

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Ethical and responsible student behavior is an essential part of the educational mission of our schools. To that end, the School Board has developed this Code of Conduct with input from school staff, students, parents, and the community. The code defines our expectations for student behavior and provides the framework for a safe, orderly and respectful learning environment.

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 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.

Code of Conduct

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

1. on school property;
2. while in attendance at school or at any school-sponsored activity, or
3. at any time or place that such conduct directly interferes with the operations, discipline or general welfare of the school.

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 will:

1. Be courteous to fellow students, staff and visitors.
2. Respect the rights and privileges of other students and school staff.
3. Obey all School Board policies and school rules governing student conduct.
4. Follow directions from school staff.
5. Cooperate with staff in maintaining school safety, order and discipline.
6. Attend school regularly.
7. Meet school standards for grooming and dress.
8. Respect the property of others, including school property and facilities.
9. Refrain from cheating or plagiarizing the work of others.

10. Refrain from vulgarity, profanity, obscenity, lewdness, and indecency.

Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in positive and restorative interventions and/or disciplinary action. Disciplinary consequences depend upon the seriousness of the violation and the student's prior disciplinary record. Consequences will range from a verbal warning for minor misconduct up to and including expulsion for the most serious offenses. Behavior that also violates the law may be referred to law enforcement authorities.

See policies: JK Student Discipline
JKD Suspension of Students
JKE Expulsion of Students

Expectations

The following is a summary of RSU 19's expectations for student behavior. In many cases, the School Board has adopted policies that address these expectations in greater detail. Students, parents and others should refer to the policies and student handbooks for more information about the expectations and consequences. In case of an inconsistency between the Code of Conduct, School Board policies and/or school handbooks, the School 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, or 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. Bullying

Bullying is not acceptable conduct in RSU 19 schools and is prohibited. Any student who engages in conduct that constitutes bullying shall be subject to disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension and expulsion. A student's bullying behavior may also be addressed through other behavioral interventions.

See policy: JICK Bullying

D. Hazing

Hazing is prohibited. Maine law defines injurious hazing as "any 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 and athletic activities. Students who engage in hazing activities are subject to appropriate disciplinary measures up to and including suspension and expulsion.

See policy: ACAD Hazing

E. Discrimination and Harassment/Sexual Harassment

Students should not discriminate against other students on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation 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 Affirmative Action

ACAA Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students

F. 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 School Board policy. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

See policy: JICH Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

G. Tobacco Use

Students shall not smoke, use, possess, sell, or distribute any tobacco products. This prohibition also applies to e-cigarettes and products and paraphilia associated with “vaping.” Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school.

See policy: ADC Electronic Cigarettes, Vaporizing Devices, Tobacco and Nicotine Use and Possession

H. Conduct on School Buses

Students must comply with all School Board policies 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.

I. 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 policy: IJNDB Student Acceptable Use Policy

J. Athletic/Extracurricular Activities

Students must follow all RSU 19 Board policies and school rules while participating in athletics and extracurricular activities. In addition, a separate policy has been developed governing students participating in these activities. Students who violate policies may be subject to suspension or removal from the team/activity as well as additional disciplinary action under School Board policies and/or school rules.

See policy: JJIC Co-Curricular Policy Standards and Conduct for Participation

Removal of Disruptive/Violent/Threatening Students

- A. Students who are disruptive, violent, or threatening death or bodily harm to others will be removed from classrooms, school buses, or other school property when necessary to maintain order and safety. The staff member who orders the student removed should arrange to have the student escorted to the office or other designated location.

- B. If a student does not comply with a staff member's order to leave, the staff member will contact an administrator, or, if not available, another staff person, who shall respond promptly.
- C. Staff members should not use force or restraint, except only to the minimum extent necessary to protect any person from imminent physical harm. 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.

See Crisis Response Plan

See Policy: JKAA Use Physical Restraint and Seclusion

Special Services

A. Referral

RSU 19 has adopted policies and procedures for determining when a student shall be referred for special services.

*See policies: IHBAA Referral/Pre-Referral Policy
IHBAC Child Find Policy*

B. Review of Individual Education Plan (IEP)

The School shall schedule a meeting to review the IEP of a student who has been removed from class when:

1. school officials and/or the parent believes the student may present a substantial likelihood of injury to himself/herself or others;
2. the class removals are sufficient to constitute a change in the student's special education program; or
3. 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

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.

See policy: KLG Relations with Campus Security Monitor and Law Enforcement Authorities

Dissemination of Student Code of Conduct

The 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 Reference: 20-A M.R.S.A. §§ 254 (11); 1001 (15)

Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior in Maine Schools and Communities (Report of The Commission for Ethical and Responsible Behavior, February 2001)

Cross Reference: AC - Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
 ACAA/ACAA-R - Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students
 ACAD - Hazing
 ADAA - School System Commitment to Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior
 ADC - Tobacco Use and Possession
 EBCC - Bomb Threats
 IHBAA – Referral and Use of General Education Interventions
 IHBAC - Child Find
 IJNDB – Student Computer and Internet Use and Internet Safety
 JICIA - Weapons, Violence, and School Safety
 JICH - Drug and Alcohol Use by Students
 JICK - Bullying
 JK - Student Discipline
 JKAA – Use of Physical Restrain and Seclusion
 JKD - Suspension of Students
 JKE - Expulsion of Students
 JKF - Disciplinary Removals of Students with Disabilities