



# Discipline Rules Update

July 2025



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**



# Vision

# Mission

# Values

*All students prepared for post-secondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.*

Transform K-12 education to a system that is centered on closing opportunity gaps and is characterized by high expectations for all students and educators. We achieve this by developing equity-based policies and supports that empower educators, families, and communities.

- Ensuring Equity
- Collaboration and Service
- Achieving Excellence through Continuous Improvement
- Focus on the Whole Child



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# Equity Statement



Each student, family, and community possesses strengths and cultural knowledge that benefits their peers, educators, and schools.

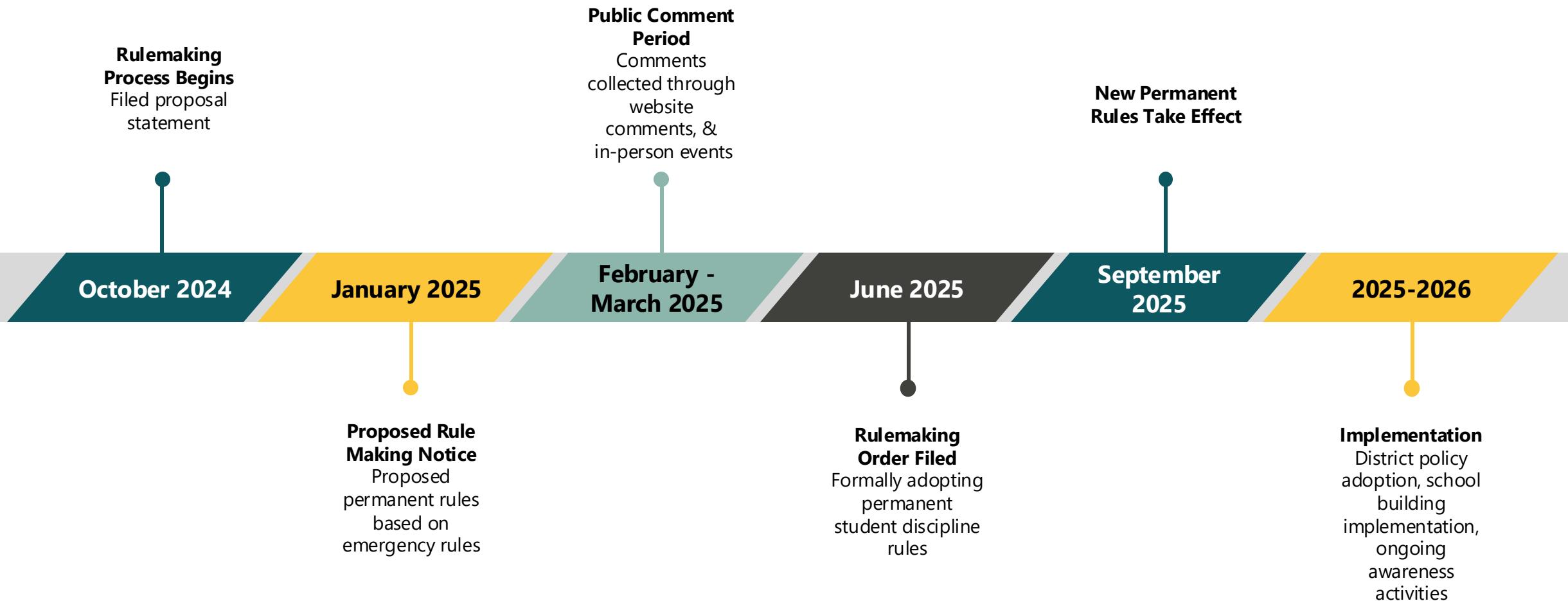
Ensuring educational equity:

- Goes beyond equality; it requires education leaders to examine the ways current policies and practices result in disparate outcomes for our students of color, students living in poverty, students receiving special education and English Learner services, students who identify as LGBTQ+, and highly mobile student populations.
- Requires education leaders to develop an understanding of historical contexts; engage students, families, and community representatives as partners in decision-making; and actively dismantle systemic barriers, replacing them with policies and practices that ensure all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools.



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# Discipline Rules Update Process



# Why Were the Rules Revised?

**The revised  
rules take  
effect**

**July 11, 2025**

## Why revise?

- Educators experienced difficulty in implementing the rules with fidelity
- Students and families reported feeling unprotected and disengaged from the rules governing them
- To provide immediate clarification and support for school districts as educators navigate discipline procedures
- To address disproportionality identified through disaggregated student discipline data

