

Issaquah School District
Executive Limitations Monitoring Report
EL – 11: DISCIPLINE
(Annual Internal October 13, 2022)

**The Superintendent certifies that the District is in compliance with EL-11
without exception**

The Board believes in providing all students with a school environment that is safe and conducive to learning. District policies around student discipline should be clearly communicated to all students and equitably enforced.

The superintendent shall not fail to establish and consistently enforce policies to maintain dignified, safe and effective environments for all students.

GENERAL INTERPRETATION

I interpret this policy to be primarily focused on maintaining a safe environment that is conducive to learning for all students while protecting student rights as individuals, and tailoring discipline policies to the state code grade bands of kindergarten to grade 4, and grades 5 to 12. This requires the District to have clear student discipline rules and procedures that are clearly communicated in multiple ways and formats, and consistently enforced, and a system that allows District leaders and school building leaders to provide clear expectations and supports to ensure our teachers, staff and students each understand their respective roles and responsibilities. The District will adjust discipline rules and procedures on a regular basis in compliance with state regulation and law. Notably, the law for discipline changed significantly in the 2019-2020 school year in which the first response for discipline was to provide interventions and supports rather than exclusions and suspensions (unless the first offense is a crime). Please refer to [Chapter 392-400 WAC](#).

Based on feedback from the Board in the past few years, the value statement and interpretation of equitable enforcement is meant to ensure consistent enforcement but with a system of monitoring that identifies and responds to inequitable or disproportionate treatment of students through the discipline process. In addition, any adult or student behaviors that requires the involvement of law enforcement for on-campus incidences are noted in monitoring evidence, on a case-by-case basis. The Board will be notified of any incidents as soon as possible by the Superintendent as it relates to their role and governance oversight.

I further interpret this policy to mean that regulations and procedures are effective in maintaining a physically and psychologically safe learning environment. Staff awareness and understanding of an inclusive culture based on affirmation and belonging, student discipline rules and procedures, must be effectively implemented to achieve the desired result of addressing root causes. There must also be a process for appeals that is objective and supportive of students and families. Further, implementation by staff must be fair and consistent in order to be supported by District officials and, if necessary, upheld by the courts.

The 2021-22 school year was the first full school year in-person following COVID-19 school closures. However, COVID-19 prevention and mitigation strategies such as physical distancing, mask wearing, ventilation and frequent cleaning were a continued operational expectation and led to

teacher and staff enforcement of health regulations. The Issaquah School District recognized an increased need to support students in their social and emotional well-being after missing nearly 16 months of in-person learning (i.e., March 2020 through April 2021).

EVIDENCE OF COMPLIANCE

- The District’s Human Resource Department orients all new staff to District, state, and federal Personnel Regulations and labor regulations through both SafeSchools and in-person instruction to promote safe and positive work and learning environments. In 2021-2022 SafeSchools online training was also utilized for re-training of all employees as one part of the three-year rotating training delivery model.
- The District’s Code of Equitable Conduct is taught to every student in every school. For example, “The Pledge of Equitable Conduct” is carried out at elementary schools through principal and teacher lessons. This code teaches students to treat people who are different than themselves with respect and kindness. This is referenced in greater detail in section 4.
- Schools support culture that promotes affirmation and belonging focusing on Tier 1 elements available to all students and families. Examples include the following:
 - Elementary: Meet the Teacher, Curriculum Night, STEM, Math &/or Literacy family events.
 - Secondary: Events led by Student Leadership focus on promoting belonging. Specific examples include WEB (Where Everyone Belongs), ASB leadership, SEL (Social Emotional Learning) lessons.
 - All schools establish and publish positively stated school-wide expectations including behavioral expectations supported by a behavioral matrix and presentational materials.
- The District’s attorney annually reviews our student handbook language, District regulations related to student discipline and our training materials for administrators. This was completed for the 2021-22 school year in August 2021.
- One student discipline appeal was heard by the Board during the 2021-22 school year and the District’s decision was upheld.
- Overall, we continue to monitor and address the disproportionality in our system specifically with our students who identify as Latino or Hispanic, Black or African American, and as Two or More Races. See chart below for all suspensions by race/ethnicity for unique students.

