



McLean County
Unit District No.5
Educating each student to achieve personal excellence

To: Unit 5 Board of Education

From: Dr. Weikle

Date: July 11, 2025

Re: Recommendation of Expulsion Hearing and Suspension Review Officer

In accordance with Board policies [7.200](#) "Suspension Procedures" and [7.210](#) "Expulsion Procedures", and as mandated by [105 ILCS 5/10-20.14](#), [5/10-22.6](#), suspension reviews and expulsion hearings are to be conducted by the Board or a Board appointed hearing officer. Given the numerous and evolving rules, regulations, laws, and judicial precedents pertinent to student discipline, I strongly recommend the appointment of Curt Richardson, Unit 5 District Attorney, as the Expulsion Hearing and Suspension Review Officer from July 19, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Mr. Richardson's invaluable expertise lies in his deep understanding of district policies and the complex landscape of state and federal regulations, particularly concerning potential legal ramifications in disciplinary matters. His appointment is critical for safeguarding the district by mitigating risks and ensuring the consistent and fair application of all policies, rules, and regulations for our students.

Administrative Transfer and Expulsion Administrator Training

In support of our mission to educate each student to achieve personal excellence, Unit 5 creates a safe and secure environment for students, staff, and the school community. Unit 5's discipline procedures are intended to correct misbehavior using restorative practices and limiting strictly punitive ones. As educators and administrators we must remain committed to helping students learn and practice the skills and behaviors desired. However, we understand that there may be times when suspension, alternative placement, or a recommendation to expel may be necessary. In each incident it is important to keep district and state policies in mind when addressing behaviors and assigning discipline.

Important Unit 5 Policies, Administrative Procedures, and Exhibits

[7.125](#) Student Discipline Philosophy

[7.190](#) Student Behavior

[7.190 AP 8](#) - Student Re-engagement Guidelines

[7.200](#) Suspension Procedures

[7.200 E1](#) - Student Short Term Suspension (1-3 days) Reporting Form

[7.200 E2](#) - Student Long Term Suspension (4-10 days) Reporting Form

[7.210](#) Expulsion Procedures

[7.230](#) Misconduct by Students with Disabilities

Why do we have a unified process for suspensions and expulsions?

- Legal Ramifications
 - ISBE Guidelines, IL School Code, and precedent of court cases
- Consistency among students and buildings
- Limit bias
- Clear and thorough with students, families and the Board of Education

Timelines

- Expulsion - Must hold a hearing and have the Board of Education vote on the recommendation to expel/not to expel within 10 school days. The student is allowed to return to school on day 11 if the Board of Education has not taken action. If the recommendation is to expel, even if it is in abeyance to go to the alternative school, then the action by the board in the 10 day timeframe is extremely important.

Remember, expulsion is the **most** significant disciplinary action we can take on a student. It should not be taken lightly and it should only be utilized when necessary. [ILCS 5/10-22.6](#) outlines suspensions and expulsions in Illinois public schools (reviewed with admin at the beginning of the year). Building administrators should only recommend students for expulsion if they believe the incident meets criteria in [ILCS 5/10-22](#) and the student's continued presence at school:

- Poses a threat to the safety of students, staff or the school community
- Substantially disrupts, impedes or interferes with the operations of the school
- Significantly impacts the school climate and may limit the school's ability to deter similar behaviors by other students
- Past conduct indicates a likelihood to engage in similar conduct in the future **and** it is determined to pose a threat to school safety
- Possible reasoning for expulsion/administrative placement includes but is not limited to:

- Possession of a weapon (e.g. firearm, knife with blade 3 in. or more)
- Possession of a look alike weapon
- Sale or distribution of drugs or alcohol
- Three or more incidents of possession/consumption of drugs or alcohol (If parents refuse SAVE placement)
- Physical aggression/serious bodily harm to staff or other students

Other Considerations:

- Past practice with similar incidents
- Whether supports & interventions been implemented and exhausted
- Age and grade
- Impact on the student

If there is **any possibility** that an incident might require an expulsion or alternative placement the building administrator should consult the building principal and then **immediately** contact Darrin Cooper, Director of Teaching and Learning, at cooperdm@unit5.org or (309) 557-4028. Darrin will notify other district administrators and Clerk to the Board.

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- *The district has **10 school days** to investigate, hold a hearing and for the Board to take action (if applicable)*

INVESTIGATION (within 1-2 days)

When investigating and/or considering expulsion, the investigating administrator(s) must do the following:

- Immediately after the incident, gather written statements of those involved as well as witnesses
- Document evidence (photos of weapons, drugs, alcohol, and visible injuries), save video(s) of incident
- Document any disruption to the learning environment (e.g. how did this impact other students, how many administrators or how much administrative time was involved in responding to the incident). Include written impact statements if possible
- If the student has an IEP, the Special Education Administrator/Director of Special Education must be notified and a manifestation determination must be completed when considering the student for expulsion. If the behavior is a manifest of the disability, the student is not eligible for expulsion.
- Threats of any kind should have a [threat assessment](#) completed
- Review EduClimber data (behavior, attendance, grades, supports, interventions, behavior, etc)
 - Review any supports/interventions that have been provided to the student regarding similar behavior and the outcomes of these efforts. Discuss with the building team what, if any, other supports/interventions can be implemented in lieu of expulsion.
- The building principal and investigating administrator must each complete the [Building Consideration for Expulsion or Administrative Transfer Form](#) *New in 23-24*
- Once the investigation is complete and the building principal recommends the student be expelled, the investigating administrator will send the following items to Darrin Cooper, Director of Teaching and Learning:
 - A detailed summary of the incident
 - Written statements

- Evidence including any photos/videos (if applicable)
- A copy of the 504/IEP (if applicable)
- Documentation of any disruption to the learning environment (if applicable)
- [Building Consideration for Expulsion or Administrative Transfer Form](#) completed by the building principal and investigating administrator *New in 23-24*

*The information gathered will be used if an expulsion hearing is held and could possibly be used in court if litigated.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM REVIEW (within 3-4 days) *New in 23-24*

- The district administrative team review will consist of the Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, the Director of Secondary Education, and the Director of Special Education/Elementary Education (if applicable). *New - In the past one district administrator would review the information prior to a hearing.*
- Each team member reads the documents and evidence provided noting questions, clarification needed and completes the [District Admin Team Review for Expulsion or Administrative Transfer Form](#) *New in 23-24*
- The TEAM will meet to discuss the facts of the investigation, questions, and the results of the [District Admin Team Review for Expulsion or Administrative Transfer Form](#)
- The investigating building administrator will be present and/or available at this meeting to answer questions and provide clarifying information.
 - If the consensus of the district administrative team is that the student **SHOULD NOT BE RECOMMENDED FOR EXPULSION** they will work with the building administration on providing additional support, intervention, restorative practices, and possibly consequences.
 - If the consensus of the district administrative team is that the student **SHOULD BE RECOMMENDED FOR EXPULSION.** then a hearing will be held in front of the hearing officer.
 - A hearing will be held as soon as possible in front of the hearing officer
 - The Board of Education will consider the recommendation of the hearing officer