



# **RSU 25 Adult and Community Education Student Handbook**

**2024 – 2025**

**RSU 25**

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**ADULT &  
COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

A decorative graphic of a bridge structure is positioned to the right of the text "RSU 25" and above the text "ADULT & COMMUNITY EDUCATION". It features two vertical pylons connected by a horizontal beam, with multiple diagonal stay cables fanning out from each pylon to the beam. The entire graphic is rendered in a dark purple color.

## Welcome to Students

Welcome you to RSU 25 Adult and Community Education and the 2024-2025 school year. The primary goal of adult education in Maine is to provide and encourage the growth of educational opportunities to ensure career, citizenship, and college readiness for all adults. We believe education opens doors and that it is never too late to attain your dreams. Our courses are rigorous and aligned to College and Career Readiness Standards. Our site is open year round and offers Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, High School Completion through both diploma and HiSET, Workforce Training, Maine College Transitions, and Enrichment courses and programs to our students. We are also a University of Maine at Augusta Distance Learning site. We put an emphasis on assisting you to plan your steps to success in a relaxed, flexible atmosphere where all students feel welcome and supported. RSU 25 Adult Education staff members look forward to meeting and working with you to explore, set, and meet your goals.

This handbook provides an overview of the important rules and regulations that govern RSU 25 Adult and Community Education. These policies incorporate state and local mandates that help to foster a positive learning environment. Please help us provide an atmosphere that is safe and conducive to social growth and the education of all students.

We will keep the lines of communication open as this makes the education process a better experience for all involved. Whether you are just starting to learn English, working on high school completion or transitioning to college or career make this time memorable. Our staff is here to assist you in attaining your dreams. Work hard, take advantage of our courses, programs, and knowledgeable staff. Enjoy your time with us and make the most of what education can offer you.

Kathy L. Pelletier, Director

Email: [kathy.pelletier@rsu25.org](mailto:kathy.pelletier@rsu25.org)

Contacting Staff: Office staff may be contacted as a group using [adulted@rsu25.org](mailto:adulted@rsu25.org). The staff person on site will distribute the message to the appropriate staff or instructor. All staff at RSU 25 Adult and Community Education can be contacted by email or by phone. All staff email addresses are the staff member's first and last name separated with a dot, then @rsu25.org, i.e. kathy.pelletier@rsu25.org.

School contact information:      Main Office Phone: 207.469.2129 (Direct and only adult education Voice Mail Line)  
Fax Number-207.469.2192  
Website: [rsu25.org](http://rsu25.org) or [www.rsu25.maineadulted.org](http://www.rsu25.maineadulted.org)

Follow us on Facebook: RSU25ADED

RSU 25 & RSU 25 ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION POLICIES ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE RSU25.ORG WEBSITE, OR THROUGH DIRECTOR, KATHY L. PELLETIER.

Adult Education office hours are 9:00am to 4:00p.m. by appointment this year. If you are calling to schedule an appointment, leave us a voicemail if we are unavailable to answer and we will get back to you as quickly as possible. Please use 207.469.2129 - not the number shown on your caller ID. Learning Center Hours vary and will be scheduled with students during enrollment. We make every effort to work with students to accommodate your work and family schedules. Course and program schedules are listed on our website and in our catalog and flyer mailings. School Cancellations will be posted on the RSU 25 Website ([rsu25.org](http://rsu25.org)) Facebook, local Radio Stations and Local TV Stations.

# 2024-2025 Student Handbook

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**The RSU #25 Policy Committee is constantly changing/adding policies. We uphold the updated policies that are on our website at [www.rsu25.org](http://www.rsu25.org). Some of the policies in this handbook may change during the school year.**

## **RSU 25 Mission**

*To provide a rigorous and inspiring education in partnership with our community.*

### **Our Values**

*Regional School Unit 25 is committed to meeting the needs of all students. We value student ownership of learning, the importance of teaching and organizing learning experiences around individuals' strengths and needs, and engaging students in meaningful learning experiences which foster risk taking and build confident learners. We embrace learning as continuous across one's lifespan and recognize the importance of leadership and participation opportunities. We believe it is the responsibility of everyone to ensure a safe and nurturing community that promotes healthy minds and bodies. We value and respond in an appropriate manner to the voices, ideas, and understandings of all community members.*

### **Our Vision**

#### ***A Comprehensive Curriculum***

*Our comprehensive cohesive, challenging curriculum is focused, relevant, rigorous, and standards-based with clear expectations of achievement for all students. A curriculum providing a solid foundation emphasizing communication, critical thinking, and problem solving skills prepares our students to be contributing citizens and life-long learners. The curriculum is brought to life through meaningful learning that is integrated and applied. This provides students with a rationale for their education and ownership of their pathway to graduation.*

