

Fighting Gladiators

Components of the TSADP

Texas Serenity Academy's school discipline plan (TSADP) describes what will be done to positively intervene in the variety of challenging, disruptive, and sometimes, volatile student behaviors confronted by educators in their classrooms. The specification of positive intervention procedures and practices is a necessary component of Texas Serenity Academy's discipline plan (TSADP). However, the TSADP will comprehensively identify the systemic and classroom strategies that will be employed to prevent challenging behaviors from occurring. This includes the professional development activities that everyone will be engaged in to build school capacity and support prevention efforts.

After research, analyzing, and interpreting current best practices and collecting accounts of personal experiences, it is my conclusion that an effective school discipline plan contains a clearly articulated prevention component. Simply stated: it is much easier to prevent challenging behavior than to change such behavior after the fact. The underlying goal of the TSADP is to assist educators anticipate and avoid challenging behavioral events in a fashion which leads to what all of us endorse, that students should be able to demonstrate – responsibility, self-discipline, and community.

Achieving this result infers that discipline (as connoted by its Latin root) is viewed as an opportunity to assist students learn a set of skills rather than an opportunity to do something to them. Students who chronically misbehave have often suffered all of the punishments and extrinsic rewards that schools and sometimes home environments have to offer. The profiles of these students are ordinarily case studies in low self-esteem, inappropriate peer relationships, family discord and violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and exposure to overly materialistic, sexually exploitive forms of mass media. Similarly, parents and guardians of these students have frequently been disenfranchised and marginalized by numerous social institutions including schools. To believe that punitive practices and extrinsic rewards can effectively prevent or respond to such circumstances is not supported theoretically or practically.

In turn, as concerned individuals (students and adults alike) and school climate in general, educators can benefit from exposure to professional development activities that help them gain a working knowledge of what motivates behavior (i.e., the human needs for belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity). They can also benefit from learning how to create educational environments that assist in fulfilling these basic human needs. And of course positive, individual, behavior change, and the strengthening of school climate require long-term commitment and the courage to critically and creatively examine current practices.

Statement of TSA Discipline Philosophy

A clear statement of Texas Serenity Academy's (TSA) discipline philosophy is one way to enable TSA to respond consistently to student misconduct. The philosophy statement will be reviewed, and endorsed by school staff, the school board, community members, and parents or guardians. To be successful, it must be widely understood and supported. TSA's philosophy statement is comprised of three primary elements: defining characteristics, purpose, and conditions of learning. TSA discipline philosophies include the following principles:

- ✓ Parents play a primary role in making a school discipline system successful.
- ✓ Students are responsible for their actions.
- ✓ Students must respect the rights of others to attend a safe and orderly school.

- ✓ Students must understand the consequences of both positive and negative behavior.
- ✓ The goal of school discipline is to foster self-control and a sense of community within and among students.
- ✓ All students can learn and practice skills essential to self-discipline.

Discipline Statement

Everyone can learn and assist others in the learning process. As a caring and responsible community we will:

Take responsibility

Strive for excellence

Always give respect and dignity

Discipline Philosophy

Discipline will be consistent and support a safe atmosphere with respect for the dignity of all. To create a positive learning environment everyone will be responsible for his/her own behaviors and the consequences. The TSA community, both adults and children will participate in and support the discipline procedures. Families and community will play an active role in promoting the discipline philosophy.

Guiding Principles

The word discipline comes from the Latin word *discere* meaning, “to learn”. Discipline is a learning opportunity and a process that all students can learn to use independently. The goal of school discipline is to foster within students the essential internal controls to be successful in all aspects of their lives. At Texas Serenity Academy:

- ✓ Discipline will preserve the dignity of all individuals
- ✓ Appropriate behavior will be modeled by ALL staff
- ✓ Everyone will take responsibility for their actions
- ✓ Discipline fosters internal controls for student responsibilities
- ✓ Parents play a primary role in making the system work
- ✓ Rules will be clearly stated and consequences applied fairly and consistently
- ✓ Staff must consistently employ appropriate methods of classroom management
- ✓ Establishing, maintaining, and restoring relationships is an essential part of the discipline process

TSA School-wide Rules

A goal for the TSADP is to establish and enforce clearly stated school rules. These rules will assist students in understanding the misconduct for which they will be held accountable and “set the tone” for school environments, such as classrooms and common areas.

To eliminate uncertainty about the behavioral expectations for all students, the clearly stated school rules will be posted throughout the school and students are regularly reminded of them.

