

Classified Personnel

Board Policy No. 4218

Reviewed: December 8, 2022

DISMISSAL/SUSPENSION/DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The Governing Board expects all employees to perform their jobs satisfactorily and to exhibit professional and appropriate conduct. A classified employee may be disciplined for unprofessional conduct or unsatisfactory performance in accordance with law or any applicable collective bargaining agreement, Board policy, or administrative regulation.

Disciplinary actions shall be based on the particular facts and circumstances involved and the severity of the employee's conduct or performance. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that disciplinary actions are taken in a consistent, nondiscriminatory manner and are appropriately documented. An employee's private exercise of personal beliefs and activities, including religious, political, cultural, social, or other beliefs or activities, or lack thereof, shall not be grounds for disciplinary action against the employee, provided that the beliefs or activities do not involve coercion of students or any other violation of law, Board policy, or administrative regulation.

In addition, an employee shall not be suspended, disciplined, reassigned, transferred, dismissed, or otherwise retaliated against solely for acting to protect a student engaged in exercising any free speech or press right authorized by, or for refusing to infringe upon a student's conduct protected pursuant to Education Coe 48907 or 48950.

Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, verbal and written warnings, involuntary reassignment, demotion, suspension without pay, reduction of pay step in class, compulsory leave, and dismissal

A probationary classified employee may be dismissed without cause at any time prior to the expiration of the probationary period.

(cf. 4216 - Probationary/Permanent Status)

Permanent classified employees shall be subject to disciplinary action only for cause as specified in the accompanying administrative regulation. (Education Code 45113)

Procedures for Serious Disciplinary Proceedings

The Superintendent or designee shall develop disciplinary procedures for use when dismissal, suspension, demotion, involuntary reassignment, or other serious disciplinary action is contemplated against an employee. The procedures for such discipline shall include an opportunity for an employee for whom any such disciplinary action is recommended to meet with, or respond in writing to, a designated district official ("Skelly officer") who will determine whether the recommended discipline should proceed further or be modified or withdrawn.

After meeting with the employee or considering the employee's written response, if the Skelly officer determines that the recommended discipline should proceed, the Superintendent or designee shall send the employee a notice of the recommended disciplinary action, a statement of charges, and the results of the Skelly hearing. The notice shall include a statement advising the employee of the right to request a Board hearing on the matter.

If the employee fails to request a hearing within the time specified in the notice, the employee is deemed to have waived the right to do so, and the Board may order the recommended disciplinary action into effect immediately.

If a timely request is submitted, a hearing shall be conducted by the Board. (Education Code 45113, 45312)

The hearing shall be held at the earliest convenient date, taking into consideration the established schedule of the Board and the availability of legal

counsel and witnesses. The employee shall be notified of the time and place of the hearing.

The hearing shall be held in closed session, unless the employee requests that the matter be heard in an open session meeting. (Government Code 54957)

(cf. 9321 - Closed Session)

The employee shall be entitled to appear personally, produce evidence, and be represented by legal counsel.

The Board may use the services of its legal counsel in ruling upon procedural questions, objections to evidence, and issues of law. The Board may review and consider the records of any prior personnel action proceedings against the employee in which a disciplinary action was ultimately sustained and any records contained in the employee's personnel files and introduced into evidence at the hearing. The Board shall not be bound by rules of evidence used in California courts. Informality in any such hearing shall not invalidate any order or decision made by the Board.

At any time before a matter is submitted to the Board for decision, the Superintendent or designee may, with the consent of the Board, serve on the employee and file with the Board an amended or supplemental recommendation of disciplinary action. If the amended or supplemental recommendation includes new causes or allegations, the employee shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to prepare a defense. Any new causes or allegations shall be deemed controverted and any objections to the amended or supplemental causes or allegations may be made orally at the hearing and shall be noted on the record.

Following the hearing or, if the employee has not requested a hearing, after reviewing the Superintendent or designee's recommendation for disciplinary action, the Board shall affirm, modify, or reject the recommended disciplinary action. The decision of the Board shall be in writing and shall contain findings of

fact and the disciplinary action approved, if any. The decision of the Board shall be final.

Within 10 working days of the Board's final decision, a copy of the decision shall be delivered to the employee and/or designated representative personally or by registered mail.

Except for an allegation of egregious misconduct in which a minor is involved, the Board may delegate the authority to determine whether sufficient cause exists for disciplinary action to an impartial third-party hearing officer. When a matter is heard by a third-party hearing officer, the Board retains the authority to review the determination and to adopt or reject the recommended decision. (Education Code 45113)

When any matter involves an allegation of egregious misconduct as defined in Education Code 44932 and involves a witness who is a minor, the matter shall be referred to an administrative law judge to determine whether sufficient cause exists for disciplinary action against the employee. In such cases, the ruling of the administrative law judge shall be binding on the district and the employee. (Education Code 45113)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

35161 Delegation of powers and duties

44009 Conviction of specified crimes

44010 Sex offense

44011 "Controlled substance offense" defined

44031 Personnel file

44940 Leave of absence; employee charged with mandatory or optional leave of absence offense

44940.5 Compulsory leave of absence; procedures; extension; compensation; bond or security

44990-44994 Testimony of minor witnesses at dismissal or suspension hearings

45101 Definitions (including "disciplinary action," "cause")

45109 Fixing of duties

45113 Rules and regulations for classified service in districts not incorporating the merit system

45123 Employment after conviction of sex or narcotics offense

45124 Dismissal of sexual psychopath

45202 Transfer of accumulated sick leave and other benefits following dismissal

45240-45320 Merit system, classified employees

CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE

1286.2 Grounds for vacating decision of arbitrator

GOVERNMENT CODE

11500-11529 Administrative adjudication

12900-12996 Fair Employment and Housing Act

54957 Brown Act open meeting laws; closed session

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

11054 Schedule I; substances included

11055 Schedule II, substances included

11056 Schedule III, substances included

11357-11361 Marijuana

11363 Peyote

11364 Opium

11370.1 Possession of controlled substances with a firearm

PENAL CODE

187 Murder

667.5 Sex offenders

830.32 Peace officers employed by district

1192.7 Violent or serious felony

11165.2-11165.6 Child abuse or neglect, definitions

VEHICLE CODE

1808.8 School bus drivers; dismissal for safety-related cause

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

12101-12213 Americans with Disabilities Act

COURT DECISIONS

California School Employees Association v. Bonita Unified School District (2008) No. B200141

California School Employees v. Livingston Union School District (2007) 149 Cal.App 4th 391

CSEA v. Foothill Community College District (1975) 52 Cal.App. 3rd 150, 155-156, 124 Cal. Rptr 830

Skelly v. State Personnel Board (1975) 15 Cal. 3d 194