

**DISMISSAL/SUSPENSION/DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

**Termination of Probationary Employment**

At any time prior to the expiration of the probationary period, the Superintendent or designee may, at his/her discretion, dismiss a probationary classified employee from district employment. A probationary employee shall not be entitled to a hearing.

**Involuntary Suspension With Pay, Demotion, Reduction of Pay Step in Class, or Dismissal of Permanent Classified Employees**

Permanent classified employees shall be subject to personnel action (suspension with pay, demotion, reduction of pay step in class, dismissal) only for cause. The Board of Trustees' determination of the sufficiency of the cause for disciplinary action shall be conclusive.

**1. Causes**

In addition to any disqualifying or actionable causes otherwise provided for by statute or by policy or regulation of this District, it shall be the policy of the District to take personnel action against a permanent employee based on causes listed in the Education Code.

No personnel action shall be taken for any cause which arose before the employee became permanent, nor for any cause which arose more than two years before the date of the filing of the notice of cause unless this cause was concealed or not disclosed by the employee when it could be reasonably assumed that the employee would have disclosed the facts to the District.

**2. Initiation and Notification of Charges**

The Superintendent or designee may initiate a personnel action as defined herein against a permanent classified employee.

In all cases involving a personnel action, the person initiating the action shall file a written recommendation of personnel action with the Board. A copy of the recommendation shall be served upon the employee either personally or by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, at the employee's last known address. The recommendation shall include:

- a.** A statement of the nature of the personnel action (suspension with pay, demotion, reduction of pay step in class, or dismissal).

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- b. A statement of the cause or causes for the personnel action, as set forth above.
- c. A statement of the specific acts or omissions upon which the causes are based. If a violation of rule, policy, or regulation of the District is alleged, the rule, policy, or regulation violated shall be stated in the recommendation.
- d. A statement of the employee's right to appeal the recommendation and the manner and time within which the appeal must be filed.
- e. A card or paper, the signing and filing of which shall constitute a demand for hearing and a denial of all charges.

**3. Employment Status Pending Appeal or Waiver**

Except as provided herein, any employee against whom a recommendation of personnel action has been issued shall remain on active duty status and responsible for fulfilling the duties of the position pending his/her appeal or waiver thereof.

If the Superintendent or designee determines that a permanent classified employee should be dismissed and that his/her continuing in active duty status would present an unreasonable risk of harm to students, staff, or property while proceedings are pending, the Superintendent or designee may order the employee immediately suspended from duty with pay in conjunction with the recommendation of personnel action. This suspension order shall be in writing and shall state the reasons that the suspension is deemed necessary.

The suspension order shall be served upon the employee either personally or by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, immediately after issuance. Except in cases of emergency when the employee must be removed from the premises immediately, the Superintendent or designee shall give the employee written notice of the proposed recommendation of dismissal at least seven (7) calendar days before the effective date of any order of suspension issued in conjunction with a recommendation involving dismissal. This notice shall state that immediate suspension with pay is being considered, the reasons for the proposed dismissal and proposed immediate suspension with pay, materials upon which the proposed action is based, and the employee's right to respond to the Superintendent or designee orally or in writing before the final recommendation and order are issued.

**4. Time Limit of Suspension**

Except for a suspension imposed under #3 above, any suspension invoked under these

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rules against any one person for one or more periods shall not aggregate more than 90 calendar days in any 12-month period; however, this time limitation shall not apply to cases in which a personnel action of dismissal is modified by the Board to a suspension.

**5. Right to Appeal**

Within seven (7) calendar days after receiving the recommendation of personnel action described above, the employee may appeal by signing and filing the card or paper included with the recommendation. Any other written document signed and appropriately filed within the specified time limit by the employee shall constitute a sufficient notice of appeal. A notice of appeal is filed only by delivering the notice of appeal to the office of the Superintendent or designee during normal work hours of that office. A notice of appeal may be mailed to the office of the Superintendent or designee but must be received or postmarked no later than the time limit stated herein. In cases where an order of suspension with pay has been issued in conjunction with a recommendation of dismissal, any appeal of the recommendation of dismissal shall also constitute an appeal of the suspension order, and the necessity of the order shall be an issue in the appeal hearing.

If the employee fails to file a notice of appeal within the time specified in these rules, he/she shall be deemed to have waived his/her right to appeal, and the Board may order the recommended personnel action into effect immediately.

**6. Amended/Supplemental Charges**

At any time before an employee's appeal is finally submitted to the Board or to a hearing officer for decision, the complainant may, with the consent of the Board or hearing officer, serve on the employee and file with the Board an amended or supplemental recommendation of personnel action.

If the amended or supplemental recommendation presents new causes or allegations, the employee shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to prepare his/her defense. Any new causes or allegations shall be deemed controverted and any objections to the amended or supplemental causes or allegation may be made orally at the hearing and shall be noted on the record.

