

Guide to Important Considerations:

► Impact of Suspension on Well-being and Achievement

The Guiding principles of the *Provincial School Code of Conduct Policy* are responsibility, equity, restorative and relationship building, and clarity and consistency. Section 1 of the *Guide for Responding to Unacceptable Behaviours* is based on the guiding principles of the *Provincial School Code of Conduct Policy* in five key areas¹:

- Trauma
- Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Practice
- Age and Stage of Development
- Impact of Suspension on Well-being and Achievement
- Mental Health and Addictions/Well-being

Understanding the potential impact of contributing factors when a student exhibits unacceptable behaviour(s) helps determine appropriate responses and the development of individualized interventions and supports.

There is a wealth of knowledge, resources and expertise within our system to build a shared understanding of the importance of these considerations. These abbreviated guide sheets are intended to build upon the **Important Considerations** outlined in the **Guide to Responding to Unacceptable Behaviours**. The considerations help us broaden our understanding and enhance our learning as we apply the Code of Conduct. In addition to the abbreviated guide sheets, administrators may also refer to the *Three Braids* professional learning resources, which are part of a multifaceted approach to increase understanding, skills, and competencies related to anti-racism and anti-discrimination. These resources focus on the dynamics of racism and discrimination, intersectionality, human rights legislation and its implications, and how to recognize and respond to acts of racism and discrimination in a culturally responsive way.

The Teaching Support Team (TST) can strengthen the school's capacity to support student well-being and achievement by assisting teachers in developing strategies to meet the needs of their students. The Student Planning Team (SPT) can support the identified well-being and achievement of individual students. The TST/SPT can review the important consideration when supporting students.

When Considering Unacceptable Behaviour:

- Interpret behaviours in light of any of the multiple intersecting considerations for all students and families, including their age and stage, trauma, mental health/addictions, disabilities or their diverse cultural or linguistic identities.
- Use student documentation to identify support needs and adjust expectations.

¹ *Guide for Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour* (pages 1–2).

Impact of Suspension on Well-being and Achievement

Schools play a vital role in creating supportive, safe learning environments. While suspensions are sometimes necessary for responding to unacceptable behaviours, they may have an impact on student school experience. When determining consequences, it is essential to understand the impacts for students experiencing the other important considerations (trauma, mental health, developmental stages, and culturally and linguistically diverse responsivity); and how it may impact long term attendance, engagement, well-being and achievement.

Why This Matters	How to Help
<p>Informed Decisions: Understanding the full impact of suspension helps school leaders make decisions that prioritize both safety and student development.</p> <p>Stronger Relationships: Communicating transparently and supporting students and families through difficult moments builds trust and belonging.</p> <p>Inclusive Schools: Awareness of the equity implications of suspension supports a school culture where every student can succeed.</p>	<p>Explain Consequences Clearly: Tailor language to students’ developmental levels. Use concrete, supportive communication and involve students in conversations when appropriate.</p> <p>Preserve Access to Services: When students are suspended, consider how to maintain access to school-based supports (e.g., counselling, speech-language services, mental health care).</p> <p>Limit Disruption: For extended suspensions, work with families and community partners to keep students connected to learning and routine.</p> <p>Plan for Re-Entry: Honour student voice, engage families, use restorative approaches, and identify key staff connections and supports for the student and their family.</p>