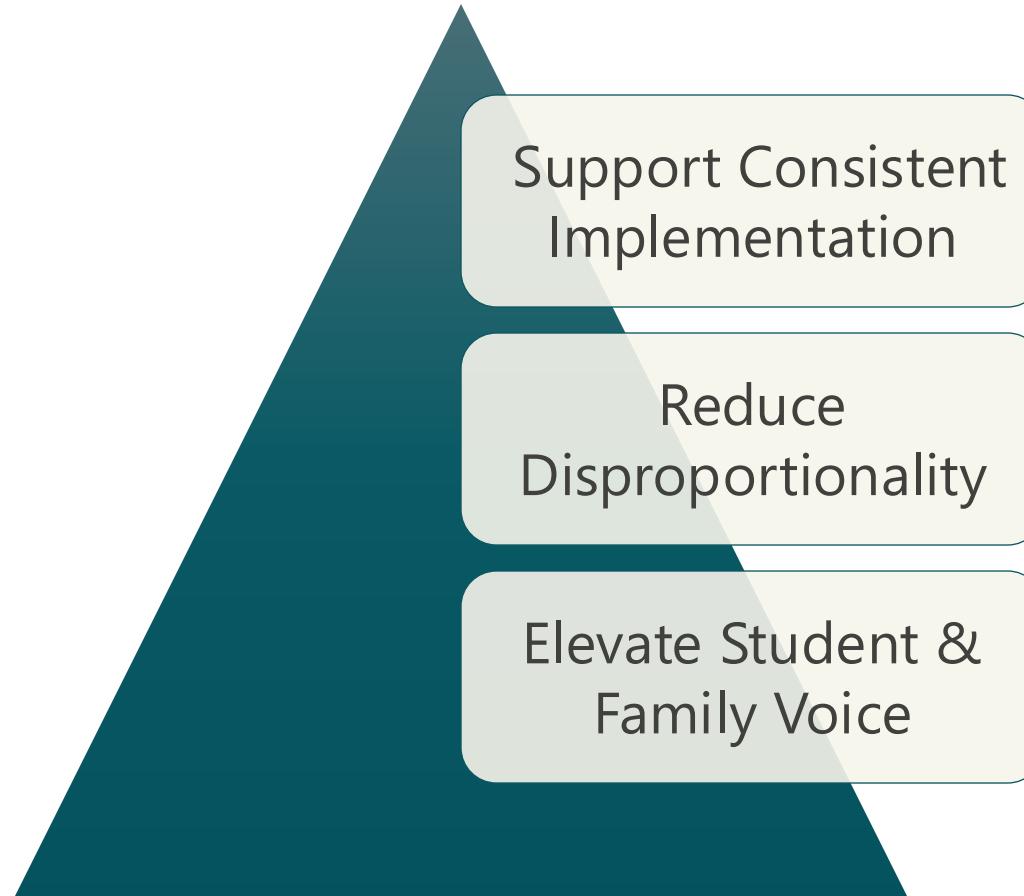
## The process aimed to ensure that the final regulations are:

- In service to a safe, supportive learning environment for all students
- Clearly understood by staff, students, and families
- Effectively implemented across all K-12 public schools in the state

