



Huron-Superior Catholic

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES STUDENT EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL OR CLASS

The Education Act imposes specific obligations for student health and safety on school principals, including the duty to exclude from the classroom or school any person whose presence, in the principal's judgement, be detrimental to a safe environment and to allow for development of appropriate programming and supports for a student.

Section 265(1)(m) of the *Education Act* indicates that one of the duties of the Principal is: "subject to an appeal to the board, to refuse to admit to the school or classroom a person whose presence in the school or classroom would in the principal's judgment be detrimental to the physical or mental well-being of the pupils."

Policy/Program Memorandum 145 stipulates that exclusion as defined in Section 265 (1) (m) of the Education Act is not to be used as a disciplinary measure but is a short-term measure to ensure the safety of students, staff and parents in the school.

Exclusion should be considered as a last resort, and only employed after a significant series of accommodations, modifications, alternative programming and/or alternative learning environment(s) have been put into place or a Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) has been conducted and safety concerns persist.

Before reaching a decision to exclude, a principal should have reviewed whether all school, Board, and community resources that could support continued attendance at school have been considered, and whether changes to a student's IEP, Behaviour Plan and/or Safety/Risk Assessment Plan could allow for continued attendance.

An exclusion from school should apply only for as long as is necessary to reasonably provide for the physical and mental well-being of the student and others while attending school.

The Principal shall consult with the School Superintendent prior to exercising their discretion to impose an exclusion from school or the class. The School Superintendent will, in consultation with the Principal, ensure that:

- The relevant factors have been appropriately considered and weighed;
- There is a learning support plan outlining the means by which the Board will provide the excluded student with access to educational services during exclusion, and how will this be monitored and updated as needed; and
- Re-entry plan requirements have been identified, and specifically what parent/guardian and school actions will be necessary to facilitate the excluded student's safe and successful re-entry.

Criteria for Exclusion

A student could be excluded due to a medical condition, a physical condition, a mental health concern or a behavioural concern.

Medical Condition:

In the case of exclusion due to a medical condition, community partners are essential when making this determination. The Health Unit may exclude a student from school and notify the school principal that such an action has already been decided (for example, communicable diseases). In other cases, the Health Unit may suspend students under the authorization of the *Immunization of School Pupils Act*.

Physical or Mental Health Condition:

A physician may provide written notification that the student is unwell and should be excused from attending school while under their care. Some examples of a physical condition or mental health conditions could be chronic disease, such as cancer, anxiety disorders or it could be related to in-hospital treatment in a Child/Adolescent Psychiatric (CAP) unit.

Behavioural:

Extreme behavioural concerns sometimes stem from mental health needs that require a student to be excluded until more information is collected (e.g. a report from a psychiatrist or psychologist in order to plan an educational program that meets the student's needs).

Excluding students based on mental health and/or behavioural conditions are not to be confused with the disciplinary provisions found in the Education Act and PPM 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour. An exclusion can proceed and/or follow a suspension. Even if an exclusion has occurred, in some cases, the student's extreme behaviour could be one which the principal would have the authority to expel.

Notice of Exclusion

A Principal who imposes an exclusion shall ensure that written notice of the exclusion is promptly provided to the following persons:

- The student, if the student is an adult student.
- The student's parent/guardian unless,
 - the student is at least 18 years of age, or
 - the student is 16 or 17 years of age and has withdrawn from parental control.
- The Director of Education and Family of Schools' Superintendent.

The written notice of the exclusion (Appendix A) must include the following:

- Identification of the behaviours that are putting students at risk.
- A date to meet and discuss the development of a learning support plan.
- Monitoring of the student's progress during exclusion.
- The steps necessary for re-entry to the school or class.
- The right to appeal the exclusion to the Board of Trustees.
- The name and contact information of the Director of Education, to whom the written notice of appeal to the Board must be submitted.

Provision of School Work

In conjunction with the classroom teacher(s), the Principal must arrange for educational services to be provided to the student for the duration of the exclusion. The Principal, in consultation with their School Superintendent may recommend home instruction to support student learning.

Attendance Record

During the exclusion period, the student's absence shall be recorded with a "G" code on the Daily Attendance Record, with one of the following options: Exclusion Behaviour, Exclusion Medical, Exclusion Mental Health, Exclusion Physical. A student excluded under clause 265(1)(m) of the Education Act is not demitted from the enrolment register as the Board is actively working to reintegrate the student back into the education system.

