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ABSTRACT

To facilitate the learning process, each school's staff must be empowered to maintain strong, consistent discipline; however, school discipline maintenance is also a total community responsibility. Whenever possible, teachers should solicit parental assistance in correcting discipline problems. Fort Wayne Community School Employees or other adults representing the school are not permitted to administer corporal punishment. When it is in the best interest of general student welfare, students may be suspended or expelled as provided by law. Consideration should be given to the nature of the offense and the subsequent penalty when imposing discipline. Further, due process guarantees, which consist of notice, evidence, and response, should be afforded to students even when not required by law. Contained within this document is one disciplinary practice prevention list and three disciplinary alternatives lists.
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FORT WAYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Fort Wayne, Indiana

ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

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Discipline/Punishment in FWCS - Statement of Philosophy

Effective schools must maintain a positive school climate if learning is to take place. The staff of each school must be empowered to maintain strong consistent discipline in order to facilitate the learning process.

Maintaining strong discipline within the schools should be considered a total community responsibility. While the principal may set the tone for discipline in the school, parents, community leaders, organizations designed to assist youth, and others must assist with the total discipline of youth if strong discipline is to exist in the schools.

The school has a major responsibility to keep the parents informed. It is then the responsibility of the parents to take necessary steps to keep the student in school and to see that his/her part is done in the teaching-learning process.

Self-discipline is a basic part of citizenship. The school will encourage and provide opportunity for the growth and development of the student so he/she will ultimately take responsibility for his/her own behavior.

When students violate the general rules of good citizenship, behavior, achievement, and/or attendance, the teacher shall make efforts to correct the situation. Whenever possible teachers should solicit the assistance of parents in correcting the problem. If the situation persists or is of a serious nature, the teacher will refer it to the principal or person designated by the principal. Any action which is taken shall be designed to correct the cause of the violation and/or protect other students rather than simply to punish the violator.

The physical striking of a student with the intent to induce bodily pain by a Fort Wayne Community Schools employee or other adult representing the school shall not be permitted as an option in disciplining students; alternative practices shall be utilized.

It is recognized that reasonable use of physical force and restraint may be necessary to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects from students, for the purpose of self defense, or for protection of persons or property.

It should be recognized that students may be suspended or expelled as provided by law when it is in the best interest of the general welfare of all students. This statement of philosophy and policy should be read in conjunction with and as a supplement to Indiana Laws governing suspension or expulsion of students. It is not intended to change, modify, or be in any way inconsistent with those laws.

Legal Reference: IC 20-8.1-3-31 and As Amended

Adopted: February 24, 1969
Revised: August 1982
Revised: April 1989

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Disciplinary Procedures:

Recognizing that student behavior is a shared responsibility between the parent and the school, the Board of School Trustees endorses a student discipline policy that strongly encourages parental involvement and support of discipline policies necessary to maintain a positive learning climate.

When imposing discipline, consideration should be given to the nature of the offense and the subsequent penalty. Any action taken should have as its objective to correct the cause of the behavior and/or protect other students' rights. Be sure that the penalty relates logically to the offense.

Parents of students should be contacted and expected to assist in correcting unacceptable behavior.

Due process guarantees should be afforded students even when not required by law. These guarantees consist of notice, evidence, and response. "Notice" means informing the student of the rule that is broken and telling him/her the possible penalties. "Evidence" means telling the student why he/she has been charged; in other words, a teacher witnessed the offense or the student admitted it. "Response" means giving the student a chance to tell his/her version of his/her involvement in the alleged offense. If some doubt about the student's guilt is raised, any final penalty should be delayed until the incident has been investigated further.

Clear, consistent discipline procedures will be developed by each school staff with input from parents and students as appropriate. Progressive discipline should be utilized whenever appropriate for the offense and the age of the student.

Students, parents, and faculty should be informed in writing of the general disciplinary procedures used in the school in order to secure support and consistency in enforcement.

