



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: December 7, 2018

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: ***Draft Model Guidance for Positive and Preventive Code of Student Conduct Policy and Alternatives to Suspension***

The draft of the Board of Education *Model Guidance for Positive and Preventive Code of Student Conduct Policy and Alternatives to Suspension* is available for your review as a Word document at [the Board of Education Agenda Item](#) link on the Department of Education website. The draft was presented to the Board of Education on November 15, 2018, and is in the process of being reviewed by the Board.

A range of stakeholders developed the document with the purpose of reframing school discipline through policy guidance that creates positive, preventive school climates for safe, supportive schools. The document also includes guidance for creating alternatives to suspension as directed by the 2017 General Assembly Senate Bill 829, which amended the *Code of Virginia* [§ 22.1-16.6](#) directing the Board of Education to “establish guidelines for alternatives to short-term and long-term suspension for consideration by local school boards.” The *Model Guidance* combines student code of conduct policy guidance with guidelines for alternatives to suspension. It addresses equity in student conduct policy and practice and provides school boards with suggestions for ensuring equity in student discipline matters.

You are invited to take this opportunity to review the document and provide comments as we undertake finalizing the draft to provide school boards with research-based guidance for updating policies and practices to improve school outcomes for students. If you would like to provide comments or have questions, please contact Rebecca Kahila via email at Rebecca.Kahila@doe.virginia.gov or at (804) 225-4654.

JFL/RCK/rt