#### ***Achievement and Accountability***

*To ensure achievement, students, parents, staff, and community at large are held to clearly defined expectations and accountability. Instruction is differentiated and built on individuals' strengths. Learning targets are aligned with standards and measured with authentic assessments.*

#### ***Innovative Learning Opportunities***

*Regional School Unit 25 meets the needs of all students by embracing flexibility and innovation. The creative use of time, scheduling, programming, and year round learning opportunities provides different pathways to meet graduation requirements. Through the use of technology, we enhance and expand learning experiences.*

#### ***Our Partners in Learning***

*Through the efficient use of resources, Regional School Unit 25 provides a community wide culture of learning for all residents. With formal and informal networks of communication, a cooperative, seamless relationship with the community allows our learners to engage in 'real world' applied learning and service learning. This relationship is a mutually beneficial partnership that supports needs of students and the community.*

## **RSU 25 Adult and Community Education Statement of Purpose**

RSU 25 Adult and Community Education supports the primary goal of adult education in Maine to provide and encourage the growth of educational opportunities to ensure career, citizenship, and college readiness for all adults. We believe that learning is a lifelong process that can provide opportunities and enrich lives. RSU 25 Adult and Community Education provides area citizens with responsive, flexible, quality educational programs to promote personal growth, community involvement, and career advancement.

### **School Performance Objectives**

Expectations for School Performance RSU 25 Adult and Community Education shall provide and is working toward:

1. A comprehensive curriculum with specified learning outcomes for students and a variety of assessment methods.
2. A unified effort to improve student thinking, communication and problem-solving skills in all subject areas.
3. A network of support services which encourage students to develop and accomplish educational goals.
4. An atmosphere conducive to research and learning, for staff and students.
5. A safe school environment.
6. A diverse program of activities to enrich the academic program.
7. Increased links with the family and the community.

### **Expectations for Student Performance (Academic):**

1. Students will demonstrate basic academic skills in the various curriculum areas.
2. Students will demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving.
3. Students, with the help of their families, teachers and academic advisors, will set goals for the school years and beyond, and develop a challenging educational program to support those goals.
4. Students will demonstrate the skill of lifelong learner such as using the library, accessing community resources and researching an issue.

### **Expectations for Student Performance (Social):**

1. Students will show tolerance and respect for others.
2. Students will be involved in activities which link the school and the community.

### **Core Values**

*A person who is **RESPECTFUL** of others and self:*

*Does:*

- ® Show tolerance for diversity (including, but not limited to: sexual orientation, physical attributes, financial or other resources, race, interests, beliefs, customs)
- ® Care for self and others (both their person and property)

***Does Not:***

- ® Use overt or covert put-downs, either verbal or non-verbal
- ® Form coalitions that hurt others

***A person who is HONEST in all academic endeavors and interpersonal relationships:***

***Does:***

- ® Speak the truth
- ® Admit their own shortcomings, mistakes, or poor judgment
- ® Acknowledge and appreciate the importance of truthfulness and trust in relationships

***Does Not:***

- ® Lie, cheat, and/or blame others for personal actions or inactions.

***A person who is COMPASSIONATE in dealing with the limitations and sufferings of others:***

***Does:***

- ® Treat all people with kindness
- ® Lend a helping hand to those in need
- ® Seem to understand others
- ® Recognize and accept the limitations of others
- ® Accept the individuality of others

***Does Not:***

- ® Tease or taunt those who are different
- ® Seek to judge others, but rather seeks to understand others in terms of our common humanity.
- ® Seek to draw undue attention to another's shortcomings.

***A person who is FAIR in dealing with others:***

***Does:***

- ® Work at balancing personal or individual needs and the needs of the community.
- ® Understand the difference between justice and vengeance and acts accordingly.
- ® Treats others with respect.
- ® Demonstrates impartial treatment of others.

***Does Not:***

- ® Engage in Malicious criticism of others.
- ® Seek to steal from or cheat others.
- ® Attempt to further one's own interests or desires at the expense of another.

***A person who is RESPONSIBLE for personal actions as an individual and a member of the community:***

***Does:***

- ® Accept consequences for his/her own actions or failure to act.
- ® Report harmful, hateful, or dangerous behavior to an adult.
- ® Acknowledge making a mistake.

