

Re-Engaging with Success After an Exclusionary Discipline Event

Every student deserves a fresh start and the opportunity to thrive after an exclusionary event, such as a suspension or expulsion. This resource provides strategies to school personnel to support a smooth and welcoming re-engagement process and ensure students have the resources they need to succeed. Re-engaging students after a suspension or expulsion is crucial for academic, social and personal development.

This recommended re-engagement process is intended to help students reconnect with the school community and ensure access to the supports students need to build a foundation for future success.

Steps for Effective Re-Engagement

1. PRE-RETURN PLANNING

- **STAY ENGAGED:** Assure the student has access to educational opportunities and other resources during the exclusion period. Keep lines of communication open.
- **SET A MEETING:** Plan to meet with the student, parents/guardians, and key school staff, including student advocates, to plan for the student's successful return.

2. PERSONALIZED RE-ENGAGEMENT PLANNING MEETING

- **WARM RECEPTION:** The re-engagement meeting should include the student and parents/guardians and ensure the student and their family feels welcomed and valued by the school community and educators.
- **PERSONALIZED RE-ENGAGEMENT PLAN CREATION:** As a team, create a re-engagement plan focused on academics and social emotional supports, making sure the student knows what supports are available and how to access them.
- **STUDENT-CENTERED APPROACH:** Create a plan with the student and family that meets the student's academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs.
- **STRENGTHS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT:** Identify the student's strengths and any additional supports they might need to thrive. Analyze academic performance, attendance records, and any other relevant data. Facilitate an [empathy interview](#) with the student to understand their challenges, needs, and preferences.
- **BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT:** If the student exhibited a pattern of behavior that led to disciplinary action or if the student's behavior has impacted their or their peers' education, the team should consider conducting a functional behavior assessment (FBA) The outcome of this assessment can inform either the development of a behavior intervention plan (BIP) or reviewing and revising the existing BIP.
- **RESOURCES AND SUPPORT:** Detail the resources available to support the student's success, including key components of their individualized plan. Highlight opportunities for connection and re-engagement in the school community through tutoring, counseling, accelerated learning, sports, school clubs, and other well-rounded learning opportunities.

3. ONGOING SUPPORT AND MONITORING

- **REGULAR CHECK-INS:** Schedule frequent check-ins to positively connect with the student, monitor the student's progress, and make necessary adjustments to the plan.
- **CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION:** Maintain open, two-way lines of communication between the student, parents and guardians, and school staff to support the student's ongoing success.
- **RECOGNIZE SUCCESS:** Acknowledge and celebrate the student's achievements and milestones, both big and small. Additionally, encourage the student to reflect on their own progress and celebrate their personal growth.

Considerations for Ongoing System Improvement

Supporting the re-engagement of individual students is vital to their success and school leaders should also examine systems that address the myriad factors related to exclusionary practices. It is important to examine school discipline practices to determine if they are culturally responsive and trauma sensitive. Revise district current discipline practices, policies and data, and focus on restorative practices in lieu of exclusionary discipline. Review discipline data (disaggregated) to identify patterns/trends and develop strategies that respond to student needs individually and within focal student groups.

Foster a relational, positive, inclusive atmosphere for returning students. Support students to view re-engagement as a chance to reconnect and succeed and to take advantage of the resources and support systems available. Be proactive in addressing challenges the student may face and provide consistent support to monitor unanticipated challenges. Evaluate the re-engagement strategies used to determine efficacy and implement continuous improvement processes.

Engage families as meaningful partners to ensure they are involved in decision-making and in developing solutions. Provide tools for parents to support their students in their re-engagement journey and encourage positive school involvement to ensure their student is receiving support and guidance they need. Further, identify a specific school point of contact for parents/guardians to ensure consistency, collaboration, and access to school resources.

Resources

Where can we find more help and resources?

- [Oregon Department of Education Discipline webpage](#)
- [Restorative Practice/Restorative Justice resource](#)
- [Oregon Department of Education Every Day Matters webpage](#)
- [Oregon Department of Education Care & Connection webpage](#)
- [Student Sense of Belonging in Schools: Predictive Factors](#)
- [Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care Early Childhood Suspension & Expulsion Prevention Program webpage](#)

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS

How do we rebuild trust and relationships?

Consider the school's responsibilities and necessary steps to repair.

Develop strategies to rebuild trust and strengthen relationships through transparency, communication, and collaboration.

What harm occurred to the student and/or their family due to the exclusionary event and how has it impacted relationships?

Reflect on actions, policies, or circumstances that negatively affected the student and family. Evaluate how these impacts influenced trust and relationships.