

WHEREAS, The suspension and expulsion of students from school is on the rise in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, A disproportionate number of African American students are suspended and expelled from school each year; and

WHEREAS, Practices that prevent challenging student behaviors can improve academic and behavioral outcomes for students, teachers, and school systems; and

WHEREAS, Many families are unaware of the availability of community resources for children with challenging behaviors; and

WHEREAS, Many families are unaware of a student's legal rights during the process by which a student is suspended or expelled from school; and

WHEREAS, Legal and community services can help end the cycle of repeated suspensions or expulsions for a student; now, therefore

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article - Education

7-305.

(a) (1) In accordance with the rules and regulations of the county board, each principal of a public school may suspend for cause, for not more than 10 school days, any student in the school who is under the direction of the principal.

(2) The student or [his] THE STUDENT'S parent or guardian promptly shall be given a conference with the principal and any other appropriate personnel during the suspension period.

(3) THE STUDENT OR THE STUDENT'S PARENT OR GUARDIAN PROMPTLY SHALL BE GIVEN A COMMUNITY RESOURCES LIST PROVIDED BY THE COUNTY BOARD IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 7-310 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

(b) At the request of a principal, a county superintendent may suspend a student for more than 10 school days or expel [him] THE STUDENT.

(c) (1) If a principal finds that a suspension of more than 10 school days or expulsion is warranted, [he] THE PRINCIPAL immediately shall report the matter in writing to the county superintendent.

(2) The county superintendent or [his] THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT'S designated representative promptly shall make a thorough investigation of the matter.

(3) If after the investigation the county superintendent finds that a longer suspension or expulsion is warranted, [he or his] THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OR THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT'S designated representative promptly shall arrange a conference with the student and his parent or guardian.