

DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT ON STUDENT DISCIPLINE**Page 1 of 3****District Philosophy Statement on Student Discipline**

The Aurora Public Schools Board of Education believes that facilitating learning is the primary function of the district and its schools. It also believes that students must not only master academic content but also acquire behavioral skills that are necessary for their ultimate success. All social institutions, including schools and places of work, establish behavioral expectations of their participants. In a public school district, these expectations and policies must reflect the need to promote an environment that is safe and conducive to learning. Such expectations and policies must also reflect the need for mutual respect and cooperation among all persons in the school community.

When students need support in meeting established expectations, guidance, discipline, and skill-building become essential. Effective discipline should be consistent, persistent, and fair, with a focus on being instructive and corrective. When implemented, discipline should serve solely as a tool for learning or as a means to uphold a safe environment. Building positive relationships with students creates an environment where they feel supported and understood, making them more receptive to guidance. The focus of discipline should be on supporting the student to develop self-regulation and a better understanding of appropriate behavior, rather than simply on punishment. Ultimately, the goal is for students to acquire self-discipline through these supportive relationships, so that minimal external intervention and enforcement are needed.

BEHAVIOR PHILOSOPHY:

All behavior is a form of communication. To effectively support students, we must uncover the root causes of their behaviors and analyze our biases to understand their underlying needs. By understanding and addressing the root causes of behavior through a culturally sustaining problem-solving process, we can support students in developing the skills they need to thrive in a structured and supportive learning environment.

Our Beliefs:

- **Positive and Proactive Behavior Supports:**

Safe and effective learning environments are built upon clear boundaries and high expectations. Preventive measures are the best intervention. Proactive practices rather than punitive measures result in a safe learning environment. Lasting behavioral change is more likely to be achieved when students feel a strong sense of belonging through a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment, through intentional relationships.

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- **Discipline as Teaching and Learning:** Discipline should teach the skills that are needed for the behavior we want to see moving forward. Through inclusionary practices, all students learn from their mistakes, and every challenging situation presents an opportunity for growth and learning for both students and educators. Discipline as a form of punishment is ineffective in building skills and maintaining connection, belonging, and regulation. Consequences should be logical, consistent, and focused on teaching students about their actions and how to make better choices in the future.
- **Restorative Practices:** Restorative practices, grounded in empathy and fairness, are often the best approach to building community, preventing conflict, and repairing relationships after harm has occurred.
- **Interconnectedness of Academics and Behavior:** We understand that academics and behavior are deeply interconnected. Behavioral regulation contributes to educational access and fosters positive behavior. Inclusive and engaging academic practices promote behavioral regulation.
- **Tiered Supports, Not Students:** We believe in a tiered system of support **for** students, not a tiered system of students. All students deserve access to high-quality education and support, aligned to their needs.
- **Co-regulation:** Physical, mental, and emotional well-being is necessary for both students and staff to be successful. Dysregulated adults cannot appropriately regulate a dysregulated student. Co-regulation allows for effective classroom management and maximizes student learning. Effective classroom management and behavior support strategies and beliefs require ongoing professional development and support for staff.
- **Problem-Solving Cycle:** The problem-solving cycle is essential: identify the root cause of behavioral challenges, analyze the situation, implement evidence-based interventions, and evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions.
- **Community and Partnership: Families** play a critical role in supporting their child's learning and well-being, and we strive to foster strong partnerships with families through culturally sustaining approaches and two-way communication, to address challenging behaviors and co-construct a shared understanding of student success.
- **Inclusive Community:** Every student, educator, and staff member deserves to learn and work in an environment that is inclusive and equitable. We acknowledge that biases exist, and we are committed to actively identifying, addressing, and minimizing the impact of bias in all its forms, whether in policies, practices, or personal interaction.

Cross References JK.1, Student Discipline
 JKD/JKE, Suspension/Expulsion of Students

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AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

APS Code: ADH

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