

Discipline Policy

Azure Fields Charter High School discipline policy focuses on building community and self-discipline through rhythm and restorative practices. Rather than punishment, AFCHS emphasizes developing love and respect within firm and healthy boundaries.

“Healthy working relationships with parents, colleagues, and all stakeholders are essential to the well being of the student, class, and school community” (Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, Core Principle #4). Clear communication processes will be used to address the root cause of behaviors, discover unmet needs, establish consistent follow-through and clear consequences related to student actions. Restorative approaches will be used to re-integrate students after serious issues such as fighting, bullying, defiance, etc.

Core Principles

Our school motto is “Developing the Human Capacity for Goodness, Beauty, and Truth.”

- Goodness includes developing love and respect to foster a warm, respectful community where everyone can learn.
- Beauty is found in rhythm and routine. Daily, weekly, and yearly rhythms provide structure, building trust and responsibility.
- Truth leads to a developmental understanding where discipline aligns with child development, seeing the child's needs before reacting.

These principles lead to discipline that is gentle on the child, yet firm on behavior. We maintain unconditional positive regard for each individual while firmly addressing unacceptable conduct through:

- **Direct Communication:** Teachers address issues directly with students and parents/guardians.
- **Restorative Practices:** Teachers help students learn from mistakes and how to repair harm. Restorative practices include assessing student and community needs in identifying root causes of problem behaviors and finding solutions that are fair for everyone in the community.
- **Discipline Referrals/Incident Reports:** Written reports for serious or escalating issues (aggression, disrespect, theft, bullying) will be used to document incidents, and communicate both internally among faculty members and externally with parents/guardians.

- Consequences: Natural consequences are linked to misbehavior to build an understanding of how the world and our society function.

Traditional reward/sanction systems (points/stickers) are generally avoided in favor of intrinsic motivation and relational approaches. In essence, AFCHS discipline policies aim to guide students toward inner self-discipline and responsibility within a supportive, community-focused environment, using clear, developmentally appropriate interventions rather than punitive measures.

Discipline Procedure

Expected behavior Exhibiting school values, cooperative, respectful	Reminding and reteaching Handled by teacher; documentation possible but not required.	Minor Handled by teacher; documented; inform parents	Major Dean of Students; documented; conference with parents; behavior plan; possible in-school suspension	Severe Dean of Students and Executive Director; conference with parents; behavior plan; possible suspension or expulsion
Language: socially appropriate, respectful; Language that honors and validates others and their values/beliefs/person	offensive remarks or gestures; Annoying on purpose, altering names, teasing too far	Repeated pattern of inappropriate language, gestures; Put-downs, threatening and/or disrespectful body language or posturing; targeting insults	Language used to harass, intimidate, show defiance, create an unsafe climate; Threat/extortion; speech targeting a protected class; continued pattern of minor offenses; continued proximity after separation; cyberbullying/intimidation	Threats with intent, verbal discrimination against racial/ethnic aggression, sexual orientation/gender ; Bullying and Harassment: Severe or persistent bullying, including cyberbullying, intimidation, and threatening behavior.
Physical : respect for others' personal space; Walking away from and reporting conflicts	rough play	Pre-fight aggressive posturing, wrestling, or bumping into others who do not wish to play	Hitting or kicking; encouraging another to fight, retaliating	Physical assault, fighting, threatening violence, or sexual assault against students or staff
Actions: Acting in a cooperative manner respectful of school and classmates; Responding appropriately when addressed	Passive refusal to participate, extremely slow in response to request, testing the limit	Ignoring reasonable request to stop low-level disruption, overt refusal to participate	Repeated refusal, ignoring reasonable request that leads to escalation and/or to an unsafe situation	Accumulated Discipline Issues: A high number of suspensions or a long history of minor violations that demonstrate a failure to correct behavior
Interchange: Turn taking, contributing appropriately to class discussions and activities	Noise making, outside talk, attention seeking behaviors, bothering others	Repeated pattern of disruptive behaviors	Behavior that stops learning in class, defiant repetition of behaviors following correction	Severe disruptive behavior: continual, willful disobedience, defiance of authority, and disruption of the educational process
Property Use: Use equipment in manner it was intended; return items to appropriate places	Not returning items to appropriate places	Thoughtlessly or accidentally damaging property	Theft, damaging or defacing property	Vandalism and Property Damage: Willful theft, destruction, or defacing of school property
Honesty/Integrity: Produce authentic work; honesty in speech and actions	Borrowing without asking; intentionally breaking rules in bad faith	Taking another's property, refusing to return a borrowed item; copying others' work and claiming as one's own	Taking another's property (significant sentimental or monetary value), not telling the truth when it involves someone's personal safety or property damage; repeated instances of plagiarism	Repeated and continuous instances of taking another's property (significant sentimental or monetary value), not telling the truth when it involves someone's personal safety or property damage; repeated instances of plagiarism
Safety: Never using or making inappropriate references to controlled substances or weapons; never viewing/accessing appropriate sites and content	Inappropriate drug, alcohol, and/or weapon references; inappropriate sexual references and jokes	Repeated inappropriate sexual and drug references, talking about use of actual or look-alike weapons in violent ways towards a community member	Under the influence, possession, distribution, paraphernalia of drugs or possession of actual or look-alike weapons or making threats to cause harm using a weapon; possession or use of pornography on school grounds	Repeated offenses: under the influence, possession, distribution, paraphernalia of drugs or possession of actual or look-alike weapons or making threats to cause harm using a weapon; possession or use of pornography on school grounds

