

NMSD Discipline Handbook

Outline:

- Definition(s) from WA law and NMSD Policy
- Philosophy of NMSD on Discipline
- Non-Discrimination Statement
- Civility Policy
- Student Rights Policy, Conduct and Discipline
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- School-Wide Discipline Plan: PBIS
 - Student Conduct: Consistent Expectations/Rules
 - Reinforcement/Feedback
 - Student Discipline: Responding to Inappropriate Behavior
- Suspension or Expulsion Process

Definition(s) of Discipline from WA law and/or NMSD Policies

Discipline – any action taken by a district in response to a behavioral violation

Other forms of discipline – response to behavioral violation NOT rising to the level of classroom exclusion, suspension or expulsion

Legal Authorities:

- State:
 - Statute - Chapter 28A.600 RCW
 - OSPI regulations - Chapter 392-400 WAC
- District:
 - Policies/procedures - Policy 3240, Policy 3241, Policy 3200

PHILOSOPHY ON STUDENT DISCIPLINE

At North Mason School District, we believe each student deserves the right to a fair and appropriate education in which her or his race, ethnicity, culture, religion, and abilities will be valued, celebrated, and used as a vehicle during academic instruction. We are dedicated to being proactive in our efforts to implement discipline practices and policies that aim to keep our students in class, receiving access to instruction, and being provided the support to succeed. Likewise, we will identify and correct practices and policies that threaten to perpetuate gaps between discipline, achievement, and access to educational opportunities that benefit students.

In connection with OSPI, North Mason School District has reviewed the changes to the discipline rules and are changing district policies and procedures.

The purpose of the changes are as follows:

- Implement culturally responsive discipline that provides opportunity for all students to achieve personal & academic success
- Ensure fairness & equity in administration of discipline
- Administer discipline in ways that respond to needs & strengths of students, support students in meeting behavioral expectations & keep students in class to the maximum extent possible
- Facilitate collaboration between staff, student & parents to ensure successful reentry following suspension/expulsion
- Discrimination concerns
- Successful advocacy by student-oriented groups
- Moves away from zero-tolerance policies (except guns)

Each building in North Mason will have a Student Handbook that will include building specific descriptions on:

- Behavioral Expectation Matrix
- Discipline Response to Behavior Flowchart
- Definitions of Minor and Major Behaviors

Non-Discrimination Statement

North Mason School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employee(s) has been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination: Title IX Coordinator, Mark Swofford, mwofford@northmasonschoools.org; Section 504 Coordinator, Thom Worlund, tworlund@northmasonschoools.org; and Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator, Lisa Roberts, lroberts@northmasonschoools.org. They can be reached by email, phone at 360-277-2300, or by mail at 71 E Campus Dr. Belfair, WA 98528.

Code of Civility

The North Mason School District members, district administration, and staff will treat students, parents/guardians and other members of the public with respect and expect the same consideration in return. It is the intent of the Board to promote mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among district employees, parents, students, and the public. It is not the intent of the Board to deprive any person of his or her right of freedom of expression. The Board encourages positive communication and discourages volatile, hostile, or aggressive communications or actions. The Board believes that a strong civility policy serves the district's educational mission by ensuring a positive learning environment while also protecting the health and safety of members of the learning community and participants in school-sponsored activities. Loud and offensive speech and threatening behavior models unacceptable conduct and subjects both victims and observers to the risk of harm. Therefore, the North Mason School District Board requires that as we communicate, students, faculty and staff, parents, guardians and all other members of the community shall:

1. Treat each other with courtesy and respect always. This means that:
 - We listen carefully and respectfully as others express opinions that may be different from ours.
 - We share our opinions and concerns without loud or offensive language, gestures or profanity.
2. Treat each other with kindness. This means that:
 - We treat each other as we would like to be treated.
 - We do not threaten or cause physical or bodily harm to another.
 - We do not threaten or cause damage to the property of another.
 - We do not bully, belittle or tease another and we do not allow others to do so in our presence.
 - We do not demean and are not abusive or obscene in any of our communications.
3. Take responsibility for our own actions. This means that:
 - We share information honestly.
 - We refrain from displays of temper.
 - We do not disrupt or attempt to interfere with the operation of a classroom or any other work or public area of a school or school facility.
4. Cooperate with one another. This means that:
 - We obey school rules for access and visitation.
 - We respect the legitimate obligations and time constraints we each face.
 - We notify each other when we have information that might help reach our common goal. This will include information about safety issues, academic progress, changes that might impact a student's work or events in the community that might impact the school.
 - We respond when asked for assistance.
 - We understand that we do not always get our way.