All Suspensions by Race 2021 - 2022

Race	Number of students with suspensions	Oct. 2021 OSPI Race/Ethnicity*	Oct 2021 OSPI percentage of total students by race	Percentage of students with suspensions by race**
Hispanic/Latino of any race(s)	80	2,001	10.14%	24.32%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	48	0.24%	0.30%
Asian	32	6,704	33.96%	9.73%
Black/African American	46	457	2.32%	13.98%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	38	0.19%	0.30%
White	125	8,622	43.68%	37.99%
Two or More Races	44	1,869	9.47%	13.37%
Totals	329	19,739	100%	100%

*OSPI's Oct Total numbers includes Running Start and Preschoolers

** number of students in race group with suspensions divided by total number of suspensions

Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

- 1. Permit student behaviors that disrupt learning. Prohibited Behaviors include:**
 - a. the use of illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco products by students and adults on school property and at school-sponsored events;**
 - b. The presence of firearms and other dangerous weapons on school property and at school-sponsored events;**
 - c. Any form of violence on school property and at school-sponsored events.**

INTERPRETATION

I interpret this to mean that rules and procedures must clearly prohibit all student and/or adult behaviors named above; any infractions must be addressed in accordance with school rules in a manner that reaffirms prohibitions in these areas, and when necessary, in partnership with law enforcement. Additionally, any infractions must be analyzed to provide support and plans for individuals involved to significantly reduce likelihood of future incidences.

EVIDENCE OF COMPLIANCE

- Principals and District administrators have verified through regularly scheduled meetings and frequent discussions with their supervisors that all reported incidents of misconduct resulting in unruly or disruptive behavior by any persons at school, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored event have been appropriately addressed. Principals and Deans attend discipline training each year.
- Principals have access to Executive Directors, Compliance Officers and legal counsel when needed.
- All schools teach and regularly review the school's behavior expectations.
- Training for students and staff occurs in the fall on how to report incidences of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB). The District adopted curriculum, Second Step, includes specific lessons to address bystander effect, anti-bullying and reporting skills.
- To ensure physical environment safety, schools utilize a variety of best practices as evidenced by: monthly safety drills, emergency kits, maps and directions, a visitor check-in system with daily badges, fob access systems, security cameras, and staff identification badges.
- Compared to the last full school year 2018-2019, the number of incidences for weapons resulting in suspensions/expulsions decreased from 23 to 21.
- The District maintains close partnerships with the six police agencies that serve schools. The safety and security team partners with local law enforcement as needed and maintain communication on a weekly basis.
- Student support plans are rooted in restorative practices, trauma informed techniques, and support overall mental health.
- 2021 was the first year of creating a protocol for threat assessments. District leadership trained staff and implemented all components, allowing for a timely and methodical school-based threat assessment. This process is distinct from student discipline in that it strives to determine level of intervention; low level threat behaviors likely to result in the creation and implementation of intervention strategies and a safety plan. Students determined to have imminent risk behaviors are referred for an outside evaluation and connected to essential community resources.
- All Administrators, school Counselors, Swedish School Based Health Counselors and School Security Officers received training on the Threat Assessment Protocol which includes safety plans and re-entry plans created for students who need additional support.
- The 2021 Healthy Youth Survey data shows a decrease in substance use as compared to 2020, including alcohol, marijuana, prescription pain killers, illegal drugs and cigarettes. The Healthy Youth Survey was not administered in the fall 2020 due to COVID-19, and was reinstated in the fall 2021 precipitating a change in the cohort of students being surveyed. Interpretation of longitudinal data must account for this change of cohort, and may be difficult to distinguish from changes in data due to COVID-19 and the impact of school closures. Healthy Youth Survey data for the District is available [here](#).
- All Administrators and school Counselors receive suicide intervention protocol training which includes re-entry support for students. Safety plans for students who experience suicide ideation are created to include ongoing support to students and the larger community of schools.

