

EMERY COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY

Date Adopted: 6/22/84

Last Review/Revision: 6/17/98

CODE: JK

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Philosophy of Discipline:

It is the philosophy of this District that discipline reaches far beyond merely dealing with inappropriate student conduct, and that the primary goal of discipline is to help each student develop a strong, useful self discipline which contributes to the achievement of personal goals and well-being, as well as to the well-being of various groups in which the individual is a member.

Of secondary, but major importance is the need for imposed discipline as part of achieving the total climate of a school. There must be an atmosphere which is conducive to learning, which not only does not detract from but actually contributes to motivation and the general climate for learning.

Discipline is to be approached in our schools as an instructional, developmental program first and foremost, and for the primary purpose of aiding each student in achieving self-discipline. Wherever feasible, even imposed discipline required to maintain order is to be designed as part of the instructional/ developmental program.

It is the Board's intent that the District discipline program comply in all respects with State statutes and requirements of the Utah State Board of Education. In meeting this intent, the District's discipline program will include these elements/goals:

1. General Curriculum

The most important component will be an effective learning program, one which seeks to provide the most worthwhile learning opportunities for each student. Schools of this District shall seek to incorporate those ideas and practices proved through research as resulting in significantly improved learning, as well as those producing increased interest in and commitment to learning.

2. Specific Discipline and Citizenship Curriculum

A) Specific instructional elements will be developed to help students: 1) understand the nature of self-discipline and its values; 2) develop their own self-discipline; 3) understand and develop good citizenship; and 4) develop healthy self-esteem.

B. Assertive Discipline

The program known as "Assertive Discipline" will be used throughout the District by all employees who work with children. The program will be used in total, and those aspects dealing with control of undesirable behavior will not be used to the exclusion of more positive elements. Similar approaches may be substituted for Assertive Discipline only with express approval of the principal, based on judgment that the substitute program is at least equally effective and that it does not detract from the consistency of a single district-wide approach.

C. Intervention Strategies

Intervention strategies shall be made available to assist students whose behavior in school is repeatedly short of reasonable expectations. A repertoire of such strategies shall be selected from those which have been found to be most successful and they shall be used, as needed, in a diagnostic-prescriptive mode.

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3. School and Classroom Management

School and classroom management shall be consistent and integrated with the discipline and good citizenship curriculum. Daily school life and special school activities shall be guided by the principles taught and shall provide both examples of the practice for the concepts taught regarding discipline

and good citizenship. Students shall be provided opportunity to experience academic and social success in all district schools and classrooms.

Teacher feedback, positive peer pressure, and recognition ceremonies are encouraged methods for classroom management. Use of, or reliance on tangible or material rewards, or “token economics”, is discouraged.

4. Standards of Conduct

Expectations regarding conduct, whether framed as rules, standards, or some other format, shall be clearly defined at the District, school, and class levels. Along with these expectations, consequences for appropriate and inappropriate behavior shall be clearly stated (per Assertive Discipline.)

Rules of conduct are to be reviewed annually, with annual updates, if any, to occur within the first month after school opens.

Additional changes may be made at any time, utilizing established involvement procedures, provided copies are filed appropriately and are furnished to students, staff, and parents.

District regulations are to be disseminated to each school within two days after any changes, either to each staff member or with a clear assignment to each school to distribute copies to each staff member.

School rules are to be disseminated to the District Office and to each member of the school’s staff, within two days after changes have been made.

Class rules are to be disseminated to students and parents within two days after changes have been made. Teachers must also see that District and school rules are disseminated to students and parents.

Development of rules and regulations at all levels shall be participatory with staff, students, and other community persons involved.

In general, regulations and rules shall be kept as minimal and as simple as can feasibly be done while accomplishing what is needed.

5. Student Rights and Responsibilities

Student rights shall be clearly defined, based on the law, court precedent, and exemplary ideas.

6. Due Process

In the event of a disciplinary action against a student, every effort must be made to resolve the problem with fairness, ordinarily being resolved by the teacher and student, sometimes with the help of parents. However, the teacher must go to higher authority if certain actions are recommended,

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such as suspension or transfer. The student and parents may appeal actions and receive hearings in a chain which includes the teacher, the principal, the superintendent (or an appointed representative), and the Board of Education. The Board of Education is the final authority within the District.

In Emery County School District, due process shall require that every effort is made to correct problems through developmental/instructional means before, and even concurrent with, if necessary, the application of more punitive means.

7. Limitations on Punishment

As a general rule, imposed discipline shall be used only to establish or maintain the minimum level of acceptable behavior necessary to an educational climate which is conducive to optimal learning. Any imposed discipline should be built around the principles of firmness, fairness, and consistency in an atmosphere of caring. These same principles should permeate all the school does.

Efforts shall be made to apply the least restrictive alternative which appears reasonably sufficient to resolve the problem.

8. In-service Program

A comprehensive in-service program will be developed and implemented to assure that all employees who work directly with students have the knowledge and skills to carry out the district's discipline and good citizenship program effectively. All new employees will be trained in assertive discipline.

Other Disciplinary Guidelines and Standards Are:

1. Grade or Credit Reduction

Lowering of grades or reduction of credit for misconduct, absence, or tardiness shall not be done.

2. Expulsion

Expulsion can only be by action of the Board. Expulsion is to be used only in very extreme cases when: a) the student's continued presence in school presents a current, serious threat of harm to persons, property, or the educational process, and cannot be adequately controlled or eliminated by other, less restrictive means; and b) provisions are made for continuing the student's education in some other way or through another institution or agency.

When all in-school alternatives have been exhausted, and it becomes necessary to refer a student to another program or institution, the referral shall be orderly and in keeping with legal and inter-agency policies and procedures.

3. Suspension

A teacher may suspend a student temporarily from a class, provided satisfactory arrangements are made with the principal for the student's learning opportunities to continue elsewhere. No student may be suspended from school unless the student's continued presence in school presents a current, serious threat of harm to persons, property, or the educational process, and that threat cannot be adequately controlled or eliminated by other, less restrictive means. Suspensions may not exceed in duration the time necessary to accomplish the purpose of the suspension. Students facing a suspension of 10 days or less must be given oral or written notice of charges and be given an opportunity to explain. Students facing suspension for more than 10 days, or suspensions during critical periods, have a right to formal due process proceedings. This latter extends to suspensions

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of indefinite length, such as “until your parents come in for a conference”, which could potentially extend beyond 10 days. School authorities shall provide suspended students with appropriate lesson materials so the student’s progress and ability to continue in school will not be unduly hampered.

4. Education Outside the School

Utah students have both the right and the obligation to participate in formal education. The fact that a student has a right to an educational service does not mean a student has an equally compelling right to receive the educational service in a regular classroom setting. Students whose behavior is such that other students, property, or the learning process itself are endangered may be given their right and be required to fulfill their obligation to receive an education in some other more appropriate location.

Annual Review:

All elements of this plan shall be reviewed annually, including policy, regulations, rules and programs. This required review shall be completed within approximately one month after the opening of school each fall.