*This chart is not an exhaustive list of behaviors and consequences but is to be used as a guideline in assessing behavior.

Teacher Responsibility

Teachers work with each student and the whole class to support relationship-based learning. Teachers utilize redirection for minor one-time behaviors and issue warnings as appropriate, utilizing teaching moments when a student says or does something inappropriate.

Teacher/Guardian/Admin Conference

When behaviors are not resolved at the classroom level, the teacher will initiate a conversation with a parent or guardian to discuss ways to support the student in changing their behavior, these supports might include setting up a classroom-level behavior plan. The student may or may not be invited to this conversation depending on the circumstances.

When behaviors are not resolved after a teacher/guardian collaboration (or a behavior is a major or severe level infraction), a conference will be set up at the school between the teacher, parent/guardian, and administration. A student may be assigned in-school suspension for up to five school days following a major or severe infraction until the teacher/guardian/admin conference determines the official consequences. This meeting must happen within five school days of an infraction unless a parent/guardian requests an extension. The meeting must take place within ten school days of the infraction. The teacher/guardian/admin conference seeks to understand the student holistically to establish supports and consequences that will help the student to be successful at school. The supports and consequences will include a behavior contract with options for the student to repair harm resulting from their behavior. Other consequences may include further in-school suspension and a reintegration plan to return in safety.

Executive Director

Further violations of a Behavior Contract or severe infractions will result in a conference with the parent/guardian and the Executive Director. Law enforcement may become involved at this level depending on the type of infraction.

Suspension procedures

The purpose of suspension is to ensure safety. Acts of aggression and violence may result in suspension while investigations are conducted and restorative procedures are established. Suspensions may be assigned for specific period(s) of the day, up to whole-day and multiple-day suspensions.

In-School Suspension

Because attendance is critical to student success, AFCHS will prioritize accommodating In-School Suspensions for behavior incidents.

1. Parents/guardians will be notified of their student being placed on In-School Suspensions and the duration of the suspension by phone call.
2. The student will be escorted to the room designated for In-School Suspension. The room will be supervised by faculty according to our student supervision policy.
3. Students will be required to write a behavior reflection and perform any assigned restorative tasks before completing their suspension.
4. Students will also be required to bring quiet work. Quiet work may include missing assignments, alternative course work, reading, math practice, or

handwork. If a student fails to bring quiet work, the supervising faculty will have grade-appropriate alternative assignments available.

Out of school suspensions

Out of School Suspensions are occasionally necessary to ensure safety and provide a way to reset and address an incident with calmness and clarity. Out of School Suspensions must be used minimally to ensure safety, and may not be longer than five consecutive school days.

1. **Notification:** The Executive Director and one additional faculty member (Dean of Students, School Counselor, Resource Officer) will meet with the parent to inform them of the suspension. The student will remain with a teacher or administrator until they depart campus under the custody of their parent/guardian. If a suspension is initiated outside of school hours, the Executive Director will reach out to parents by phone and also speak with the student.
2. **Prior to departure from campus:** Until the student departs campus under parent/guardian supervision, the student will remain with a faculty member or administrator until the parent/guardian arrives. While waiting to be picked up, the student may work on homework that does not require devices or a computer. Confiscated student devices will only be released to the parent/guardian.
3. **Departure from campus:** No matter what transportation a student normally uses, suspended students will only be released to their parent/guardian or an emergency contact upon verbal request from the parent/guardian. If a student is not picked up by a parent/guardian, or arrangements made for an emergency contact to pick up the student, by 5:00 pm the school will work with local law enforcement to ensure the student's safe transport home.
4. **Student presence on school property and at school events during suspension:** The suspended student must remain off campus and away from all school activities until the student has completed the re-entry process.
5. **Re-entry process:** During the suspension the student will be asked to engage in a reflective process which includes a re-entry letter and a reflection paper to prepare for their re-entry interview.
On the day of re-entry, the student and a parent/guardian will meet with the Executive Director and one additional faculty member (Dean of Students, School Counselor, Resource Officer). The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the student's reflections and re-entry letter, and to establish the re-entry behavior plan, which includes repairing harm and rebuilding trust.

