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School bullies could have 'black mark' on record

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KUALA LUMPUR — School students may have to deal with a “black mark” in their school-leaving certificate if they are suspended for bullying.

Education Minister Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid said his ministry was serious in addressing the problem and those involved must face the consequences of their actions.

Mahdzir said a national-level committee had been tasked to work on the mechanics of the implementation of the system in January.

He said, the committee would decide if the student’s suspension be reflected in their school leaving certificate.

“We are not out to punish, but to find a solution to the problem — mainly to stop it from occurring,” he told *Malay Mail* yesterday.

Mahdzir was elaborating on his statement on Sunday that the ministry was mulling suspension as a punishment with the bullies getting up to a year in community service or time in a rehabilitation centre.

“This will come into effect in the coming school-term in January, with the emphasis more on secondary schools as there are more bullying cases reported there,” he said.

Mahdzir said all schools

to evaluate cases of bullying in their schools.

“The board will consist a mix of those from the academic sector, parent’s teachers association as well as other relevant stake holders,” he said.

The board will conduct hearings and come up with a decision — on the duration of the suspension if the board finds the student guilty.

The board will then have to submit their findings and decision to the district education department for its endorsement.

“But the standard operating procedure (SOP) of the board hearings will be drawn up by the ministry and this will have to be followed,” he said.

“This is the way to decentralise the operation and not leave it to one person or the ministry to make a decision,” he said.

On the year-long suspension, Mahdzir said: “It means if a student has been found guilty and is sentenced to one-year suspension, his suspension will be till the end of the school year only or to the end of the school term.”

Mahdzir said the national committee was also looking at other options besides suspension, and one of the suggestions was for the parent of the student to come to school every day with the student for a certain period of time to monitor the student.



The increasing number of school bullying cases is being taken seriously by the Education Ministry which will be setting up boards in schools to deal with such cases.