

Administrative Procedure 3265

Student Suspensions

Board Governance Policy Cross Reference: [1, 5, 12, 13](#)

Administrative Procedures Cross Reference:

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Dispute Resolution](#)

[Smoke and Vapour Free Environments](#)

Form Cross Reference:

[Serious Incident Form](#)

[Notification of Suspension Form](#)

Legal/Regulatory Reference:

[Appropriate Disciplinary Consequences in Schools Regulation \(92/2013\)](#)

[Appropriate Educational Programming Regulations](#)

[Education Administration Act](#)

[Manitoba Human Rights Code](#)

[Provincial Code of Conduct: Appropriate Interventions and Disciplinary Consequences](#)

[Public Schools Act](#)

[Safe and Caring Schools: Taking Action Against Bullying](#)

[Safe Schools Charter of Manitoba](#)

[Youth Criminal Justice Act](#)

The Interlake School Division (ISD) accepts responsibility to foster and maintain a safe school environment for its students, staff, and community. The Division subscribes to the standards set by provincial and federal legislation and is committed to providing safe and nurturing learning environments for all students, staff, and members of the community who learn in, work at, or visit ISD schools.

The Interlake School Division affirms its commitment to recognizing the individual worth and dignity of every person and upholds its responsibility to provide learning environments and workplaces free of discrimination

and harassment, as prescribed by the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) and the [Manitoba Human Rights Code](#).

The ISD accepts its responsibility to implement effective measures to deal with inappropriate behaviours by students. This includes the establishment of preventive procedures, provision for appropriate early intervention strategies and the administration of disciplinary action such as is appropriate under the provisions of the [Public Schools Act](#), the [Education Administration Act](#) and their regulations, the [Safe Schools Charter of Manitoba](#), ISD administrative procedures, and other federal statutes such as the [Youth Criminal Justice Act](#).

Students are expected to practice appropriate behaviour at all times. Principles such as positive self-esteem, individual and social responsibility, respect for property and the rights and values of others shall form the foundation for appropriate behaviour. When behaviour is inappropriate, intervention and discipline should assist students to understand the fundamental values essential to the well-being of both the individual and society, and to accept the consequences for their actions.

A suspension occurs when a student's actions are detrimental to the teaching and learning environment within a school, contravene the school's code of conduct, or are injurious to the school environment.

Principals, teachers, superintendents, and the school board are permitted, with different degrees of authority, to suspend.

A teacher may suspend a student from the classroom, and the Principal or Superintendent may suspend a student from the school, if:

- the student engages in disruptive behaviour; and
- suspension is the consequence for that behaviour under the school's disciplinary behaviour management policies and the school's code of conduct.

A teacher has the authority to suspend a student from class for a period not exceeding two days. A Principal may suspend a student from school for a period not exceeding five days. The Superintendent/CEO or designate may suspend a student for a period not exceeding six weeks (30 days).

A school board may suspend or expel from a school any pupil who, upon investigation by the school board, is found to be guilty of conduct injurious to the school environment ([Public Schools Act section 48\(4\)](#)). In its decisions, the board may choose to identify possible solutions and recommend preferred alternatives.

1. Definitions and Terminology

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS): An instance in which a student is dismissed from school for disciplinary purposes for a finite period of time when their peers are expected to be in attendance.

In-School Suspension (ISS): An instance in which a student is temporarily removed from their regular classroom(s) for at least half a school day for disciplinary purposes but remains under the direct supervision of school personnel. Direct supervision means school personnel are physically in the same location as students under their supervision.

2. Enhancing Proactive and Preventative Practices

The Interlake School Division engages in proactive and preventative practices, which foster a positive school climate and build a culture of trust and respect. Positive school climate is fostered through the following characteristics:

- strong relationships;
- students are inspired and given support to succeed in an environment of high expectations;
- consistency in expectations and discipline;
- regular collection of feedback, followed by adjustments;
- students, staff members, and parents feel—and are—safe, included, and accepted;
- members of the school community demonstrate respect, fairness, and kindness in their interactions, and build healthy relationships that are free from discrimination and harassment;
- students are encouraged and given support to be positive leaders and role models in their school community (e.g., speaking up about issues such as bullying);
- students, principals, staff members, parents, and community members engage in open and ongoing dialogue, and all partners are actively engaged;
- principles of equity and inclusive education are embedded across the curriculum;
- strategies for bullying prevention, intervention, and raising awareness are reinforced for students and staff; and
- the learning environment and instructional and assessment practices reflect the diversity of all learners.