Re-Entry

Once the terms for re-entry, as stipulated in the Principal's letter of exclusion, have been met, and the Principal is otherwise satisfied that re-entry will not pose a safety risk, the Principal shall, verbally and in writing invite the parent/guardian of the student or adult student to a re-entry meeting. If the parent/guardian of the student or adult student cannot attend the meeting, reasonable efforts to accommodate must be made to reschedule the meeting at a mutually convenient time. This meeting must occur in advance of the student returning to school/class.

Appeal of Exclusion

The following persons may appeal to the Board a Principal's decision for an exclusion:

- The student's parent/guardian, unless
 - The student is at least 18 years of age, or
 - The student is 16 or 17 years of age and has withdrawn from parental control.
- The student, if
 - The student is at least 18 years of age, or
 - The student is 16 or 17 years of age and has withdrawn from parental control.

Written Notice of Appeal

- A person who is entitled to appeal an exclusion must give written notice of the intention to appeal to the Director of Education.
- The notice shall include the grounds and facts in support of the appeal.
- A request for an appeal shall not stay the exclusion.

Notice of Appeal to the Director of Education

Upon receipt of written notice of the intention to appeal the exclusion, the Director of Education or Designate will complete the following actions:

- Advise the school Principal and School Superintendent of the receipt of the notice of appeal;
- Provide a copy of the notice of appeal to the Principal and School Superintendent;
- Acknowledge receipt of the notice of appeal and advise the student's parent/guardian or adult student that a review of the exclusion will take place; and
- Arrange a facilitation meeting between the student's parent/guardian or adult student, the Principal and the School Superintendent.

Exclusion Hearing Committee of the Board

In the absence of a resolution at the facilitation meeting, the Director of Education or Designate shall arrange for the Board of Trustees to hear the appeal, as soon as is reasonably possible at a mutually convenient time for the appellant and the principal.

The Director of Education or Designate will:

- Arrange a date for the appeal before the Board of Trustees.
- Coordinate the preparation of a written report to be provided to the parties (the Appellant and the Principal) and the Board of Trustees no less than three (3) days prior to the hearing, containing:
 - The rationale for exclusion;
 - The learning support plan in place for the student, as prepared by the Principal;
 - The original exclusion letter issued by the Principal;
 - The notice of appeal of the exclusion;
 - A summary of the student's academic progress during the period of exclusion;
 - Confirmation that a facilitation meeting took place at which resolution was discussed;
 - Documentation submitted by the Appellant, provided any such documentation is submitted no less than two (2) days prior to the hearing date.
- Inform the student's parent/guardian or adult student of the date, time and location of the hearing for the appeal of the exclusion and provide a copy of the above noted report.

Appeal Hearing Before the Board of Trustees

The Exclusion Hearing will be held in accordance with the *Education Act* and Board Policy:

- The Board of Trustees will hear the appeal. The Chair of the board or designate will chair the appeal hearing.
- The Principal, the School Superintendent, and the Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education, (if required) will be in attendance.
- The student's parent/guardian, or adult student, if they appealed the decision of the exclusion may be in attendance.
- The Appellant may be accompanied by a representative, provided that the Appellant gives at least three (3) days' notice to the Board, and includes the name and contact information of their representative.
- Legal counsel for the Board may be present at the appeal to act as an advisor to the Board of Trustees on procedural matters.
- It is customary where the Appellant has legal counsel for the Board to also have their legal counsel present to advise the principal.
- The Board of Trustees shall allow both the principal and the Appellant with the opportunity to make oral submissions, and shall consider any documentary evidence submitted by either party with the allowable timeline.
- The Board of Trustees may ask either party questions of clarification.
- Upon hearing from the parties, and considering any documentary evidence submitted, the Board of Trustees shall consider whether the exclusion should be upheld or overturned.
- Where any party who has received proper notice of the location, date and time of the appeal fails to attend the appeal or comply with the necessary time lines, the appeal may proceed in the absence of the party and the party is not entitled to any further notice of the proceedings.
- The decision of the Board of Trustees shall be communicated to the parent/guardian or adult student orally and in writing within twenty-four (24) hours of the conclusion of the appeal hearing.
- The decision of the Board of Trustees is final and shall be implemented within two (2) days of the hearing.