

ZERO TOLERANCE/FIGHTING

Fighting is unacceptable for any reason at any Morehouse Parish School. A fight shall be defined as *a physical altercation between two (2) or more students*. The physical nature of a fight could include, but is not limited to, hitting, punching, slapping, poking, grabbing, pulling, tripping, kicking and pushing.

Students and parents will be informed of the policy regarding the consequences for fighting. They will also be informed to report the incidences of bullying and other hostile behaviors, as soon as they occur, to teachers and administrators.

After each incident of fighting, all efforts will be made to determine the underlying cause of the altercation through assistance from school administrators, the School Board's psychologist, or the school counselor.

Each student participating in the fight will give his/her account in writing to a school administrator, and if a student's participation in the fight is deemed as self-defense, no punishment will be issued to that participant.

Students in all grades who congregate around a fight preventing school staff members from breaking up a fight or who film or post a video of a fight on social media will also be subject to disciplinary action.

Notwithstanding any other provision contained in this policy manual or any other document, students in Pre-K through grade 6 who are found fighting will be administered corporal punishment (if proper written consent has been provided by parents) or suspended three (3) days out of school for the first and second fight. Students in grades 5 and 6 accused of a third fight will be suspended pending a Superintendent's (or designee's) hearing. If found guilty at the hearing the student will be assigned thirty (30) days at the alternative school.

Notwithstanding any other provision contained in this policy manual or any other document, students in grades 7 - 12 who engage in such action as fighting as described above shall follow the hierarchy of offenses listed below.

First Offense Fighting:

- The student's parents shall be notified by phone and a letter that their child will be suspended from school and the reason for the suspension. **A Superintendent's (or designee's) hearing will be scheduled, and if the suspension is upheld the student will be assigned to the alternative school for thirty (30) days.**
- The parent/guardian of the student must meet with the school principal or his/her designee during the period of the suspension regarding the student's behavior to

develop an Action Plan on how to help prevent future altercations before the student can be admitted back to the school of origin. A copy of the Action Plan should be placed in the student's permanent records.

Second Offense Fighting:

- The student's parents shall be notified by phone and a letter that their child will be suspended from school for forty-five (45) days and the reason for the suspension.
- The student shall be referred to law enforcement by the school administrator or School Resource Officer.
- After a hearing before the Superintendent or his/her designee, a student found guilty of fighting as a second offense in the same school year shall attend the Fresh Start Alternative School Program for a time period of no more than forty-five (45) days.
- Two (2) documented conferences between the student and a school administrator or the school psychologist shall be held during the thirty (30) days to discuss effective ways to handle conflict among his/her peers.
- The parent/guardian of the student must meet with the school principal or his/her designee during the period of the suspension regarding the student's behavior to develop an Action Plan on how to help prevent future altercations before the student can be admitted back to the school of origin. A copy of the Action Plan should be placed in the student's permanent records.

Third Offense Fighting:

- The student shall be referred to law enforcement by the school administrator or School Resource Officer

Any student who is readmitted to his/her school of origin under a probationary period and who is found, after a hearing before the Superintendent or his/her designee, to have violated his/her probation, shall at a minimum, be expelled from school for one (1) semester and assigned to the Home Bound Program for a period of at least forty-five (45) days. At the end of the time of the Home Bound Program, the student shall be allowed to return to his/her home-based school on probation for the remainder of the original suspension or expulsion period.

Students in Pre-K through Grade 4 who are found fighting will be administered corporal punishment or suspended three (3) days out of school notwithstanding any other provision which may be contained in the policy manual or any other document. Parents will be notified by phone and by letter regarding the disciplinary action.

The provisions of this policy shall be applicable to exceptional children provided special education services pursuant to part I of chapter 8 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes only to the extent the provisions are not in conflict with federal or state statutes, rules, regulations and guidelines applicable to the education of exceptional students.

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Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. "17:81, 17:223, 17:416, 17:416.1; Board minutes 6-3-25.