School Rules

1. ***We care about each other's feelings.***

- We are kind to others.
- We respect others.
- We respect ourselves.
- We use appropriate and respectful language.
- We listen to each other.
- We don't use put-downs.
- We don't bully others.
- We don't tease others.
- We don't scare, threaten, or intimidate others.

2. ***We keep others and ourselves safe.***

- We keep our hands and bodies to ourselves.
- We stay in our own space.
- We keep our bodies safe.
- We keep our bodies and voices under control.
- We play and work safely.
- We don't hurt others.

3. ***We respect property.***

- We keep our school clean.
- We use equipment appropriately.
- We leave other people's things alone.
- We do not damage property.

4. ***We are responsible for what we say and do.***

- We take responsibility for our actions.
- We come to school.
- We do our best.
- We finish our work.
- We are on time for our activities.
- We use good manners.
- We cooperate with others.
- We resolve our conflict.
- We apologize and make up for our mistakes.
- We follow the bus rules.
- We follow all school rules.

Rules for Specific School Areas

Classrooms, school buses, the computer lab, playgrounds, and cafeterias will require distinct rules of conduct. Rules for specific areas are prepared early in the school year, often on the first day of school, and usually with input from students. Rules for specific areas are reviewed regularly with students, and are prominently displayed.

Bus Rules

- Stay safely seated
- Elementary students in the front; middle school students in the rear
- No food or drinks
- Talk quietly using appropriate language

- RESPECT the bus driver and follow his/her direction

Hallway's/Lobby's

- A pass is needed except during class changeover times
- Use trash receptacles
- Walk in halls
- Do not block walkways
- Use appropriate language and conduct

Possible alternative programs

- Development of Alternative Learning Environments
- Time Away or Time Out
- Student Support
- Planning Room
- In School Suspension
- Alternative Classroom

If an alternative program is deemed to be needed, the program will become part of the TSADP. The plan will then identify the criteria for referring and assigning students to those settings and the processes to be followed when making or altering those assignments. Alternatives need not be compulsory and may range in nature from "supervised study" rooms to educational programs. TSA administrators, and educators will collectively place students in an alternative setting for a period of time as a disciplinary measure.

Students whose behavioral needs warrant placement in the supervised study room will follow the procedures required by the TSA school board policy on discipline. A student may be referred to the supervised study room by the Principal or Dean of Discipline for failure to cease any misconduct that significantly disrupts a classroom or other school setting. An assignment to the supervised study room will be of short duration, generally less than a full school day. While in the supervised study room, the student will be given sufficient academic work to allow him or her to successfully return to the classroom at the end of the assignment.

The supervised study room will not be used when a student's misconduct requires an out-of-school suspension, except when the out-of-school suspension is to begin on the day following a one-day assignment to the supervised study room. The due process provisions of the TSA school policy on student discipline will apply to any suspension.

The goal of TSA's alternative program is to successfully reintegrate students into the regular educational environment, it is important to build reciprocal relationships between them. This infers opportunities for alternative and regular school staff to meet with one another, visit and observe in each other's learning environments and share strategies that are effective in preventing and responding to challenging behavior.

Three-level System

To ensure a consistent response to student misbehavior, TSA will adopt and implement a "Three-level System". The "Three-level System" utilizes "behavior support staff" and a "crisis

response team” in specific situations, suggested approaches to prepare school staff, and informing students and parents about its components.

Behavior support staff will be the Dean of Discipline. The crisis response team will consist of three (3) volunteer support staff or educators. The "Three-level System" assign responsibility for responding to specific types of student misconduct to (1) "educators or supervising adults," (2) "educators and behavior support staff," and (3) "school administrators".

**Level One Behaviors
(Primary Responsibility - Educator/Supervising Adult)**

STUDENTS BEHAVIOR	SUPPORTIVE(S) or DIRECTIVE(D) TEACHER BEHAVIOR	CONSEQUENCES
Off task behaviors Minor to moderate disruption Inappropriate verbal interactions Non-responsive to teacher direction Inattention to classroom work Unprepared for class	(S) Planned ignoring (S) Interact (Eye contact, proximity, etc.) (S) Affirmation (S) Active Listening (S) Change/ modify task (S) Offer choice (S) Supportive guidance back to task (D) "I" Statements (D) <u>"Back on Task Script"</u> 1. What are you doing? 2. What are you supposed to be doing? 3. What do you choose to do? (give two choices)	Opportunities for recognition of achievement Positive reinforcement for task completion and class cooperation In-class time-out Work completion during free time Verbal behavior plan Restitution Loss privileges Parent notification/involvement Failure of lesson

