

Section J STUDENTS

JIC Student Code of Conduct

Promoting ethical and responsible student behavior is an essential component of the Region 8 Board's educational mission.

Region 8 is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful and orderly school environment in which students may receive and staff may deliver quality education without disruption or interference and in which students may develop as ethical, responsible and involved citizens.

To achieve this goal, the Board has developed this Student Code of Conduct with input from school administrators, staff, students, parents and the community. Based on values identified as essential to ethical and responsible behavior, the Code articulates the Board's expectations for student conduct.

The Board believes that each member of the school community should take responsibility for their own behavior. To that end, the Board recognizes the need to define unacceptable student conduct, identify the possible consequences for unacceptable conduct, and ensure that discipline is administered fairly, promptly, and appropriately.

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:

- Respect
- Honesty
- Compassion
- Fairness
- Responsibility
- Courage

Code of Conduct

All students are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct and all related Board 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.

General Behavior Expectations and Discipline Policies

The following expectations for student behavior are fundamental to the 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 Board 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.
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.

Discipline

Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in positive and restorative interventions and/or disciplinary action. Administrators have the discretion to tailor discipline to the facts and circumstances of the particular case. Consequences will range from a verbal warning for minor violations up to and including removal from a program for the most serious offenses. Behavior that also violates the law may be referred to law enforcement authorities.

Expectations

The following is a summary of Region 8 expectations for student behavior. In many cases, the Board 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, Board policies and/or school handbooks, the Board's 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 the removal of a student from a program.

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 the removal of a student from a program.

C. Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying includes, but is not limited to, a written, oral or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a student or students that:

(1) Has, or a reasonable person would expect it to have, the effect of: (a) Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property; or (b) Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to the student's property;

(2) Interferes with the rights of a student by: (a) Creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment for the student; or (b) Interfering with the student's academic performance or ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by a school; or

(3) Is based on actual or perceived characteristics or association with persons with these actual or perceived characteristics specified in the policy, and has the effects describe above.

Bullying and cyberbullying is grounds for disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension and removal from a program.

D. 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 school.” No student shall plan, encourage, or engage in such activities in connection with any school program or activity, including extracurricular and co-curricular activities. Students who engage in hazing activities are subject to suspension, removal from a program and/or other appropriate disciplinary measures.

E. Discrimination and Harassment/Sexual Harassment

Students should not discriminate against other students on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, ancestry or national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Nor should students harass one another on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, or national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Sexual harassment is also prohibited. Discrimination and harassment are grounds for disciplinary action up to and including the removal of a student from a program.

F. Drug and Alcohol Use

Students shall not distribute, possess, use or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, drug, look-alike substance, or other prohibited materials and/or substances as described in Board policy. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including the removal of a student from a program.

G. Tobacco Use

Students shall not smoke, use, possess, sell or distribute any tobacco products. This prohibition also applies to e-cigarettes and products and paraphilia associated with “vaping.” Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including the removal of a student from a program.

H. 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 be subject to additional disciplinary action, up to and including removal from a program, depending upon the particular violation.

I. Computer/Internet Use

Students may use school computers, devices, networks and Internet services only for educational purposes and other purposes authorized by the school. Students shall comply with all policies and rules governing acceptable use. Unacceptable use may result in use restrictions, suspension or cancellation of computer privileges as well as additional disciplinary and/or legal action.

J. Cocurricular/Extracurricular Activities

Students must follow all Region 8 Board policies and school rules while participating in cocurricular 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 Board policies and/or school rules.

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, a trained designee, who shall respond promptly.
3. The responding administrator or trained designee will take appropriate action.
4. Any use of physical restraint or seclusion of students must comply with applicable regulations and Board policy.

Referrals to Law Enforcement Authorities

The Director 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 Director/administrators 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 Director, must be reported to law enforcement authorities.

Dissemination of the Student Code of Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct and summary of consequences for violation of the Code of Conduct shall be distributed to staff, students and parents through handbooks and/or other means selected by the Director and administrators.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §§ 254 (11); 1001 (15), (15-A)

Cross Reference: AC - Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
ACAA - Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students
ACAA-R – Student Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure
ACAD - Hazing
ADAA - School System Commitment to Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior
ADC - Tobacco Use and Possession
EBCC - Bomb Threats
IJNDB – Student Digital Device and Internet Use and Internet Safety
JICIA - Weapons, Violence, and School Safety
JICH – Student Drug and Alcohol Use
JICK – Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention in Schools
JK - Student Discipline
JKD - Suspension of Students

First Reading: 10/28/20, 1/26/22

Adopted: 11/18/20, 2/16/22

Revised: 1/12/22

Reviewed: _____