

Weapons, Violence and School Safety

The Board believes that students and staff are entitled to learn and work in a school environment free of violence, threats and other disruptive behavior. Students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for others and in accordance with Board policies, school rules, reasonable unwritten behavior expectations, and applicable state and federal laws.

School staff and volunteers are required to immediately report incidents of prohibited conduct to the building administrator for investigation and appropriate action. Students who are subjected to or observe prohibited conduct are strongly encouraged to report it to a staff member or administrator.

Prohibited Conduct

Students are prohibited from engaging in the following conduct on school property, while in attendance at school or at any other school-sponsored activity, or at any time or place that such conduct directly interferes with the operations, discipline or general welfare of the school:

- A. Possession and/or use of articles commonly used or designed to inflict bodily harm and/or to threaten, intimidate, coerce or harass another person. Examples of such articles include but are not limited to firearms, BB guns, pellet guns, any other kind of gun, ammunition, explosives, cross-bows, brass knuckles, switchblades, knives, chains, clubs, Kung Fu stars and nunchucks;
- B. Discharge of a firearm within 500 feet of school property;
- C. Use of 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 of such objects include but are not limited to bats, belts, picks, pencils, compasses, articles capable of ignition (e.g., matches, lighters), files, tools of any sort and replicas of weapons (including toys);
- D. Violent, threatening or menacing behavior, including but not limited to fighting, assault and/or battery, taking hostages, threats to commit violence against persons or property (e.g., verbal or written death threats, threats of bodily harm, bomb threats), stalking, or blocking access to school property or facilities;

- E. Verbal or written statements (including those made on or through a computer or other electronic device) which threaten, intimidate, or harass others; verbal or written statements which tend to incite violence and/or disrupt the school program; blackmail; extortion; or demands for money or property;
- F. Intentional damage to school or personal property;
- G. Stealing or attempting to steal school or personal property;
- H. Lewd, indecent or obscene acts or expressions of any kind;
- I. Violations of the school unit's drug/alcohol and tobacco policies;
- J. Violations of state or federal laws; and
- K. Any other conduct that may be harmful to persons or property.

Exceptions to Prohibition Against Possession and Use of Weapons on School Property

- A. The prohibition on the possession and discharge of a firearm does not apply to law enforcement officials.
- B. An authorized person who possesses an unloaded firearm for use in a supervised educational program approved and authorized by the Board, for which appropriate safeguards have been adopted by the Board.
- C. An authorized person who possesses other weapons for use in specific instructional programs that have been approved and authorized by the Board and for which appropriate safeguards have been adopted by the Board.

Addressing Policy Violations

Principals may engage students in restorative intervention and/or discipline students who violate this policy, based upon the facts of each case and in accordance with applicable Board policies and state and federal laws. Conduct which violates this policy is deliberately disobedient and deliberately disorderly within the meaning of 20-A MRSA §1001(9) and will be grounds for expulsion, as permitted by law, if found necessary for the peace and usefulness of the school. Such conduct may also be grounds for expulsion under other provisions of 20-A MRS §1001 (9 and 9-A) that specifically prohibit the use and possession of weapons, infractions of violence, and possession, furnishing and trafficking of scheduled

drugs.

Students who are found to have brought a firearm or to have possessed a firearm at a school (as both terms are defined by federal law), may be expelled for a period of not less than one year, unless this requirement is modified by the Superintendent on a case-by-case basis in writing.

All firearms violations will be referred to law enforcement authorities as required by law. Other violations of this policy will be referred to law enforcement authorities at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Students with disabilities will be disciplined in accordance with applicable federal and state laws/regulations and Board Policy JKF.

Risk Assessment

The Superintendent is authorized to request a risk assessment of a student who violates this policy when, in the Superintendent's opinion, such an evaluation will assist in assessing the risk the student poses to school safety if the student were to remain in school or return to school after a suspension or expulsion.

All such evaluations will be performed at the school unit's expense. If the parents/guardians and/or student refuse to permit a requested risk assessment, the Superintendent and the Board may draw any reasonable inferences from the student's behavior concerning the risk the student poses to school safety for purposes of determining appropriate action.

Legal References: 20 USC § 7151 (Gun-Free Schools Act)
5 M.R.S. §4681 et seq.
17-A M.R.S. §2(9); 2(12-A)
20-A M.R.S. §§1001(9), (9-A), (15) and (15-A); 6552
P.L. 2005, Chapter 307

Cross References: ACAA – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students
ADC – Tobacco Free Schools: Use and Possession of Tobacco and Electronic Smoking Devices
EBC – Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
JFCK – Student Use of Privately Owned Electronic Devices at School
JFCK-R - Student Use of Privately Owned Electronic Devices at School Procedure

JIC – System Wide Code of Conduct
JICH – Drug and Alcohol Use by Students
JICK – Bullying and Cyberbullying in Schools
JICK-R - Bullying and Cyberbullying in Schools Procedure
JIH – Questioning and Searches of Students
JIH-R – Questioning and Searches of Students Procedure
JK – Student Discipline
JKD – Suspension of Students
JKE – Expulsion of Students
JKE-R – Expulsion of Students Procedure
JKF – Disciplinary Removal of Students with Disabilities
KLGA – Relations with School Resource Officers and Law Enforcement Authorities
KLGA-R - School Resource Officers and Law Enforcement Procedure

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