

# Student Suspensions & Expulsions



This guide will help you support and advocate for your child through the disciplinary process.

## INTRODUCTION

The *Student Code of Conduct in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)* establishes guidelines and expectations for positive behavior to create a safe, respectful and inclusive school environment for all students.

The MCPS student handbooks—the *Student Code of Conduct*, *Students Rights and Responsibilities*, *Guidelines for Respecting Religious Diversity*, and *Guidelines for Student Gender Identity*—are provided to students and families so that everyone is aware of the expectations of students, staff, and families in making sure that schools are positive and safe environments for learning. All handbooks are available online [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/students/rights/](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/students/rights/); a printed copy may be requested from your school.

If you have received notice that your child has been suspended or recommended for expulsion, please review the letter provided to you and the *Student Code of Conduct* for an understanding of the alleged inappropriate or disruptive behavior and allowable consequences. This guide will help you support and advocate for your child through the disciplinary process.

## DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCES

A variety of strategies and disciplinary responses, including restorative practices and progressive discipline, are used to address student behavior. Suspension and expulsion are considered last resort options.

### SHORT-TERM (1–3 DAYS) OR LONG-TERM (4–10 DAYS) SUSPENSION

Principals can suspend a student for up to 10 days and must notify parents in writing. Suspension may mean either removal of a student from the classroom (in-school suspension) or from the school building (out-of-school suspension).

### EXTENDED SUSPENSION (11–44 DAYS) OR EXPULSION (45+ DAYS)

Only the superintendent, or the superintendent's designee, can suspend a student for more than 10 days. An extended suspension or expulsion may be implemented when a student poses an imminent threat of serious harm to other students and staff or the student has engaged in chronic and extreme disruption of the educational process.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

There are additional protections for students who receive special education services or have a Section 504 plan. If your student is suspended, get in touch with the IEP or Section 504 team at your school, or your student's counselor, to make sure their disability is considered appropriately.

A manifestation meeting (IEP) or Causation meeting (504) must occur if your child receives a total of more than 10 days of suspension during the school year. This meeting will determine if your child's conduct was directly related to their educational disability. Please be aware, a manifestation meeting or causation meeting will not occur if your child is suspended for a cumulative 10 days or less.

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING SUSPENSION?

- When students are suspended they are entitled to educational services and will receive school work to keep them up-to-date on what is going on in their classes.
- Students are not allowed on MCPS property and are not allowed to participate in any MCPS sponsored event (to include extra-curricular activities) while they are on suspension.
- If a student is placed on extended suspension or expulsion, they will be assigned to Alternative Programs where they will receive instruction.

## REVIEWS & APPEALS

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The appeals process may last longer than the suspension.

### Short-term or Long-term Suspensions (10 days or fewer):

- You may ask the principal to reconsider a suspension of 10 days or fewer if you think additional information needs to be considered. Send that information in an email or letter to the principal immediately.
- If the principal does not revise their decision you may ask the director of the Division of Pupil Personnel and Attendance Services (DPPAS) to review the principal's decision to see if the principal applied the suspension rules correctly based on the information available.
- If you are not satisfied with DPPAS's decision, you may appeal to the superintendent by contacting the Division of Appeals within 15 calendar days.

### Extended Suspensions or Expulsions (longer than 10 days):

- If the principal has recommended expulsion, the process for asking for a review is a little different.
- It is the superintendent's decision to expel a student, so if you believe the superintendent applied the rules incorrectly based on the information available, you may appeal directly to the Board of Education within 10 calendar days.

## RECORDS

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### Confidentiality

School discipline records, including suspensions and expulsions, are considered confidential information, which means they can't be shared publicly. As such, school administrators cannot share any disciplinary actions with anyone other than the student's parent(s) or guardian(s). This is protected by laws like the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#).

### Removal from Student's Record

Suspensions can sometimes be removed from a student's record. This is considered when the student is a first-time offender or the behavior was a minor infraction. Parents or guardians can discuss the possibility of removing the suspension with school administrators. While removals from student records are possible; they are not guaranteed. (MCPS Regulation JGA-RB).

## REINTEGRATION

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Reentry into the learning environment is an important part of the discipline process. We want all students to be successful in school, even after a disciplinary consequence. Your school administrator will schedule a required intake meeting and work with you on a plan to bring your child back into school after a suspension for a successful school year. That plan will include expectations for your child's behavior and the resources that will be made available to your child.

## WHO TO CALL

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If you have questions about your child's disciplinary process or need additional support, please contact the school-based staff listed below.

For academic work

School counselor

Pupil Personnel Worker (PPW)

Parent Community Coordinator (PCC)

Translation services - Request to coordinate interpretation services with staff at school

## RESOURCES

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For **STUDENT HANDBOOKS**, visit  
[montgomeryschoolsmd.org/students/rights/](https://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/students/rights/)

