



2014 Resolution to Raise Awareness of School Discipline Concerns and Best Practices

Adopted on March 6, 2014

WHEREAS the State Board of Education affirms its commitment to improving school discipline practices in Washington by collaborating with districts and communities, to promote best practices, and to explore incorporation of a discipline indicator in the Statewide Indicators of Educational System Health framework; and

WHEREAS being removed from the educational environment through in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, or other discipline practices has been found to impact a student's academic success; and

WHEREAS schools in Washington state disciplined over 59,000 students in 2012-13, and data regarding student discipline rates can be found and will be added to in the future at the following webpages:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/Behavior/default.aspx>

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/Discipline/default.aspx>; and

WHEREAS similar to national trends, the majority of suspensions and expulsions in Washington state are for non-violent behavior; and

WHEREAS in Washington state students of color, low-income students, and special education students are suspended and expelled at higher rates; and

WHEREAS the State Board of Education recognizes that efforts are already underway in many districts to improve discipline policies and practices; and

WHEREAS on January 8, 2014 the United States Departments of Education and Justice issued school discipline guidance that draws on emerging research and best practices to help guide state and local efforts to improve school climate and discipline policies with the goal of reducing disproportionality in discipline practices, which can be found on the following webpage

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/index.html>; and

WHEREAS the guidance encourages schools to develop safe, inclusive, and positive school climates that provide students with supports such as evidence-based tiered supports and social and emotional learning; and

WHEREAS the guidance encourages schools to develop clear, consistent, and appropriate expectations and consequences regarding student behavior; and

WHEREAS the guidance encourages districts to engage parents, students, and communities in developing discipline policies and creating positive school climates; and

WHEREAS the guidance encourages schools to collect and monitor discipline data to facilitate continuous improvement of practice and policy, in order to ensure equity in their discipline practices; and

WHEREAS the guidance encourages schools to only remove students from the classroom as a last resort and return students to class as soon as possible; and

WHEREAS the guidance asserts that if students are removed from class they should receive comparable academic instruction and educational services as those received in the classroom.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington State Board of Education encourages schools and school districts to review their locally collected discipline data and review and adjust their discipline policies and practices based on their local data, recognized best practice, and in light of the 2014 federal guidance.