

REENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

TIPS FOR EDUCATORS

School districts are required to create reengagement plans for every student excluded from school for 10 or more days.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A STUDENT GETS LONG-TERM SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED?

You have a student who was long-term suspended or expelled because he or she put the safety of him/herself, other students, or staff at risk. It benefits everyone when safety can be re-established and the student can be reconnected with the school community. When a student is expelled or suspended for longer than 10 school days, the school district must create an appropriate, culturally responsive and culturally sensitive reengagement plan. This should happen as soon as possible, within 20 days of the suspension or expulsion if it is for more than 20 days, and no more than five days before the end of the suspension or expulsion if it is for less than 20 days. Parents/Guardians and the student must be invited to attend a Reengagement Meeting set for a mutually agreeable date and time.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A REENGAGEMENT MEETING?

The meeting gives you, the parent/guardian, and the student an opportunity to:

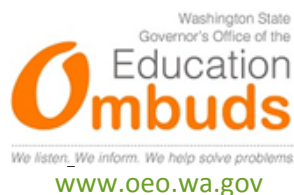
- 1) Establish a plan for ensuring safety for all;
- 2) Discuss the possibility of allowing the student to return to school as soon as possible;
- 3) Collaboratively develop a plan to address and amend the situation that led to the student's exclusion;
- 4) Help reconnect the student and family to the school thereby improving the student's academic potential.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR THE MEETING?

- Connect with the family and student to establish that the meeting is designed to be helpful, not hurtful.
- Reflect on how the student's behavior might have looked through his/her eyes.
- Reflect on what skills the student or family or school staff might be missing that resulted in the problem.
- Have the facts as you know them prepared to share with the student and family.
- Review the model meeting template as an option for use at the meeting (back of page).

AT THE MEETING:

- Acknowledge common goals you may share (see template).
- Hear the parent and student out – let them tell their side of the story.
- Validate feelings and listen actively to what the student and parent may be sharing with you.
- Discuss how all parties could repair damaged relationships that led to or resulted from the incident.
- Review how the alternative educational services offered by the school are working for the student.
- Identify ways the student could reconnect socially and academically.
- Identify ways the student may be able to transition back to school with dignity.
- Help the parent identify positive activities the student could be doing while out of school.
- Identify trusted adult role models that the student could have contact with regularly once they return.
- *Establish a schedule for regular connection/progress assessment with the student and reporting to the family. At least weekly is recommended for the first month back in school.*
- Avoid getting defensive or making accusations.



While this publication provides basic information on education law in Washington State, it is not legal advice, and is not in any way intended to be a substitute for legal advice or representation. This document was developed collaboratively with TeamChild, the Office of the Education Ombuds, and Sound Discipline and is intended to provide support to educators, families and students as they implement strategies to reengage students who have been excluded from school.

SAMPLE MEETING TEMPLATE

SHARE GOALS FOR THE MEETING (choose those that apply)

- Safety
- Ensure that behavior is not repeated
- Access to education for the student
- Rebuild the connection between your school, school staff, other students, and the student and family
- Additional academic and social support for the student
- Other: _____

WHAT IS THE STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT IS THE SCHOOL'S PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT HAPPENED?

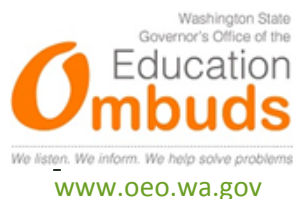
HOW MIGHT THE STUDENT MAKE AMENDS?

HOW MIGHT THE SCHOOL SUPPORT BETTER OUTCOMES AND/OR REPAIR THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SCHOOL (STAFF) AND STUDENT/FAMILY?

WHAT IS THE SAFETY PLAN FOR THE FUTURE THAT DOES ITS BEST TO HONOR THE DIGNITY OF THE STUDENT/FAMILY AND STAFF OF THE SCHOOL?

HOW WILL THE STUDENT RECONNECT ACADEMICALLY AND SOCIALLY AT SCHOOL TO AIM TOWARD SUCCESS?

HOW /WHEN WILL THE ADMINISTRATOR FOLLOW UP WITH THE STUDENT AND FAMILY?



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