



October 2024

## Rules for the Suspension of Students

### Organization & Culture

#### Background

Respectful and responsible behaviour by all students is essential to positive learning environments. Fusion Christian Academy schools are committed to providing a safe and caring school environment. To this end, students, staff, parents and community members are expected to model and reinforce socially responsible and respectful behaviours.

#### Disciplinary Principles

Actions related to student discipline shall consider the following principles:

- A. Learning – and not punishment – shall be the foundation and primary consideration of any disciplinary action. To this end, wherever possible, teaching a student what to do is preferable to making a rule about what not to do;
- B. Student safety is immediate – appropriate disciplinary decisions and actions may take time;
- C. The parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be informed in disciplinary actions that pertain to their own child while respecting the privacy of other children who may be involved;
- D. Corrective discipline, wherever and whenever possible, shall be a private activity that maintains all students' sense of dignity;
- E. Disciplinary action and/or consequences shall consider the specific and unique special needs of any student.

## Procedures

In matters related to student discipline it is expected that a progressive discipline model that enables the student to demonstrate growth and learning shall be followed. Failure to meet the expectations for behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action to be applied by, or under the authority of the principal.

### Primary Student Responsibilities:

Each student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with the school's code of conduct.

### Grounds for Disciplinary Action:

Teaching and reinforcing clear behavioural expectations, providing supports and interventions for students with challenging behaviours, and using alternatives to suspension or expulsion are effective forms of positive student discipline and preferable, wherever possible.

Clear examples of unacceptable behaviour that could lead to disciplinary action include:

1. Discrimination in any form as defined in the Alberta Human Rights Act;
2. Any action deemed non-compliant or in contravention with The Education Act section 31, and/or 33(2);
3. School and/or athletic codes of conduct;
4. Conduct that is deemed disruptive and/or inhibits the process of learning for others;
5. Conduct that is deemed by school administration as threatening, aggressive or intimidating.
6. Conduct that is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others including verbal threats or inappropriate comments, whether or not the threats or comments are explicitly stated, written, or posted online;
7. Conduct deemed to exhibit mean behaviour;
8. Conduct deemed to be bullying and/or cyber bullying;
9. Conduct that causes a student or students to be subjected to forms of punishment or indignities (hazing/froshing);
10. Conduct deemed to be harassment or sexual harassment;
11. Assaulting another person;
12. Damage to property; including
  - a. Personal possessions of staff or other students;
  - b. Abuse of the school's computer network, the internet, email or any electronic privileges; or
  - c. Tampering with fire, fire alarm or safety equipment;
13. Possession of a weapon or weapon replica while on school property, that is dangerous or has the appearance of being dangerous to students and/or staff;
14. Displaying or brandishing a weapon or weapon-replica in a threatening or intimidating manner;
15. Any possession, use, or act of exhibiting the effects of influence of any of the following prohibited substances, regardless of the student's age in school and on school property or at school related events or onsite or offsite activities:
  - a. Illicit (illegal) substances as defined in the Controlled Substances Act of Canada;
  - b. Tobacco products (including vapor or e-cigarettes);
  - c. Cannabis products (including derivatives);
  - d. Alcohol;
  - e. Inhalants;

16. Any action deemed to be in alignment with trafficking, giving, sharing, trading, selling or distributing to any other student or group of students, by any means, a prohibited substance including, but not limited to illicit or controlled substances, tobacco products, cannabis products, alcohol or inhalants;
17. Possession or distribution (in any form) of paraphernalia, including any item used in connection with ingesting, selling and/or distributing prohibited substances;
18. Conduct that displays an attitude of willful, blatant or repeated refusal to comply with school rules or the reasonable direction of any school staff member.

### With respect to parent involvement:

Success at school begins at home. Parents and/or guardians take an active role in the educational and social-emotional well-being of the children in their care. Parents shall actively communicate with the school whenever the typical school day will be adversely affected by factors present in the student's life but unknown to school, including:

19. Family tragedies; lack of sleep or challenges with nutrition; or medical concerns that may impact learning.
20. In keeping with privacy protection, parents shall not be informed of disciplinary action concerning a child who is not their own.

### Schedule of Disciplinary Actions:

Discipline refers to specific corrective learning – and not punishment – that is intended to build foundational behaviours and habits of mind that will actively contribute to an individual's well-being and success.

21. Learning shall be the foundation and primary consideration of any disciplinary action. Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Problem solving, monitoring, or reviewing behaviour expectations with student and reprimand;
  - b. Parental involvement that may include a disciplinary hearing
  - c. Assignment of designated tasks;
  - d. Temporary removal of privileges;
  - e. Detention of the student so long as the detention does not interfere with transportation or sustenance;
  - f. Implementation of an in school short term opportunity placement involving an out- of-class learning opportunity;
  - g. Establishment of a behavioural contract with student;
  - h. Suspension, as defined in the Education Act (section 36), including:
    - i. Suspension from riding the school bus;
    - ii. Suspension from a classroom period by the teacher;
    - iii. Suspension from any school-related activity; and/or
    - iv. Suspension from school, as per the Education Act, for up to five (5) days;
    - v. A medical/psychological assessment of the student to develop appropriate programming;
    - vi. Involvement of police; and/or
    - vii. Expulsion from school with unanimous agreement by the Academic Principal and the Senior Management Team.

