

LETTER 11.1: SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTER TO PARENTS ON DISCIPLINE

This is a strongly worded letter to parents, attempting to enlist their support in helping to maintain standards in the schools.

Dear Parents:

This letter is about discipline and our schools. Discipline is a little like weather in that everybody talks about it but not many do much about it. We are trying to do something about it in the Pickering School District. We are determined to maintain our high standards of excellence for our students and our schools.

Lately, we have had to exclude a number of students from our schools because of chronic misbehavior involving smoking, drinking, and drugs. Excluding students from school is very unpleasant for us, because we recognize the importance of education in the lives of our students. However, we cannot tolerate chronic misbehavior of the sort that these few students have demonstrated.

We are asking your help as parents to support our schools in trying to teach youngsters that there are consequences for serious misdeeds. In Pickering the consequences will be swift and sure. All students and parents have a copy of the rules, and every student who is involved in a case of serious misconduct is granted a fair and impartial trial before being excluded from school.

Although we believe the system is just and fair, it sometimes happens that the parents of those involved in disciplinary infractions criticize our schools. We feel that such criticism is unwarranted, self-serving, and sometimes actually detrimental to students who must learn to accept responsibility for their actions as young adults.

Please do what you can to be sure your youngsters understand our rules at school. Also, please try to remember that we are attempting to provide a safe and sound educational environment for your child. Such an environment has no place for students who either cannot or will not comply with reasonable rules of order and discipline.

If you agree with us and will sustain our position, we will have taken one more step toward helping students achieve a healthy and happy adult life. If you have any questions about our schools' disciplinary rules and regulations, feel free to contact us at your convenience.

Your help, cooperation, and support of the Pickering School District in these matters of discipline will be greatly appreciated.

LETTER 11.2: DETENTION NOTICE

This is a form letter to the parent or guardian of a student who has received detention. It serves to explain why the student will not be home at the usual time on the date specified.

Dear Parent or Guardian:

This notice is to inform you that your child, _____,
has been assigned detention on _____.
The reason for this detention is _____

_____.

Detentions are held from 2:20 p.m. to 4:20 p.m. Failure to report for detention may result in an out-of-school suspension. Please speak to your child about the behavior that resulted in this detention so that further disciplinary actions will not be necessary.

If you have any questions, please contact my office.

LETTER 11.3: LETTER TO PARENTS ABOUT DETENTION

The detention in this letter is really a kind of in-school suspension, because the student cannot attend classes until it is served. It occurs during normal class hours.

Dear Parent or Guardian:

This letter will confirm our telephone conversation regarding your son's or daughter's detention that will be served on _____
for the following incident: _____

_____.

You are expected to bring your child to Room 142, the in-school suspension room, at 9:00 a.m. He or she will be released at 11:00 a.m.

This detention is mandatory. No student will be admitted to another classroom until the detention time has been served. For this detention to be credited, your son or daughter must exhibit proper school behavior and proper teacher respect.

We regret the need for this detention and hope that similar action will not have to be taken in the future.

LETTER 11.4: NEWSLETTER STATEMENT ON SMOKING

The writing in a newsletter tends to be more informal, more chatty than in a regular letter, and the text below is no exception. Nevertheless, the writer makes his stand on smoking perfectly clear.

Dear Parents:

The 20xx–20xx school year continues to go well. When I say *well*, I am speaking relatively. It does not mean that we have had no problems. Five students have been suspended from school already this year. The most frequent reason for suspension, once again, has been for smoking. Students are never suspended for their first smoking offense. The first time, they and their parents receive notice that suspension for further smoking will occur. If students persist, they are suspended.

We at Fitzgerald Junior High School do not object to doing battle with students about smoking. We think there is ample evidence that smoking is hazardous to health and safety. Students who challenge our position, and challenge the wishes of their parents, know the consequences. Perhaps school is one of the few places that are *unreasonable* about smoking. I prefer to think we are willing to stand behind a principle in which we strongly believe: Fitzgerald Junior High School is not a place where kids learn how to smoke—at least not without considerable risk.