

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE

It is essential for schools to maintain a safe and orderly environment that supports student learning and achievement. Effective discipline enables the schools to discharge their primary responsibilities to educate students and promote citizenship and ethical behavior. All students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for others and in accordance with 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. Students shall not be disciplined solely on the basis of their actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation, actual or perceived gender identity or expression or any other distinguishing characteristic, or is based on a student's association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

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

- A. Discipline should emphasize positive reinforcement 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.
- B. Expectations for student behavior should be clear and communicated to school staff, students and parents.
- C. 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.
- D. Parents should be actively involved in the process of preventing and resolving disciplinary problems at school.

Any restraint or seclusion of students shall comply with applicable regulations and Board policy.

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.”

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 building principal/designee.

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 shall provide for the

suspension 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.

To reduce disciplinary problems and the potential for violence in the schools, the Superintendent may develop procedures for conflict resolution which may be accomplished through peer mediation, counseling, parent involvement, services of community agencies or other activities suitable to the school unit.

Legal Reference:       17-A MRSA § 106  
                              20-A MRSA §§ 1001(15A); 4009

Cross Reference:       AC - Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action  
                              ACAA – Student Harassment and Sexual Harassment  
                              EBCA – Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan  
                              JIC – Student Code of Conduct  
                              JICIA Weapons, Violence and School Safety  
                              JKAA – Use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion  
                              JKB - Student Detention  
                              JKD - Suspension of Students  
                              JKE - Expulsion of Students  
                              JKF – Disciplinary Removal of Students with Disabilities

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