### Approach to Discipline:

22. Administrators, teachers and school staff, in loco parentis, shall ensure that disciplinary actions lead to positive development and are not merely punitive.
  - a. Disciplinary actions shall not remove a student's opportunity for sustenance (e.g. lunch or nutrition breaks).

### Regarding restitution for loss or damages:

23. Under Section 257 of the Education Act, the school may seek restitution for damage to school property.
24. For the protection of staff and students in the school and to prevent potentially violent behaviours, school staff may in specific circumstances be required to use reasonable measures, including restraint, to manage a student who is out of control, or where to not intervene could reasonably foreseeably expose the student or others in the vicinity to harm.

### With respect to Student Suspension:

25. Suspensions shall comply with Section 36 of the Education Act.
26. The Principal shall ensure that any suspension is fair and proper, and that suspensions are made only after other reasonable interventions have proven ineffective or when student conduct is of such a nature that other intervention is not, in the circumstances, deemed to be in the best interests of the student or others in the school.
27. The Principal shall carefully consider the implications of student suspension; ensuring:
  - a. That the student is informed of the formal disciplinary nature of suspension and its consequences, and of the reasons for which suspension is being considered;
  - b. Opportunity for the student to offer an explanation in defense or mitigation prior to completing his/her investigation; and
  - c. Document the details related to the suspension within 48 hours of the initiation of the suspension.
28. Parents and the student, if he/she is 16 years of age or older, must be provided with a copy of a written letter detailing the reason for, and conditions of suspension:
  - a. The Principal or designate shall take prudent steps to ensure that the letter is received (registered mail, parent picks up, courier);
  - b. A copy of the letter of suspension shall be put on record with the Board of Directors.
  - c. Suspension letters shall contain the reason(s) for the suspension, the date of when the suspension starts and when it ends, how the suspension will be carried out, and any other background information that may relate to the suspension.
29. The student's parent or guardian and/or, where the student is 16 years or older, the student shall be provided an opportunity to meet with the Principal to discuss the reasonableness of the suspension.

### With respect to student reinstatement after suspension:

30. The Principal shall determine a process for reinstatement at the conclusion of a student's suspension.
31. The Principal may reinstate a student at any time during the length of the suspension if, in the opinion of the Principal, the situation warrants an earlier reinstatement.

## Regarding a Parent-Coordinated Student Transfer:

A Parent-Coordinated Student Transfer involves a change in school location for a student mid- year, that is supported by both the parent(s) or guardian(s) and school administration.

32. After consulting with the parent(s) or guardian(s), a parent-coordinated student transfer may be initiated by the student's principal in consultation with the Senior Management Team.

## Disciplinary Hearings and Potential for Expulsion:

33. A Disciplinary Hearing may be requested by a Principal to the Senior Management Team when:
- A suspension is required for longer than five (5) days; or
  - The removal of a student from the school is necessary;
  - A recommendation for removal may consider transfer to an alternate school.
34. Disciplinary Hearings shall be held within ten (10) school days of the first day of a student's suspension.
35. The process for a Discipline Hearing shall ensure the following:
- That clear notification of the date and time of the meeting shall be communicated to all parties;
  - That all information that is to be received for the Disciplinary Hearing shall be provided to all parties in attendance at the Disciplinary Hearing;
  - That prior notification shall be provided to the parent, guardian or independent student of the right to have an advocate or legal counsel present during the hearing; and
  - That the parent, guardian or independent student shall have the right to make representation during the Discipline Hearing.
36. A Disciplinary Hearing shall proceed as per the Education Act, Section 37 and shall result in any of the following decisions for a student:
- The Student may be reinstated to the school with accompanying conditions;
  - The Student may be transferred to an alternative school; or
  - The Student may be expelled from school.
37. Expulsion is an action which can be taken only by unanimity of the Principal and the Senior Management Team.
38. The Principal together with the SMT shall provide communication based on section 35 to parents within 10 days.
39. The Senior Management Team shall, in the event a student is expelled:
- Provide a written decision to the parent, guardian or independent student regarding the recommendation for expulsion;
  - Inform the parent, guardian or independent student of their right to request that the Minister of Education review the decision of the Senior Management Team; and
  - Inform the parent, guardian or independent student about alternate school possibilities that may be available for the student.

## Reference:

<https://www.psd.ca/board/administrative-procedures/4651>

Education Act 11, 31-33, 36, 37, 196, 197, 222

Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act

Controlled Drugs and Substances Act

Youth Criminal Justice Act

Criminal Code (Canada)