Authority and Enforcement of the Code of Civility

Authority and enforcement of a code for civil conduct ultimately depends on the individual and collective will of those involved – students, staff, parents, guardians and all other members of the community. However, individuals need to know how to respond to uncivil behavior and how such behavior will be responded to. The school board does not condone a lack of civility by anyone. Therefore:

1. A student who believes that he or she has not been treated in a manner reflective of the Code of Civility should report such behavior to the appropriate school administrator.
2. A parent, guardian or community member who believes that he or she has not been treated in a manner reflective of the Code of Civility should report such behavior to the staff member's immediate supervisor.
3. An employee or Board Member who believes that he or she has not been treated in a manner reflective of the Code of Civility should use the following guidelines:
 - If personal harm is threatened, the employee shall inform his/her supervisor and may contact law enforcement.
 - Anyone on school district property without authorization may be directed to leave the premises by an administrator or security officer. Anyone who threatens or attempts to disrupt school or school district operations, physically harm someone, intentionally cause damage, uses loud or offensive language, gestures, profanity or shows a display of temper may be directed to leave the premises by an administrator or security officer. If such person does not immediately and willingly leave, law enforcement shall be called.
 - If a telephone call recorded by an answering machine, an email, a voice mail message or any type of written communication is demeaning, abusive, threatening or obscene the employee is not obligated to respond. The employee shall save the message and contact his or her immediate supervisor or school district security.
4. If any member of the public uses obscenities or speaks in a demeaning, loud or insulting manner, the employee or Board Member to whom the remarks are directed shall take the following actions:
 - Calmly and politely ask the speaker to communicate civilly.
 - If the verbal abuse continues, give appropriate notice to the speaker and terminate the meeting, conference or telephone conversation.
 - If the meeting or conference is on school district premises, request that an administrator or authorized person direct the speaker promptly to leave the premises.
 - If the speaker does not immediately leave the premises, an administrator or other authorized person shall notify law enforcement to take any action deemed necessary.

District Policies including Student Rights, Student Conduct and Student Discipline

Policy No. 3200 Rights & Responsibilities

Each year, the superintendent shall develop handbooks pertaining to student rights, conduct and discipline and make the handbooks available to all students, their parents and staff. The superintendent shall develop such handbooks with the participation of parents and the community.

The school principal and certificated staff shall confer at least annually to develop and/or review student conduct standards and the uniform enforcement of those standards as related to the established student handbooks. They will seek to develop precise definitions for common problem behaviors and build consensus on what constitutes a manifestation of those problem behaviors. The definitions will also address differences between major and minor manifestations of problem behaviors to identify those problem behaviors that teachers and other classroom staff can generally address and those problem behaviors that are so severe that an administrator needs to be involved. This work will also help district staff identify and address differences in the perception of subjective misbehaviors and reduce the effect of implicit bias.

They shall also confer annually to establish criteria for determining when the certificated employee must complete classes to improve classroom management skills.

All students who attend the district's schools shall comply with the written policies, rules and regulations of the schools, shall pursue the required course of studies, and shall submit to the authority of staff of the schools, subject to such discipline, including other forms of discipline as the school officials shall determine.

Policy No. 3241 Student Discipline

“Discipline” means any action taken by the school district in response to behavioral violations. Discipline is not necessarily punitive but can take positive and supportive forms. Data show that a supportive response to behavioral violation is more effective and increases equitable educational opportunities. The purposes of this policy and accompanying procedure include:

- Engaging with families and the community and striving to understand and be responsive to cultural context
- Supporting students in meeting behavioral expectations, including providing for early involvement of parents
- Administering discipline in ways that respond to the needs and strengths of students and keep students in the classroom to the maximum extent possible
- Providing educational services that students need during suspension and expulsion
- Facilitating collaboration between school personnel, students, and parents, and thereby supporting successful reentry into the classroom following a suspension or expulsion
- Ensuring fairness, equity, and due process in the administration of discipline
- Providing every student with the opportunity to achieve personal and academic success
- Providing a safe environment for all students and for district employees

Policy No. 3205 Sexual Harassment of Students Prohibited

This district is committed to a positive and productive education free from discrimination, including sexual harassment. This commitment extends to all students involved in academic, educational, extracurricular, athletic, and other

programs or activities of the school, whether that program or activity is in a school facility, on school transportation or at a class or school training held elsewhere.

