

REENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

TIPS FOR STUDENTS

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 you have been expelled or suspended for longer than 10 school days, your school must create a reengagement plan. Your 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 exclusion. Make sure the meeting is set for a date and time that works for you and your family.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A REENGAGEMENT MEETING?

The meeting gives you, your parent/guardian, and the school an opportunity to:

- 1) Build a plan to make sure everyone stays safe;
- 2) Plan with others for the best way for you to return to school as soon as possible;
- 3) Talk with others about the situation that led to your exclusion and plan how to make it better;
- 4) Help reconnect you and your family to the school so you can succeed at school.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR THE MEETING?

- Think about your goals for returning to school as soon as possible.
- Reflect on how your behavior might have looked through the school's eyes. You don't need to agree.
- Reflect on what support, resources and skills you or your family might need to prevent future problems.
- Be prepared to share the facts as you know them with your school administrator.
- Review the model meeting template as an option for use at the meeting (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.
- Identify ways you could reconnect socially and academically. What are some of your strengths? How could you use them here?
- Identify ways you may be able to transition back to school with dignity for you and for your school.
- Identify ways you can continue to keep up academically and earn credits while out of school.
- Help the school identify positive activities you could be doing in and out of school.
- Which adults do you trust at school? Which of these adults could support you when you return to school?
- *Establish a schedule for regular connection/progress assessment with your teachers, administrators and your family. At least weekly is recommended for the first month back in school.*
- Avoid getting defensive.
- Avoid making accusations.
- Remember that helping you do better in school in a way that works for everyone is the main goal at the meeting.



www.sounddiscipline.org



www.governor.wa.gov/oEO



www.teamchild.org

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 you
- Rebuild the connection between you, your family and your school, school staff, other students
- Additional academic and social support for you
- Other: _____

WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT IS THE SCHOOL'S PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT HAPPENED?

HOW MIGHT YOU MAKE AMENDS? HOW CAN YOU REPAIR ANY THINGS THAT WERE DAMAGED OR RELATIONSHIPS THAT WERE HURT?

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

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

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

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



www.sounddiscipline.org



www.governor.wa.gov/oeo



www.teamchild.org

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.