Safety Leave of Absence for a Victim: Occasionally a victim of violence, or threatened violence, will be placed on a temporary Safety Leave of Absence by a collaborative decision between the Executive Director, school guidance counselor, and the parent/guardian of the victim. Victims on a Safety Leave of Absence will be given a school-excused attendance marking for the duration of the leave, not to exceed 3 school days. Safety Leave of Absence students will not engage in the reflective re-entry process; however, upon returning to school, they will meet with the guidance counselor to address any concerns the student may still have and to make sure they have a plan for feeling safe.

Expulsion

Expulsion means that the school is ending the student/school relationship due to an extreme disciplinary issue. An expulsion may occur when serious issues are repeated and have not been resolved to the satisfaction of the school. In extreme circumstances, an expulsion can be the result of a singular act of felony level violence. The school reserves the right to expel any student in accordance with this policy.

Expulsion procedure

1. Except for a single act of felony level violence, this expulsion procedure may only be initiated after three failed attempts through the Restorative Reintegration Process. A fourth severe level offence will initiate the Expulsion Procedure.
2. Upon a fourth severe level offence, the student will be immediately assigned Out of School Suspension for five school days, and the parent/guardian will be notified with a phone call.
3. During the five school day suspension period, the school will conduct an investigation of the incident and student's record to verify that the student is eligible for expulsion. The Governing Board will hold a hearing in an emergency closed session with the Executive Director and parent/guardian to review the investigation's findings and ratify the expulsion decision.
4. Upon a ratified expulsion decision of the Governing Board, the parent/guardian will be asked to retrieve all of the student's personal property from school grounds and return all school property that they have at home. A school administrator will assist the parent/guardian in retrieving the student's belongings from school grounds. School owned items at home that need to be returned can be dropped off through an arrangement with the Executive Director. A school employee must be present to receive these items.
5. All high school records will be released to the family if or when requested.

A single act of felony level violence will expedite the expulsion procedure. The School Threat Assessment Team will review the case within 3 school days of the incident and make a recommendation for initiating the expulsion procedure, starting with the school investigation and Governing Board hearing.

Attendance at School Events by Expelled Student

- Expulsion terminates a student's right to attend and participate in all school events and activities for two years from the expulsion date.
- After two years, an expelled student may petition to attend the following events by submitting a written request (including email) at least 2 weeks prior to the event. The petition will be reviewed by the Executive Director and at least one other administrator. Events that qualify are:
 - class plays
 - school festivals and events
 - commencement ceremonies
- If permission is granted after a petition, the expelled student will receive a written response detailing the conditions for attending the event.
- An expelled student who is still a minor and granted permission to attend an event (see the list above) must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian for the duration of the event, including arrival and departure.
- An expelled student attempting to attend or participate in a school event who does not meet the above conditions is trespassing and will be told to leave the campus and/or the event.
- No refunds will be given for event expenditures already paid by, or on behalf of, the student.

Due Process Rights for Suspension/Expulsion

Notice: Parents must receive written notice of the specific rules violated, along with the time, date, and place of a hearing.

Right to Counsel: Parents can be accompanied and advised by an attorney or specialized advocate.

Present Evidence: An opportunity to present evidence and witness testimony, as well as cross-examine school witnesses.

Impartial Hearing: A fair, recorded/documented hearing that provides written findings of fact and decisions.

Emergency Safety Interventions in School Discipline

School employees shall follow the Utah State Board of Education rules for emergency safety interventions as outlined in 53G-8-301.

- The least restrictive intervention available shall be used first and physical restraint is limited to the uses outlined in state code.
- Corporal punishment is prohibited.
- Seclusion may only be used for students in grade 1 or higher when the school has a written policy that meets the requirements of 53G-8-301.

The school will collect and report data to the state board annually for each incident where emergency safety interventions were used as outlined in 53G-8-301.

School Threat Assessment Team

*Utah Code: 53G-8-301