

Federal School-Discipline Enforcement Changes, but Fair Process Still Matters

Federal discipline enforcement has changed—but students still deserve fair process before schools impose life-changing consequences.

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, July 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The U.S. Department of Education has removed disparate-impact provisions from regulations implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, changing an enforcement tool long used to examine school policies that disproportionately burden racial or national-origin groups.

The Associated Press reported that the department will generally require intentional discrimination rather than disproportionate effect alone under the revised provisions. School discipline has been a central setting for disparate-impact analysis because national data has

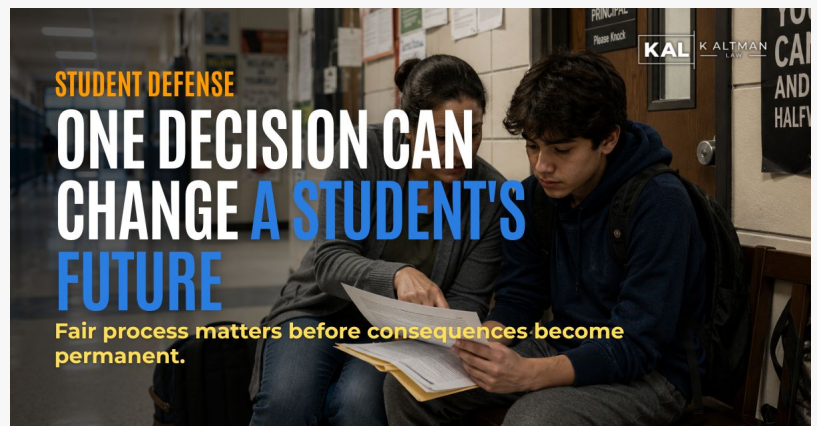
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and a meaningful opportunity to respond.

“A shift in one federal enforcement theory does not make the underlying process unimportant,” said [Keith Altman](#), founder and managing partner of K Altman Law. “A defensible disciplinary decision should identify the rule, explain the evidence, apply stated procedures consistently, and



A disciplinary decision can shape a student's future long after the paperwork is signed. Fair process still matters.

repeatedly shown unequal rates of suspensions, expulsions, and alternative-school transfers. [You can read about it here.](#)

The change is significant, but it should not be misunderstood. Title VI's prohibition on intentional discrimination remains. Other federal laws, state civil-rights protections, disability laws, constitutions, student handbooks, collective policies, and contractual promises may also apply. Schools still benefit from clear rules and consistent documentation; students still need timely notice

give the student a fair chance to be heard.”

Students and families confronting serious discipline should consider three immediate steps:

- Obtain the precise charge, code provision, evidence, hearing procedure, and sanction range in writing.
- Create a timeline and preserve communications, video requests, witness information, accommodation records, and comparison evidence.
- Calendar every conference, hearing, records request, and appeal deadline; deadlines are often short.

The revised federal rule does not decide whether a particular suspension or expulsion is lawful. The analysis remains fact-specific. Evidence of inconsistent treatment, biased statements, departures from policy, unreliable proof, or a failure to provide disability-related protections may still be important under the laws and rules that govern the institution.



Keith Altman

K Altman Law represents students and families in K-12 and higher-education disputes involving discipline, due process, accommodations, discrimination, and institutional procedure. The firm’s approach emphasizes early fact development, careful documentation, and practical decision-making.

This release provides general educational information and is not legal advice. It does not create an attorney-client relationship. Legal rights and deadlines depend on jurisdiction, facts, and institutional policy.

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