

1                                   **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND CONDUCT**

2   **AMENDMENTS**

3   2007 GENERAL SESSION

4   STATE OF UTAH

5   **Chief Sponsor: Eric K. Hutchings**

6   Senate Sponsor: Carlene M. Walker

7   Cosponsor:   Keith Grover

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9   **LONG TITLE**

10 **General Description:**

11                   This bill amends provisions of the State System of Public Education relating to school  
12 discipline and conduct.

13 **Highlighted Provisions:**

14                   This bill:

- 15                   ▶ defines terms;
- 16                   ▶ clarifies that school discipline and conduct provisions relate to all public schools,  
17 including charter schools;
- 18                   ▶ provides that it is unlawful to engage in disruptive student behavior;
- 19                   ▶ provides for standards, procedures, and administrative penalties to address  
20 disruptive student behavior;
- 21                   ▶ provides for the issuance of:
  - 22                   • a notice of disruptive student behavior; or
  - 23                   • a habitual disruptive student behavior citation;
- 24                   ▶ provides that a school-age minor who receives a habitual disruptive behavior  
25 citation is subject to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court; and
- 26                   ▶ makes technical corrections.

27 **Monies Appropriated in this Bill:**

28                   None

29 **Other Special Clauses:**

30 None

31 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

32 AMENDS:

33 **53A-11-901**, as last amended by Chapter 97, Laws of Utah 1995

34 **53A-11-902**, as last amended by Chapter 97, Laws of Utah 1995

35 **53A-11-903**, as last amended by Chapter 10, Laws of Utah 2001, First Special Session

36 **53A-11-904**, as last amended by Chapter 203, Laws of Utah 2003

37 **53A-11-905**, as last amended by Chapter 97, Laws of Utah 1995

38 **53A-11-906**, as last amended by Chapter 318, Laws of Utah 1996

39 **53A-11-907**, as last amended by Chapter 318, Laws of Utah 1996

40 **53A-11-908**, as enacted by Chapter 240, Laws of Utah 1997

41 ENACTS:

42 **53A-11-910**, Utah Code Annotated 1953



44 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

45 Section 1. Section **53A-11-901** is amended to read:

46 **53A-11-901. Public school discipline policies -- Basis of the policies --**

47 **Enforcement.**

48 (1) The Legislature recognizes that every student in the public schools should have the  
49 opportunity to learn in an environment which is safe, conducive to the learning process, and  
50 free from unnecessary disruption.

51 (2) (a) To foster such an environment, each local school board or governing board of a  
52 charter school, with input from [~~district~~] school employees, parents and guardians of students,  
53 students, and the community at large, shall adopt conduct and discipline policies for the public  
54 schools [~~within the district~~].

55 (b) Each district or charter school shall base its policies on the principle that every  
56 student is expected:

57 (i) to follow accepted rules of conduct; and

58 (ii) to show respect for other people and to obey persons in authority at the school.

59 (c) (i) The State Superintendent of Public Instruction shall develop conduct and  
60 discipline policy models for elementary and secondary public schools.

61 (ii) Each district or charter school shall use the models, where appropriate, in  
62 developing its conduct and discipline policies under this chapter.

63 (d) The policies shall emphasize that certain behavior, most particularly behavior  
64 which disrupts, is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action.

65 (3) The local superintendent and designated employees of the district or charter school  
66 shall enforce the policies so that students demonstrating unacceptable behavior and their  
67 parents or guardians understand that such behavior will not be tolerated and will be dealt with  
68 in accordance with the district's conduct and discipline policies.

69 Section 2. Section **53A-11-902** is amended to read:

70 **53A-11-902. Conduct and discipline policies and procedures.**

71 The conduct and discipline policies required under Section 53A-11-901 shall include:

72 (1) provisions governing student conduct, safety, and welfare;

73 (2) standards and procedures for dealing with students who cause disruption in the  
74 classroom, on school grounds, on school vehicles, or in connection with school-related  
75 activities or events;

76 (3) procedures for the development of remedial discipline plans for students who cause  
77 a disruption at any of the places referred to in Subsection (2);

78 (4) procedures for the use of reasonable and necessary physical restraint or force in  
79 dealing with disruptive students, consistent with Section 53A-11-802;

80 (5) standards and procedures for dealing with student conduct in locations other than  
81 those referred to in Subsection (2), if the conduct threatens harm or does harm to:

82 (a) the school;

83 (b) school property;

84 (c) a person associated with the school; or

85 (d) property associated with a person described in Subsection (5)(c);

86 (6) procedures for the imposition of disciplinary sanctions, including suspension and  
87 expulsion;

88 (7) specific provisions for preventing and responding to gang-related activities in the  
89 school, on school grounds, on school vehicles, or in connection with school-related activities or  
90 events[-]; and

91 (8) standards and procedures for dealing with habitual disruptive student behavior in  
92 accordance with the provisions of this part.