Definitions: For purposes of this policy, sexual harassment means unwelcome conduct or communication of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can occur adult to student, student to student or can be carried out by a group of students or adults and will be investigated by the District even if the alleged harasser is not a part of the school staff or student body. The district prohibits sexual harassment of students by other students, employees or third parties involved in school district activities.

Under federal and state law, the term “sexual harassment” includes:

- acts of sexual violence;
- unwelcome sexual or gender-directed conduct or communication that interferes with an individual’s educational performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment;
- unwelcome sexual advances;
- unwelcome requests for sexual favors;
- sexual demands when submission is a stated or implied condition of obtaining an educational benefit;
- sexual demands where submission or rejection is a factor in an academic, or other school related decision affecting an individual.

A “hostile environment” has been created for a student when sexual harassment is sufficiently serious to interfere with or limit the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the school’s program. The more severe the conduct, the less need there is to demonstrate a repetitive series of incidents. In fact, a single or isolated incident of sexual harassment may create a hostile environment if the incident is sufficiently severe, violent, or egregious.

Refer to Board Policy 3205 for reporting procedures and appeals

SCHOOL-WIDE DISCIPLINE PLAN: **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)**

What is a School-wide Discipline Plan?

A School-wide Discipline plan is an organized, data-driven system of interventions, strategies and supports that positively impact school-wide and individualized behavior planning.

What is PBIS?

PBIS is a school wide plan for teaching and supporting positive behaviors for All students. This approach to behavior is based upon creating consistent behavior management across all settings in a way that promotes student achievement of academic and social success. PBIS promotes the application of socially appropriate behaviors through teaching, modeling, practicing, intervening, and positively rewarding students for appropriate behaviors.

There are three main elements of PBIS:

- Consistent Expectations/Rules

- PBIS focuses on teaching, modeling, and practicing the school wide expectations for all students. The rules and expectations for each school wide area is posted as a visual reminder for all students.
- Providing Feedback and Reinforcement
 - When students follow the rules and expectations, they are recognized and provided feedback that encourages the positive behavior.
- Responding to Inappropriate Behavior
 - When students do not follow the rules, there is a consistent response from staff to the student's behavior, with an emphasis on practices that will provide re-teaching, modeling, and practicing of the appropriate behaviors.

PBIS in the North Mason School District

PBIS is part of our multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) that ensures all students receive the supports and instruction needed to be successful. Every building has created their own behavior expectation matrix. These expectations are taught, modeled and reinforced by all staff throughout the year.

STUDENT CONDUCT: CONSISTENT EXPECTATIONS/RULES

The school-wide expectations for the primary and secondary buildings are unique to the building.

These school-wide expectations are used to define what student conduct should *look* and *sound* like in each location of our school campus. The charts and explanations of the expectations are included in the student handbooks.

REINFORCEMENT/FEEDBACK FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

A key component to a school-wide discipline plan is to actively reinforce students when they demonstrate appropriate behavior. Providing feedback can come in many forms, and each school at NMSD has a plan for consistently acknowledging appropriate behavior, with the goal of increasing appropriate behaviors.

Example: School-wide plan to acknowledge and reinforce desired positive behavior expectations:

- Verbally Acknowledge: *"I like how you are making a good decision by having all of your materials with you for class."*
- Positive calls home
- PAWSitve Tickets or EAGLE Cards- Weekly drawings for fun activities or added privileges

- PBIS assemblies are a great way to: Celebrate individual and group achievements; Allow students to perform mini skits about the appropriate expectations; Acknowledge improvements in student behavior; Invite parents to join the celebration!

