

JK - STUDENT DISCIPLINE

It is essential for schools to maintain a safe and orderly environment which supports student learning and achievement. Effective discipline allows the schools to discharge their primary responsibilities to educate students and promote good citizenship. All students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for others and in accordance with School Board policies, school rules, and applicable state and federal laws. Disciplinary action may be taken against students who violate policies, rules, or laws, and/or whose conduct directly interferes with the operations, discipline or general welfare of the school.

The Board expects the following principles to guide the development and implementation of school rules and disciplinary procedures:

- I. Discipline should emphasize positive interventions and expectations for appropriate behavior, as well as appropriate consequences for misbehavior. The focus should be on providing a school environment where students are engaged in constructive learning and interactions with others. Instructional and environmental supports should be designed to teach students prosocial alternatives to problem behaviors, and provide high rates of feedback.
- II. Expectations for student behavior should be clear and communicated to school staff, students and parents.
- III. Positive and restorative interventions should be used to the extent feasible. Consequences for misbehavior should be in proportion to the offense, fair and consistently enforced. Administrators shall have the discretion to tailor discipline to the facts and circumstances of the particular case.
- IV. Parents should be actively involved in the process of preventing and resolving disciplinary problems at school.

Recess may not be withheld as a consequence for a violation of the Student Code of Conduct for any student in grade five or below, except that when there is no alternative time available, recess time may be used for restorative interventions related to the student's conduct.

Physical force and corporal punishment shall not be used as disciplinary methods. Maine law provides that "a teacher or other person entrusted with the care or supervision of a person for special or limited purposes may not be held civilly liable for the use of a reasonable degree of force against the person who creates a disturbance if the teacher or other person reasonably believes it is necessary to a) control the disturbing behavior; or b) remove the person from the scene of the disturbance." Any restraint or seclusion of students shall comply with applicable regulations and Board policy.

Teachers are authorized to make and enforce rules for effective classroom management and to foster appropriate student behavior, subject to the direction and approval by the Principal.

School-wide rules shall be developed by the building principal with appropriate input from school staff, students and parents and subject to approval by the Superintendent. Principals and the Board shall provide for the suspension of or other serious disciplinary action against students in accordance with Board policies, administrative procedures and Maine law.

Students with disabilities shall be disciplined in accordance with applicable federal and state law/regulations.

Legal Reference:

- 17-A MRS § 106
- 20-A MRS §§ 1001(15A); 4009

Cross Reference:

- AC - Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
- ACAA - Student Harassment and Sexual Harassment
- JIC - Student Code of Conduct
- JICIA- Weapons, Violence, Bullying and School Safety
- JKAA- Use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion
- JKD - Student Suspension
- JKE - Expulsion of Students
- JKF - Suspension/Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

ADOPTED:

- October 9, 1984

RECODED:

June 1998

REVISED:

- August 25, 1992
- May 13, 2003
- November 4, 2008
- December 11, 2012
- June 14, 2022

Revizyon #4

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Jennifer Lakari taraf?ndan 10 Ekim 2024 16:28:55 g?ncellendi