93 Section 3. Section **53A-11-903** is amended to read:

94 **53A-11-903. Suspension and expulsion procedures -- Notice to parents --**  
95 **Distribution of policies.**

96 (1) (a) Policies required under this part shall include written procedures for the  
97 suspension and expulsion of, or denial of admission to, a student, consistent with due process  
98 and other provisions of law.

99 (b) (i) The policies required in Subsection (1)(a) shall include a procedure directing  
100 public schools to notify the custodial parent and, if requested in writing by a noncustodial  
101 parent, the noncustodial parent of the suspension and expulsion of, or denial of admission to, a  
102 student.

103 (ii) Subsection (1)(b)(i) does not apply to that portion of school records which would  
104 disclose any information protected under a court order.

105 (iii) The custodial parent is responsible for providing to the school a certified copy of  
106 the court order under Subsection (1)(b)(ii) through a procedure adopted by the local school  
107 board or the governing board of a charter school.

108 (2) (a) Each local school board or governing board of a charter school shall provide for  
109 the distribution of a copy of a school's discipline and conduct policy to each student upon  
110 enrollment in the school.

111 (b) A copy of the policy shall be posted in a prominent location in each school.

112 (c) Any significant change in a school's conduct and discipline policy shall be  
113 distributed to students in the school and posted in the school in a prominent location.

114 Section 4. Section **53A-11-904** is amended to read:

115 **53A-11-904. Grounds for suspension or expulsion from a public school.**

116 (1) A student may be suspended or expelled from a public school for any of the  
117 following reasons:

118 (a) frequent or flagrant willful disobedience, defiance of proper authority, or disruptive  
119 behavior, including the use of foul, profane, vulgar, or abusive language;

120 (b) willful destruction or defacing of school property;

121 (c) behavior or threatened behavior which poses an immediate and significant threat to  
122 the welfare, safety, or morals of other students or school personnel or to the operation of the  
123 school;

124 (d) possession, control, or use of an alcoholic beverage as defined in Section  
125 32A-1-105; or

126 (e) behavior proscribed under Subsection (2) which threatens harm or does harm to the  
127 school or school property, to a person associated with the school, or property associated with  
128 that person, regardless of where it occurs.

129 (2) (a) A student shall be suspended or expelled from a public school for any of the  
130 following reasons:

131 (i) any serious violation affecting another student or a staff member, or any serious  
132 violation occurring in a school building, in or on school property, or in conjunction with any  
133 school activity, including:

134 (A) the possession, control, or actual or threatened use of a real weapon, explosive, or  
135 noxious or flammable material;

136 (B) the actual or threatened use of a look alike weapon with intent to intimidate another  
137 person or to disrupt normal school activities; or

138 (C) the sale, control, or distribution of a drug or controlled substance as defined in  
139 Section 58-37-2, an imitation controlled substance defined in Section 58-37b-2, or drug  
140 paraphernalia as defined in Section 58-37a-3; or

141 (ii) the commission of an act involving the use of force or the threatened use of force

142 which if committed by an adult would be a felony or class A misdemeanor.

143 (b) A student who commits a violation of Subsection (2)(a) involving a real or look  
144 alike weapon, explosive, or flammable material shall be expelled from school for a period of  
145 not less than one year subject to the following:

146 (i) within 45 days after the expulsion the student shall appear before the student's local  
147 school board superintendent [~~or~~], the superintendent's designee, chief administrative officer of  
148 a charter school, or the chief administrative officer's designee, accompanied by a parent or legal  
149 guardian; and

150 (ii) the superintendent, chief administrator, or designee shall determine:

151 (A) what conditions must be met by the student and the student's parent for the student  
152 to return to school;

153 (B) if the student should be placed on probation in a regular or alternative school  
154 setting consistent with Section 53A-11-907, and what conditions must be met by the student in  
155 order to ensure the safety of students and faculty at the school the student is placed in; and

156 (C) if it would be in the best interest of both the school district or charter school, and  
157 the student, to modify the expulsion term to less than a year, conditioned on approval by the  
158 local school board or governing board of a charter school and giving highest priority to  
159 providing a safe school environment for all students.

160 (3) A student may be denied admission to a public school on the basis of having been  
161 expelled from that or any other school during the preceding 12 months.

