Minnesota Department of Education

A Parent's Guide to the Expulsion Process

Each public school district or charter school must have a discipline policy that explains when a student may be suspended or expelled from school. You or your child should be given a copy or summary at the beginning of each school year.

An expulsion is the most serious consequence and a student can be removed from school for up to one calendar year (365 days). Students are most commonly expelled from school for possession of a weapon (ex. pocketknife) or illegal drugs.

If your child is suspended and may be expelled from school, you and your child have rights and protections under state and federal law. A copy of the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act (PFDA) should be given to you that includes these rights and protections. If your child receives special education services, your child has additional protections under state and federal law.

You and your child have the right to hire an attorney or have someone of your choice represent your child at the expulsion hearing.

Your child's school district must send you a letter with the date of the hearing, the reason your child is being expelled, and a list of all witnesses and what they will say at the hearing. If the hearing date does not work for you, you can ask for it to be changed. After the hearing, the school board will decide if your child will be expelled and the number of days your child will be expelled from school. Your child can only be removed from school for 15 school days from the first day of suspension until the school board makes its decision.

If your child is expelled, the school district or charter school must offer your child education at another location so your child can continue to work toward graduation requirements. If you do not like the services offered by the school district or charter school, you may also choose to enroll your child on your own in another school district or charter school (including online programs), or a nonpublic school (private or home school).

If your child is expelled, you can appeal the expulsion to the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) within 21 calendar days of the date of the school board meeting. You can fax your appeal to 651-582-8725, including the name of the student, the school district, and the date of the expulsion.

If you have any questions about expulsion, including special education questions, you can contact MDE Compliance and Monitoring at 651-582-8689.