**Level Two Behaviors
(Primary Responsibility - Educator and Behavior Support Staff)**

STUDENT BEHAVIOR	TEACHER BEHAVIOR	CONSEQUENCES
<p>Include all Level One behaviors in which student remains non-compliant and disruptive to his/her or others learning or responsibilities</p> <p>Level One or Two behavior continues despite educator intervention</p>	<p align="center">IMMEDIATE</p> <p>Direct student to prearranged location (Dean of Discipline office)</p> <p>With ongoing student refusal, summon crisis response team (last resort)</p> <p align="center">FOLLOW-UP</p> <p>Teach alternative behaviors</p> <p>Educational support team</p> <p>Counseling</p>	<p>Participation in the development of individual behavior plan</p> <p>Restitution</p> <p>Loss of privileges</p> <p>Parent notification</p> <p>Class failure</p>

**Level Three Behaviors
(Primary Responsibility – School Administration)**

STUDENT BEHAVIOR	TEACHER BEHAVIOR	CONSEQUENCES
<p>Chronic violation of school or class rules</p> <p>Serious Verbal aggressions, harassment, or threats</p> <p>Drugs and alcohol possession or use</p> <p>Serious damage to property</p> <p>Serious physical altercations</p> <p>Weapons possession, threat to use, or actual use</p>	<p>Referral to Administrator</p> <p>Seek assistance from Crisis Support Team and other school wide supports</p> <p>Participate in parent conferences and re-entry meetings</p> <p>Provide work for in-school suspension</p> <p>Referral for Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavioral Intervention Plan</p>	<p>Restitution</p> <p>Home/School coordination and support</p> <p>Short-term suspension (in or out of school)</p> <p>Consideration for placement in alternative program</p> <p>Long-term suspension</p> <p>Expulsion</p> <p>School failure</p>

Through a collaborative effort (educators, behavioral support staff, and administrators), the “Three-level System” is designed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the obligations of responsible adults to respond to specific incidents of student misconduct?

TSA staff will respond to minor misconduct in settings over which they have supervisory responsibility such as classrooms by immediately following the protocols outlined in the TSA handbook. Minor misconduct, including but not limited to:

- ✓ failure to remain on task in a classroom
- ✓ failure to follow an adult's instructions
- ✓ disrupting an activity by interrupting the teacher or other students

Minor misconduct is not referred to administrators or behavior support staff unless efforts by the teacher to redirect the student result in further disruption.

Students who require specific interventions in response to misconduct will be subject to those interventions and will not be removed to alternative settings without consultation with responsible administrators unless the student's behavior poses an immediate danger.

Educators and other supervising adults must make a timely referral to the Principal of any student who engages in significant misconduct. Significant misconduct includes:

- ✓ chronic violations of school or class rules
- ✓ drug or alcohol possession use or sale
- ✓ serious verbal threats or harassment
- ✓ substantial damage to property
- ✓ physical aggression
- ✓ weapons possession or use.

2. How will TSA officials inform responsible adults of their responsibilities under the discipline system adopted by TSA?

The Dean of Discipline will inform educators and other staff of their responsibilities under the TSADP. When staff members are initially employed they will receive copies of the staff and student handbooks and will be instructed by the Dean of Discipline on the protocols to follow when encountering student misconduct. Prior to the beginning of each school year, in-service time will be devoted to reviewing the disciplinary responsibilities of all staff.

3. How will TSA officials inform parents and students about the school's responses to specific types of misconduct?

The student handbook includes a complete statement of the discipline policies of TSA. Each student is given a handbook at the beginning of the school year or, if a student enrolls during the school year, upon enrollment. Students are asked to take the handbook home and review it with their parents or guardians. Parents are asked to return signed statements to the school indicating they have reviewed the discipline section of the handbook with their children.

At least annually, as part of the school's annual open house, a forum is held for interested parents and community members to discuss the discipline plan with school administrators and

staff. The Principal will notify parents of this event as part of the notice sent to them announcing the open house. The TSADP will be made available at the Registrar's office during normal business hours for review by anyone interested.

