

REENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

TIPS FOR FAMILIES

New school discipline laws went into effect September 30, 2013. One of the significant changes requires school districts to create reengagement plans for every student excluded from school **for 10 or more days**.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A STUDENT GETS SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED?

When your student is expelled or suspended for longer than 10 school days, the school must create a reengagement plan. The school should contact you to invite you to a reengagement meeting. This should happen within 20 days of the suspension or expulsion, but no more than five days before the end of your student's exclusion. Make sure the meeting is set for a date and time that works for you and your student.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A REENGAGEMENT MEETING?

The meeting gives you, your student, and the school an opportunity to:

- 1) Establish a plan for ensuring safety for all;
- 2) Collaboratively develop a plan for the best way for your student to return to school as soon as possible;
- 3) Collaboratively develop a plan to address and amend the situation that led to your student's exclusion;
- 4) Help reconnect you to the school thereby improving your student's ability to succeed in school and life.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR THE MEETING?

- Think about the goals for returning your student to school as soon as possible.
- Reflect on how your student's behavior might have looked through the school's eyes.
- Reflect on what support, resources and skills you and your student might need to prevent future problems.
- Have the facts as you know them prepared to share with the school.
- Review the model meeting template as an option for use at the meeting (on back of page).

AT THE MEETING:

- Acknowledge common goals you may share (see template).
- Hear the administrator out. Let them tell their side of the story. You don't have to agree.
- Discuss how all parties could repair damaged relationships that led to or resulted from the incident.
- Think of ways your student could reconnect socially and academically.
- Think of ways your student may be able to transition back to school with dignity.
- Think of ways your student may continue to keep up academically and earn credits while out of school.
- Help the school find positive activities your student could be doing in and out of school.
- With the help of your student, think of trusted adult role models that your student could have contact with regularly once he/she returns.
- *Establish a schedule for regular connection/progress assessment with your student and reporting to the school. At least weekly is recommended for the first month back in school.*
- Avoid getting defensive.
- Avoid making accusations.
- Remember, you are all looking for ways for your student to be successful in school and in life.



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While this publication provides basic information on education law in Washington State, it is not legal advice, and is not in any way intended to be a substitute for legal advice or representation. This document was developed collaboratively with TeamChild, the Office of the Education Ombudsman, and Sound Discipline and is intended to provide support to educators, families and students as they implement strategies to reengage students who have been excluded from school.

SAMPLE MEETING TEMPLATE

SHARE GOALS FOR THE MEETING (choose those that apply)

- Safety
- Ensure that behavior is not repeated
- Access to education for your student
- Rebuild the connection between you, your student, and your school, school staff, other students
- Additional academic and social support for your student
- Other: _____

WHAT IS YOUR STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT IS THE SCHOOL'S PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT HAPPENED?

HOW MIGHT YOUR STUDENT MAKE AMENDS (REPAIR DAMAGE TO THINGS OR RELATIONSHIPS)?

HOW MIGHT THE SCHOOL SUPPORT BETTER OUTCOMES AND/OR REPAIR THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SCHOOL (STAFF) AND YOUR STUDENT AND YOU?

WHAT IS THE SAFETY PLAN FOR THE FUTURE THAT DOES ITS BEST TO HONOR THE DIGNITY OF YOUR STUDENT, YOUR FAMILY, AND THE STAFF OF THE SCHOOL?

HOW WILL YOUR STUDENT RECONNECT ACADEMICALLY AND SOCIALLY AT SCHOOL TO AIM TOWARD SUCCESS?

HOW /WHEN WILL THE ADMINISTRATOR FOLLOW UP WITH YOU AND YOUR STUDENT?



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