162 (4) A suspension or expulsion under this section is not subject to the age limitations  
163 under Subsection 53A-11-102(1).

164 (5) Each local school board and governing board of a charter school shall prepare an  
165 annual report for the State Board of Education on:

166 (a) each violation committed under this section; and

167 (b) each action taken by the school district against a student who committed the  
168 violation.

169 Section 5. Section **53A-11-905** is amended to read:

170           **53A-11-905. Delegation of authority to suspend or expel a student -- Procedure**  
171 **for suspension -- Readmission.**

172           (1) (a) A local board of education may delegate to any school principal or assistant  
173 principal within the school district the power to suspend a student in the principal's school for  
174 up to ten school days.

175           (b) A governing board of a charter school may delegate to the chief administrative  
176 officer of the charter school the power to suspend a student in the charter school for up to ten  
177 school days.

178           (2) The board may suspend a student for up to one school year or delegate that power  
179 to the district superintendent ~~[or]~~, the superintendent's designee, or chief administrative officer  
180 of a charter school.

181           (3) The board may expel a student for a fixed or indefinite period, provided that the  
182 expulsion shall be reviewed by the district superintendent or the superintendent's designee and  
183 the conclusions reported to the board, at least once each year.

184           (4) If a student is suspended, a designated school official shall notify the parent or  
185 guardian of the student of the following without delay:

- 186           (a) that the student has been suspended;
- 187           (b) the grounds for the suspension;
- 188           (c) the period of time for which the student is suspended; and
- 189           (d) the time and place for the parent or guardian to meet with a designated school  
190 official to review the suspension.

191           (5) (a) A suspended student shall immediately leave the school building and the school  
192 grounds following a determination by the school of the best way to transfer custody of the  
193 student to the parent or guardian or other person authorized by the parent or applicable law to  
194 accept custody of the student.

195           (b) Except as otherwise provided in Subsection (5)(c), a suspended student may not be  
196 readmitted to a public school until:

- 197           (i) the student and the parent or guardian have met with a designated school official to

198 review the suspension and agreed upon a plan to avoid recurrence of the problem; or  
199 (ii) in the discretion of the principal or chief administrative officer of a charter school,  
200 the parent or guardian of the suspended student and the student have agreed to participate in  
201 such a meeting.

202 (c) A suspension may not extend beyond ten school days unless the student and the  
203 student's parent or guardian have been given a reasonable opportunity to meet with a  
204 designated school official and respond to the allegations and proposed disciplinary action.

205 Section 6. Section **53A-11-906** is amended to read:

206 **53A-11-906. Alternatives to suspension or expulsion.**

207 (1) Each local school board or governing board of a charter school shall establish:

208 (a) policies providing that prior to suspending or expelling a student for repeated acts  
209 of willful disobedience, defiance of authority, or disruptive behavior which are not of such a  
210 violent or extreme nature that immediate removal is required, good faith efforts shall be made  
211 to implement a remedial discipline plan that would allow the student to remain in school; and

212 (b) alternatives to suspension, including policies that allow a student to remain in  
213 school under an in-school suspension program or under a program allowing the parent or  
214 guardian, with the consent of the student's teacher or teachers, to attend class with the student  
215 for a period of time specified by a designated school official.

216 (2) If the parent or guardian does not agree or fails to attend class with the student, the  
217 student shall be suspended in accordance with the conduct and discipline policies of the district  
218 or the school.

219 (3) The parent or guardian of a suspended student and the designated school official  
220 may enlist the cooperation of the Division of Child and Family Services, the juvenile court, or  
221 other appropriate state agencies, if necessary, in dealing with the student's suspension.

222 Section 7. Section **53A-11-907** is amended to read:

223 **53A-11-907. Student suspended or expelled -- Responsibility of parent or**  
224 **guardian -- Application for students with disabilities.**

225 (1) If a student is suspended or expelled from a public school under this part for more



226 than ten school days, the parent or guardian is responsible for undertaking an alternative  
227 education plan which will ensure that the student's education continues during the period of  
228 suspension or expulsion.

229 (2) (a) The parent or guardian shall work with designated school officials to determine  
230 how that responsibility might best be met through private education, an alternative program  
231 offered by or through the district or charter school, or other alternative which will reasonably  
232 meet the educational needs of the student.

233 (b) The parent or guardian and designated school official may enlist the cooperation of  
234 the Division of Child and Family Services, the juvenile court, or other appropriate state  
235 agencies to meet the student's educational needs.