***Does Not:***

- ® Violate school rules or the law.
- ® Withhold information that could harm individuals or the school.
- ® Rationalize or make excuses for unacceptable behavior.
- ® Evade the consequences of personal actions.

***A person who is COURAGEOUS in the face of ethical challenges:***

***Does:***

- ® Seek the advice and/or assistance of a trustworthy person when making difficult decisions or when in a dangerous or troublesome situation.
- ® Hold high aspirations for self and community.

***Does Not:***

- ® Say “I Cannot,” But instead says, “I will try”, when faced with difficult challenges.
- ® Stand idly by while others engage in an unethical or harmful behavior.
- ® Sacrifice aspirations when confronted by academic or ethical setbacks.

See [JIC-RSU 25 Code of Conduct](#) for full policies and procedures.



## **RSU 25 Adult and Community Education Pathways**

### **REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

**Academic Enrollment of Adult Education Students (general information):** Students wishing to enroll in adult education academic programs and courses should contact our office to set up an appointment to meet with staff. Students under the age of 16 are not permitted to enroll in adult education without the express permission of the RSU 25 Superintendent. Students between the ages of 16 and 17 require a referral from the RSU 25 superintendent, Bucksport high school Principal/vice Principal and/or Bucksport guidance counselor(s) to apply to adult education. Students age 16 and older applying to academic courses in adult education should be aware that acceptance is based on Intake and Orientation completion which depends on enrollment type as defined in the next section (ESL/ELA, ABE, HSC, WFT, MCT, etc.) and may include but is not limited to: Intake Application, CASAS Assessments, WOWi assessment, Accuplacer assessments, staff interviews, and academic advising session(s). Acceptance to adult education programs is at the discretion of the Adult Education Director unless otherwise stated. Grant programs may have additional requirements that will be explained thoroughly prior to student acceptance. Our friendly, knowledgeable staff work with students to create an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) that takes into account the best learning option for the student and their life, family, and work schedules.

- High School Diploma students should bring any high school records and/or transcripts they may have. Staff will assist students in requesting records if you do not have them. High School Completion programs are FREE!
- HiSET students should bring any high school records and/or transcripts they may have. Staff will assist students in requesting records if you do not have them and it is determined they could be helpful to creating an Individual Learning Plan. Students are not required to have identification when applying or preparing for exams. However, HiSET exam students must provide a valid, photo id meeting HiSET requirements prior to testing and must have reached the age of 17. HiSET Testing is FREE to Maine residents. Non-residents may still test but will be assessed a fee as determined by the State of Maine.
- College and Career Access students should bring (if available) a copy of their HiSET, GED, or diploma, college placement such as Accuplacer and/or CASAS assessment scores if previously taken. They may also take Accuplacer assessments after entry to our program. The program is FREE to students accepted to our grant program for the 2024/2025 academic year. For the 2024/2025 academic year, the grant also covers students preparing to enter other forms of post-secondary training or employment.
- Workforce Training students may need to complete additional requirements to enter programs. Our office staff can answer any questions you have regarding course requirements.
- Grant programs may have additional requirements. These requirements will be explained fully and must be accepted by students prior to acceptance in the program.

**Academic Acceptance:** Students and parents should be aware that Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) does not, nor is it intended to, apply to Adult Education. Acceptance to the program is at the discretion of the Adult Education Director. Students should follow outlined enrollment procedures for application to the program. Academic students will be notified of application status within two weeks of Intake/Orientation completion. Instructions to enter courses will be given after formal acceptance.

**Certification of Enrollment Letters:** Student requests for Certification of Enrollment letters will be issued after student has completed Intake/Orientation, received formal acceptance to adult education, completed a minimum of twenty-five hours in their assigned course(s) and **MUST** be requested at least one week in advance of the day on which the letter is needed. Certification of Enrollment letters cannot be signed by Adult Education staff

members. They must include the Adult Education Director's signature. Students needing such letters for agency or court approved programs or assistance should plan accordingly as exceptions will not be made except in extreme circumstances. Students who do not continue attending class after issuance of a Certification of Enrollment letter should expect adult education staff to report noncompliance if said agency or court requires or requests said information as it would be fraudulent of us to do otherwise. Students should understand that their noncompliance may result in loss of assistance or sentencing changes.

**Agency Mileage and Training Verifications:** Mileage and Training verifications needed for CareerCenters and workforce training agencies, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, Unemployment, and other programs, must be signed by the Adult Education Director or Coordinator. Instructional staff is not permitted to sign form or if form specifically requests teacher signature, the Director or Coordinator must sign in addition to the teacher. Students must complete forms prior to requesting signature. Blank forms WILL NOT be signed. Students should plan accordingly for us to have appropriate time to review forms and verify attendance prior to signature. Office staff will make every effort to keep a copy of the form in the student's file for the student's convenience but the student is responsible for timely submission of the form(s) and tracking of the original document.