4. How will TSA inform parents about disciplinary action involving their children?

Not every incident of misconduct warrants parental contact. Staff members will contact parents when changing a student's behavior requires parental support but does not warrant intervention by an administrator. The Principal and the Dean of Discipline will contact parents when the student's misconduct is severe (as defined by the school's code of behavior) or becomes chronic. The Principal will send the appropriate form to parents for this purpose. The form explains to parents the nature of the misconduct and invites parents to contact appropriate personnel for further information. Other means of communicating with parents that protect confidentiality are also used as necessary.

When a student is subjected to short-term suspension out of school and it is necessary to send the student home before the end of a school day, the parents of the student will be contacted by telephone or by other means. If a responsible adult is not available to supervise the student at home, the student will remain at TSA until the end of the school day. Parents of a student who is suspended from school for 10 days or less will be offered an informal hearing with the Principal or the Dean of Discipline in accord with the school board discipline policy and state board of education rule. Except in situations involving immediate threats to a student or others, or demonstrates an immediate threat to school property or the school environment, the informal hearing will take place prior to the suspension.

Long term suspensions of more than 10 days or expulsions are preceded by formal notice to parents and a hearing in accord with the requirements of due process as stated in the school board's discipline policy and state law.

5. What procedures will apply to misconduct resulting in suspension from TSA sponsored activities?

A student who is barred or suspended from participation in school sponsored activities due to misconduct, but is not suspended from school, may appeal the action to the Principal. The Principal or, if the Principal is not available, the Dean of Discipline, will discuss the circumstances of the action and the allegations of misconduct with the student and, if requested by the student or parent, with the student's parents or guardian within 48 hours of the action. The Principal may ask others who have relevant information to be present for the discussion. The suspension will remain in effect until the Principal has discussed the incident with the student and has explained his/her decision to the student.

If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the Principal, the student may ask the Superintendent to review the decision. Within three days of the request, the Superintendent will provide the student and the student's parents or guardian with an opportunity to present their version of the incident and the opportunity to solicit relevant information from others who have knowledge of the allegations of misconduct or of factors that should be considered in deciding whether the action should be upheld. The Superintendent will explain his/her decision to the student as soon as possible after meeting with the student, and will provide a written decision if requested to do so by the student or the student's parents or guardian. Unless otherwise

determined by the Superintendent due to unusual circumstances, the action will remain in effect until the Superintendent makes a decision. The Superintendent's decision will be final.

TSA Discipline Responsibilities Policy

Policy

It is the policy of the Texas Serenity Academy School District to maintain a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment. In order to ensure that the school is free from hazing, harassment, bullying and other disruptive misconduct, a system of classroom and school management practices, supported by consistent, clear, and fair disciplinary procedures, will be utilized. The goal of this policy is to create an environment where the rules for student behavior are clearly stated, are understood and accepted by students and staff, and are applied in compliance with due process requirements. This policy is to be applied in conjunction with the school's overall discipline plan.

Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each student to contribute to a safe and productive learning environment in the school by demonstrating respect and consideration for other students and adults. This includes complying with all policies and rules of conduct of the School District and individual classrooms.

Administrative Responsibilities

The Dean of Discipline, in consultation with the educational staff and endorsed by the Principal, will develop an overall discipline plan. The plan will include clear guidelines for student behavior. Behavioral expectations, and the consequences of misconduct, will be stated in the student handbook and other publications distributed to students and parents/guardians. The rules of conduct will be distributed to, and discussed with, all students at the beginning of each school year in accord with procedures stated in the school discipline plan. Students will be instructed to share the student handbook with their parents. Copies of the handbook will be provided to parents or guardians in a manner determined by the Principal. The Principal may ask that parents sign a form indicating that they have reviewed the rules of conduct with their children. When new students enroll during the school year, they and their parents will be given copies of the rules of conduct as part of the pre-enrollment process. The Principal or Dean of Discipline shall be responsible for carrying out discipline procedures conforming to the following guidelines.

