

<b>Circling Star</b>	<b>Recommendation Two</b>	<b>Reported Status: (not reported)</b>
<b>Report Sent: October 19, 2018</b>	<b>Public Body: The Department of Education and Training</b>	
<p><b>Recommendation Two:</b> The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Education and Training through Healthy Child Manitoba, and with participation from all school divisions, conduct an urgent review of the current use of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, and develop a province-wide strategy to limit, reduce, and phase-out exclusionary practices, except in situations of imminent safety risk to students and staff. This review and strategy should provide evidence-informed disciplinary alternatives that are in line with the best interest of the child and respect the right of children and youth to education.</p> <p><b>DETAILS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department of Education and Training will develop quality assurance and information management processes to: (1) define “imminent safety risk to students and staff”, (2) assess the prevalence, duration, and nature of school suspensions and expulsions in Manitoba, (3) analyse and ensure compliance with standards and best practices, (4) provide school boards with the necessary information to develop strategies to reduce and end school suspensions and exclusionary practices, and evaluate initiatives. Changes should be data informed and made considering the unique dynamics in Manitoba.</li> <li>• The Department of Education and Training will implement province-wide and evidence-informed suspension and exclusion prevention policies and procedures for Manitoba schools. This is to then, in turn, inform training for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ School division training for teachers, principals, and superintendents;</li> <li>○ Mentorship programs; and,</li> <li>○ Alternative approaches to suspension.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

**Response from the Manitoba Government on April 23, 2019:**

Summary of activities completed in the last six months

A school attendance task force is being established in April 2019. The deputy ministers of Education and Training and Justice will co-chair and the task force will include superintendents of school divisions and community leaders. They will meet on a monthly basis and address issues such as school suspensions, expulsions and chronic absenteeism.

**Response from the Manitoba Government on June 27, 2019:**

Summary of activities completed since April 23, 2019 report

Manitoba Education and Training (MET) has begun collaboration with the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents to review current practices and policies in the use of suspensions, expulsions and how the incidence rates should be reported to the province. In addition, the collaboration will examine how best to promote positive behaviour planning and safety plans before there is an imminent safety risk to students and staff. These discussions are beginning in June 2019 and data trends and analyses of the use of suspensions will continue throughout the 2019/20 school year.

**(continued below)**

**Analysis of Manitoba Government's Response by the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth:**

**Activities Completed:**

- A 'school attendance task force', co-chaired by the deputy ministers of Education and Training and Justice, is being established in April 2019. This task force will meet on a monthly basis and is intended to address concerns regarding suspensions, expulsions, and chronic absenteeism.
- Manitoba Education and Training (MET) began collaboration with the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents for the purpose of: reviewing current practice and policy in the use of suspension, expulsion and how incident rates should be reported in Manitoba, and; how to promote positive behavior planning and safety plans prior to there being imminent safety risks to students and staff.
- Initial discussions were to occur in June 2019.
- Data trends and analysis of the use of suspensions will continue throughout the 2019/20 school year.

**Level of Compliance**

This response does not provide enough information to determine when or how the intent of this recommendation or its details will be met.

**Analysis of April 23, 2019 Response**

- This response indicates that the implementation of this recommendation is in early stages.

**Analysis of June 27, 2019 Response**

- As the implementation of this recommendation progresses, MACY requests the following information:
  - With regards to "addressing concerns regarding suspensions, expulsions and chronic absenteeism," MACY needs clarification on how the 'school attendance task force' will examine the use of suspensions and expulsions with the intention to develop a strategy to limit, reduce, and phase-out exclusionary practices? Will evidence-informed disciplinary alternatives not currently in use be explored?
  - All evidence-based documentation, including that of the review mentioned in the response.
- Explain how the trends and analysis of use of suspensions will be reported (i.e. quarterly or bi-annually). As part of the implementation process, MACY would like all corresponding documentation attached to the response, including data trends and analysis.
- To be addressed in the short term\*:
  - Status of implementation
  - Information indicating a timeline for implementation

\*On September 30, 2019, the Manitoba Advocate sent a letter to the members of the government's MACY-RAP committee and working group requesting additional information regarding the government's progress on recommendations made by the Advocate. The Advocate communicated to the government



representatives short-term questions for information that could be provided quickly. Additionally, the Advocate sent long-term questions for the government to address in future progress reports. The questions are designed to seek clarification on activities, seek evidence or documentation to support the activities, or to determine how the government's responses are meeting the intent of the recommendations made by the Advocate. All of this information will be used by the Advocate to determine the levels of compliance with implementation, in accordance with s.11(1)(d), s.30(2)(d), and s.30(4), of *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*.