

## System-Wide Student Code of Conduct

Ethical and responsible student behavior is an essential part of the educational mission of the schools in MSAD 52. To that end, the Board has developed this System-Wide Code of Conduct with input from school staff, students, parents/guardians and the community. This Code defines 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 state-wide standards for ethical and responsible behavior:

- Respect
- Honesty
- Courage
- Compassion
- Responsibility

### Article 2 - 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 schools.

### Article 3 – General Behavior Expectations:

The following general expectations for student behavior are fundamental to a safe, orderly and respectful environment in our schools. Each student should demonstrate:

#### Respect -

- Treat others as you wish to be treated.
- Accept people for who they are.
- Be considerate of yourself, others and property.

#### Honesty –

- Be truthful in words and actions with yourself and others.
- Seek the truth.
- Admit when you don't agree and ask for help when you don't understand.

#### Courage –

- Follow all school rules and District policies, even when it is not popular .
- Ask for help when making difficult decisions.
- Take appropriate risks.

Compassion –

- Treat all people with kindness.
- Help those in need.
- Care about others.

Responsibility –

- Follow through with commitments.
- Own your behaviors, attitudes and words.
- Accept consequences for your actions.

Along with the above mentioned general behavior expectations, the Student Code of Conduct outlines additional expectations for student behavior in Article 4 of this policy.

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:

JK – Student Discipline

JKB – Detention of Students

JKD – Suspension of Students

JKE – Expulsion of Students

Article 4 - Expectations

The following is a summary of additional MSAD 52’s expectations for student behavior. In many cases the Board has adopted policies that address these expectations in greater detail. Students, parents/guardians 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, Board 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:

JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety

EBCC – Bomb Threats and Threats of any other Toxic or Hazardous Substance.

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:

JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety

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 or harass other students on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment is also prohibited. Harassment is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

See policies:

AC – Nondiscrimination

ACAA – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students

E. Bullying Defined

For the purpose of this policy, “bullying” means any physical act or gesture or any verbally, written, or electronically communicated expression that:

1. A reasonable person should expect will have the effect of:

- a. Physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property;
  - b. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to his/her property;
- or

- c. Substantially disrupting the instructional program or the orderly operations of the school; or
- 2. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, hostile educational environment for the student who is bullied.

F. 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 Board policy. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

See policy:

JICH – Student Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Use

G. 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 suspension from school.

See policy:

ADC – Tobacco Use and Possession

JICH – Student Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Use

H. Conduct on School Buses

Students must comply with all Board policies and school rules while on school buses. Students who violate these policies and 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 policy:

JICC – Student Conduct on School Buses

I. 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 Computer and Internet Use

J. Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Code of Conduct

Students must follow all Board policies and school rules while participating in co-curricular and extracurricular activities. In addition, a separate Code of Conduct has been developed governing the behavior of students participating in these activities. Students who violate the Co-Curricular Code of Conduct 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.

See policy:

JICI – Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities Code of Conduct for Middle and High School Students of MSAD #52

#### Article 5 - Removal of Disruptive/Violent/Threatening Students

1. Students who are disruptive, violent, or threatening death or bodily harm 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 MSAD 52'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 District 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 an IEP meeting to review the IEP of a student who has been removed from class when: a) school officials

and/or the parent/guardian 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/guardian believes that the student's behavior may warrant a change in educational programming.

See policy:

JKF – Disciplinary Removals of Students with Disabilities

3. Therapeutic Restraint. MSAD 52 also has established a policy on the use of therapeutic restraints as required by Maine statute.

See policy:

JKAA – Therapeutic Restraint

#### Article 7 - Referrals to Law Enforcement Authorities

The Superintendent and administrative designee 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 or his/her designee must be reported to law enforcement authorities.

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

The System-Wide Student Code of Conduct 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)

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