**Credit Recovery Requests:** Adult Education will make every effort to accommodate Credit Recovery requests for students with appropriate approvals based on space and availability of instructional staff; however, Adult Education students must take precedence based on governmental design, intent, and funding of Adult Education programs. Enrollment of students wishing to participate in Credit Recovery courses must be recommended by the Bucksport High School Principal and/or Guidance Office. Acceptance to the Adult Education program for Credit Recovery requests is at the discretion of the Adult Education Director and must include the approval of the Principal and/or the RSU 25 Superintendent. Acceptance may also require approval of Guidance, Special Education Services, and parents/guardians if student is under the age of 18. Credit Recovery students are subject to the policies and rules of both Adult Education and the Bucksport High School.

**Additional Credit Requests for Currently Enrolled High School Students:** Adult Education programs are designed and funded for adult students. Therefore, students enrolled in K-12 high schools are not permitted to attend adult education (including summer sessions) for the purpose of acquiring additional credits or early graduation except in extreme circumstances. Enrollment must include the recommendation of the Bucksport High School Principal and/or the RSU 25 Superintendent. Enrollment acceptance is at the discretion of the Adult Education Director. We will make every effort to accommodate students with appropriate recommendations based on space and availability of instructional staff.

**Transfer of Currently Enrolled High School Students to Adult Education:** High School students under the age of 16 are not permitted to enroll in adult education without the express written permission of the RSU 25 Superintendent. Acceptance of students enrolled at Bucksport High School wishing to transfer to Adult Education is at the discretion of the Adult Education Director and must include approval of the Principal and the RSU 25 Superintendent and may also require approval of Guidance, Special Education Services, and parents/guardians if student is under the age of 18. Out of District students may require a Superintendent's Agreement if one is not already in place. Enrollment in Adult Education generally requires that the high school student dis-enroll from day school to be eligible for our programs. K-12 Students should not take this step until they have met with adult education staff, the students/parents/guardians understands the ramifications of the transfer, and it is determined that they will be accepted to the program. Students will not be accepted unless it is determined by RSU 25 administration to be in the best interest of the student. Adult Education is designed to meet the needs of adult learners and does not, nor is it intended to, meet FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education). Therefore, it may not be appropriate or in the best interest of students to transfer out of the K-12 system. Additionally, Adult Education is not required to accept K-12 student transfers.

Transferring out of the K-12 system is a big step and should not be taken lightly. Students who transfer to Adult Education are no longer eligible to ride the bus; participate in school lunch programs or extra-curricular activities, and need to request permission to access the high school during day school hours, attend school dances, etc.

**Enrollment in Healthcare Programs:** Workforce Training and grant students may need to comply with additional requirements to meet enrollment eligibility. Workforce Training and certificate courses may include fees. Students will be notified of course and program costs prior to enrollment commitment. Healthcare students should be prepared to supply immunization records, submit to background checks, and are required to participate in labs. Labs may require Phlebotomy “sticks” and “bleb” placements, EKG lead placements, and other lab activities depending on your certificate course. Remember that if students aren’t willing to participate – no one can practice. Students will progress to live sticks only under the supervision of the healthcare instructor. Students with medical issues that prevent active lab participation must notify adult education staff at or prior to enrollment. All components of the program must be completed in order to receive a completion certificate. Students should understand that their inability to participate may prevent completion of course or certification. Externship placements include employer policies and procedures and may require drug testing by the employer. Students should be aware that externships are at the discretion of the employer, require an agreement between the employer and RSU 25 Adult Education, and may take two weeks or longer from application for an open spot to acceptance and obtainment of a start date.

**Enrichment Enrollment:** Adult Education Enrichment programs are open to the public. Class information is available via published catalogs and at [www.rsu25.maineadulted.org](http://www.rsu25.maineadulted.org). Registration is based on a first come-first served, PAID basis. PAID is defined as cash, check, money order, credit or debit card, Veteran’s Administration Certificate of Eligibility, agency Training Approval, or Employer Commitment Letter. Other forms of payment may be accepted but must be approved by the Adult Education Director. Online registrations are accepted at [www.rsu25.maineadulted.org](http://www.rsu25.maineadulted.org) using a credit or debit card. You can also fill out our registration form in the back of the catalog and drop it off at our office, fax it to 207-469-2192, or mail the form. Check, money order, credit or debit cards are accepted, but please do not mail cash. Credit and/or debit card payments cannot be taken over the phone as we require a signature for authorization. Please register early to help us keep instructors informed and prevent course cancellations. Some courses require a minimum attendance in order to run. Enrichment programs are not eligible for state subsidy and policy requires that Enrichment programs be self-sufficient.

