



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

HCCPS Procedures for Director Hearings for Long-Term Suspension

Purpose

This procedure outlines the process for principal hearings regarding long-term suspensions (more than 10 consecutive school days), ensuring due process, fairness, and compliance with M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H3/4. Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School prioritizes restorative practices and alternative remedies whenever possible while ensuring disciplinary actions are applied equitably.

Procedures for Director Hearing for Long-Term Suspension

1. Notification of Hearing

- Before imposing a long-term suspension, the Director of Teaching and Learning (or designee) provides the student and parent/guardian with written notice of:
 - The disciplinary offense and the basis for the charge;
 - The date, time, and location of the hearing;
 - The student's right to:
 - Be represented by counsel or an advocate (at the student's/parent's expense);
 - Present evidence and call witnesses;
 - Confront and cross-examine witnesses;
 - Present mitigating circumstances;
 - The parent/guardian's right to attend and participate in the hearing;
 - The potential consequences, including length of suspension;
 - The right to appeal the decision to the Head of School.
- Notice is provided in a language the parent/guardian understands, as required by civil rights laws.

2. Conducting the Hearing

- The hearing is conducted by the Director of Teaching and Learning (or designee) and includes the following elements:
 - A full discussion of the alleged disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any relevant information;
 - An opportunity for the student to respond and present information, including mitigating facts;
 - The opportunity for the parent/guardian, if present, to share perspectives and mitigating circumstances;
 - The right of the student to present witnesses and cross-examine any witnesses presented by the school;



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- Consideration of alternative remedies, such as restorative justice, mediation, or behavioral interventions, before determining consequences.

3. Determination and Decision

- After reviewing all available information, including any mitigating circumstances, the principal determines whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and, if so, decides on the appropriate consequence.
- The principal considers:
 - The student's prior disciplinary record;
 - The severity of the offense;
 - Any relevant mitigating factors;
 - The potential impact of the suspension on the student's education.
- The principal provides a written determination that includes:
 - The decision on whether the student committed the offense;
 - The reason for the decision;
 - If a suspension is imposed, the duration and start date of the suspension;
 - The student's right to academic services and an education plan to ensure academic progress during the suspension;
 - The student's right to appeal the decision to the Head of School.

4. Right to Appeal

- If a long-term suspension is imposed, the student and parent/guardian have the right to appeal the decision to the Head of School.
- The request for an appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days of the principal's decision.
- The Head of School must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) school days of receiving the request.
- The student has the same due process rights at the appeal hearing as in the original principal hearing.
- The Head of School's decision is final.

5. Educational Services During Suspension

- The student will receive academic assignments and access to schoolwork to maintain progress.
- The school ensures alignment with Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks to keep the student on track.

By following these procedures, Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School ensures that long-term suspensions are handled in a fair, transparent, and legally compliant manner, while prioritizing student support and engagement.