

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

It is essential for schools to maintain a safe and orderly environment that supports student learning and achievement. Good discipline allows 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.

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.
- D. Parents should be actively involved in the process of preventing and resolving disciplinary problems at school.

Physical force and corporal punishment shall not be used as disciplinary methods.

However, school personnel may use reasonable force to control the behavior of a student who presents an immediate threat of physical harm to him/herself or others, to remove a student from a situation where the student is violent or presents an immediate danger to others, or to prevent damage or destruction of school property. Force, including physical restraint, should not be used beyond the point necessary to prevent the student from harming him/herself or others.

Any staff member who uses force to control the behavior of a student shall immediately contact the building principal to report the incident, the reasons for the use of force and

the specific measures taken. The building principal shall notify the student's parent and the Superintendent as soon as practicable following the incident.

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.

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 § 4009
Ch. 125.23 (B)(5)(1) (Maine Dept. of Ed. Rule)

Cross Reference: AC - Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
ACAA – Student Harassment and Sexual Harassment
EBCA – Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
JICIA Weapons, Violence and School Safety
JKAA – Timeout Rooms and Therapeutic Restraint
JKB - Student Detention
JKD - Suspension of Students
JKE - Expulsion of Students
JKF - Suspension/Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

Adopted: December 6, 1999

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