

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Promoting ethical and responsible student behavior is an essential component of the Board's educational mission.

The Board is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful and orderly school environment in which students may receive and staff may deliver quality education without disruption or interference and in which students may develop as ethical, responsible and involved citizens.

To achieve this goal, the Board has developed this District-wide Student Code of Conduct with input from school administrators, staff, students, parents and the community. Based on values identified as essential to ethical and responsible behavior, the Code articulates the Board's expectations for student conduct.

The Board believes that each member of the school community should take responsibility for his/her own behavior. To that end, the Board recognizes the need to define unacceptable student conduct, identify the possible consequences for unacceptable conduct, and ensure that discipline is administered fairly, promptly, and appropriately.

The Code applies to students who are on school property, who are in attendance at school or at any school-sponsored activity, or whose conduct at any time or place directly interferes with the operations, discipline, or general welfare of the school.

The Student Code of Conduct shall be distributed to students, parents and staff through handbooks and/or other methods deemed appropriate by the Superintendent and building administrators.

I. STANDARDS FOR ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR

The Code of Conduct is intended to support and encourage students to meet the following core values. These expectations are based upon the values identified by the community as essential to ethical and responsible behavior:

- Fairness
- Compassion
- Honesty
- Responsibility
- Respect
- Courtesy

II. CODE OF CONDUCT

All students are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct and all related Board policies and school rules. The Code of Conduct applies to students:

- On school property;
- Attending school or at any school-sponsored activity; or
- At any time or place that such school conduct directly interferes with the operations, discipline, or general welfare of the school.

III. GENERAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES

The following expectations for student behavior are fundamental to a safe, orderly and respectful environment in our schools. Each student should:

- Treat every person with kindness and courtesy and respond politely when addressed
- Promptly follow the directions and requests of all school personnel
- Enter a room or section of the building only with the permission of a staff member
- Move safely within the building
- Maintain all school books, desks, or other school property
- Respect the rights and privileges as well as the property of other students and staff
- Obey all Board policies and school rules governing student conduct
- Meet school standards for grooming and dress
- Attend school regularly
- Refrain from cheating or plagiarizing the work of others
- Avoid vulgarity, profanity, obscenity, lewdness, and indecency

Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary consequences depend upon the seriousness of the violation and the student's prior disciplinary record. Please note that a first offense could lead to expulsion depending upon the nature and seriousness of the offense. Consequences will fit within the following framework:

- Level 1 Intervention: Consequences that allow the student to remain within the school setting that range from a "Time-Out" to an "In-School Suspension"
- Level 2 Intervention: 1-5 days out-of-school suspension
- Level 3 Intervention: 6-10 days out-of-school suspension
- Level 4 Intervention: Expulsion

Behavior that also violates the law may be referred to law-enforcement authorities.

IV. EXPECTATIONS

The following are summaries of some of the major policies involving student conduct. For a complete listing of policies, please refer to the district's student handbooks and district policy manual. In cases where there are inconsistencies between the Code of Conduct, Board policies, and/or school handbooks, Board policies will prevail.

A. Violence and Threats

Students shall not engage in violent or threatening behavior. Prohibited behavior includes fighting, assault and/or battery, taking hostages, threats to commit violence against persons or property, threats, intimidation, or harassment. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

See policies: JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety
EBCC – Bomb Threats

B. Weapons

Students shall not possess or use weapons of any kind (examples include but are not limited to firearms, explosives, and knives). Students also shall not use any object, although not necessarily designed to be a weapon, to inflict bodily harm and/or to threaten, intimidate, coerce, or harass another person (examples include but are not limited to bats, lighters, tools, and toy weapons). Firearms violations will result in expulsion in accordance with state and federal statutes; other weapons violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

See policy: JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety

C. Hazing

Hazing is prohibited. Maine law defines injurious hazing as an action or situation, including harassing behavior, that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of any school personnel or a student enrolled in a public school. No student shall plan, encourage, or engage in such activities in connection with any school program or activity, including extracurricular, co-curricular, or athletic activities. Students who engage in hazing activities are subject to suspension, expulsion, and/or other appropriate disciplinary measures.

