

SUSPENSION APPEALS

1. Under Maine law, students have the right to due process in disciplinary matters, including suspension. The student must be informed of the charges and given an opportunity to respond. Parents/guardians have the right to appeal a school suspension if they believe it was unjustified or if they feel the due process rights of their child were violated.
2. Administration shall send a written notice of the suspension within a 24 hour period after the suspension has been assigned. Upon receiving a suspension notice, parents/guardians and students are advised to review the details of the notice carefully. The notice should include:
 - The reason for the suspension includes relevant policies and/or laws.
 - The duration of the suspension
 - The date of the incident
 - Any evidence or statements regarding the student's conduct
3. Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to review and confirm the School's disciplinary policies available in the Student Handbook and on the School District's website [www.union103.org (Administration/Policies/JBHS Policies)].
4. Parents/guardians are urged to meet with the Principal to discuss the suspension in order to address concerns, present evidence, and clarify any misunderstandings. If the issue is not resolved to the parents'/guardian's satisfaction at this level, they may file a formal appeal to the Superintendent of Schools. If the parents/guardians believe law, policy, and or procedure were not followed, they may file a formal appeal to the school Board. The appeal must be filed no later than 3 school days after the suspension is assigned. Adhering to the timelines for filing appeals is critical. Failure to meet deadlines can result in the suspension standing, even if there is a strong case for appeal.
5. The appeal should include:
 - A clear statement why the suspension should be overturned or reduced
 - Any supporting evidence or documentation
 - A request for a hearing if desired
6. The Superintendent's decision shall be given in writing to the parents/guardians within 3 days after the hearing has been completed.

7. The parents/guardian are not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision then they can appeal to the school board. A written appeal must be submitted to the board with a 3 day period after receiving the written outcome from the Superintendent.
8. Once the written appeal is submitted, the School Board will review the case. The School Board will only look to see if all policies and procedures were followed according to the JBHS policies and handbooks. If the Board agrees to a hearing, it will set a date no later than 5 school days after receiving the appeal. The student and their parents may attend the hearing or submit written testimony. The Principal, the Superintendent and/or another school administrator must attend. The hearing is not open to the public.
9. During the hearing:
 - The School Administrator will present evidence supporting the policies and procedures according to JBHS policies and handbooks.
 - The parents may present counter-evidence and explain why they feel that policies or procedures were not followed. If the parents/guardians do not attend, the Board will review their written testimony.
 - The Board members may question the appellants and school administrator after they have presented their cases.
10. After reviewing the case, the School Board will either:
 - Uphold the suspension
 - Overturn the suspension
11. The School Board must issue a written decision no later than 5 school days after the hearing. The school administrator shall inform the parents/guardians of the Board's decision by the quickest means possible and send them a copy of the written decision by registered mail. Or whatever method requires a signature upon receipt
12. If the parents/guardians are not satisfied by the Board's decision, they may appeal to the Maine Department of Education.
13. If all other avenues are exhausted and the parents/guardians still believe the suspension was illegal or violated their child's civil rights, they may choose to pursue legal action.