

DON'T TELL THE TEACHERS! – Here is one of the best kept secrets in Brevard: **You have the authority to permanently remove from class any student whose behavior you determine interferes with your ability to communicate effectively.** The School Board, Superintendent, and Principal shall support this authority given to Teachers, and parents must also cooperate. This ability to control your classroom learning environment comes from the **Teacher Authority Law (TAL)**, but roadblocks may be placed in your way. Here is how the process should go:

1.) After taking the usual actions to change a “disobedient, disrespectful, violent, abusive, uncontrollable, or disruptive” student’s behavior, and you determine this student needs to go, notify administration that you are invoking the TAL (we suggest you document this using a referral). The moment administration is made aware of this, that student is officially removed. Every student has the right to a free and appropriate public education, but that is not your worry because this is no longer your student.

2.) The TAL requires that the principal has notified every Teacher of the availability, procedures, and criteria for a **Placement Review Committee (PRC)**. The PRC is **two (2) Teachers** (one selected by the school’s faculty and one selected by the removing Teacher), and **one (1) staff person** selected by the principal. [NOTE the significance of the Teacher Authority Law creating a PRC made up of two (2) Teacher reps and one (1) administrative rep.] The PRC has within 5 days of a removal to carry out its only task: **To decide where to place the student**. They are not there to pass judgment on the Teacher’s professional decision to remove the student. The PRC should be very creative in considering the many ways a removed student can still receive his/her guaranteed education. If the decision is to return the student, the Teacher may appeal the decision to the Superintendent.

The TAL trusts the judgment of a highly trained professional to do what is best for all students, but just in case there is a breakdown in this trust, the TAL’s failsafe position requires any teacher who removes twenty-five percent (25%) of his/her total class enrollment to complete professional development to improve classroom management.

SOME WORDS OF CAUTION: 1.) No one is “in charge” of the PRC. There should be a free flow of ideas before making a decision that is in the best interests of everyone involved. The PRC may seek the advice of others, but only the three members of the PRC must make the final decision. If administration warns, “You’ll just be pushing this problem onto another Teacher,” so be it. Let that Teacher invoke the TAL if necessary, until administration gets the message that this student needs more than the classroom Teacher has the time and energy to give. 2.) In order to avoid weakening a PRC that was purposely created with 2 to 1 Teacher influence, the Faculty should choose its representative wisely. Who would best understand the dynamics and the needs of a successful classroom?

Having the responsibility to produce highly successful students, within an incredibly demanding and often adversarial setting, the TAL provides an influence not often afforded Teachers. It should be wielded with the utmost professionalism, and its implementation must be respected by all. **If you should ever have questions or need advice regarding its use or implementation, call the BFT office (636-3323). As always, all such communications are CONFIDENTIAL.**