. . . the Superintendent may not:

- 2. Permit teachers, students and parents to be uninformed of the disciplinary expectations of students and the consequences of non-compliance.**

The Superintendent shall not fail to:

- a. appropriately involve teachers, administrators, students and the community in developing student discipline policy;**
- b. distribute annually to each student a student handbook which outlines the student discipline policy;**
- c. ensure that a copy of the student discipline policy, and any significant changes to it are posted or available for inspection in each school building and on the District website.**

INTERPRETATION

I interpret this to mean that the District develops and distributes written procedures for administering corrective action to address student discipline. The District adheres to law and regulation as the guardrails for the student discipline policy while considering best practices to promote positive student behavior and values of diversity, equity and inclusion to reduce disproportionality. Going forward, the District will use this information as a foundation to review student discipline policy on an annual basis to engage with teachers, administrators, unions, students and the community to reflect on the data and lessons learned from the prior school year and adjust to legal or regulatory changes. The District uses multiple formats and methods to distribute the student handbook, to notify all about any changes and to ensure the information is easily accessible.

EVIDENCE OF COMPLIANCE

- The Issaquah Education Association and District Discipline Committee met on February 2 and April 6, 2022 to review the legal changes and discuss any implications for teachers. As a result of these discussions, teachers received the same training as administrators.
- As part of the Tier 1 schoolwide behavior expectation process, new students meet with a school representative to learn the expectations. Tier 1 teams review and update behavior expectations regularly and specifically when students have been excluded through the required re-entry conference following suspensions.
- Student handbooks are distributed prior to the beginning of the year and to students enrolling throughout the year. Students and families agree to these guidelines through the Enrollment Verification Process (EVP). Multi-lingual families can request an in-person translator to complete this process.
- Student handbooks are posted on the district website, which allows for translation to other languages.

. . . the Superintendent may not:

3. Permit any unruly behaviors to disrupt learning.

INTERPRETATION

I interpret this to mean that there is a clear expectation communicated about what positive classroom and school culture means for students and that there are consequences when there is unruly or disruptive learning at school, on a bus, at a school-sponsored activity or in a classroom. I am defining unruly or disruptive learning as activity that prevents a student from being able to fully participate in class whether this is due to any known in-class behaviors or due to interpersonal interactions in-person or virtually during the school day. Therefore, I interpret this to mean that principals and staff may not allow any known instance of unruly or disruptive behavior by any persons to remain unaddressed.

EVIDENCE OF COMPLIANCE

- School staff implement a Positive Behavior Instruction Support (PBIS) philosophy and approach to explicitly teach social emotional learning strategies. In grades K-8, the adopted curriculum follows the state, scope and sequence for Social Emotional Learning (SEL). These lessons support students with skills and strategies to help address issues and respond to conflicts.
- Classroom management is found in the teacher evaluation Danielson model in several criterion. Calibration on responding to incidental classroom behaviors occurred in Teacher Work Days in August 2021.
- Tier 1 schoolwide systems are in place at the elementary schools to reinforce positive behavior, build relationships and culture, and establish clear expectations for student behavior. Schools celebrate this work through special weeklong events such as “Wolf Week” at Cedar Trails Elementary when school spirit days focus on the school’s four core expectations.
- To address diversity, equity and inclusion, and foster a culture of affirmation and belonging for all students, staff participated in the following activities that proactively addresses student engagement and will also serve as evidence of our work to comply with EL-16:
 - Our Building and District Administrators received training on cross cultural communication to help ensure that our culturally and linguistically diverse families are being communicated with about district/building programs, expectations, and practices that considers their culture and language.
 - Building staff received training on Courageous Conversations which helps them set up classrooms that are safe and establishes inclusive learning environments. The training provides them with the tools to intervene when students are displaying behaviors or communicating in a way that creates harm, trauma, and negatively impacts the ability of peers to learn.
 - Our K-12 certificated staff received training on culturally responsive and inclusive classroom practices that foster a sense of belonging for all our students.