Discipline is the practice of enforcing classroom standards and building patterns of cooperation in order to maximize learning and minimize disruptions. Effective teachers and administrators utilize a variety of methods to assist in maintaining strong, positive discipline in the classroom and the school. A safe learning environment where students and staff feel secure should be provided.

Following is a list of alternatives designed to promote the maintenance of positive discipline. They are to serve as examples and are not meant to limit effective practices that may not be noted here.

DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES - PREVENTION LEVEL I

1. Everyone in the school must take responsibility for maintaining strong discipline whether it be in the hall, cafeteria, classroom, or on school grounds.
2. Good behavior must be consistently reinforced by the entire staff.
3. A variety of teaching/learning activities should be provided for students to help prevent misbehavior.
4. The class should be conducted in a business-like way. Class should be started on time and the daily lesson carefully planned in order to make the best use of time available.
5. Clear, concise rules that are communicated to parents, students, and staff should be established.
6. Curriculum appropriate for the learning levels of students should be utilized.
7. Students should be involved in the decision making process as appropriate for the age group.
8. The physical environment should be conducive to good discipline.
9. In-service sessions dealing with alternative classroom programs and procedures that promote proper behavior (TESA, assertive discipline) should be scheduled as appropriate.
10. Sincere personal interest in students as individuals (clothes, families, extracurricular, etc.) should be shown.
11. Efforts should always be made to accentuate the positive.
12. Students' work should be displayed to foster positive student attitudes.
13. A determination should be made that the rules established are needed and that they are consistently reinforced. Pointless rules contribute to misbehavior.
14. Students should be informed of natural consequences of good and bad behavior. The reward or the penalty should match the behavior.
15. Negative competition among students which can lead to stress, poor self-concept, and poor attitudes should be minimized.
16. Instruction to students on expectations for proper behavior should be provided. Discussions on helping students learn how to deal with conflict should be utilized.

17. Regular contacts should be maintained with parents to inform them of school policies and to keep them informed on the progress of their student(s).
18. Parents may be asked to sign a statement that they understand and support the discipline rules of the school.
19. Rules should be continuously reinforced by reteaching them to students during the year.
20. Programs such as peer counseling or group counseling sessions should be planned.
21. Parent involvement programs, such as scheduled visitations to classrooms, during the school day should be used to keep parents informed. Activities that foster parent participation should be encouraged.
22. Programs to utilize volunteer mentors to work with students should be used.
23. School personnel should not administer discipline that treats a student in a different manner because of his/her cultural, ethnic, or religious background.

DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVES LEVEL II

1. Counseling with a student or group of students.
2. Conferencing with a parent or group of parents.
3. Scheduling detentions after school.
4. Restricting extracurricular activity.
5. Developing quiet places for students to "cool off."
6. Teaming of adults (administrators, teacher, aides) to take individual students aside to talk with them.
7. Giving or taking away special privileges.
8. Utilizing logical consequences, e.g. detention for wasting time, sent home for remainder of the day for interpersonal problems such as hitting another student.
9. Completing behavior contracts with students in cooperation with their parents.
10. Placing students on probation that requires specific behavior if the student is to remain in the regular school program.
11. Requiring students to remain in at noon or at recess time.
12. Shortening the school day for a student.
13. Requiring students to develop a plan of action to correct the misbehavior.

DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVES LEVEL III

It is recognized that some of the following alternatives may not be available in all buildings due to staffing patterns or decisions to utilize allocated staff in other ways.

1. Assigning to an in-school alternative education program e.g. in-school suspension/time out rooms.
2. Placing students on probation and completing a behavior contract outlining expectations for them.
3. Assigning to out-of-school suspension.
4. Assigning to Saturday school programs.
5. Referring students to special programs provided by the school system or community organizations.
6. Utilizing home visitations to confer with the parent and student.

DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVES LEVEL IV

1. Assigning to alternative school programs.
2. Completing due process procedures for expulsion.
3. Assigning students to home study on a short term basis.
4. Referring students and/or parents to court system for assistance in correcting the problem.

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