STUDENT DISCIPLINE: RESPONDING TO INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

In accordance with NMSD Board Policy 3241, our school is working hard to keep students in school with continuous access to instruction and reserve imposing classroom exclusion, short-term suspension, or in-school suspension for behavior that poses an immediate and continuing danger to others or an immediate and continuing threat to the educational process. Staff will first consider other forms of discipline when responding to inappropriate behavior. The definition of “other forms of discipline” is a “response to behavioral violation NOT rising to the level of classroom exclusion, suspension, or expulsion.”

Defining Inappropriate Behavior: Minor

Minor behaviors are those that can be managed in the setting they occurred (classroom, playground, etc.). A menu of options for other forms of discipline that staff may use to respond to minor behaviors has been developed and staff are provided support in using this response plan.

Defining Inappropriate Behavior: Major

Major behaviors are those that are managed by administration in the building.

When Discipline may result in Suspension or Expulsion the following is the procedures administrators or designee will follow:

<p>Step One: Investigation of Reported Situation and witness statements</p> <p>If findings lead to possible Suspension or Expulsion:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Informal Initial Hearing - To gain a student perspective</p> <p>If potential Short Term or ISS – <u>student</u> has the opportunity to contact parent <i>during</i> the hearing</p> <p>If potential Long Term or Expulsion – <u>Admin</u> contact parents to provide an opportunity to participate in hearing by phone or in person</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">AT Hearing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Notice of Violation ● Supporting Evidence ● Discipline that MAY be imposed ● Student opportunity to share perspective and explanation <p style="text-align: center;">AFTER a hearing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inform student of the decision

- Beginning and End Dates of Discipline

Suspension or Expulsion may begin once:

“ An Informal Initial Hearing has been completed “ Attempt at parent notification *“as soon as reasonably possible”*”

No LATER than one school business day following the informal initial hearing written notice must be given to student and parent. Educational Services agreed upon and written documentation of agreement completed. Sent in Person, by mail or email. Suspension Letters to be copied, placed in the student file AND sent to the District Office.

Following a district’s decision to suspend, expel, or emergency expel a student –

Step 1 - “Informal conference” parent OR student may request this with the principal or designee.

- Must be held within three school business days of receiving the request.
- Parents or student will have a chance to share the student’s perspective, learn more about the incident from the administrator, and attempt to resolve any disagreement regarding the discipline imposed.

Step 2 - “Appeal” or “Appeal Hearing” is the **first formal level** of review for suspensions and expulsions.

- A student or parent must have at least five school business days (three for emergency expulsions) from the date of written notice to appeal to superintendent or designee.

Appeals of Long-term suspensions, expulsions and emergency expulsions

- Heard by superintendent, a hearing officer, or discipline appeal council.
- Within one school business day of receiving the appeal request, the superintendent or designee must provide written notice of the time of the appeal hearing, the name of the presiding official, the right to inspect the evidence and district’s witness list upon request, and the rights at hearing to be represented by counsel, question witnesses, and introduce evidence.
- The hearing must be audio recorded.
- The written appeal decision must be provided to the student and parents within three school business days (one for emergency expulsions) after the hearing.

Appeals of Short-term suspensions and in-school suspensions

- Student and parent must have an opportunity to share the student’s perspective orally or in writing with superintendent or designee
- A written decision must be delivered within two school business days after receiving the appeal including the duration and conditions of the suspension. Letter must include the beginning and end dates; educational series being offered and the right to request “review and reconsideration” by the school board or discipline appeal council.

- During the pendency of the appeal, a suspension or expulsion may be imposed for up to ten days or until the appeal is decided, whichever is shorter.

Step 3 - “Review and Reconsideration” – Appeal to the board or discipline appeal council

- The student and parent have 10 school business days (five for emergency expulsions) from the date the district provides the written appeal decision to request review and reconsideration.
- The board or council need not conduct a hearing but must consider all available evidence and all records from the appeal and may request to hear further arguments and gather additional information from the parties.
- Recording of the hearing shall be available for the board.
- The board or council must provide a written decision within ten school business days (five for emergency expulsions) of receiving the request for review and reconsideration. Petitions to extend an expulsion will only be allowed after a reengagement plan is created, except for firearms violations. An extension may not exceed the length of an academic term.