

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR PREVENTION: RESTORATIVE PRACTICES RESPONSE IN STUDENT DISCIPLINE

LEARN's fundamental mission is to provide all students with the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge, and competencies in a nurturing and accountable school setting; to achieve at the highest levels intellectually, academically, socially, emotionally, ethically, and civically; and to become contributing and engaged citizens in our diverse society.

LEARN supports school discipline that: promotes and sustains a positive school climate; maintains safe and engaging learning communities; assures consistency and coherence across all schools/programs; defines and communicates expectations for student behavior and staff responsibility for school discipline; balances the needs of the student, the needs of those directly affected by challenging behaviors, and the needs of the overall school community; and assures equity across racial, ethnic, and cultural groups, as well as all other protected classes, including but not limited to gender, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression. The use of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, recommendations for expulsion, and referrals to law enforcement shall be minimized to the extent practicable, while maintaining compliance with state statutes, local ordinances, and mandatory reporting laws. The juvenile and criminal justice systems shall not be utilized unless the student behavior or conflict becomes violent or criminal.

As students at times find it difficult to effectively manage their emotions and focus on their studies, developmentally appropriate social and emotional skills building contributes to a positive school climate by developing emotional intelligence through self-awareness, self-management, goal setting, social awareness, relationship building, collaborative skills, and responsible decision making. Restorative practices approaches recognize the unique strengths, needs and interests of students, and present an opportunity for schools to support students in learning the skills necessary to maintain a positive school climate and to avoid challenging behavior.

Accordingly, for the school year beginning July 1, 2025, LEARN adopts this Restorative Practices Response policy to address incidents of challenging behavior or student conflict that is nonviolent and does not constitute a crime.

Restorative practices are evidence and research-based system-level approaches that focus on: building high-quality, constructive relationships among the school community; holding each student accountable for any challenging behavior; and ensuring each such student has a role in repairing relationships and reintegrating into the school community.

Restorative practices in the district shall be guided by the Connecticut School Climate Standards, which include:

1. A shared vision and plan for promoting and sustaining a positive school climate that focuses on prevention, identification, and response to all challenging behavior.
2. Policies that promote a school environment that develops and sustains academic, social, emotional, ethical, civic, and intellectual skills; and is focused on overcoming barriers to teaching and learning.
3. Practices that are identified, prioritized, and supported to develop and sustain a restorative infrastructure that builds capacity, accountability, and sustainability; cultivates a sense of belonging through norms and activities that promote social and civic responsibility, and a dedication to cultural responsiveness, diversity, equity, and inclusion; practices early identification and assessment of struggling students; uses a problem solving/collaborative process to provide interventions matched to student needs; ensures timely progress monitoring and feedback; and delivers scientific research-based interventions.

The Executive Director or designee shall develop a regulation and provide for any training necessary as may be needed to effectively implement this policy.

This policy and its accompanying regulation shall be posted on the LEARN website as well as that of each school/program, and a copy shall be available in each school's/program's administration office. This policy, its accompanying regulation, and school/program rules shall be made available, upon request, to each student and parent/guardian, and, upon request, promptly translated in a language that the parent/guardian can understand.

cf. 1110.1 – Parent Involvement
cf. 4131 – Staff Development
cf. 5131.5 – Vandalism by Minors
cf. 5131.6 – Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco
cf. 5131.7 – Weapons and Dangerous Instruments
cf. 5131.91 – Hazing
cf. 5131.911 – Bullying- Safe School Climate
cf. 5131.913 – Cyberbullying
cf. 5141.4 – Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect
cf. 5144 – Student Discipline
cf. 5144.3 – Discipline of Students with Disabilities
cf. 5145.5 – Sexual Harassment
cf. 5162 – Nondiscrimination

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-233a through 10-233f Suspension, removal and expulsion of students,
as periodically amended.
21a-240(9) Definitions.
53a-3 Definitions.
Public Act 23-167, Section 74, An Act Concerning Transparency in
Education

Other
GOALS 2000: Educate America Act, Pub. L. 103-227.
18 U.S.C. 921 Definitions
Title III - Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Act Sec. 314
Elementary and Secondary Schools Act of 1968, as amended by the Gun
Free
Schools Act of 1994
PL 105-17 The Individuals with Disabilities Act, Amendments of 1997
P.L. 108-446 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of
2004

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