

# POLICY

## STAND-DOWNS, SUSPENSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

### RATIONALE

Our school aims to create a climate whereby the need to refer to these guidelines is minimal. Situations do occur where it is necessary to take these actions.

### PURPOSE

Section 13 of the Education Act sets out the three-fold purpose of the provision for stand-down, suspension and exclusion.

- a) Provide a range of responses for cases of varying degrees of seriousness, and
- b) Minimise the disruptions to a student's attendance at school and facilitate the return of a student to school when that is appropriate, and
- c) Ensure that individual cases are dealt with in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

### GUIDELINES

1. Refer to 'Guidance for Principals and Boards of Trustees on Stand-downs, Suspensions, Exclusions and Expulsions' booklet - June 2003.

2. Definitions

Stand-down - means the formal removal of a student from school for a specified period. No more than 5 school days per term or 10 school days per year, per student.

Suspension - means the formal removal of a student from school until the board of trustees decides the outcome at a suspension meeting.

Only principals can stand-down or suspend.

Exclusion - means the formal removal of a student aged under 16 from the school and the requirement that the student enrol elsewhere.

Expulsion - refers to students over 16 years (Secondary)

3. The principal shall take all steps to ensure that all students get good guidance and counselling.
4. The principal shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that parents are told of matters which, in the principal's opinion, are preventing or slowing the student's progress through the school, or are harming the student's relationships with teachers or other students.

5. Boards are required to help all students realise their full potential by providing appropriate learning programmes and addressing barriers to learning while respecting cultural differences.

6. Natural Justice:

Individual cases will be dealt with in accordance with the principles of natural justice. Natural justice is defined as ' the obligation to act fairly and reasonably in the circumstances.'

7. The principal must act fairly and reasonably in the circumstances. The principal must consider the circumstances of each situation and be satisfied it warrants standing-down or suspension. The evidence of all the circumstances prevailing at the time will be the basis of this decision.

8. Student Rights

If the principal decides that the student's actions warrant standing down or suspension, natural justice means that the student has the eight rights listed on page Five.

9. Board's Actions

Suspension must be followed by a meeting of the board to decide what the outcome will be. The board must also act fairly and reasonably. The board must receive the principal's report and hear with an open mind, what the student / parent / representative has to say.

The chairman must be prepared to rule whether specific information or material presented by either the principal or the student / parent / representative is relevant.

The board must make its final decision without the recommendation or vote of the principal.

Any trustee who personally knows the students concerned should declare a 'potential conflict of interest'.

Formulated: September 1995

Revised: July 2003

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