**7. Hearing Procedures**

- a. The hearing shall be held at the earliest convenient date, taking into consideration the established schedule of the Board or hearing officer and the availability of

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counsel and witnesses. The parties shall be notified of the time and place of the hearing. The employee shall be entitled to appear personally, produce evidence, and have counsel. The employee shall be entitled to a public hearing if he/she demands it when the Board is hearing the appeal. The complainant may also be represented by counsel. The procedure entitled "Administrative Adjudication" commencing with Government Code 11500 shall not apply to any such hearing before the Board or a hearing officer. Neither the Board nor a hearing officer shall be bound by rules of evidence used in California courts. Informality in any such hearing shall not invalidate any order or decision made or approved by the hearing officer or the Board.

- b.** All hearings shall be heard by a hearing officer (who shall be an attorney licensed in the State of California) except in those cases where the Board determines to hear the appeal itself. In any case in which the Board hears the appeal, the Board may use the services of its counsel or a hearing officer in ruling upon procedural questions, objections to evidence, and issues of law. If the appeal is heard by the Board, the Board shall affirm, modify or revoke the recommended personnel action.
- c.** If the appeal is heard by a hearing officer, he/she shall prepare a proposed decision in a form that may be adopted by the Board as the decision in the case. A copy of the proposed decision shall be received and filed by the Board and furnished to each party within 10 days after the proposed decision is filed by the Board. The Board may:

  - (1)** Adopt the proposed decision in its entirety.
  - (2)** Reduce the personnel action set forth in the proposed decision and adopt the balance of the proposed decision.
  - (3)** Reject a proposed reduction in personnel action, approve the personnel action sought by the complainant or any lesser penalty, and adopt the balance of the proposed decision.
  - (4)** Reject the proposed decision in its entirety.
- d.** If the Board rejects the proposed decision in its entirety, each party shall be notified of such action and the Board may decide the case upon the record including the transcript, with or without the taking of additional evidence, or may

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refer the case to the same or another hearing officer to take additional evidence. If the case is so assigned to a hearing officer, he/she shall prepare a proposed decision, as provided in item "c" above, upon the additional evidence and the transcript and other papers which are part of the record of the prior hearing. A copy of this proposed decision shall be furnished to each party within 10 days after the proposed decision is filed by the Board.

- e. In arriving at a decision or a proposed decision on the propriety of the proposed personnel action, the Board or the hearing officer may consider the records of any prior personnel action proceedings against the employee in which a personnel action was ultimately sustained and any records that were contained in the employee's personnel files and introduced into evidence at the hearing.

**8. Hearing Decision**

The decision of the Board shall be in writing and shall contain findings of fact and the personnel action approved, if any. The findings may reiterate the language of the pleadings or simply refer to them.

The decision of the Board shall be certified to the Superintendent or designee who recommended the personnel action, and he/she shall enforce and follow this decision. A copy of the decision shall be delivered to the appellant or his/her designated representative personally or by registered mail. The decision of the Board shall be final.

**9. Compulsory Dismissal**

The District shall not employ or retain in employment any person who has been convicted of any sex offense as defined in Education Code 44010 or any controlled substance offense as defined in Education Code 44011. However, the District may employ a person convicted of a controlled substance offense if the Board determines from the evidence it requires that the person has been rehabilitated for at least five years. If any such conviction is reversed and the person acquitted or charges dismissed except as otherwise provided below, the employee may be reemployed by the District, although reemployment is not a guarantee. (Education Code 45123)

The District reserves the right to dismiss an employee for any acts upon which the original criminal charges were based, despite the disposition by the courts. If dismissal is recommended and upheld, an employee will not be reemployed or compensated for the time he/she was suspended unless otherwise required by law. An employee shall be

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given notice of the possibility of not being reimbursed during mandatory suspension if he/she is ultimately dismissed for the acts upon which the original charges were based.

**10. Extension of Compulsory Leave**

The Board may extend an employee's compulsory leave of absence by giving him/her notice, within 10 days after the entry of judgment in the proceedings, that he/she will be dismissed in 30 days unless he/she demands a hearing. Employee compensation during the period of compulsory leave shall be made in accordance with law. (Education Code 44940.5)

*Legal Reference:*

EDUCATION CODE

35161 *Delegation of powers and duties*

44009 *Conviction of specified crimes*

44010 *Sex offense*

44011 *"Controlled substance offense" defined*

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; reports*

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*

45302 *Demotion and removal from permanent classified service*

45303 *Additional cause for suspension or dismissal of employees in classified service*

45304 *Suspension for reasonable cause; filing of charges; employee charged with mandatory or optional leave of absence offense*

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

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

**Regulation**

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**FORTUNA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Fortuna, California**