3. Alternative Approaches to Suspension

Rather than employing a suspension, one or more of the following supportive strategies may be used and the situation reframed as a learning opportunity, thereby fulfilling a need the student has identified through their behaviour:

- in-school community service;
- restorative practice such as peace/community circle;
- behaviour contract;
- group brainstorming among student, school staff, and parent(s) and/or extended family;
- referral to counsellor, social worker, occupational therapist, or other clinical supports;
- referral to school or community-based service (in- or out-of-house counselling group, addictions services, anger management, mental health services);
- mentoring;
- flexible daily schedule as documented in a student-specific plan;
- in-school suspension; and/or
- continued learning at a designated off-campus location.

4. Discretion and Consideration

Schools must provide reasonable accommodation when disciplining a student and must take into consideration the student's state of development, ability to comply, and the amount of support required.

This means that, for some students, the approach to student discipline will need to consider the student's special learning needs and abilities including whether:

- the student is able to access the information;
- the student understands the policy or rules; and
- the disciplinary actions used for the majority of students are appropriate for the student.

Additional factors may direct the course of action. The decision to suspend should consider the following:

- the information gathered from the student, reporting staff, and others who may have witnessed or been affected;
- whether a process should be initiated for determining the risk of threat to self or others, and the risk of recurrence;
- possible motivation or underlying reason(s) that led to the incident (e.g., setting events, antecedent);
- previous disciplinary incidents;
- previously employed interventions and their effectiveness;
- the student's background and support network;
- alternative approaches not previously employed; and/or
- whether the suspension will be a breach of probation, if applicable.

The decision to suspend may also include the following:

- a discussion with the parent(s); and/or
- a discussion with the in-school team and/or divisional-level staff.

Note: Suspension may not be used as a response to absenteeism. Further, suspension duration must not incrementally increase based on the number of suspensions a student has previously received.

5. Suspension Procedures

The following procedures are in place for in-school and out-of-school suspensions:

A. Notification to Parents

If the student is suspended, parents/caregivers must be promptly notified of the reason and period of suspension by:

- the Principal of the school, if the student is suspended by a Teacher or the Principal; or
- the Superintendent/CEO or designate, if the student is suspended by the Superintendents' Department.

Within 24 hours of the decision to suspend, a written letter will be sent to the parents with information that includes the following:

- the student's name, birthdate, and student MET number;
- the nature of the suspension (in-school or out-of-school);
- the reason(s) for the decision to suspend in relation to the code of conduct and divisional Administrative Procedure(s);
- the period of suspension (with beginning and end dates);
- information regarding the re-entry process;

- the date, time, and location of the re-entry meeting;
- information regarding the opportunity for parents to be provided with accommodations such as an interpreter or having a supporting person accompany them to the re-entry meeting;
- the name and contact information of the school/division staff who will serve as the parent's initial contact for the purpose of arranging appropriate educational programming and maintaining regular contact with the student;
- information regarding the parent's right to make an appeal and the appeal procedures of the division and the school board; and
- clarity of any other restrictions.

B. Written Report

Within 24 hours following the decision to suspend, the Principal must report a suspension in writing to the Superintendent/CEO or designate, using the [Notification of Suspension Form](#) that includes

- the student's name;
- the period of suspension; and
- a description of the behaviour for which the student was suspended.

The report must be entered in the school division's student information system within 48 hours of the suspension.

C. Access to Educational Programming during Suspension

School divisions must offer and arrange educational programming for students who are suspended for more than five days. Educational programming may range from work at home to alternative courses at a different location or remote learning, depending on the student's needs, length of suspension, or age.

D. Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)

During an out-of-school suspension, students will not be permitted to be present at school and, at the discretion of the Principal, may not be permitted to participate in school-sponsored activities, whether they occur inside or outside the school, on the school bus, or on school property.

Following a decision to suspend a student out of school, the Principal will ensure that expectations are communicated with the student, parents, classroom teacher(s), in-school team, and relevant school/divisional staff with details such as the following:

- period of suspension (beginning and end dates);
- name of the school/division staff who will serve as initial contact for any questions/concerns;
- arrangement of appropriate educational programming and regular contact with professional staff (e.g., virtual, telephone, in person);
- clarification of expectations noting any restrictions;
- information regarding the time, date, and location of the re-entry meeting; and
- additional people or agencies and their contact information and any expectations set forth (if relevant).

Staff must develop a student-specific plan for a student who has been suspended out-of-school more than two times during a school year.

School and divisional staff must work collaboratively with other agencies to develop a coordinated plan that involves appropriate parties and follows divisional protocols. A multi-faceted approach is expected to be considered for students with:

- two or more out-of-school suspensions; or
- educational programming due to suspension for more than five days.

E. In-School Suspension (ISS)

An in-school suspension is to be carried out in a supervised educational environment with restricted contact to peers during the instructional day. During an in-school suspension, a student may be restricted from attending one or more classes and/or school-sponsored activities, whether they occur inside or outside the school or on the school bus.

Provided there is no safety risk to students or staff, the Superintendent, Principal, or designate may determine that a student observing an in-school suspension can continue to participate in school-sponsored activities with direct supervision, whether they occur inside or outside the school, in order to maintain connection, relationships, and a sense of belonging.

Following the Principal's decision to suspend the student, the Principal will ensure arrangements are made and communicated to the student, parents, classroom teacher(s), in-school team, and relevant school/divisional staff with details such as the following:

- date(s), including the expected date of return to classroom learning with peers;
- location of alternative supervised learning environment;
- expectations for contact with professional staff (who, when, purpose);
- expectations for non-structured times (e.g., lunch/breaks, extracurricular, transportation, arrival/dismissal), noting any restrictions to peers/activities;
- a structured plan outlining the appropriate educational programming the student is to be engaged in during the suspension;
- details of the re-entry process; and/or
- a meeting with the student prior to the date of re-entry to communicate expectations and to develop strategies to repair relationships.

F. 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.

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; and
- meet with the student, Principal, and parents prior to re-entry to communicate expectations and to develop strategies to repair the relationship.

6. Re-Entry Process

A re-entry process must be in place at the school level 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.

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; and
- restore a sense of safety and belonging for all.

Note: The completion of schoolwork must not be used as a condition of re-entry. Further, suspension must not be prolonged due to the parent's inability to be present at the re-entry meeting.

7. Appeal Process

The appeal process will be as follows:

- All school based disciplinary decisions, including suspensions, are eligible to be appealed within 14 days under the [Dispute Resolution procedures](#).
- If the parent or student if the student is 18 or older, wishes to appeal the Principal's decision, the matter is to be referred to the Superintendent/CEO or designate.
- If the parent wishes to appeal a suspension in excess of 5 days (after appealing to the Superintendent/CEO), they will contact the Secretary-Treasurer to arrange to be placed on the agenda for the In Camera portion of the next scheduled Board meeting.
- The suspended student and parent may attend as a delegation to appeal the suspension and have the right to be accompanied by a supporting person.
- The Interlake School Division will have senior administration, and may have school administration, department heads, legal counsel or any other relevant staff of the division present during the In Camera meeting.
- The student will be required to remain out of school for the duration of the suspension or until the appeal is satisfied.
- After considering the presentations brought forward at the In Camera appeal, the Board may:
 - confirm the suspension;
 - modify the suspension; or
 - reinstate the student.
- The decision of an appeal must be recorded in the pupil file.

8. Documentation

Each event of suspension must be documented. Documentation must include:

- information about the misconduct;
- disciplinary measures issued; and
- the actions undertaken by the school in relation to a student.

Documentation in the pupil file may also include:

- a record of communication between staff and the student and parents; and/or
- a record of the re-entry meeting.