# What Changes Were Made?

Learn what's new in the Discipline Rules

# Overview of changes

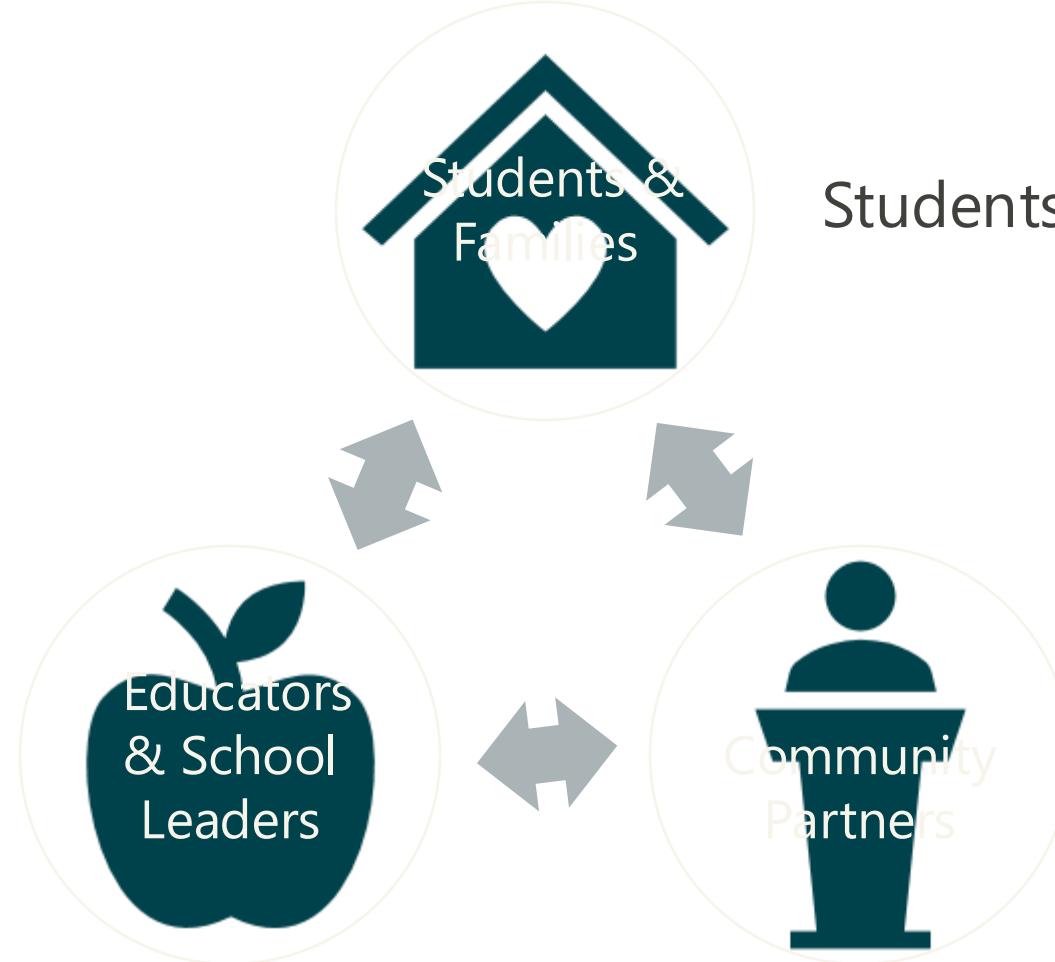


# Discipline Rules Were Revised through Collaborative Partnership

Educators & School Leaders

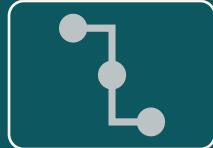
Students & Families

Community Partners



# Elevating Student and Family Voice and Reengagement

The updated rules strengthen the voice and protection of students and families in the discipline process. **Schools must:**



Clearly notify parents or guardians of disciplinary actions



Explain students' rights



Offer meaningful opportunities for families to appeal decisions or participate in reengagement meetings



Aim to keep students connected to learning and foster inclusive school communities

# Clarified Definitions & Guidance

The revised rules now include clearer **definitions** of:

- Classroom exclusion
- Discretionary discipline
- Non-discretionary discipline
- “Emergency expulsion” has been replaced with “emergency removal” which emphasizes temporary removal for safety while preserving due process protections

New guidance includes:

- Side-by-side comparisons of updated rules
- Appropriate use of various disciplinary actions, including long-term suspension and expulsion
- Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

# Focus on Equity and Reducing Disproportionality

## Revised Rules Key Emphasis

- Reducing disproportionality in discipline especially for:
  - Students of color
  - Students with disabilities

## Schools are Now Required to:

- Use culturally responsive strategies
- Monitor discipline data for fairness
- Reinforce the importance of local school board policymaking in guiding and sustaining equitable discipline practices

# Alignment with Educational Standards

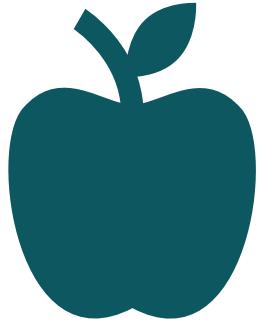
Frameworks emphasize **professional judgment** and **evidence-based strategies** to create respectful, responsive classrooms

The revised discipline rules refer to professional **standards** for educator certification and renewal:

- Teacher and Principal Evaluation Program (TPEP)
- Cultural Competency, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CCDEI) Standards

References were added to support **alignment** with these important educational frameworks

# Everyone has a Role



## Teachers

- Use Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs)
- Establish and build positive relationships with students and families
- Intentionally provide Social Emotional Learning (SEL)



## School Leaders

- Ensure student handbooks are accessible and understood by students and families
- Monitor the impact of the district's policies, procedures, and practices
- Implement Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)



## District Leaders

- Widely communicate and post updated and current policies
- Identify and highlight community partnerships and resources to support all learners



## School Boards

- Review discipline data (including classroom clears)
- Stay connected with the superintendent regarding what leadership actions are being taken to support district and building leaders in assisting teachers and principals
- Engage families and communities for feedback on discipline policies.

# What Do I Need to Do?

School districts  
& school boards  
need to:

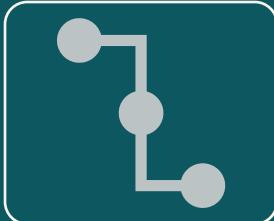
- Review and revise district policies and procedures

Ensure all staff collaborate in **consistent enforcement** of student behavior expectations both schoolwide and within individual **classrooms**

**Engage families and students** in understanding local district policies and procedures

# Discipline Resources

Check out the  
[OSPI Discipline Webpage](#)



## 2025 Revised Discipline Rules

- Behavior & Discipline WAC Side by Side Changes to Permanent Rules
- Frequently Asked Questions



## Discipline Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and Washington Administrative Code (WAC)

- Guiding rules and laws



## Data

- Reporting requirements and data analysis tips

# I've Got Questions...

**Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction**  
**OSPI**

- Questions about updated rules
- Process taken to update rules

**Washington State School Directors' Association**  
**WSSDA**

- Questions about policy revisions

**Association of Washington School Principals**  
**AWSP**

- Questions about implementation for school leaders

**Washington Association of School Administrators**  
**WASA**

- Questions about implementation for school administrators

**Washington Education Association**  
**WEA**

- Questions about implementation for teachers

**Office of the Education Ombuds**  
**OEO**

- Resources and guidance for parents/guardians regarding student behavior and school discipline.



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