

**Students**

**SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION/DUE PROCESS**

The Santa Cruz County Board of Education (Board) desires to provide district students access to educational opportunities in an orderly school environment that protects their safety and security, ensures their welfare and well-being, and promotes their learning and development. The Board shall develop rules and regulations setting the standards of behavior expected of district students and the disciplinary processes and procedures for addressing violations of those standards, including suspension and/or expulsion.

*(cf. 5131 - Conduct)*  
*(cf. 5131.1 - Bus Conduct)*  
*(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)*

The grounds for suspension and expulsion and the procedures for considering, recommending, and/or implementing suspension and expulsion shall be only those specified in law, in this policy, and in the accompanying administrative regulation.

BP 5144.1(b)

Except when otherwise permitted by law, a student may be suspended or expelled only when the behavior is related to a school activity or school attendance occurring within any district school or another school district, regardless of when it occurs, including, but not limited to, the following: (Education Code 48900(s))

1. While on school grounds
2. While going to or coming from school
3. During the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus

*(cf. 5112.5 - Open/Closed Campus)*

4. During, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity

District staff shall enforce the rules concerning suspension and expulsion of students fairly, consistently, equally, and in accordance with the district's nondiscrimination policies.

*(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)*

**Appropriate Use of Suspension Authority**

Note: Education Code 48900.5 requires districts to use other means of correction instead of suspension or expulsion except when a student commits certain enumerated offenses. The following section reflects legislative intent regarding appropriate use of suspension as a means of disciplining students and may be modified to reflect district practice.

Except when a student's act violates Education Code 48900(a)-(e), as listed in items #1-5 under "Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion: Grades K-12" of the accompanying administrative regulation, or when the student's presence causes a danger to others, suspension shall be used only when other means of correction have failed to bring about proper conduct. (Education Code 48900.5, 48900.6)

*(cf. 5138 - Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation)*  
*(cf. 5144 - Discipline)*  
*(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)*  
*(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)*  
*(cf. 6164.5 - Student Success Teams)*

Note: The following **optional** paragraph may be revised to reflect district practice.

A student's parents/guardians shall be notified as soon as possible when there is an escalating pattern of misbehavior that could lead to on-campus or off-campus suspension.

Note: As amended by SB 419 (Ch. 279, Statutes of 2019), Education Code 48900(k) prohibits a district from suspending students in grades K-8 for disruption or willful defiance beginning July 1, 2020.

A district may, but is not required to, suspend students in grades 9-12 for disruption or willful defiance. Even with this authority, districts should be careful in using these grounds, as available data have indicated a disproportionate use with certain student subgroups. Option 1 below is for use by any district that chooses to suspend students in grades 9-12 for disruption and/or willful defiance as authorized pursuant to Education Code 48900(k). Any district that chooses to eliminate disruption and willful defiance as reasons for suspending any of its students from school should select Option 2 below. Such districts should also delete the section titled "Additional Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion: Grades 9-12" in the accompanying administrative regulation.

Each option below reflects an exception granted to teachers pursuant to Education Code 48910 to suspend students, including a K-3 student, from class; see section "Suspension from Class by a Teacher" in the accompanying administrative regulation.

No student may be suspended for disruption or willful defiance, except by a teacher pursuant to Education Code 48910. (Education Code 48900)

Note: The following **optional** paragraph reflects the Legislature's intent, expressed in Education Code 48900, concerning disciplinary actions against truant, tardy, or absent students. Since these are not enumerated offenses, a district does not have the authority to suspend or expel students for committing any of these acts.

Students shall not be suspended or expelled for truancy, tardiness, or absenteeism from assigned school activities.

*(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)*

*(cf. 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy)*

### **Authority to Expel**

A student may be expelled only by the Board. (Education Code 48918(j))

As required by law, the Superintendent or principal shall recommend expulsion and the Board shall expel any student found to have committed any of the following "mandatory recommendation and mandatory expulsion" acts at school or at a school activity off school grounds: (Education Code 48915)

1. Possessing a firearm which is not an imitation firearm, as verified by a certificated employee, unless the student had obtained prior written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the principal or designee's concurrence

*(cf. 5131.7 - Weapons and Dangerous Instruments)*

2. Selling or otherwise furnishing a firearm
3. Brandishing a knife at another person
4. Unlawfully selling a controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058
5. Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a, or 289, or committing a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code 243.4
6. Possessing an explosive as defined in 18 USC 921

For all other violations listed in the accompanying administrative regulation, the Superintendent or principal shall have the discretion to recommend expulsion of a student. If expulsion is recommended, the Board shall order the student expelled only if it makes a finding of either or both of the following: (Education Code 48915(b) and (e))

1. That other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct
2. That due to the nature of the violation, the presence of the student causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the student or others

A vote to expel a student shall be taken in an open session of a Board meeting.

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 48917, the Board may decide to suspend the enforcement of an order for expulsion as long as a student satisfies specific conditions. See the accompanying administrative regulation for criteria. In addition, the Attorney General opined in 80 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 85 (1997) that the enforcement of an expulsion order may be suspended even in those cases where the student has committed an offense for which expulsion is required by law. Legal counsel should be consulted as appropriate.

