



## Student Conduct and Discipline Policy

### Introduction

- A. The District desires the use of evidence-based, trauma-informed practices that maximize instructional time for every student and minimize the use of exclusionary discipline. The District seeks to build a system-wide understanding of trauma prevalence and impact which recognizes that traumatic experiences can negatively affect student behavior and that disciplinary practices can retraumatize students. Each school and program shall create a safe, calm, and secure environment in which all students feel included, supported, and respected. To this end, disciplinary decision making should include a trauma-informed perspective and focus on restorative practices first and foremost. When student behavior disrupts the learning or working environment, school staff, families, and students will share concerns and work collaboratively to develop and implement equitable and restorative plans for more intensive interventions and supports

The District believes the following will reduce the need for disciplinary actions that exclude students from their classroom:

1. Positive school climate
  2. Clear and consistent student behavioral expectations
  3. Trauma-informed and effective classroom management strategies
  4. Parent/family/guardian engagement
  5. Culturally relevant instruction
  6. Developmentally appropriate practices
- B. Discipline should be used to support students in learning the skills and concepts necessary to enhance a positive school climate and avoid disruptive behavior. Utilizing a trauma-informed approach to school discipline that is paired with meaningful and accessible instruction and guidance offers students an opportunity to learn from their mistakes and contribute to the school community. This is more likely to result in re-engaging the student in learning. The District is committed to preparing students to be successful in life by providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive school climate which:
- Is conducive to student learning
  - Fosters self-efficacy
  - Encourages active participation in their communities

The Superintendent or designee will work with all schools and programs to carry out a variety of evidence-based, trauma-informed practices and strategies for maintaining a safe, calm, and secure school climate. The strategies shall focus on:

- Communicating clear, appropriate, and consistent behavior expectations
- Educating students on behavior expectations
- Providing students with tiered supports/interventions
- Implementing consistent and fair use of consequences
- Eliminating disproportionate uses of discipline actions
- Continuous review and improvement of discipline practices
- Fostering teachers' use of trauma-informed and effective classroom management strategies

The District recognizes that some students experience disproportionate disciplinary actions in response to their behavior, specifically Latinx students, students with African American or Black, Native American, and Pacific Islander ancestry, English Language Learners, students with disabilities, LGBTQ Continuum students, and students living in poverty. The District recognizes that unconscious biases can impact disciplinary decision-making and seeks to eliminate disparities in the use of school and program discipline. As stated in our district Racial Educational Equity Policy (2.10.010-P), Portland Public Schools is committed to the success of every student in each of our District. Schools and programs shall strive to enforce disciplinary rules fairly, equitably, and without discrimination or bias.

- C. Recognizing that student discipline practices are closely related to student achievement, the District expects school practices that:
1. Incorporate student and family perspective at all levels from policy to enforcement, and engage parents/guardians early in disciplinary processes;
  2. Are trauma-informed and evidence based, resulting in safer schools grounded in equity, improved student achievement, improved student attendance, and fosters student sense of self-efficacy;
  3. Provide consistency, fairness, and equitable interventions and consequences across all schools and programs in the district;
  4. Eliminate disparities in applying discipline by assuring equitable tiered interventions and consequences across all racial and ethnic groups, by gender, among those with disabilities and other protected classes (see 1.80.020-P Non-Discrimination);
  5. Define and communicate expectations for student behavior;
  6. Define and communicate expectations for staff responsibilities related to student conduct and discipline;
  7. Use restorative practices to balance the needs of the student, the needs of those directly affected by a student's behavior, and the needs of the overall school community;
  8. Facilitate students, staff, parents/guardians and the community working together to provide both academic and non-academic support to students.
- D. Since we are all invested in the success of our children, it is the shared responsibility of all adults in our school district to ensure that social justice principles are imbedded in our schools and that we take the necessary steps to shift our system to meet the needs of students. These responsibilities will include personal and professional introspection, acknowledgement of unconscious biases, willingness to learn restorative and trauma-informed practices.

