OUACHITA PARISH SCHOOLS

DISCIPLINE UPDATES



OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION

OUACHITA PARISH SCHOOLS
Building Bridges to the Future

DISCIPLINE UPDATES

This document outlines changes to state laws made during the 2024 Louisiana Regular Legislative Session.

ACT 313: CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

- No student **shall possess** on their person an **electronic communication device** throughout the **instructional day.**
- If a student brings an **electronic communication device** in any public elementary or secondary school building or on the grounds during the **instructional day,** the electronic device shall either be **turned off and properly stowed away for the duration of the instructional day or prohibited from being turned on and used during the instructional day.**
- The provisions above are **not applicable** to a student whose **IEP, IAP, Section 504 plan or IHP requires use of an electronic communications device.**

CELL PHONE POLICY

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- **First offense:** Parent called, cell phone taken and returned at the end of the school day, parent signs for minor infraction.
- **Second offense:** Parent called, cell phone taken for one day, parent picks up cell phone after one day prior to 3 pm, parent signs for minor infraction, parent notified that next cell phone infraction will result in phone taken for three days.
- **Third offense:** Parent called, cell phone taken for three days, parent picks up cell phone after three days prior to 3 pm, parent signs for major referral that is recorded into computer, one day in-school suspension or one day suspension.
- **Fourth offense:** Parent called, cell phone taken for five days, parent picks up cell phone after five days prior to 3 pm, three day suspension, loss of cell phone privileges at school for the remainder of the school year, meeting with Child Welfare & Attendance office before returning to school.
- **Fifth offense:** Parent called, student recommended for alternative placement, loss of cell phone privileges at school for the remainder of the school year.

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MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLS

- **First offense:** Parent called, cell phone taken, parent picks up cell phone prior to 3 pm, parent signs for minor infraction.
- **Second offense:** Parent called, cell phone taken, parent picks up cell phone prior to 3 pm, One day Saturday Seminar or in-school suspension, parent signs for minor infraction.
- **Third offense:** Parent called, cell phone taken, parent picks up cell phone prior to 3 pm, Two days Saturday Seminar or in-school detention, parent notified that next cell phone infraction results in phone taken for three days.
- **Fourth offense:** Parent called, cell phone taken for three days, parent picks up cell phone after three days prior to 3 pm, three days suspension, loss of cell phone privileges at school for the remainder of the school year, meeting with Child Welfare & Attendance office before returning to school.
- **Fifth offense:** Parent called, student recommended for alternative placement, loss of cell phone privileges at school for the remainder of the school year.

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ACT 324: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

- Requires local public school boards to **adopt and implement a program to facilitate behavioral health intervention and referral for treatment.**

- Program must assist school personnel in **identifying signs and symptoms of a student with behavioral or emotional challenges** that may cause the student to be at risk of their behavior escalating into **aggression or disruption, disciplinary actions including suspension or expulsion or juvenile delinquency.**

- An employee at each school **shall be designated responsibility** for identifying **behavioral and mental health support services available** in the community and **facilitate a referral when appropriate.**

- The principal and designated employee **shall consult after any second suspension** whether the student's behavior rises to the level of **willful disobedience** and could be attributed to **behavioral or emotional challenges.**

- The principal and designated employee **shall schedule a conference with the student's parent or legal guardian** to discuss the **student's behavior, counseling and referral to support services** if the student's behavior is at a level where support services **could be beneficial.**

- School board **required to annually report** to LDOE and House and Senate Education Committees the **number of students identified as possibly having behavioral or emotional challenges, number of students for which a conference was scheduled and the number of students referred for assessment and support services.**

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ACT 337: MANDATORY EXPULSION

- Changes the mandatory expulsion requirement from a student who is 16 years or older to **a student in grades six through 12th grade.**

- A student in sixth through 12th grade found guilty of being in possession of **a firearm, a knife with a blade of at least two and a half inches in length or any illegal narcotic, drug or other controlled substance** on school property, a school bus or school-sponsored event **shall be expelled from school for a minimum of four complete semesters and referred to the district attorney's office.**

- A student in sixth through 12th grade found guilty of being in possession of **tobacco, alcohol or vaping products** on school property, a school bus or school-sponsored event **may be recommended for expulsion.**

- A student in sixth through 12th grade who is **suspended for a third time within the same school year** for any offense, excluding **dress codes** or **tardiness**, **shall be recommended for expulsion.**

- All expulsion recommendations are pursuant to an expulsion hearing.

- Superintendents may modify the length of a minimum expulsion on a case-by-case basis and in writing.

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ACT 386: RESPONSIBLITIES OF PARENTS WITH TRUANT CHILDREN

- The parent or legal guardian of a truant student **shall ensure** that the student **makes up missed school work by attending after-school tutoring sessions, weekend make-up classes or other remediation opportunities** as determined by the school board **until the student is caught up with their work.**

- The parent **shall attend meetings at the school on at least a monthly basis** relative to the student's progress until the student has caught up on his missed school work and **any assistance fair conducted by the school district** that provides information on supports available to families.

- Failure to comply may **subject a parent to legal penalties for failure to supervise a minor.**

- The principal of each school or their designee **shall note any concerns that school personnel have relative to a child's school attendance** on the back of any Supplemental Security Income form that the school receives relative to the child.

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ACT 400: STUDENT DISCPLINE

- Principals or administrators are prohibited from **discouraging a teacher** from taking **disciplinary action** against a **student who violates school rules or interferes with an orderly education process.**

- Prohibits **retaliation and taking employment action** against a teacher for **taking disciplinary action that complies with policy against a student.**

- Requires the **removal of a student** whose behavior prevents the **orderly instruction of other students, posses an immediate threat to the safety or physical well-being of any student or teacher or when a student violates the school's code of conduct.**

- Requires a **parent conference** after the **third removal** of a student before the **student returns to the classroom.**

- Teachers are **not authorized to violate public school governing authority discipline policy** in the exercise of their rights. Prohibition on adverse employment action against a teacher for taking disciplinary action is **limited to when teachers take action in accordance with public school governing authority policy.**

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ACT 780: CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

- Prohibits **taping a student's mouth shut** or otherwise **restricting a student's airway in any manner** as a form of corporal punishment in elementary or secondary schools **regardless of parental consent.**