See policy: ACAD – Hazing

D. Discrimination and Harassment/Sexual Harassment

Students should not discriminate against other students on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, national origin, or disability. Nor should students harass one another on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, or national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. Sexual harassment is also prohibited. Harassment is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

See policies: AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmation Action
ACAA – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students

E. Drug and Alcohol Use

Students shall not distribute, possess, use or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, drug, or look-alike substance as described in Board policy. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

See policies: ADC – Tobacco Use and Possession
JICH – Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

F. Tobacco Use

Students shall not smoke, use, possess, sell, or distribute any tobacco products. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school.

See policy: ADC – Tobacco Use and Possession

G. Conduct on School Buses

Students must comply with all Board policies, bus rules, and school rules while on school buses. Students who violate these policies and rules on a school bus may have their riding privileges suspended or revoked and may also be subject to additional disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, depending upon the particular violation.

See policy: JICC – Student Conduct on School Buses

H. Computer/Internet Use

Students may use school computers, networks, and Internet services only for educational purposes. Students shall comply with all policies and rules governing acceptable use. Unacceptable use may result in suspension or cancellation of computer privileges as well as additional disciplinary and/or legal action.

See policies: IJNDB – Student Computer and Internet Use and Internet Safety
IJNDB-R – Telecommunication Network – Network Use Contract

I. **Athletic/Extra Curricular Activities**

Students must follow all Board policies, school rules, and athletic contracts while participating in athletics and extracurricular activities. Students who violate Board policies and/or school/team rules may be subject to suspension or removal from the team/activity as well as additional disciplinary action under applicable Board policies and/or school rules.

V. REMOVAL OF DISRUPTIVE/VIOLENT/THREATENING STUDENTS

- A. Students who are disruptive, violent, or threatening death or bodily harm to others may be removed from classrooms, school buses, or other school property when necessary to maintain order and safety.
- B. If a student does not comply with a staff member's request to report to the office or other location, the staff member will contact the main office/an administrator for assistance.
- C. Staff members should use force or restraint to the minimum extent necessary. Staff members are not required to take action that puts them at risk of serious injury.
- D. The responding administrator will take appropriate action. If the student fails to obey verbal directions, force or restraint may be used only to the minimum extent necessary to protect any person from imminent physical harm or to quell a disturbance. Whenever practicable, law enforcement should be called to restrain or physically remove the non-compliant student. The administrator may invoke the school unit's crisis response plan if appropriate.

VI. SPECIAL SERVICES

- A. **Referral.** The school unit has adopted policies and procedures for determining when a student shall be referred for special services.

See policies: IHBA – Referral/Pre-Referral of Students with Disabilities
IHBAC – Child Find

- B. **Review of Individual Educational Plan.** The school shall schedule an IEP meeting to review the IEP of a student who has been removed from class when: a) school officials and/or the parent believes the student may present a substantial likelihood of injury to himself/herself or others; b) the class removals are sufficient to constitute a change in the student's special education program; or c) school officials

or the parent believes that the student's behavior may warrant a change in educational programming.

See policy: JKF – Disciplinary Removal of Students with Disabilities

C. Physical Restraint and Seclusion. RSU 68 also has established a policy on the use of physical restraint and seclusion as required by Maine law.

See policy: JKAA – Use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion

VII. REFERRALS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES

The Superintendent and administrators have the authority to seek the assistance of law enforcement authorities when there is a substantial threat to the safety of the schools, students, or staff. The Superintendent/administration may also inform law-enforcement authorities when they have reason to suspect that a student or staff member may have violated a local, state, or federal statute. All serious offenses, as determined by the Superintendent, must be reported to law-enforcement authorities.

VIII. DISSEMINATION OF SYSTEM-WIDE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The District-wide Student Code of Conduct shall be distributed to staff, students, and parents through handbooks and/or other means selected by the Superintendent and building administrators.

Legal References: 20-A MRSA §§ 254 (11); 1001 (15)

Cross Reference: ADAA – School System Commitment to Standards for Ethical and Responsible Student Behavior

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