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**Informal Removal Parent Education**

**What is informal removal?**

* Informal removal, sometimes called off-books-suspension, is the practice of school personnel asking or requiring that a parent come to the school to pick up their child and failing to record the removal as a suspension or absence
  + Informal removal may also be recorded as an unexcused absence
  + Informal removal may also include the use of inappropriate consequences or threats made by the school. This could include:
    - threatening to call police or the Department of Children’s Services (DCS),
    - additional suspensions or expulsions or consequences to the child, including isolation or “in-school suspension”
    - threatening to alter or amend an individualized education program (IEP) (ex. To send the child to a more restrictive environment)
  + Informal removal is not:
    - Choosing to remove your child…

**Why does informal removal occur?**

* Informal removal can occur for a number of reasons, including inadequate staffing, insufficient behavior planning and intervention, staff fatigue or burnout, poor IEP construction and/or implementation, negative school culture, etc.
* Schools may not record the removal for a number of reasons as well. These include the desire to avoid submitting high suspension rates to the state Department of Education, ignorance of attendance rules, poor enforcement of IDEA/504, perceived inability to work with a child, avoidance of due process rights, etc.

**Why is informal removal bad?**

* State and federal law requires recording a removal as a suspension. Failing to do so denies students their due process rights, including a manifestation determination meeting, use or amendment of a functional behavior assessment or plan (FBA) or behavior intervention plan (BIP), etc.
* Students who are frequently removed from school early will likely miss the same academic instruction repeatedly, diminishing their opportunity to make adequate academic progress in certain skills
* Frequent removals without intervention may build and reinforce undesirable behaviors

**What are your rights?**

* Your child has a right to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment possible
* You have the right to request an IEP meeting at any time where you can request a reevaluation, amendments to an IEP, a new or amended FBA, BIP, etc.
* Your child’s removal MUST be recorded as a suspension if the student is removed for reasons related to behavior (or reasons suspected to be related to behavior) even one-minute shy of a full school day (hours in which the school is in session)