to be ineffective or when the seriousness of the offense warrants such action.
- 5.3. The following may be considered as reasons for suspensions but shall not be considered either complete or so prescriptive as to require that suspension follow when a student commits the offense:
 - 5.3.1. Open opposition to the authority of the teacher, Principal, school staff or bus driver;
 - 5.3.2. Willful disobedience over a prolonged period or in a single instance where the disobedience endangers students, teachers, bus drivers, buses, buildings, or the general climate of orderly conduct;
 - 5.3.3. Profane or indecent language or gestures in the presence of other students or staff;
 - 5.3.4. Threats of physical violence or an act of violence against another person;
 - 5.3.5. Possession of a weapon on school grounds, bus and property;
 - 5.3.6. Any act of indecency in a school building, on school grounds or on the bus;
 - 5.3.7. Failure to observe and obey any reasonable rule, regulation or procedure established for maintaining a climate of conduct conducive to learning;
 - 5.3.8. Willful or malicious damage to school property, including the bus;
 - 5.3.9. Use or possession of drugs or alcohol;
 - 5.3.10. Chronic acts judged to seriously diminish the rights or privileges of staff and students in their participation in the school process;
 - 5.3.11. Flagrant acts of any student deemed to be seriously detrimental to the education or welfare of other students and/or staff of the school;
 - 5.3.12. The student's conduct is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school.
- 5.4. The student and parent must be informed of the terms of the suspension and specifically why the action was taken.
- 5.5. A Principal or designate may suspend a student from:
 - 5.5.1. One or more class periods,
 - 5.5.2. One or more courses or school programs;
 - 5.5.3. School;
 - 5.5.4. Riding on a school bus, or
 - 5.5.5. Participating in a school activity sponsored or approved by the Board.
- 5.6. A Principal or designate may reinstate a suspended student.
- 5.7. In arriving at a decision to suspend, the Principal or designate shall:

- 5.7.1. Review the circumstances with any teacher, support staff, or bus driver who is involved in the situation, and may consult with the Director of Counselling and Student Wellness and the Coordinator of Transportation;
 - 5.7.2. Conduct such other investigations as deemed necessary;
 - 5.7.3. Give the student a fair hearing and an opportunity to explain his/her actions; and
 - 5.7.4. Have previously informed the parent/guardian of the potential for suspension, if the nature of the student's discipline breach was ongoing or foreseeable.
- 5.8. After making a decision to suspend, the Principal or designate shall:
- 5.8.1. Advise in writing, the student, parent/guardian, and the staff involved (where feasible it is encouraged that the appropriate parties be advised as soon as possible, by telephone or in person);
 - 5.8.2. Advise the student and parent/guardian that if they have concerns with the suspension, they may arrange a meeting with the Principal or designate to discuss those concerns;
 - 5.8.3. Complete appropriate documentation in PowerSchool
 - 5.8.4. Forward a copy of the letter confirming the suspension to the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent of Learning Services and the Coordinator of Transportation.
- 5.9. When a Principal suspends a student from riding on a school bus:
- 5.9.1. The procedures as indicated in 5.7 and 5.8 above shall be followed,
 - 5.9.2. It shall be deemed advisable to include the Transportation Coordinator, and bus driver in the meeting with the parent and the student,
 - 5.9.3. Copies of all reports shall also be submitted to the bus driver and the Transportation Coordinator,
 - 5.9.4. The parent is responsible to provide transportation until the student is reinstated.
 - 5.9.5. The first day of suspension from riding on a school bus takes effect after the student has been returned to the normal home drop-off point, unless other arrangements are made with the parent by the Principal.
- 5.10. A student 16 years of age or older, or the parents/guardians, may appeal any suspension longer than 1 day to the Superintendent who may reinstate the student or confirm the suspension. This must be explained in writing in every suspension longer than 1 day.
- 5.11. Non permissible forms of suspension are:
- 5.11.1. Suspending a student for an indefinite amount of time, unless recommending an expulsion hearing. This includes asking students to stay home until something takes place such as a plan, a VTRA or Worrisome Behaviour Meeting, a parent meeting, an intervention hearing, etc.;

