



Family Matters Parent Training & Information Center

Fact Sheet: Child with a Disability has been Suspended

1. Take a breath and give yourself some time to fully understand the situation. Do not respond until you have fully explored all of the issues.
2. Connect with an advocate or educational coach through your state Parent Training and Information Center or other educational support resource.
3. If helpful, request a meeting with the educational team and the administrators to discuss how the suspension may impact your child's access to the curriculum.
4. If your child has a documented disability and the behavior leading to the suspension may be related to the disability, you may need to request a "Manifestation Determination Review." This process is an important part of protecting your child's educational rights. Read more here from the Center for Parent Information and Resources/Parent Center Hub: <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/manifestation/>. We encourage you to read the linked document fully, as it will help you understand the process and how you will participate in the meeting.
5. Read more about Discipline - Manifestation Determination Reviews (MDR) from Equip for Equality: <https://www.equipforequality.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Manifestation-Determination-Review-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

At a Manifestation Determination Review meeting, the IEP team must address two key issues (per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act/IDEA)

- (i) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
 - (ii) If the conduct in question was the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP. . . [§300.530(e)(1)-(2)]
6. Understand if services will be provided if the student remains on suspension after a Manifestation Determination Review – from Parent Center Hub: <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/services-discipline/>
 7. Be thoughtful and direct in your communication with the school team. While a disciplinary issue ending in suspension is extremely stressful, it is important to maintain a working relationship with your school team. Generally, we encourage parents to communicate via email whenever possible. If that is not possible, accurately document the content of calls immediately following the call.

8. Do you want to understand more about the authority school team members have in making disciplinary decisions for a child with a disability? Read this Parent Center Hub resource: <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/schoolauthority/>
9. Wrightslaw: Suspensions, Expulsions, and IEP's, from Crabtree, Esq.: <https://www.wrightslaw.com/info/discipl.suspend.crabtree.htm>

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The contents of this (type of publication) were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, #H328M200072. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Project Officer David Emenheiser.

