

---

**Discipline of Students Who Make Threats of Violence or Cause Incidents of Violence - Student Threats of violence and Incidents of Violence**

Effective student discipline policies serve the needs of the District in maintaining the order of the education environment while safeguarding the education interests of all students. For this reason, it is crucial to engage many perspectives in crafting sound policies related to discipline. The board, in conjunction with teachers and administrators in the District, have assigned further meaning to concepts listed in this policy.

**Incident Levels Defined**

Incident levels must escalate, with Level 1 being less severe than Level 3 incidents. However, the District maintains discretion in applying the level of discipline appropriate for an incident. In making this determination, the administration will consider the following definitions of incident levels. Because no definition could encompass all possible threats or incidents, the administration has discretion in determining which level to assign the incident after looking at the nature of the incident as well as the age, grade level, and maturity of the student.

**Level 1 Defined:**

A relatively minor threat of violence or a minor incident of violence involving a student. These incidents are typically characterized by low severity, minimal harm or intent, and a low likelihood of causing significant disruption or harm to others. Level 1 incidents may include verbal threats, minor altercations, or non-serious incidents that do not pose an immediate danger to others.

**Level 2 Defined:**

A moderate threat of violence or a moderate incident of violence involving a student. These incidents are more serious than Level 1 and may involve intent to cause harm, although the harm caused is still limited in scope. Level 2 incidents could include physical fights with minor injuries, serious verbal threats, or behaviors that significantly disrupt the school environment and/or school day. Students who have previously been involved in a 'Level 1' event may escalate to a 'Level 2'.

**Level 3 Defined:**

A severe threat of violence or a serious incident of violence involving a student. These incidents are highly concerning and pose a significant risk to the safety and well-being of others and/or create a substantial disruption in the school community and community and/or school day. Level 3 incidents may include physical assaults causing substantial harm, credible threats of serious violence, or incidents involving weapons. Students involved in a 'Level 2' event may escalate to a 'Level 3'.

**Timeframe for Determining Repeated Incidents**

The District will consider all incidents occurring within a student's academic career as sufficiently close in proximity between incidents to establish that a repeated incident has occurred. The rationale for establishing this timeframe is that determining a potential pattern of behavior sometimes takes longer periods of time. The administration will have discretion to alter this timeframe when appropriate under the circumstances, depending on the nature of the incident as well as the age, grade level and maturity of the student. The administration will have discretion to alter this timeframe when appropriate under the circumstances, depending on the nature of the incident as well as the age, grade level and maturity of the student.

## **Considerations for Determining the Maturity of the Student**

The District believes that gauging the maturity of a student is subject to interpretation and best left to the licensed employees who interact most closely with the student on a regular basis. Assessing a student's maturity level is based on individual characteristics unique to each student. Therefore, in making a determination about the maturity of a student, the administration may consult with the student's classroom teacher and other relevant licensed staff. The administration will consider the following factors in determining the maturity of the student:

- Age / Grade Level
- Cognitive Level
- 504/IEP

## **Considerations for Determining Whether the Off-Campus Threat of Violence or Incident of Violence Will Directly Affect the Good Order, Efficient Management and Welfare of the School District**

The District recognizes that students maintain First Amendment rights to free expression both within school and outside. However, free speech protections are not absolute and do not extend to true threats of violence toward an individual or a group of individuals. In considering whether a threat or incident of violence will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district necessitating the need for investigation, the administration will consider, among other things, the following factors:

- The specificity of the threat for time, location or individual(s) targeted
- The reasonable likelihood of the student's ability to carry out the threat
- The reasonable likelihood that the threat will interfere with the operation of the educational environment

In addition to the notification requirements in policy, the administration will apprise the parents or guardians of any student who suffered violence or a threat of violence, of the rights to file complaints under any other relevant board policies including but not limited to anti-bullying/anti-harassment and Title IX.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §279.65A

---