

# GENERAL DISCIPLINE POLICY

A spirit of Christ-like charity, respect for authority, and mutual cooperation are essential elements of the learning environment at Notre Dame Regional Secondary. Students are expected to act with courtesy and respect toward one another and toward all members of the staff. They must take seriously their obligation to develop lifetime habits of self-control and concern for the well-being of others. Home and school will work together to help students to learn and live the qualities of responsible behaviour and the elements of good citizenship.

A student who chooses to disrupt the good order of the school or to violate a policy or regulation will have to accept the consequences of those irresponsible choices. Appropriate discipline is within the discretion of the Administration. Notre Dame Regional Secondary uses a system of progressive discipline which is designed to modify behaviours that interfere with this learning program.

Actions which violate the law, threaten or cause harm to other students or staff members, disrupt or impede the welfare and progress of the school community, or bring discredit to the school will not be tolerated. Such actions as well as other severe violations of school rules and/or other inappropriate conduct, may result in immediate dismissal. If a student persists in violating basic obligations of courtesy, consideration, respect, cooperation or safety, a Parent-Student-Administrator conference may be scheduled. If these cooperative efforts of parents and school staff prove ineffective, the student may lose the privilege of attending Notre Dame or may be denied re-admittance to the School.

It is within the rights of the Administration to meet with students at any time during the course of the school day to discuss concerns or allegations of a disciplinary or academic nature. Depending on the nature of the meeting, parental presence may or may not be desired or requested. However, parental contact will be made as soon as the situation warrants it.

PLEASE NOTE: It is neither the jurisdiction nor the desire of Notre Dame Regional Secondary to specify what limits or freedoms parents/guardians may wish to set on their children's behaviour away from school or school sponsored activities. However, there are times and places in which the behaviour of students reflect on Notre Dame. In all such cases, student behaviour is definitely the jurisdiction of the school and appropriate measures will be taken. In accordance with our policy of progressive discipline, students who exhibit behaviour which is contrary to the mission and values of Notre Dame Regional Secondary will be facing one or more of the actions listed below.

Notre Dame's Progressive Discipline Model is intended to:

- Make clear the policies and expectations related to student behaviour (i.e. letters home, student handbook, ND Website, full school, grade level and individual meetings).
- Make clear what the consequences will be when students make choices that violate one or more of the policies and/or expectations.

- Communicate with the student and parent(s) if and when initial intervention strategies are unsuccessful and the undesired behaviours continue.
- Put in writing clear stipulations when problems persist (i.e. probation, contract, etc.).
- Include correspondences and/or meetings with the student and his/her parents to discuss the concerns related to the necessity of placing the student on probation or contract. Those meetings would take place prior to, during, and/or after the written documents have been prepared and would, in most cases, involve the GLC, the grade level Vice-Principal, and the Principal.
- Give students an opportunity to learn from their mistakes, improve their behaviour, make better choices, and remain at Notre Dame.

The school reserves the right when dealing with any type of misconduct manifested by any student to consider the student's entire record regarding school regulations in reaching a decision on a sanction on any particular breach of school regulations.

## **Consequences**

Repeat offenders regarding school policy violations will, in most cases, receive escalating consequences under the Progressive Discipline Model.

### ***Detention***

This is an after school program for students who have violated school rules. Assignment to detention is made by individual teachers and/or the administrative staff. Students are given advance notice when possible and, in most cases, the parent/guardian will be notified by the student or the school.

In addition to this structured formal detention system, teachers have the authority to request that students stay after school under their supervision. Teachers may ask students to stay after school for either academic and/or disciplinary reasons.

Detentions will, in most cases, supersede participation in extracurricular activities.

### ***Saturday Detention***

Saturday detention may be used if/when needed. Saturday detention is held from 8:30 to 11:30 AM.

### ***School Service***

When students choose not to comply with school rules, they can hurt the Notre Dame community. When

appropriate, the Vice Principal may assign service to the community as a consequence for rule infractions. Such service, which may include light maintenance or office work, will be carefully supervised.

### ***In-School Suspension***

Students who are assigned to in-school suspension will be required to spend the entire instructional day or a number of periods, as determined by the administrative staff, in a specified room. Dismissal from an in-school suspension will usually be 30 minutes after the regular dismissal time.