9. Monitoring and Review

Collation, monitoring, evaluation, and review of data related to the use of suspensions, both in-school and out of school, is required at the school and divisional levels.

Principals must:

- keep records on the nature and duration of all suspensions, both in-school and out of school;
- ensure suspensions are categorized (Refer to Appendix A: Categories of Suspension) and tabulated by total number of students suspended and the duration of suspensions;
- establish a designated group to review suspension data (the school's safe school advisory committee, or an existing organized school group functioning as the school's safe school advisory committee, may fulfill this purpose); and
- review data at the school level annually or sooner (i.e., following regular reporting periods).

The School Division must:

- develop consistent categories across schools for the reasons of student suspension and ensure that each suspension is categorized (Refer to Appendix A: Categories of Suspension);
- ensure suspensions are categorized and tabulated by total number of students suspended and the duration of suspensions;
- establish a divisional committee to review division-wide suspension data;
- review data at the divisional level annually or sooner (i.e., following regular reporting periods); and
- provide suspension-related data to the Province upon request.

Appendix A

Categories of Suspension

All suspensions must be reported to the Superintendent/CEO or designate within 24 hours of the suspension using the [Notification of Suspension Form](#). Principals will also provide a copy of each suspension letter to the Superintendent/CEO or designate. The categories of suspension (listed alphabetically) are:

1. **Assault:** Assault may be physical or sexual in nature. It is the application of force without consent or an attempt or threat to apply force by one person on another.
2. **Bullying:** Bullying is defined as an assertion of power (often repeated) with intent to do harm. It may be physical, verbal, social and/or electronic. Bullying is intended to cause fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other forms of harm to another person. Refer to [Safe and Caring Schools: Taking Action Against Bullying](#) for further information on strategies and interventions to address and prevent bullying.
3. **Drugs/Alcohol:** Drug violations include the use, possession or trafficking of illicit drugs and/or cannabis (marijuana), or being under the influence of such drugs, on school grounds or during a school event (including field trips). Alcohol violations include the consumption, possession or sale of alcohol, or being under the influence of alcohol, on school grounds or during a school event (including offsite activities).
4. **Explosives (Categorized as 'Weapons' in SIS):** Explosives offences include the unauthorized possession or use of a substance or chemical that may be an explosive or incendiary device.
5. **Fighting:** Fighting is physical assault involving two or more persons.
6. **Gang Involvement:** Gang involvement is recognized to have occurred when a group of individuals who, while acting or congregating together, displays a pattern of inappropriate behaviour which may result in violent activities or conduct injurious to the school environment.
7. **Non-Compliance/Insubordination:** Non-Compliance or insubordination may include a student being disrespectful to staff, and/or oppositional behaviour that is compromising to the learning environment of others.
8. **Physical Aggression:** Physical aggression may include fighting, assault, physical obstruction, punching, pushing and shoving.
9. **Smoking/Vaping:** Smoking includes the use of any product made or derived from tobacco and the use of Electronic Vaporizer Devices ("vaping") on school grounds or during a school event (including field trips). Refer to [Smoke and Vapour Free Environments](#).
10. **Theft:** Theft is the unauthorized taking, conversion or use of another's property.
11. **Vandalism:** Vandalism is the wilful damage or destruction of property, including deliberate damage or defacement of buildings, grounds, vehicles and/or equipment on ISD property regardless of ownership. Vandalism does not include accidental damage or destruction of property.
12. **Verbal Aggression/Harassment:** Verbal aggression or harassment may include threats, intimidation, name-calling, teasing, and verbal put-downs directed at an individual.
13. **Weapons:** Weapons offences include the use of any object as a weapon. Any object which is a weapon or used as a weapon is strictly prohibited in ISD schools. Weapons include any item used to intimidate or inflict harm, including replicas. Careful attention shall be given to conditions and circumstances. For instance, if a student carelessly or unknowingly brings a pocketknife to school without the intent to intimidate or inflict harm, staff will confiscate the knife and notify parents/guardians, and the Principal will deem what disciplinary actions, if any, are warranted.