- We provided training for our 6-12 grade students on why it is not okay to say the N-word at school. During advisory or SEL time, students worked through a lesson called, “The power of language.”
- Digital citizenship and safety lessons are consistently taught. In elementary, this is taught through the K-5 Library Scope and Sequence. Middle school health curriculum also includes lessons on digital media and health and wellness. Secondary SEL committees met to review and revise SEL lessons, including mandatory digital citizenship and safety lessons primarily delivered through advisory and/or flex time. Resources on technology safety can be found [here](#).
- Cyber bullying and virtual conflicts, including social media issues that overlap with the school day were addressed through our regular disciplinary practices, additionally supported through the anonymous tip reporting system and Gaggle content review, analysis and reporting system.
- The District’s responsible use agreement, with the accompanying student engagement, provides clear expectations for appropriate and safe use of school-related technology. This agreement is signed by all staff and all students prior to accessing district technology.

. . . the Superintendent may not:

4. Fail to ensure that all policies and procedures regarding discipline are enforced consistently using reasonable judgment.

INTERPRETATION

I interpret this to mean there is consistent implementation of policies and procedures regarding discipline rooted in regular review of data by the Superintendent’s leadership team and cabinet in partnership with school administrators. This review includes a calibration across levels and buildings to support a positive and welcoming student and school culture, and responses to infractions. I further interpret this to be supported by ongoing training, and the provision of supports to ensure consistency in the use of discipline across the District and through the lens of equity to ensure there is not a disproportionate impact on student groups by demographics or program characteristics.

EVIDENCE OF COMPLIANCE

- Executive Directors of Schools proactively utilized check-ins with building leaders and sectionals to review and discuss discipline. As cases arose, Executive Directors also worked with individual schools to support discipline interventions, supports and responses. Human Resources staff were available to support Executive Directors and Schools as needed, especially if personnel were involved.
- All School Psychologists and school Counselors received updated training on Manifestation Determination meetings to include considerations for conducting updated Functional Behavior Assessments and revising Behavior Intervention Plans.
- Students receive HIB training at the beginning of the school year to understand how to report to a building administrator, or trusted school staff member, if there is a safety concern, including any HIB reports. October is National Bullying Prevention Month and many of the counselors, ASB student groups, as well as teachers share information and resources. Our website includes many ways for students to report anonymous tips that can help inform a response.

- District staff receive HIB training annually through our compliance cycle. A HIB compliance officer is trained annually and is accessible by staff or parents for consultation.
- K-12 students are expected to follow the Equitable Code of Student Conduct, which is outlined in the student handbook. Student handbooks are reviewed annually and signed off on by both students and parents. The Equitable Code of Student Conduct is also located on the District website. The Equitable Code of Student Conduct states that all students have a responsibility to:
 - Respect each individual, even if that person’s identity is different from your own.
 - Seek to understand your impact on others while seeking to understand other’s intent.
 - Communicate respectfully with others in person, on social media and in any other form.
 - Use what you are learning to use good judgment and make ethical and informed decisions.
 - Take responsibility for your words and actions.
 - To report behavior that interferes with having an equitable and inclusive learning environment that honors and respects people of all identities.
- The AWSP Principal Evaluation Framework, Criterion 2, Ensuring School Safety, is reviewed by Principals and Executive Directors at monthly sectional meetings. This criterion includes physical, social, emotional and intellectual safety, as well as identity safety.
- Key staff received crisis management training to provide the skills and competencies necessary to effectively prevent, minimize, and manage behavioral challenges with dignity and safety.

Board acceptance: October 13, 2022