

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL IN HANDLING STUDENT FIGHTS

The maintenance of appropriate discipline is essential to a school climate conducive to learning. Monitoring student discipline is a responsibility for school personnel; effective discipline, however, results from the cooperative efforts of administrators, teachers, staff, students, and parents.

Fights and other physical confrontations are examples of unacceptable student conduct. When a fight or physical confrontation between students occurs, staff members should act prudently in accordance with the circumstances. The administration should be informed of all fights as soon as possible.

Staff members should take reasonable action including:

1. Use best command voice instructing participants to stop and use combatants' names if known.
2. Request assistance through office call system and/or from nearby staff.
3. Analyze the situation and mentally form a strategy before acting.
4. Request medical assistance for students who appear to have been injured.

Staff members should consider the following conditions before intervening through the use of physical restraint:

1. Personal safety
2. Presence and type of weapon(s)
3. Size of students involved
4. Severity of fight
5. Number of students involved
6. Proximity of persons available to assist

When a staff member physically intervenes, he/she should:

1. Attempt to separate the students involved from each other.
2. Attempt to remove the participants to separate locations.

If at all possible, consistent with protecting students or himself/herself, a staff member must avoid retaliating, even if he/she is hit while intervening in an actual fight.

If a weapon is present, the staff member should attempt to protect other students and himself/herself from harm. Extreme caution should be exercised when confiscating a weapon from a student. *Possession of any weapon must be reported to the principal or his/her designee.*

Once order has been restored and any needed medical assistance has been rendered, the administration must obtain written statements from students and staff regarding the incident, if possible, before the students have the opportunity for collaboration of accounts. Parents must be informed of the incident and consequences.

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