236 (3) Costs for educational services which are not provided by the school district or  
237 charter school are the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian.

238 (4) (a) Each school district or charter school shall maintain a record of all suspended or  
239 expelled students and a notation of the recorded suspension or expulsion shall be attached to  
240 the individual student's transcript.

241 (b) The district or charter school shall contact the parent or guardian of each suspended  
242 or expelled student under the age of 16 at least once each month to determine the student's  
243 progress.

244 (5) (a) This part applies to students with disabilities to the extent permissible under  
245 applicable law or regulation.

246 (b) If application of any requirement of this part to a student with a disability is not  
247 permissible under applicable law or regulation, the responsible school authority shall  
248 implement other actions consistent with the conflicting law or regulation which shall most  
249 closely correspond to the requirements of this part.

250 Section 8. Section **53A-11-908** is amended to read:

251 **53A-11-908. Extracurricular activities -- Prohibited conduct -- Reporting of**  
252 **violations -- Limitation of liability.**

253 (1) The Legislature recognizes that:

254 (a) participation in student government and extracurricular activities may confer  
255 important educational and lifetime benefits upon students, and encourages school districts and  
256 charter schools to provide a variety of opportunities for all students to participate in such  
257 activities in meaningful ways;

258 (b) there is no constitutional right to participate in these types of activities, and does  
259 not through this section or any other provision of law create such a right;

260 (c) students who participate in student government and extracurricular activities,  
261 particularly competitive athletics, and the adult coaches, advisors, and assistants who direct  
262 those activities, become role models for others in the school and community;

263 (d) these individuals often play major roles in establishing standards of acceptable  
264 behavior in the school and community, and establishing and maintaining the reputation of the  
265 school and the level of community confidence and support afforded the school; and

266 (e) it is of the utmost importance that those involved in student government, whether as  
267 officers or advisors, and those involved in competitive athletics and related activities, whether  
268 students or staff, comply with all applicable laws and rules of behavior and conduct themselves  
269 at all times in a manner befitting their positions and responsibilities.

270 (2) (a) The State Board of Education may, and local boards of education and governing  
271 boards of charter schools shall, adopt rules implementing this section that apply to both  
272 students and staff.

273 (b) Those rules shall include prohibitions against the following types of conduct, while  
274 in the classroom, on school property, during school sponsored activities, or regardless of the  
275 location or circumstance, affecting a person or property described in Subsections  
276 53A-11-902(5)(a) through (d):

277 (i) use of foul, abusive, or profane language while engaged in school related activities;

278 (ii) illicit use, possession, or distribution of controlled substances or drug  
279 paraphernalia, and the use, possession, or distribution of tobacco or alcoholic beverages  
280 contrary to law; and

281 (iii) hazing, demeaning, or assaultive behavior, whether consensual or not, including

282 behavior involving physical violence, restraint, improper touching, or inappropriate exposure  
283 of body parts not normally exposed in public settings, forced ingestion of any substance, or any  
284 act which would constitute a crime against a person or public order under Utah law.

285 (3) (a) School employees who reasonably believe that a violation of this section may  
286 have occurred shall immediately report that belief to the school principal ~~[or]~~, district  
287 superintendent, or chief administrative officer of a charter school.

288 (b) Principals who receive a report under Subsection (3)(a) shall submit a report of the  
289 alleged incident, and actions taken in response, to the district superintendent or the  
290 superintendent's designee within ten working days after receipt of the report.

291 (c) Failure of a person holding a professional certificate to report as required under this  
292 Subsection (3) constitutes an unprofessional practice.

293 (4) Limitations of liability set forth under Section 53A-11-1004 apply to this section.

294 Section 9. Section **53A-11-910** is enacted to read:

295 **53A-11-910. Disruptive student behavior.**

296 (1) As used in this section:

297 (a) "Disruptive student behavior" includes:

298 (i) the grounds for suspension or expulsion described in Section 53A-11-904; and

299 (ii) the conduct described in Subsection 53A-11-908(2)(b).

300 (b) "Parent" includes:

301 (i) a custodial parent of a school-age minor;

302 (ii) a legally appointed guardian of a school-age minor; or

303 (iii) any other person purporting to exercise any authority over the minor which could  
304 be exercised by a person described in Subsection (1)(b)(i) or (ii).

305 (c) "Qualifying minor" means a school-age minor who:

306 (i) is at least nine years old; or

307 (ii) turns nine years old at any time during the school year.

308 (d) "School year" means the period of time designated by a local school board or local  
309 charter board as the school year for the school where the school-age minor is enrolled.

