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Emergency Procedures for Handling Student Disorder

How effectively the building principal handles a disturbance depends frequently upon the speed and type of action which is taken. Hopefully, this plan will assist the principal in making effective and timely responses. The following guidelines will be useful in either preventing student disorder or managing it properly if it occurs.

During any student crisis, the building principal shall be in charge of the situation. The Superintendent may be called to advise and counsel but, the principal shall serve as the spokesman during the crisis period.

Guidelines for Teachers

- () Be alert to any deviation from normal group behavior.

- () Notify the principal immediately if information is received about a possible demonstration or other student unrest.

- () Conduct classes as usual; the majority of the students will remain in class.

- () Withhold comments about the demonstration until the facts are known.

- () Stand in the corridor at the change of classes and help clear the halls for orderly passage.

- () Be prepared to provide assistance if requested by the principal.

() If possible, avoid physical contact with students during the time of incidents.

() In the event of a demonstration, each teacher shall provide the principal with as many names of demonstrators as s/he can identify.

Guidelines for Principals

() Serious Disorders

Involve immediate threat to the safety of persons and/or the destruction of property.

() Telephone the police dispatcher for immediate assistance. Identify yourself by name and official responsibility; quickly and briefly describe the situation and the specific location of the disturbance.

() Notify the Superintendent's office immediately and/or the _____ indicating the nature and size of the disturbance.

() Maintain a responsible person on the school communication system and have him/her keep the Central Office administration informed.

() Advise faculty that classes are NOT to be dismissed unless so ordered by the principal's office. Classes should not be left unsupervised, regardless of number of students present.

() Notify principals of nearby schools that a disturbance has occurred so that they might be prepared for similar disruptions.

() If disturbances center around administrative offices, keep doors locked and admit no unauthorized personnel. Provide security measures for files and records.

() Arrange for a staff member to video tape the disorder and submit the tape to the principal.

() Instruct custodian to remove all waste paper baskets from the restrooms and halls.

() Lock outer doors to prevent admission of outsiders. However, check "panic bars" to make sure that doors can be opened from the inside. Make every effort to keep all outsiders not having official business out of the building. Board policy on visitors should be visibly posted. Ask the undesirable persons to leave. If they refuse, call the police immediately.

() If possible, vacate or make available a room near the scene of the disorder which is large enough to hold all disruptive students. This may become helpful to police if students must be suspended or arrested, permitting greater control of a crowd and its leaders.

() Limit persons making statements to disruptive students to school administrators or police.

() Notify key members of the faculty of the impending development.

() Attempt to determine the cause of the disturbance from student leaders. Student leaders referred to here are not necessarily school leaders, but "natural leaders" of groups.

() Ask the students to select four (4) to six (6) representatives to meet with the principal to discuss grievances. Agree upon a time when the student committee will report back to the demonstrators. The demonstrators should be told to return to class until the meeting time is set. The last period of the day might be a suitable time. Ask the student leaders to dismiss the group for the next class of the day.

Student committee members should state their grievances and complaints to the principal after the demonstrators have returned to their classes. Possibly a committee of teachers and parents would be advisable as discussions progress.

() Reconvene demonstrators periodically and indicate that the problems are under study. Student committee members should also report at this time.

() Set a meeting date for the entire group to reassemble after a designated time for study of the entire situation.

() Maintain a "log" in which are listed the date, time, and nature of each incident, names of persons involved and description of the action taken.

() Close school only after every effort has been made to keep it open.

() If, in the principal's opinion, the school should be closed, confer with the Superintendent. Legally, only the Superintendent or a designated assistant can authorize the closing of a school.

() If the request to close schools is approved, follow administrative guidelines for emergency closings AG 8420.

() Student Boycott, Sit-Ins or Other Forms of Passive Resistance

This situation assumes that no immediate crisis exists which endangers life or property and that some "lead time" is available.

() Notify the Superintendent's office immediately and/or the _____ indicating the nature and size of the disturbance.

() Proceed as noted above.

() If it is determined that the disruptive students should return to their classes or be suspended, the principal should read the statement below to the students involved. Use a bullhorn, public address, or other means in the presence of adult witnesses. The adults should be stationed at various locations in the area and be prepared to testify regarding the audibility of the warning:

May I have your attention, please. I am _____, Principal, of _____ school. As the official representative of the District, I would like to make the following statement for your consideration:

You are being advised that your continued absence from class is disruptive to the orderly educational process of this school and in violation of the attendance laws of the State of Michigan. I am, therefore,

directing you to return to class at once. Your refusal to comply with this directive could place you in jeopardy of being suspended from school. In cases of flagrant or repeated violation of the attendance laws of the State of Michigan, the Board or its designated representative may expel a student. I direct you again to please return to your classes at this time.

() If it is the normal practice of the school or teachers to require "admission slips" of late students before admitting them to class, the building principal should either give such slips to those students wanting to return to class or announce over the public address system that students may be readmitted to class without such written permits.

() If, after a reasonable length of time (five (5) minutes), the students do not return to class, and if the principal decides that the students should be suspended, the principal should read the statement printed below:

A short time ago, you were directed to return to class. You have not complied with the directive. You are therefore advised that you are considered to be truant and in violation of the normal rules and regulations of the school.

Your refusal to comply with my directive is a flagrant violation of proper conduct and is premeditated defiance of a school official. You are now advised that you are officially suspended from the School, as permitted by state law.

During the time of your suspension from school, we request you to remain at home and off the streets during school hours and not attend any activities related to school. You should now leave the building at once. If you do not leave the building you shall be arrested for trespassing.

() Follow all suspension procedures as described in AG 5600 and AG 5610.

() If students trespass, loiter, or remain in the building or upon the grounds of any school against the directions of the building principal, s/he may contact law enforcement authorities.