

Students

Suspension Procedures ¹

In-School Suspension ²

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to maintain an in-school suspension program. The program shall include, at a minimum, each of the following:

1. Before assigning a student to in-school suspension, the charges will be explained and the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the charges.
2. Students are supervised by licensed school personnel.
3. Students are given the opportunity to complete classroom work during the in-school suspension for equivalent academic credit.

Out-of-School Suspension

The Superintendent or designee shall implement suspension procedures that provide, at a minimum, for each of the following: ³

1. A conference during which the charges will be explained and the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the charges before he or she may be suspended.
2. A pre-suspension conference is not required, and the student can be immediately suspended when the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process. In such cases, the notice and conference shall follow as soon as practicable.
3. An attempted phone call to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
4. A written notice of the suspension to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student, which shall: ⁴
 - a. Provide notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their child's right to a review of the suspension;

¹ State law requires districts to have a policy on student discipline. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, amended by P.A. 103-896; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.280. State or federal law controls this policy's content.

Boards may authorize *by policy* the superintendent, building principal, assistant building principal, or dean of students to suspend students guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct from school, including all school functions. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b), amended by P.A. 103-896. See sample policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*, for such an authorization.

² An in-school suspension program may focus on promoting non-violent conflict resolution and positive interaction with other students and school personnel, and districts may employ a school social worker or a licensed mental health professional to oversee in-school suspension programs. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(l), amended by P.A. 103-896. Providing programming during in-school suspensions is not required; however, providing educational programs during in-school suspensions will help distinguish them from exclusionary suspensions. See f/n 4 in sample policy 5:230, *Maintaining Student Discipline*, for further discussion of in-school suspension programs. Contact the board attorney for advice concerning amending this section.

20 ILCS 1705/76 requires the Ill. Dept. of Public Health to create and maintain an online database and resource page on its website that contains mental health resources specifically geared toward school social workers, school counselors, parents, teachers, and school support personnel. See the database at: www.dhs.state.il.us.

³ Suspension procedures are required by State law. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6, amended by P.A. 103-896. The right to attend school is a property right protected by the due process clause of the U.S. Constitution. *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975). Imposing a short deprivation of this property right by suspending a student for 10 or fewer days requires only minimal due process. The student must be generally informed of the reasons for the possible suspension and be permitted to tell his/her version of the story. Making a decision to suspend before the hearing violates the basic due process requirement that the hearing be meaningful. *Sieck v. Oak Park-River Forest High Sch.*, 807 F.Supp. 73 (N.D. Ill. 1992).

⁴ 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6, amended by P.A. 103-896.

Consult the board attorney (1) about the specific documentation required in this portion of the notice, and (2) to ensure that 7:200-E1, *Short Term Out-of-School Suspension (1-3 Days) Reporting Form* and 7:200-E2, *Long Term Out-of-School Suspension (4-10 Days) Reporting Form* reflect the exact practices that the district will use to implement this requirement.

- b. Include information about an opportunity to make up work missed during the suspension for equivalent academic credit;⁵
- c. Detail the specific act of gross disobedience or misconduct resulting in the decision to suspend;
- d. Provide rationale or an explanation of how the chosen number of suspension days will address the threat or disruption posed by the student or his or her act of gross disobedience or misconduct; and
- e. Depending upon the length of the out-of-school suspension, include the following applicable information:
 - i. For a suspension of 3 school days or less, an explanation that the student's continuing presence in school would either pose:⁶
 - a) A threat to school safety, or
 - b) A disruption to other students' learning opportunities.
 - ii. For a suspension of 4 or more school days, an explanation:⁷
 - a) That other appropriate and available behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted,
 - b) As to whether school officials attempted other interventions or determined that no other interventions were available for the student,⁸ and
 - c) That the student's continuing presence in school would either:
 - i) Pose a threat to the safety of other students, staff, or members of the school community, or
 - ii) Substantially disrupt, impede, or interfere with the operation of the school.
 - d) Of what, if any, appropriate and available support services will be provided to the student during the length of his or her suspension, as determined by the Superintendent or designee.⁹
- 5. A summary of the notice, including the reason for the suspension and the suspension length, must be given to the Board by the Superintendent or designee.
- 6. Upon request of the parent(s)/guardian(s), a review of the suspension shall be conducted by the Board or a hearing officer appointed by the Board.¹⁰

⁵ Required by 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-30).