6. Intervention Hearings

- 6.1. A Student Intervention Hearing may be recommended for any student for inappropriate conduct which, in the opinion of the school Principal, is harmful to the moral tone and/or general well being of the school community.
- 6.2. A Student Intervention Hearing is a restorative practice where a committee, alongside the parents/guardians, student, and any support people identified by the family come together to decide on a plan to improve the situation in question, and to assist the student in taking responsibility for their actions. Conditions may be set out by the committee and may include but are not be limited to the following; restorative circles, a modified schedule, alternate location for the delivery of a school program, modified programs, and/or any other program (i.e. counselling, anger management, mistatim, conflict resolution, Young Spirit Winds, etc.) that are deemed necessary by the board committee.
- 6.3. The Student Intervention Committee will be identified by the Superintendent, which may include Elders, the Director of Counselling Student Wellness along with the Director of Inclusive Learning and other Learning Services staff as requested.
- 6.4. A recommendation for a Student Intervention Hearing by a Principal to the Superintendent shall accompany a report in writing of the circumstances and of any suspension accompanying the recommendation. The hearing will held as soon as possible but in no more than 10 school days from the time of the Superintendent being notified of the hearing. The student will continue to attend school regularly until the hearing takes place unless a suspension is assigned by the principal.
- 6.5. Principals/designates shall, in writing, inform the student and parents of any recommendation submitted for a Student Intervention Hearing.
- 6.6. The principal can recommend a student for an Intervention Hearing, but only the board committee can direct a student to follow any conditions set out from the hearing.
- 6.7. Parents and students shall be informed of their right to appeal the decision of the Student Intervention Committee by requesting a review with the MESC Board of Governors.
- 6.8. After the Committee makes their decision, the principal will state the procedure for admitting the student back into school.

7. Expulsion Hearings

- 7.1. Expulsion refers to the removal of a student from his/her current class, school or bus for a period of more than 10 school days.
 - 7.1.1. The Principal will contact the Superintendent to discuss the circumstances of the expulsion, consequences and conditions to determine if the hearing will go ahead.
- 7.2. The board shall, within 10 school days after the initial date of the suspension, make a decision to:

- 7.2.1. Return the student to the school, class, a course or courses, transportation or a school-related activity, or
- 7.2.2. Expel the student.
- 7.3. The board may expel a student only if the principal has recommended that the board expel the student.
- 7.4. If a student is expelled, the expulsion takes effect immediately following the board's decision.
- 7.5. The board may establish rules or conditions for an expelled student respecting the circumstances in which the student may be enrolled in the same or in a different education program.
- 7.6. An expulsion or any rule or condition under subsection (7.5) may apply to a student beyond the school year in which the student was expelled.
- 7.7. When a student is expelled under this section, the board shall immediately notify, in writing, the student's parent, and the student if the student is 16 years of age or older of:
 - 7.7.1. The expulsion and any rules or conditions that apply to the student, and;
 - 7.7.2. The right to request a review with the MESC Board of Governors.
- 7.8. When a student is expelled under this section, the board shall:
 - 7.8.1. Ensure that the student is provided with a supervised education program consistent with the requirements of this MESC Administrative Procedure and the regulations,
 - 7.8.2. Ensure that the student is provided with supports and services in accordance with MESC AP 313 Student Placement, and MESC AP 205 Inclusive Education Programs, and;
 - 7.8.3. Make all reasonable efforts to ensure the attendance of the student in accordance with section 7.5.
- 7.9. Reasonable effort shall be made to ensure that students are provided opportunities for interventions prior to making the decision to expel a student.
- 7.10. MESC believes that the expulsion of a student is the most serious punitive measure and shall be invoked only with the utmost consideration of the rules of natural justice and right of hearing before the Board or committee thereof.
- 7.11. Recommendations for expulsion by school officials may only be heard and decided by the Board or a committee of the Board. This committee shall include the Superintendent.
- 7.12. A student may be suspended from school during the time in which the recommendation for expulsion is being considered.
- 7.13. Principals/designates shall ensure the following has been considered prior to submitting a recommendation for an expulsion:
 - 7.13.1. Recommendations of counsellors and teachers
 - 7.13.2. Consultation with the Associate Superintendent of Learning Services
 - 7.13.3. Evidence obtained through investigation
 - 7.13.4. Student(s) must be offered an alternative educational program.

- 7.14. A recommendation for expulsion by a Principal to the Superintendent shall accompany a report in writing of the circumstances of the suspension.
- 7.15. Principals/designates shall, in writing, inform the student and parents of any recommendation submitted for expulsion.
- 7.16. The student and student's parent/guardian may make representations to the board with respect to the principal's recommendation to expel the student.
- 7.17. The following additional documentation shall be made available as required by local circumstances:
 - 7.17.1. Reports from all teachers concerned with the student describing academic achievement, behaviour, and relationship with peers;
 - 7.17.2. Reports from counsellors or other educational personnel;
 - 7.17.3. Reports of remedial action taken by the Principal and teachers; and
 - 7.17.4. The student's cumulative record.
- 7.18. When a recommendation for expulsion is made, Board Policy EL-1: Treatment of Students and Parents shall apply.