

POLICY: WEAPONS, VIOLENCE AND
SCHOOL SAFETY

NEPN/NSBA CODE: JICIA

The School Board believes that students and staff are entitled to learn and work in a school environment free of violence, threats and 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 are required to immediately report incidents of prohibited conduct by students to the building administrator/designee for investigation and appropriate action.

Prohibited Conduct

Students are prohibited from engaging in the following conduct 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:

- A. Knowing 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. 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 articles include but are not limited to bats, belts, picks, pencils, compasses, objects capable of ignition (e.g., matches, lighters), files, tools of any sort and replicas of weapons (including some toys);
- C. Violent or threatening 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);
- D. Verbal or written statements (including those made on or through a computer) which threaten, intimidate, or harass others, which tend to incite violence and/or disrupt the school program;
- E. Willful and malicious damage to school or personal property;
- F. Stealing or attempting to steal school or personal property;
- G. Lewd, indecent or obscene acts or expressions of any kind;
- H. Violations of the school unit's drug/alcohol and tobacco policies;

- I. Violations of state or federal laws; and
- J. Any other conduct that may be harmful to persons or property.

Role of School Staff

School personnel will take appropriate action to secure the health and safety of students during any altercation involving violence and/or use of a weapon. With the objective of defusing potentially violent situations and student anger, school staff will receive training in recognition, prevention and responding to violence. Incidents are to be reported immediately to an appropriate administrator.

Disciplinary Action

Principals may suspend and/or recommend expulsion of students who violate this policy based upon the facts of each case and in accordance with applicable 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 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 MRSA 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 to school (as defined by federal law), shall 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.

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

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

Administrative Implementation Procedures

The Superintendent shall be responsible for the development and dissemination of appropriate regulations and procedures to implement relevant law, board policy and good practice which shall include these basic components:

- A. Administrators shall take appropriate action against any individual violating this policy, including but not limited to student discipline and/or action by law enforcement officials as appropriate.
- B. Administrators will confiscate any article described in this policy and, if appropriate, submit it to a suitable law enforcement agency.

- C. Principals may authorize inspections of student lockers, automobiles, clothing, purses, bags, backpacks and other personal belongings when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the inspection will produce evidence that this policy has been violated.

Such regulations are also to include appropriate rules, sanctions and procedures regarding violence and/or use of weapons by employees, visitors, or other persons in addition to students.

Legal References: 20 USCA 8921 (Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994)
20-A MRSA 1001(9); 1001(9-A); 6552
17-A MRSA 2(9); 2(12-A)

Cross References: JBA – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students
ADC – Tobacco Use and Possession
EBCA – Crisis Response Plan
JICH – Drug and Alcohol Use by Students
JK – Student Discipline
JKD – Suspension of Students
JKE – Expulsion of Students
JKF – Suspension/Expulsion of Students with Disabilities
KLG – Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities

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