



## EXPULSION, OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION, OR OSS

A school may want to remove a child from school for breaking certain rules, disrupting class, or causing danger. A school will call this punishment expulsion, out-of-school suspension, or OSS.

These punishments should be explained in the school's code of conduct or student handbook.

### What should I do if the school wants to remove my child from school?

The school must hold a special meeting when it wants to remove a child for more than ten days. This meeting is called a **Tribunal**. The tribunal will decide whether your child broke the rule and what the punishment will be.

You can advocate and defend your child at a tribunal. You can call witnesses or question the school's witnesses.

You should talk to a lawyer if your school tells you that the school will hold a tribunal for your child. For free legal help, call Atlanta Legal Aid Society at (404) 524-5811 or the Georgia Legal Services Program at (888) 408-1004.

### What if my child is in special education?

If a child has an IEP or is in special education, a school cannot remove that child from school for more than **ten days** in a row without a meeting called a **Manifestation Meeting**. A manifestation meeting may also be required if a child is repeatedly suspended. At this meeting, the school will decide if your child's disability caused the behavior. If the disability did cause the behavior, the school usually cannot suspend or expel.

You can advocate and defend your child at a manifestation meeting. You should talk to a lawyer if your school tells you they are holding a manifestation meeting.

### What if my child is in preschool through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade?

A school must give these children extra help and support before the school can expel or suspend them for more than **five days total** each year. This extra help and support is called a multi-tiered system of supports, or MTSS. Learn more about MTSS in our guide on [Multi-Tiered System of Supports and Responses to Intervention](#).

A school must provide extra protections for children who are in preschool through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade **and** have an IEP or Section 504 plan. The school must give these children MTSS and a new IEP or Section 504 meeting. Learn more in our guides on [Section 504 Plans for Children with Disabilities](#) and [Special Education and IEPs for Children with Learning Disabilities](#).