District leadership is expected to provide professional development to support these shifts, and to define procedures and practices that build a safe, supportive, and inclusive school climate. Everyone in a school who has direct contact with students is expected to utilize the learning opportunities provided to create and maintain an environment that inspires student learning by using principles of positive behavior support, cultural responsiveness, and trauma-informed effective discipline practices to support students' prosocial development.

## **Discipline Principles**

- A. Discipline must be an equitable, transparent, timely, fair, and developmentally appropriate response based on individual student needs as defined in ORS 339.250.

- B. Discipline practices should deter undesired behavior before it occurs, and use effective interventions after it occurs, seeking to repair any harm caused.
- C. The District and schools shall make every reasonable effort to first correct student undesired behavior through family, school, and community-based resources. These efforts involve utilizing a trauma-informed perspective to analyze individual student needs and adult responses, developing preventive, responsive, and developmentally appropriate interventions and providing disciplinary and educational alternatives.
- D. Discipline should take into consideration the understood effects of trauma to the developing brain and start at the lowest possible level reasonably determined to change the student's behavior and to minimize the loss of instructional time. It is the expectation that District representatives consider an individual student's trauma load when discussing discipline. Unless there is a behavior that poses an imminent risk to others, exclusionary discipline should be the actions of a last resort.

### **Monitoring and Accountability**

- A. The Superintendent shall establish a structure at the District and school level to monitor progress on student conduct, including annual reporting to the District.
- B. The District shall monitor progress on student conduct in a way that is data driven and responsive to the needs of schools and students.
- C. The monitoring structure shall be connected to School and District Improvement Plans and designed to identify areas of need, target tiered areas for support, thus enabling schools and the District to craft solutions.
- D. Monitoring information shall be presented in a manner that is transparent and accessible to administrators, teachers, and the general public as the law permits (OAR 581-021-0330, OAR 581-021-0340). Ongoing monitoring shall be used to ensure that equitable school-based practices are implemented in a fair, non-discriminatory, and culturally responsive manner.

### **Implementation**

- A. The Superintendent shall develop administrative directives, procedures and/or standards to implement this policy.
- B. The District shall publish and distribute to staff, students and parents expectations outlining student rights and responsibilities, behavior expectations, tiered interventions and potential disciplinary actions.
- C. Under this policy, resources will be allocated to support a trauma-informed approach to discipline, positive behavior and provide alternatives to exclusionary discipline.

### **Definitions**

- **Restorative Practices**: District staff shall endeavor to utilize restorative practices when applicable and agreed upon by all parties. Restorative practices include, but are not limited to:
  - Restorative Conferencing: a meeting between all parties impacted, attendees include school administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents/guardians, and appropriate community service providers to discuss impact of behavior, solving conflict peacefully, and to create a plan of action for interventions and supports.

- Restorative Responsive Circles: a gathering to give space to students directly involved in a conflict and others directly affected to discuss the impact of the behavior and develop a plan to repair the harm.
- Restorative Action Plan: the result of the circle described above, requiring students to make reparations that meet the needs of those impacted.
- Tiered Supports: the main component of a data based Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework. Attention is focused on Tier 1 (universal practices and supports for all students), Tier 2 (targeted small group strategies and supports provided in addition to Tier 1) and Tier 3 (supports at the individual student level).
- Self-Efficacy: students' belief in their innate ability to set and achieve goals.
- Social Justice Principles: values that favor measures aimed at decreasing or eliminating inequity; promoting inclusiveness of diversity; and establishing environments that are supportive of all people.
- Trauma-Informed Approach: designed to be a community response to support traumatized students and their families. This includes policies and practices that create safe school environments and professional learning regarding the signs and symptoms of trauma, promote resiliency and wellness among students, their families, and staff, and reduce re-traumatization.

Legal References: ORS 339.240, ORS 339.250, ORS 659.850, OAR 581-021-0045, OAR 581-021-0050 to -0075.

History: Replaces 4.30.010-P (Standards of Conduct) and 4.30.020-AD (Philosophy for Discipline) Adpt 6/2009

#### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 5 years. It revises 4.30.010-P and eliminates 4.30.030-P Program for Disruptive Students, as well as the Administrative Directive 4.30.031-AD that accompanies it.