Considerations for Suspension of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Pre-Suspension Factors/Considerations (if you can answer “Yes” to any of these questions, be able to provide solid rationale for using suspension)

- Is there a Behavior Support Plan (BSP) addressing the behavior in question?
- Is the team/teacher aware of the BSP and attempting to implement it?
- Are there Reactive Strategies in the BSP specific to the potentially suspendable behavior?
- Are there specific criteria for suspension as part of the BSP?
- Is the student placed in a program already designed to support these behaviors?
- Have pre-suspension alternative interventions been attempted?
- Are the behaviors directly related to the student’s disability (i.e., ASD)?
  - Lack of social awareness/no clear intent to harm
    - Evidence in social skills or behavior goals as part of IEP
  - Behavior that is “annoying” but not harming anyone (e.g., noise or disruption)
  - Behavior that is more likely to cause harm to the student him/herself than others (e.g., elopement, SIB)
- Will suspension actually “reward” the behavior (i.e., is the student’s goal in engaging in the behavior to escape from school and/or go home?)

Pre-Suspension Collaboration and Planning (at start of the year and when new students enter site)

- Administrators on site aware of students with BSP’s
- Admin meet with teachers of those students and behaviorist if possible to plan and coordinate reactive strategies and how they will align with discipline

Post-Suspension Supports and Follow-up (also use if no suspension occurs)

- Document behavior in Aeries and any other data-collection method being used
- Document debriefing of team
- If there is no BSP, consider developing one
- If there is a BSP, examine it and consider revising it
- Make Request for Behaviorist Observation and Consultation if BSP is ineffective and behaviorist is not already part of the support team
- If a behaviorist is already involved via class support, consultation, or IEP hours, notify him/her for follow-up support and planning