Students are required to bring textbooks, pens, notebooks and other material for a full day of study. Teachers will provide specific assignments for students who attend in-school suspension. The Vice Principal is responsible for coordination of the program. Parents will be notified per administrative referral system or by telephone.

### ***Out-of-School Suspension***

Depending on the severity of the incident or misbehaviour, the Administration may remove students from school and from school-sponsored events for a stated period of time. During the time of suspension, students are neither permitted to be on school grounds nor to participate or attend any school activities.

Teachers are not responsible for providing make-up work or assignments to students who are suspended. Parents/guardians will be notified by mail or by telephone prior to the effective day of the suspension. A parent-student conference may be requested prior to readmission to school. In most cases, when a student is suspended, he/she will also be placed on probation for a length of time determined by the Administration (usually between 3 months and one full school year).

### ***Parent Conference***

A parent conference may be scheduled as a way of developing common strategies leading to changes in student behaviour. Such conferences may be initiated by parent-guardian, by faculty and staff, or by the Administration.

### ***Probation***

Students who demonstrate a serious and consistent lack of responsibility and disregard for school rules may be placed on probation.

The length of the probation is determined by the Administration.

It must be understood that students on probation may be subject to dismissal and their participation at school events may be denied at the discretion of the Administration.

### ***Contracts***

In certain situations, the Administration may deem it necessary to place a student on contract. When that happens, it usually means the student has one more opportunity to improve his/her behaviour. The contract will clearly stipulate what is expected of that student. In most cases, if a student on contract violates any of the stipulations, he/she will lose the privilege of attending Notre Dame, effective immediately.

### ***Dismissal***

Under extreme conditions, students may be expelled. Students who are dismissed are not allowed to participate in activities sponsored by Notre Dame nor can they be present on school grounds without written permission of an administrator.

Although expulsion is often the final resort regarding consequences, it may be put into effect immediately depending on the behaviour and/or behavioural history of the student or students involved.

Any of the disciplinary procedures and consequences listed here are subject to constant review by the faculty and by the Administration and are subject to additions, deletions or changes without prior written notification.

Decisions by the Administration are always guided by the best interests of students, parents and staff for the welfare and safety of the entire Notre Dame community.

Rulings on disciplinary matters by the Administration are final.

### **Appeal Process for Suspension, Probation, and Expulsion**

When an appeal of an expulsion is brought to a local Education Committee, an appeal sub-committee will be appointed to hear the case.

The decision to overturn the expulsion must be based on one or more of the following points:

- *Did the student commit the infraction he/she is accused of?*
- *Is the infraction covered by the school's policy and does the policy allow the sanction of expulsion?*
- *Is the policy being applied properly?*
- *Has the school followed both its own and Archdiocesan policy regarding the handling of the expulsion?*

Often parents will appeal a decision to expel, although they agree that the student is guilty of the infraction and

that the school followed policy correctly. As such, the parents are not appealing the correctness of the decision, but are asking for clemency.

If an appeal is made beyond the local education committee, the CISVA Board of Directors will only address the four principles (in italics), not the issue of clemency.

Appropriate documents for this Appeal process will be given to the student's parent(s) at the time the sanction is imposed.

All CISVA policies in this area supersede those of the school.

### ***Appeal against the Sanction of Expulsion***

Because a sanction to expel a student is so serious a matter, a special process governs such appeals:

After the Principal has followed the sanction procedure concerning a breach of school regulations considered by the school to be of a sufficiently serious nature, even were the offence not specifically mentioned in this policy, and the Principal has decided on the sanction of expulsion and has informed the family of same in writing, the Principal shall inform the family that it has the right to appeal the sanction to expel.

The Principal will give the family a copy of the Notre Dame Appeal Policy.

The family has two (2) school days from the date of the expulsion notification to inform the Principal of its decision to appeal.

When an appeal against expulsion is being launched, the sanction to expel shall be termed "pending" until the appeal hearing has taken place, and until such time that the NDEC Appeal Authority has presented a decision on the appeal, and during this time the student shall be termed to be on an "away suspension".