The Board may vote to suspend the enforcement of the expulsion order pursuant to the requirements of law and the accompanying administrative regulation. (Education Code 48917)

No student shall be expelled for disruption or willful defiance. (Education Code 48900)

### **Due Process**

The Board shall provide for the fair and equitable treatment of students facing suspension and/or expulsion by affording them their due process rights under the law. The Superintendent or designee shall comply with procedures for notices, hearings, and appeals as specified in law and administrative regulation. (Education Code 48911, 48915, 48915.5, 48918)

*(cf. 5119 - Students Expelled from Other Districts)*

*(cf. 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))*

### **Maintenance and Monitoring of Outcome Data**

Note: Education Code 48900.8 and 48916.1 require the district to maintain data related to suspensions and expulsions as provided below. Pursuant to Education Code 48916.1, the Superintendent of Public Instruction may require submission of such data as part of the Federal Program Monitoring process. In addition, 20 USC 7961 requires districts to submit to CDE a description of the circumstances surrounding any expulsions based on bringing or possessing a firearm on campus, including the name of the school, the number of students expelled, and the type of firearms involved.

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain outcome data related to student suspensions and expulsions in accordance with Education Code 48900.8 and 48916.1, including, but not limited to, the number of students recommended for expulsion, the grounds for each recommended expulsion, the actions taken by the Board, the types of referral made after each expulsion, and the disposition of the students after the expulsion period. For any expulsion that involves the possession of a firearm, such data shall include the name of the school and the type of firearm involved, as required pursuant to 20 USC 7961. Suspension and expulsion data shall be reported to the Board annually and to the California Department of Education when so required.

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 52060, districts are required to address school climate in the local control and accountability plan, as measured by student suspension and expulsion rates and other local measures for each school and each numerically significant student subgroup. As defined in Education Code 52052, numerically significant subgroups include ethnic subgroups, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, students with disabilities, foster youth, and homeless students, when there are at least 30 students in the subgroup or at least 15 foster youth or homeless students.

In presenting the report to the Board, the Superintendent or designee shall disaggregate data on suspensions and expulsions by school and by numerically significant student subgroups, including, but not limited to, ethnic subgroups, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, students with disabilities, foster youth, and homeless students. Based on the data, the Board shall address any identified disparities in the imposition of student discipline and shall determine whether and how the district is meeting its goals for improving school climate as specified in its local control and accountability plan.

*(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)*

*Legal Reference:*

EDUCATION CODE

212.5 Sexual harassment

233 Hate violence

1981-1981.5 Enrollment of students in community school

8239.1 Prohibition against expulsion of preschool student

17292.5 Program for expelled students

32261 Interagency School Safety Demonstration Act of 1985

35145 Open board meetings

35146 Closed sessions (regarding suspensions)

35291 Rules (for government and discipline of schools)

35291.5 Rules and procedures on school discipline

48645.5 Readmission; contact with juvenile justice system

48660-48666 Community day schools

48853.5 Foster youth

48900-48927 Suspension and expulsion

48950 Speech and other communication

48980 Parental notifications

49073-49079 Privacy of student records

52052 Numerically significant student subgroups

52060-52077 Local control and accountability plan

64000-64001 Consolidated application

CIVIL CODE

47 Privileged communication

48.8 Defamation liability

CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE

1985-1997 Subpoenas; means of production

GOVERNMENT CODE

11455.20 Contempt

54950-54963 Ralph M. Brown Act

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

11014.5 Drug paraphernalia

11053-11058 Standards and schedules

LABOR CODE

230.7 Employee time off to appear in school on behalf of a child

PENAL CODE

31 Principal of a crime, defined

240 Assault defined

241.2 Assault fines

242 Battery defined

243.2 Battery on school property

243.4 Sexual battery

245 *Assault with deadly weapon*  
 245.6 *Hazing*  
 261 *Rape defined*  
 266c *Unlawful sexual intercourse*  
 286 *Sodomy defined*  
 288 *Lewd or lascivious acts with child under age 14*  
 288a *Oral copulation*  
 289 *Penetration of genital or anal openings*  
 417.27 *Laser pointers*  
 422.55 *Hate crime defined*  
 422.6 *Interference with exercise of civil rights*  
 422.7 *Aggravating factors for punishment*  
 422.75 *Enhanced penalties for hate crimes*  
 626.2 *Entry upon campus after written notice of suspension or dismissal without permission*  
 626.9 *Gun-Free School Zone Act of 1995*  
 626.10 *Dirks, daggers, knives, razors, or stun guns*  
 868.5 *Supporting person; attendance during testimony of witness*  
WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE  
 729.6 *Counseling*  
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 18  
 921 *Definitions, firearm*  
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20  
 1415(K) *Placement in alternative educational setting*  
 7961 *Gun-free schools*  
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42  
 11432-11435 *Education of homeless children and youths*  
COURT DECISIONS  
*T.H. v. San Diego Unified School District* (2004) 122 Cal. App. 4th 1267  
*Woodbury v. Dempsey* (2003) 108 Cal. App. 4th 421  
*Board of Education of Sacramento City Unified School District v. Sacramento County Board of Education and Kenneth H.* (2001) 85 Cal.App.4th 1321  
*Fremont Union High School District v. Santa Clara County Board* (1991) 235 Cal. App. 3d 118  
*Garcia v. Los Angeles Board of Education* (1991) 123 Cal. App. 3d 807  
*John A. v. San Bernardino School District* (1982) 33 Cal. 3d 301  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS  
 84 *Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen.* 146 (2001)  
 80 *Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen.* 348 (1997)  
 80 *Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen.* 91 (1997)  
 80 *Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen.* 85 (1997)

*Management Resources:*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS PUBLICATIONS  
*Dear Colleague Letter on the Nondiscriminatory Administration of School Discipline, January 2014*  
WEB SITES  
 CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>  
 California Attorney General's Office: <http://www.oag.ca.gov>  
 California Department of Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>  
 U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-2012-data-summary.pdf>  
 U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students:  
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/oshs>