

Book Denver Public Schools Board of Education Policies
Section J - Students
Title Student Discipline
Number JK
Status Active
Adopted January 14, 1994
Last Revised August 21, 2008

I. Introduction

A. The Board of Education supports the mission of the Denver Public Schools ("District"), which is to provide all students the opportunity to achieve the knowledge and skills necessary to become contributing citizens in our diverse society. Students should have the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge, and competencies in a nurturing and accountable school setting. Students should receive effective and engaging teaching, with differentiated curriculum, instruction, and assessment designed to address the needs of our diverse learners. Students have a right to attend schools that are safe and free from unnecessary disruption. The Board believes that proper student conduct, reinforced by an effective discipline program, is essential to create and maintain a positive school climate. This is the joint responsibility of students, staff, parents, and the community.

II. Purpose

A. The goal of student discipline is to teach students to behave in ways that contribute to academic achievement and school success, and to support a school environment where students and staff are responsible and respectful.

B. The purpose of this policy is to support school discipline that:

- i. Maintains safe and orderly learning communities;
- ii. Assures consistency across all schools in the district;
- iii. Defines and communicates expectations for student behavior;
- iv. Defines and communicates expectations for staff responsibility related to school discipline;
- v. Balances the needs of the ~~student~~whole child, the needs of those directly affected by the behavior, and needs of the overall school community;
- vi. Assures equity across racial, ethnic, and cultural groups, as well as all other protected classes (gender, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity).

III. General Principles

A. School discipline is best accomplished by preventing misbehavior before it occurs, and using effective interventions after it occurs.

B. School safety and academic success are formed and strengthened when all school staff and personnel build positive relationships with students and are actively engaged in their lives and learning.

C. Effective school discipline maximizes the amount of time students spend learning and minimizes the amount of time students cause disruption or are removed from their classrooms due to misbehavior.

D. School discipline should be reasonable, timely, fair, age-appropriate, and should match the severity of the student's misbehavior. School discipline that is paired with meaningful instruction and guidance offers students an opportunity to learn from their mistakes and contribute to the school community, and is more likely to result in getting the student re-engaged in learning.

E. Effective discipline is built on consistent and effective classroom management, and is supported by a positive school climate. The vast majority of disciplinary issues should be addressed at the classroom level by teachers; however, behaviors that cannot be addressed at this level should receive more targeted and intensive interventions, as determined by an individualized assessment.

F. The District serves a diverse community. In order to serve all students and to prepare them to be members of an increasingly diverse community, school and staff must build cultural competence. We must strive to eliminate any institutional racism and any other discrimination that presents barriers to success.

G. Student conduct which may be subject to disciplinary action includes those occurring during either curricular or extracurricular activities, in classrooms, in school buildings, on school grounds, or in school vehicles, when such conduct is detrimental to the school environment and to the welfare or safety of other students or school personnel.

H. Positive experiences in school and with teachers, beginning with the earliest exposures to school, lay a foundation for engagement with and connection to school throughout a student's academic career. These early experiences have the most critical impact on students' perceptions and trust of school and teachers, and are fundamental to the development of the social and academic skills necessary to support them through school and beyond. Removal from school during this time period negatively impacts a student's opportunities for success.

IV. General Statement of the Policy

A. The District's system of discipline is built on personal accountability, which is understood to mean:

- i. Recognizing that misbehavior damages relationships between the person or persons who misbehaved, the person harmed by the behavior, and the community as a whole;
- ii. Having an opportunity to repair harm done and restore relationships whenever possible, as opposed to excluding the person who misbehaved;
- iii. Building personal responsibility by helping individuals develop empathy, self-control, and motivation.

B. School discipline interventions should be guided by the following principles:

- i. Practicing early identification and assessment of struggling students before they fall behind;
- ii. Using a problem solving process to provide interventions matched to student needs;
- iii. Ensuring timely progress monitoring and feedback;
- iv. Delivering scientific, research-based interventions with fidelity.

C. There are three types of intervention strategies that are available: Administrative, Restorative, and Skill-based/Therapeutic. Teachers and administrators should consider utilizing different types of strategies, or multiple strategies simultaneously, to deal with misbehavior, especially for 2nd or 3rd offenses.

D. The District will make every reasonable effort to correct student misbehavior through school-based resources at the lowest possible level, and to support students in learning the skills necessary to enhance a positive school environment and avoid negative behavior.

E. District employees must abide by all applicable federal and state statutes and city ordinances, plus all relevant Board policies and procedures when dealing with disciplinary matters.

F. Every student is required to follow this policy and accompanying procedures.

G. All students are held to high standards of behavior, and adults maintain such standards by teaching, modeling, and monitoring behavior, and by correcting misbehavior as necessary. Students should have input in the development of discipline rules for their school and classrooms.

H. Schools should minimize the use of out-of-school suspensions, recommendations for expulsion, and referrals to law enforcement, to the extent practicable while remaining consistent with state statute, local ordinances, and mandatory reporting laws. It is a goal of the Denver Public Schools and the Board of Education that the juvenile and criminal justice systems be utilized less frequently to address school-based misconduct.

I. For students in early childhood education programs through third grade, suspension from school is reserved for only the most severe behaviors impacting staff or student safety. For these young learners, it is essential to provide developmentally appropriate strategies and supports for student behaviors; removals from the educational environment should be rare, and should be accompanied by intentional planning to address behaviors.

J. Denver Public Schools policy does not support expulsion of students in ECE through third grades, **except as provided herein.**

K. Discipline procedures must guarantee due process to all students and must be enforced uniformly, fairly, consistently and in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

L. This policy and accompanying procedures are intended to help the District eliminate racial and ethnic disparities, and any other protected class disparities, in school discipline, while improving behavior, school climate, and academic achievement for all students.

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M. Accurate and complete data collection is essential for administering an effective school discipline policy. It assists with identifying problems, crafting solutions, and monitoring progress.

N. The Board of Education hereby adopts this policy and accompanying procedures / regulations as the safe schools plan for the District as mandated by ~~C.R.S. 22-32-109.1~~ state law. Schools are free to implement their own Codes of Conduct so long as those plans are not in conflict with this policy, accompanying regulations, or other Board policies, and those codes have been approved by the Superintendent or a designee.

O. The District shall post this policy on the District web site and in each school. A copy of this policy and accompanying procedures shall be readily available in each school's administration office, in both Spanish and English. Copies of this policy, its accompanying procedures / regulations, and school rules will be made available, upon request, to each student and parent/guardian, and, upon request, promptly translated in a language that the parent/guardian can understand.

P. The Superintendent, or a designee, shall develop such procedures as may be needed for the implementation of this policy.

LEGAL REFS: C.R.S. 18-12-105.5

C.R.S. 18-18-102

C.R.S. 18-18-406

C.R.S. 18-18-407(2)

C.R.S. 22-32-102(1)(W)

C.R.S. 22-32-209

C.R.S. 22-32-110(2)(3)(4)

C.R.S. 22-32-126

C.R.S. 22-33-105

C.R.S. 22-32-106

C.R.S. 22-32-109.a(2)(a)X

20 USC 88921

C.R.S. 22-32-109.1 (adoption and enforcement of safe school plan including conduct and discipline code and disciplinary removal from classroom)