

CODE: JICDA

SYSTEM-WIDE 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 Committee has developed this System-Wide 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.

Article 1 - Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior

The Code of Conduct is intended to support and encourage students to meet the following standards for ethical and responsible behavior:

- HONESTY** An honest person behaves with truthfulness and sincerity.
- INTEGRITY** A person with integrity does the right thing, even when no one is looking.
- FAIRNESS** A fair person pursues justice, commits themselves to the equitable treatment of individuals, and displays tolerance and acceptance of diversity.
- CARING** A caring person shows concern for the well-being of self, others, and the environment. He or she acts with compassion, generosity, kindness, and a commitment to service.
- RESPECT** A respectful person abides by his or her own beliefs and values while also acknowledging, understanding, and supporting the rights of others to express and live by their beliefs.
- CITIZENSHIP** A responsible citizen contributes to the community in active, positive, and creative ways and encourages the participation of others.
- COURAGE** A courageous person possesses the strength and willingness to act on core values and their beliefs.

Article 2 - 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:

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

Article 3 - 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 should:

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 Committee 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 (*see policy JICA*).
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 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: JIC - Expectations for the Learning Environment
JK - Student Discipline
JJK - Revocation of Student Privileges
JKD - Suspension of Students
JKE - Expulsion of Students*

Article 4 - Expectations

The following is a summary of the school unit's expectations for student behavior. In many cases, the School Committee 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 Committee policies and/or school handbooks, School Committee 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: JICI – Weapons, Violence and School Safety
JICIB – 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: JICI – Weapons in Schools

C. 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 suspension, expulsion and/or other appropriate disciplinary measures.

See policy: ACAD – Hazing

D. 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 Opportunities
ACAA – Policy on Harassment*

E. 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 Committee policy. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

See policy: JICH – Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Use by Students

F. Tobacco Use

Students shall not smoke, use, possess, sell, or distribute any tobacco products. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

See policy: JICH – Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Use by Students

G. Conduct on School Buses

Students must comply with all school rules while on school buses. Students who violate these 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.

See Transportation Handbook

H. 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 Internet and Appropriate Use

I. Co-Curricular Conduct

Students must follow all School Committee policies and school rules while participating in athletics and extracurricular activities. Students who violate policies and rules may be subject to suspension or removal from the team/activity as well as additional disciplinary action under applicable School Committee policies and/or school rules.

See policy: JIK – Student Conduct at Co-Curricular Functions

Article 5 - Removal of Disruptive/Violent/Threatening Students

1. Students who are disruptive, violent or threatening death or bodily harm to others may 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.
2. 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 suitable person, who shall respond promptly.
3. 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.
4. 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 20-A M.R.S.A. § 4009 – Protection from Liability

See Crisis Response Plan

Article 6 - Special Services

1. **Referral.** The school unit 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*

2. **Review of Individual Educational Plan.** The school shall schedule a PET meeting to review the IEP of a student who has been removed from class when: a) school officials and/or the parent believes the student may present a substantial likelihood of injury to himself/herself or others; b) the class removals are sufficient to constitute a change in the student’s special education program; or c) school officials or the parent believes that the student’s behavior may warrant a change in educational programming.

See policy: JKF – Disciplinary Removals of Students with Disabilities

Article 7 - 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.

Article 8 - Dissemination of System-Wide Student Code of Conduct

The System-Wide Student Code of Conduct accompanied by the Alphabetical Summary of Consequences 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)

Cross Reference: *Taking Responsibility: Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior in Maine Schools and Communities* (Report of The Commission for Ethical and Responsible Behavior, February 2001)

Adopted: November 16, 2004
Revised: June 17, 2014 (deleted Consequences)