

It is essential for schools to maintain a safe and orderly environment which supports student learning and achievement. Good discipline allows the schools to discharge their primary responsibilities to educate students and promote good citizenship. All students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for others and in accordance with School Committee 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 Committee 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. State law provides that “a teacher or other person entrusted with the care or supervision of a person for special or limited purposes may not be held civilly liable for the use of a reasonable degree of force against the person who creates a disturbance if the teacher or other person reasonably believes it is necessary to a) control the disturbing behavior; or b) remove the person from the scene of the disturbance.”

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 Superintendent/designee.

The Superintendent shall provide for the suspension or other serious disciplinary action against students in accordance with Committee policies, administrative procedures and Maine law.

To reduce disciplinary problems and the potential for violence in the schools, the Superintendent will be responsible for developing 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
JICIA Weapons, Violence and School Safety
JKB - Student Detention
JKD - Suspension of Students
JKE - Expulsion of Students
JKF - Suspension/Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

Adopted: 04/28/08 by J. Boegel, M. Chioffi, & J. Stevens