⁶ 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-15) explains that "threat to school safety or a disruption to other students' learning opportunities" shall be determined by the school board or its designee on a case-by-case basis. **Consult the board attorney for specific advice regarding the application of these statutory terms in this context (see f/n 8, below).**

⁷ 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-20). School officials are granted the sole authority to determine on a case-by-case basis: (1) whether "appropriate and available behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted;" and (2) whether "the student's continuing presence in school would either (i) pose a threat to the safety of other students, staff, or members of the school community, or (ii) substantially disrupt, impede, or interfere with the operation of the school." Consult the board attorney to request specific training for school officials to apply these statutory terms in this context.

⁸ While school officials have discretion to determine the length of suspensions, they must resolve threats, address disruptions, and minimize the length of student exclusions to the greatest extent practicable. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-20). **Consult the board attorney about the practical implementation of documenting other appropriate and available interventions for the student.**

Last, the law also requires school districts to make reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to all school personnel, school board members, and school resource officers on the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6 and 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, adverse consequences of school exclusion and justice-system involvement, effective classroom management strategies, culturally responsive discipline, *trauma-responsive learning environments* as defined in 105 ILCS 5/3-11(b), appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement, and developmentally appropriate disciplinary methods that promote positive and healthy school climates. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(c-5), amended by P.A. 103-896.

⁹ 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-25), amended by P.A. 103-896. In consultation with stakeholders, the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) must draft and publish guidance for the re-engagement of students who are suspended out-of-school, expelled, or returning from an alternative school setting by 7-1-25. *Id.*

¹⁰ A board may hear student disciplinary cases in a meeting closed to the public. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9).

- a. At the review, the student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) may appear with a representative of their choice and at their expense, be accompanied by a support person of their choice and at their expense, disclose any factor to be considered in mitigation (including the student's status as a parent, expectant parent, or victim of domestic or sexual violence as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26A), and discuss the suspension with the Board or its hearing officer. Any representative and support person must comply with hearing rules and may be prohibited from further participation if they violate the rules or engage in behavior or advocacy that harasses, abuses, or intimidates either party, a witness, or anyone else in attendance at the hearing. ¹¹
- b. If the review involves allegations of sexual violence by the student, neither the student nor the student's representative shall directly question nor have direct contact with the alleged victim. The student or the student's representative may, at the discretion of the Board or its hearing officer, suggest questions to be posed by the Board or its hearing officer to the alleged victim. ¹²
- c. Whenever there is evidence that mental illness may be the cause for the suspension, the Superintendent or designee shall invite a representative from a local mental health agency to consult with the Board. ¹³
- d. After presentation of the evidence or receipt of the hearing officer's report, the Board shall take such action as it finds appropriate. If the suspension is upheld, the Board's written suspension decision shall specifically detail items (a) and (c) in number 4, above. ¹⁴

LEGAL REF.: Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565 (1975).
 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/10-22.6.
 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.280.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities),
 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:220 (Bus Conduct)

Approved:

¹¹ 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-35), added by P.A. 102-466, *a/k/a Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Law*, eff. 7-1-25. A representative chosen by the parent/guardian (or by the student, if emancipated) must be permitted to represent the student "throughout the proceedings and to address the school board or its appointed hearing officer." A support person chosen by the parent/guardian (or by the student, if emancipated) must also be permitted to accompany the student to any expulsion hearing or proceeding. *Id.* For the definition of *support person*, see sample administrative procedure 7:255-AP1, *Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

¹² 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-40), added by P.A. 102-466, *a/k/a ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25.

¹³ 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(c).

¹⁴ 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b).