

(8.5) What can I expect if my child is suspended?

A teacher may suspend a student for up to two days. [Cal. Ed. Code Sec. 48910.] A principal may suspend a student for up to five days. [Cal. Ed. Code Sec. 48911.] Typically, with suspensions, there is a pre-suspension conference involving the principal and teacher and the student. At that conference, the student is told why he is being suspended and what the evidence is against him, and he is given an opportunity to present his version of the event and any evidence in his favor. The law does not require the school to wait for the parent to arrive to hold this pre-suspension conference. [Cal. Ed. Code Sec. 48911(b).] However, the school is required to make reasonable efforts to contact the parent by phone at the time of the suspension. [Cal. Ed. Code Sec. 48911(d).]

A student can be suspended without a pre-suspension conference if the principal determines that an emergency situation exists. An emergency situation is where there is a “clear and present danger” to the life, safety or health of students or school staff. [Cal. Ed. Code Sec. 48911(c).] If no pre-suspension conference is held, because it is an emergency situation, a conference must be held within two school days. Both the parent and student must be notified of this conference and the student must be allowed to return to the campus to attend. [Cal. Ed. Code Sec. 48911(c).]

You must also be informed in writing of a suspension. [Cal. Ed. Code Sec. 48911(d).] The written notice should specify the section or sections of the Education Code which the district says your child violated. You are required to respond without delay to any request from school officials to attend a conference regarding your child’s behavior. [Cal. Ed. Code Sec. 48911(f).]