



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



To: Superintendents and Principals of Schools

From: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education

Date: April 28, 2026

Subject: In-School Suspensions, Out-of-School Suspensions and Forced Parent Pickups

Introduction and Background

As we continue to strive for an educational environment that fosters engagement, growth, and success for all students, it is vital to address the critical issue of student discipline and its implications. Recent concerns have arisen regarding the practices related to in-school and out-of-school suspensions, as well as the requirement for parents or guardians to pick up their children when behavioral issues occur. The purpose of this communication is to clarify the regulations surrounding these practices and to provide guidance on ensuring that our disciplinary measures align with the core mission of supporting every student's educational journey.

Forced Pick-Ups

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has been notified of a practice requiring parents and guardians to pick up their students from school when behavioral issues occur. It is important to note that when a district asks a parent or guardian to pick up a student under such circumstances, it is considered an out-of-school suspension (OSS) and as such is subject to the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes ([CGS Section 10-233c](#)). This classification means the student is not only being removed from the school environment for the day but may also need interventions or support to address the underlying behavioral issues. Schools are required to document these cases to comply with the statute, ensure proper communication and collaboration with families about the students' needs, and employ any resources that could help manage the behavior more effectively by the school.

In-School Suspension

[CGS Section 10-233c](#) provides that all suspensions from school for students in grades three to twelve must be in-school suspensions (ISS) except under specific circumstances. Therefore, this requires that all districts have an ISS program. [CGS Section 10-233a](#) redefined an ISS as an exclusion from regular classroom activity for no more than five (previously ten) consecutive school days, without excluding the student from school. Additionally, an ISS cannot extend beyond the end of the school year in which it was imposed.

The only time an OSS may be imposed is when the administration determines that:

- The pupil being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such a serious disruption to the educational process that the suspension should be an OSS; or

- OSS is appropriate for such pupil based on evidence of (1) previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of such pupil, or (2) efforts by the administration to address such disciplinary problems through means other than OSS or expulsion, including positive behavioral support strategies, have not resulted in a change in behavior.

ISS and Compassionate Learning Spaces

The law is not intended to eliminate a district's reasonable need to remove students from school, but rather to encourage school leaders to carefully consider their decisions and to find ways to keep students engaged with school by using an ISS program for misconduct. The CSDE believes that the content of ISS programs should address, but not be limited to, the following:

- placement of pupils by age or grade in a positive learning environment;
- supervision and/or instruction by a qualified individual, as determined by the district;
- prompt access to current school work supplied by the pupil's classroom teachers; and
- guidance on prosocial skills and correcting behavior.

Additionally, districts must ensure that the location and services provided during ISS support learning for students with an IEP or Section 504 plans. For students with disabilities, ISS must meet three components: (1) participation in the general education curriculum appropriate to their needs, (2) receiving services outlined in the IEP or 504, and (3) continued participation with nondisabled peers.

Successful and effective ISS programs require thoughtful planning to achieve the goals of reconnecting students to the learning community and remediation of behavioral and subsequent academic concerns.

Child Find

School districts are obligated to identify, locate, and evaluate all children who are either diagnosed with or suspected as having a disability. Pursuant to the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) Section 10-76d-7 school districts are legally obligated to promptly refer students to a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) who are suspended repeatedly in or out-of-school, or whose behavior, attendance, including truant behavior, or academic progress in school is considered unsatisfactory or at a marginal level of acceptance.

In cases where a student is found eligible for special education, the PPT will develop an IEP, including recommended behavioral supports and services, that provides the student with access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). If a student's behavior impedes their learning or that of others, the PPT must consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior. If the student exhibits behaviors that impede learning for themselves or others, the IEP will indicate if (1) IEP goal(s) and objectives will be developed to address the behavior; (2) a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) has been developed; or (3) other supports will be implemented.

For additional information regarding discipline and students in the special education referral process or eligible for special education please refer to the [Special Education Procedures and Practices Manual](#).

Suspensions of Students in Preschool and Kindergarten to Grade Two

- In cases where a school has determined that a suspension is necessary for a child attending certain preschool programs, an OSS is prohibited. [CGS Section 10-233l](#), which was enacted specifically to address the use of exclusionary discipline in preschools, categorically prohibits the use of OSS for students attending preschool programs operated by local or regional boards of education, charter schools or interdistrict magnet schools.
- For students in kindergarten to grade two, [CGS Section 10-233c](#) provides that an OSS may be used in rare situations involving conduct on school grounds. An OSS is permissible only if it is determined that an OSS is appropriate based on evidence that the student's conduct (on school grounds) was of *serious* physical harm, ([Public Act 26-1](#)) to themselves or others, and only up to five days in duration. In all other situations where a suspension is necessary for a child in kindergarten to grade two, the law requires the school to use an ISS for no more than five consecutive days.
- Districts must provide trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate services that align with any BIP, IEP, or Section 504 plan upon the student's return to school immediately following the OSS ([CGS 10-233c\(g\)](#)).

Administrators should carefully review the requirements of [CGS Sections 10-233a through 10-233f and 10-233l](#) and ([RCSA](#)) [Section 10-76d-7](#) and work with staff and attorneys to implement and comply with the provisions therein. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Kimberly.Traverso@ct.gov.

Thank you for your attention to this important work so that, working together, we can achieve welcoming and supportive learning spaces that foster engagement, growth and success for all our students.

CRT:kst

cc:

Sinthia Sone-Moyano, Deputy Commissioner
John D. Frassinelli, Division Director
Bryan Klimkiewicz, Division Director
Dr. Kimberly S. Traverso, Education Consultant