1. A student may request a meeting with the Principal or Dean of Discipline to review any disciplinary action, other than a suspension or expulsion, affecting the student. If requested, the Principal or Dean of Discipline shall hold an informal meeting to review the incident and to hear the views of the student and any other persons who may have information that the Principal or Dean of Discipline believes to be relevant to the circumstances. The Principal or Dean of Discipline shall issue a prompt decision to the student, which may be oral or written. Except as otherwise provided in this policy, the decision of the Principal will be final.
2. Suspension or expulsion of students shall be imposed in accordance with state and federal law and regulations, due process requirements, and the following rules and procedures:

a. The Principal or Dean of Discipline may assign a student to in-school detention for up to 10 consecutive school days for any infraction of school rules. As provided in the school's overall discipline plan, students assigned to in-school detention will be provided with reasonable opportunities to complete academic assignments and to benefit from counseling or other activities designed to bring about improvements in their behavior.

b. A student who poses an immediate danger to persons or property or a significant threat of disrupting the academic process of the school shall be removed from the school or to a place within the school determined by the Principal, Superintendent, or the Dean of Discipline to be sufficiently secure to ensure the safety of students and school personnel and the continuation of the academic process. The Superintendent, Principal, or Dean of Discipline shall notify the parent or guardian (without undue delay) of a student who is removed from school. If the parent, guardian, or other responsible person designated as an emergency contact by the parent or guardian cannot be notified, the student will be detained at school or at another safe and secure setting for the remainder of the school day.

c. No student will be removed from school for more than the remainder of a school day unless the student and his/her parents are given an opportunity for an informal hearing pursuant to paragraph (d) of this policy. When immediate removal of a student is necessary prior to a hearing, the hearing shall be held as soon as possible following the removal.

d. The Superintendent or Principal may suspend a student from school for a period of 10 days or less for misconduct occurring on or off school grounds. Except as provided in paragraph (b) above, prior to such a suspension, the student and his/her parent or guardian shall be given an opportunity for an informal hearing with the Principal or Dean of Discipline. The student and his/her parent or guardian must be given notice of the charges, an explanation of the evidence against the student, an opportunity for the student to tell his/her side of the story, and a decision in writing to the parent or guardian.

e. The Superintendent or Principal may, with the approval of the Board, impose a long-term suspension or expulsion of a student (for longer than ten days and up to 90 school days or the remainder of the school year whichever is longer) for misconduct on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity when the misconduct makes the continued presence of the student harmful to the welfare of the school.

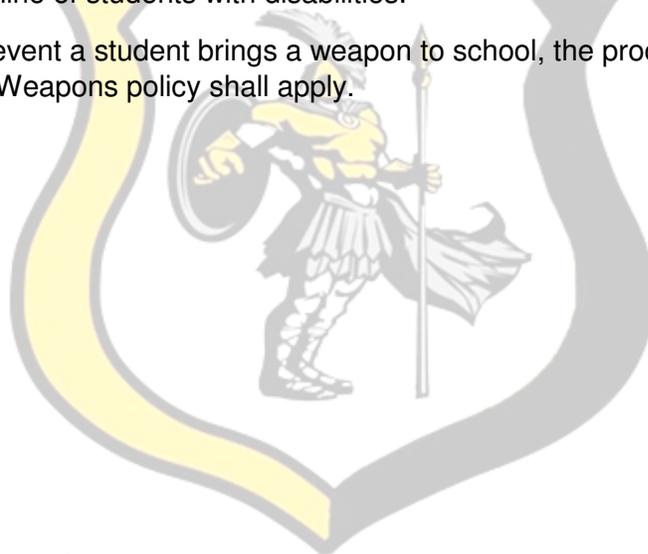
f. In accord with the overall discipline plan, short-term (ten days or less) or long-term suspension or expulsion may be imposed for misconduct not on school property, on a school bus or at a schoolsponsored activity where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated.

g. Long-term suspension or expulsion must be preceded by notice and formal due process procedures, including the opportunity for a hearing before the Board. The Superintendent shall notify the student and his/her parents in writing of the nature of the charges, the date, time, and place of the hearing, the right to

legal representation, and the disciplinary action to be recommended to the Board. This notice shall be provided in sufficient time to allow the student and his/her parents to prepare for the hearing. At the hearing, the student and parent/guardian shall be given an opportunity to present evidence and to cross-examine witnesses. The Board shall issue a written decision within 10 business days of the conclusion of the hearing.

3. Notwithstanding the above provisions, a legal pupil who has a disability or is suspected of having a disability, and is eligible for special education services may be removed from his/her current educational placement for disciplinary reasons for more than 10 consecutive days, or for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year only in accord with IDEA regulations. The school Principal, with the agreement of a special education administrator, may impose short-term disciplinary sanctions on special education students in accordance with IDEA regulations. The Superintendent and coordinator of special education will develop additional procedures as needed to govern the discipline of students with disabilities.

4. In the event a student brings a weapon to school, the procedures set forth in the District's Weapons policy shall apply.



Fighting Gladiators