

## Sylvan Heights Science Charter School

**Policy Number:** 113.1

**Policy Title:** Discipline of Students with Disabilities

**Approved:** May 17, 2021

**Revised:**

### **Purpose**

The Sylvan Heights Science Charter School (the School) shall develop and implement Positive Behavior Support Plans (PBSP) and programs for students with disabilities who require specific interventions to address behaviors that interfere with learning.

Students with disabilities who violate the Code of Student Conduct, or engage in inappropriate behavior, disruptive or prohibited activities, and/or actions injurious to themselves or others, which would typically result in corrective action or discipline of students without disabilities, shall be disciplined in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and Board policy and, if applicable, their Individualized Education Program (IEP) and PBSP.

### **Definitions**

**Students with disabilities** – school-aged children within the jurisdiction of the School who have been evaluated and found to have one or more disabilities as defined by law, and who require, because of such disabilities, special education and related services.

**Suspensions from school** – disciplinary exclusions from school for a period of one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days.

**Expulsions from school** – disciplinary exclusions from school by the Board for a new period exceeding ten (10) consecutive school days and may include permanent exclusion from school.

**Interim alternative educational settings** – removal of a student with a disability from the student's current placement. Interim alternative educational settings may be used by School personnel for up to forty-five (45) school days for certain infractions committed by students with disabilities. The IEP team shall determine the interim alternative educational setting; however, this does not constitute a change in placement for a student with a disability.

### **Authority**

The Board directs that the School shall comply with provisions and procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and federal and state regulations when disciplining students with disabilities for violations of Board policy or School rules or regulations. No student with a disability shall be subjected to a disciplinary change in placement if the student's particular misconduct is a manifestation of the student's

disability. However, under certain circumstances a student with a disability may be placed in an interim alternative educational setting by school personnel or the IEP team could, if appropriate, change the student's educational placement to one which is more restrictive than the placement where the misconduct occurred.

### **Provision of Education During Disciplinary Exclusions**

During any period of expulsion, or suspension from school for more than ten (10) cumulative days in a year, or placement in an interim alternative educational setting for disciplinary reasons, a student with a disability shall continue to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), in accordance with law.

### **Suspension from School**

A student with a disability may be suspended for ten (10) consecutive and fifteen (15) cumulative days of school per school year, for the same reasons and duration as a student without a disability. Such suspension shall not constitute a change in the student's educational placement.

### **Changes in Educational Placement/Manifestation Determinations**

For disciplinary exclusions which constitute a change in educational placement, the School shall first determine whether the student's behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability. Expulsion, or exclusion from school for more than fifteen (15) cumulative days in a year, or patterns of suspensions for substantially identical behaviors constitute changes in educational placements requiring a manifestation determination. For students with intellectual disability, any disciplinary suspension or expulsion is a change in educational placement.

A pattern exists when:

- The series of removals totals more than ten (10) school days in a school year;
- The student's behavior is substantially similar to the student's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in a series of removals; and
- Additional factors exist, such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

A Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) shall be issued to the parent/guardian, along with the notice of procedural safeguards, prior to removing the student from his/her current placement in accordance with law and regulations.

A student with a disability whose behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability may be disciplined in accordance with Board policy and School rules and regulations in the same manner and to the same extent as students without disabilities.

### **Parent/Guardian Appeals from Disciplinary Actions/Request for Hearing by District for Students who are a Danger to Themselves or Others**

A due process hearing may be requested by a parent/guardian of a student with a disability who disagrees with a disciplinary placement or manifestation determination, or by the School if the School believes that the current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others. On parent/guardian appeal, or when the School requests a due process hearing, the hearing officer may return the student to the placement from which the student was removed or order the student's removal to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for up to forty-five (45) school days in the hearing officer determines that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in an injury to the student or others.

Placement during appeals of disciplinary actions shall be in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or expiration of the time period set for the disciplinary exclusion from the student's regular placement unless the School and the parent/guardian agree otherwise.

### **Students not Identified as Disabled/Pending Evaluation**

Students who have not been identified as disabled may be subject to the same disciplinary measures applied to students without disabilities if the School did not have knowledge of the disability. If a request for evaluation is made during the period the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the evaluation shall be expedited.

### **Administrative Removal to Interim Alternative Educational Setting for Certain Infractions**

School personnel may remove a student with a disability, including intellectual disability, to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability if the student:

1. Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school property, or at school functions under the jurisdiction of the School. For purposes of this provision, **weapon** is defined as a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than two and one-half (2 ½) inches in length.
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, as defined by law, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, as defined by law, while at school, on school property, or at school functions under the jurisdiction of the School.
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school property, or at school functions under the jurisdiction of the School. For purposes of this provision, **serious bodily injury** means bodily injury which involves a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or

protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

### **Referral to Law Enforcement and Reporting Requirements**

For reporting purposes, the term “incident” shall mean an instance involving an act of violence; the possession of a weapon; the possession, use, or sale of a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined in the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device, and Cosmetic Act; the possession, use, or sale of alcohol or tobacco; or conduct that constitutes an offense listed under the Safe Schools Act.

The Principal/Chief Academic Officer (CAO) or designee shall immediately report required incidents and may report discretionary incidents committed on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from school or school-sponsored activity by a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school’s property, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies. The Principal/CAO or designee shall respond to such incidents in accordance with the School’s Special Education Plan and, if applicable, the procedures, methods, and techniques defined in the student’s PBSP.

For a student with a disability who does not have a PBSP, subsequent to notification to law enforcement, the School shall convene the student’s IEP team to consider whether a PBSP should be developed to address the student’s behavior, in accordance with law, regulations and Board policies.

When reporting an incident committed by a student with a disability to the appropriate authorities, the School shall provide the information required by state and federal laws and regulations and shall ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the student are transmitted for consideration by these authorities. The School shall ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) when transmitting copies of the student’s special education and disciplinary records.

In accordance with state law, the Principal/CAO or designee shall annually, by July 31, report to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form all new incidents committed by students with disabilities, including students for whom an evaluation is pending, which occurred on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from school or school-sponsored activity.

### **References:**

18 U.S.C. Sec. 930  
18 U.S.C. Sec. 1365(h)(3)  
20 U.S.C. Sec. 1400 et seq.  
21 U.S.C. Sec. 812

34 CFR Part 300

24 P.S. Sec. 510

35 P.S. Sec. 780-102

22 PA Code 10.2

22 PA Code 10.21

22 PA Code 10.22

22 PA Code 10.23

22 PA Code 10.25

22 PA Code 12.6

22 PA Code 14.104

22 PA Code 14.133

22 PA Code 14.143

Policy: 103.1, 113, 113.2, 113.3, 216, 218, 218.1, 233