

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**STATE OF GEORGIA**

<b>Z. B.,</b>	:	
	:	
<b>Appellant,</b>	:	
	:	
<b>vs.</b>	:	<b>CASE NO. 2008-51</b>
	:	
<b>DEKALB COUNTY</b>	:	
<b>BOARD OF EDUCATION,</b>	:	
	:	<b>DECISION</b>
<b>Appellee.</b>	:	

This is an appeal by Z. B. (Student) from a decision by the DeKalb County Board of Education (Local Board) to uphold the decision of a student disciplinary tribunal to suspend him for the remainder of the 2007-2008 school year after finding him guilty of possessing a knife at school. The Student complains that the punishment is too harsh. The Local Board's decision is sustained.

On January 28, 2008, a teacher discovered a knife in a book that the Student had left in a classroom. The Student admitted that the book and knife were his and that he had used the knife as a bookmark the night before, but he claimed that he had forgotten that the knife was still in the book. The Student was charged with possessing a knife at school and a student disciplinary hearing was held. The tribunal found the Student guilty and suspended him until the end of the 2007-2008 school year. The Local Board upheld the suspension and the Student appealed to the State Board of Education.

The Student claims that the punishment was too harsh since he did not intend to bring the knife to school. The State Board of Education, however, cannot adjust the level or degree of discipline imposed by a local board of education. *B. K. v. Bartow Cnty. Bd. of Educ.*, Case No. 1998-33 (Ga. SBE, Sep. 10, 1998). The Local Board has the authority to suspend the Student.

Based upon the foregoing and the record below, it is the opinion of the State Board of Education that there was evidence to support the Local Board's decision. The Local Board's decision, therefore, is  
**SUSTAINED.**

This \_\_\_\_\_ day of July 2008.

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William Bradley Bryant  
Vice Chairman for Appeals