310 (2) A local school board, school district, governing board of a charter school, or charter  
311 school may impose administrative penalties on a school-age minor who violates this part.

312 (3) (a) It is unlawful for a school-age minor to engage in disruptive student behavior.

313 (b) A qualifying minor is subject to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court if the  
314 qualifying minor:

315 (i) engages in disruptive student behavior, that does not result in suspension or  
316 expulsion, at least six times during the school year;

317 (ii) (A) engages in disruptive student behavior, that does not result in suspension or  
318 expulsion, at least three times during the school year; and

319 (B) engages in disruptive student behavior, that results in suspension or expulsion, at  
320 least once during the school year; or

321 (iii) engages in disruptive student behavior, that results in suspension or expulsion, at  
322 least twice during the school year.

323 (4) (a) A local school board or governing board of a charter school shall:

324 (i) authorize a school administrator or a designee of a school administrator to issue  
325 notices of disruptive student behavior to qualifying minors; and

326 (ii) establish a procedure for a qualifying minor, or a qualifying minor's parent, to  
327 contest a notice of disruptive student behavior.

328 (b) A school representative shall provide to a parent of a school-age minor, a list of  
329 resources available to assist the parent in resolving the school-age minor's disruptive student  
330 behavior problem.

331 (c) A local school board or governing board of a charter school shall establish  
332 procedures for a school counselor or other designated school representative to work with a  
333 qualifying minor who engages in disruptive student behavior in order to attempt to resolve the  
334 minor's disruptive student behavior problems before the qualifying minor becomes subject to  
335 the jurisdiction of the juvenile court as provided for under this section.

336 (5) The notice of disruptive student behavior described in Subsection (4)(a):

337 (a) shall be issued to a qualifying minor who:

- 338 (i) engages in disruptive student behavior, that does not result in suspension or
- 339 expulsion, three times during the school year; or
- 340 (ii) engages in disruptive student behavior, that results in suspension or expulsion, once
- 341 during the school year;
- 342 (b) shall require that the qualifying minor and a parent of the qualifying minor:
- 343 (i) meet with school authorities to discuss the qualifying minor's disruptive student
- 344 behavior; and
- 345 (ii) cooperate with the local school board or governing board of a charter school in
- 346 correcting the school-age minor's disruptive student behavior;
- 347 (c) shall contain a statement indicating:
- 348 (i) the number of additional times that, if the qualifying minor engages in disruptive
- 349 student behavior that does not result in suspension or expulsion, will result in the qualifying
- 350 minor receiving a habitual disruptive student behavior citation; and
- 351 (ii) that the qualifying minor will receive a habitual disruptive student behavior citation
- 352 if the qualifying minor engages in disruptive student behavior that results in suspension or
- 353 expulsion; and
- 354 (d) shall be mailed by certified mail to, or served on, a parent of the qualifying minor.
- 355 (6) A habitual disruptive student behavior citation:
- 356 (a) may only be issued to a qualifying minor who:
- 357 (i) engages in disruptive student behavior, that does not result in suspension or
- 358 expulsion, at least six times during the school year;
- 359 (ii) (A) engages in disruptive student behavior, that does not result in suspension or
- 360 expulsion, at least three times during the school year; and
- 361 (B) engages in disruptive student behavior, that results in suspension or expulsion, at
- 362 least once during the school year; or
- 363 (iii) engages in disruptive student behavior, that results in suspension or expulsion, at
- 364 least twice during the school year;
- 365 (b) may only be issued by a school administrator, a designee of a school administrator,

366 or a truancy specialist, who is authorized by a local school board or governing board of a local  
367 charter school to issue habitual disruptive student behavior citations.

368 (7) (a) A qualifying minor to whom a habitual disruptive student behavior citation is  
369 issued under Subsection (6) shall be referred to the juvenile court for violation of Subsection  
370 (3).

371 (b) Within five days after the day on which a habitual disruptive student behavior  
372 citation is issued, a representative of the school district or charter school shall provide  
373 documentation, to a parent of the qualifying minor who receives the citation, of the efforts  
374 made by a school counselor or representative under Subsection (4)(c).

375 (8) Nothing in this part prohibits a local school board, school district, governing board  
376 of a charter school, or charter school from taking any lawful action not in conflict with the  
377 provisions of this section, including action described in this part and action relating to a  
378 habitually truant or ungovernable child, to address a disruptive student behavior problem of:

379 (a) a school-age minor who is not a qualifying minor; or

380 (b) a qualifying minor, regardless of the number of times that the qualifying minor has  
381 engaged in disruptive student behavior during the school year.