No confirmation will be sent unless there are course changes or if you have not enrolled early enough to meet the course enrollment minimum. When pre-registering by phone, you will be put on our waiting list until payment has been received. Payment is defined as cash, check, money order, credit or debit card, Veteran’s Administration Certificate of Eligibility, agency Training Approval, or Employer Commitment Letter. Other forms of payment may be accepted but must be approved by the adult education director.

Students attending Enrichment classes are expected to follow School Board approved policies and procedures. If a student displays behavior that is disruptive to the instruction-learning process or is noncompliant with School Board policies, the teacher involved will refer that student to the administration for appropriate action. In the rare instance the situation progresses to the point in which a student is removed from the class by administration, a refund of registration fees will be made prorated based on attendance. A refund of materials fees, if any, will be made based on materials already used by or in possession of the student. Administration will make every effort to refund as much of the student’s fees as possible. In the rare instance that a student is removed from an Adult Education course, the student will no longer be eligible to attend any course within the Adult Education program until or unless an appeal hearing is requested by the student to request approval to resume access to programs and

said student is able to provide documentation/demonstrate that they are able to attend the program and its courses following School Board policies and procedures.

**Driver Education:** Students enrolled in Driver Education courses held through Adult Education are expected to follow School Board policies and procedures, Adult Education policies and procedures, and the rules and regulations of the Driver Education program. K-12 students are also subject to the policies and procedures of the Bucksport High School. Students and parents should be aware that a student who displays behavior that is disruptive to the instruction-learning process or is noncompliant with any of the policies and procedures. Due to the nature of this course and its oversight by the Maine State Motor Vehicle Department, the Driving Instructor, High School Principal, and/or the Adult Education Director may be involved with noncompliance of policies, procedures, rules, and regulations for this course. Payments and Refund policies will be made by the Driver Education program.

**All Enrollments:** When registering for either Academic or Enrichment enrollment, students are asked to please notify staff regarding any information you feel we may need while you are enrolled with us (i.e. allergies, accommodations, etc.). Individuals with a disability who may need accommodations are requested to contact the adult education director at least two weeks in advance of the event, so that appropriate accommodations/arrangements may be made.

**Holidays and Vacations:** RSU 25 Adult and Community Education follows the RSU 25 District School Calendar for holiday and vacation days with the exception that we are open throughout the summer months.

## **PROGRAMS**

### **English as a Second Language/English Language Acquisition (ESL/ELA)**

Beginning to Advanced ESL/ELA sessions that will meet individual needs for speaking, listening, reading, and writing English. Civics course can be added to help prepare students for the Citizenship Exam.

### **Adult Basic Education (ABE)**

Beginning to start of Secondary education level of instruction. Instruction is designed to provide initial learning, fill gaps in a student's knowledge base, or provide a thorough brush-up.

### **High School Completion (HSC)**

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE!!! A High School Diploma opens many doors toward employment and future educational goals. All high school completion courses are FREE. Our friendly, knowledgeable staff will work with students to determine which option you qualify for and design an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) that best fits your learning style, goals, and schedule. High School Completion classes are contextualized with your individual goals in mind to better prepare you for college or the workplace. You will have two paths to choose from to earn your high school credentials: High School Diploma or HiSET (High School Equivalency Test). Successful students from both HSC pathways are eligible to participate in our adult education graduation held in June each year.

**HiSET (High School Equivalency Test:** The HiSET®, which replaced the GED® in 2014, covers the same content area and allows test-takers to demonstrate proficiency of the academic skills expected by employers and post-secondary institutions. Maine Community Colleges now recognize a score of 15 and up on the HiSET Reading, Writing, and Math portions as documentation of college readiness and may waive the Accuplacer assessment for adult education students. Passing the HiSET® Test with a score of 8 or more on each individual test with a total of 45 or more puts you in the upper 40<sup>th</sup> percentile in terms of class rank. Students age 17 and older may take the HiSET exam in Maine.

### **What does the new HiSET® Test look like?**

This 7.25-hour test consists of multiple choice questions and one essay response.

<b>Test</b>	<b>Score Points</b>	<b>Time Limit</b>
Language Arts - Reading	8-20	65 minutes
Language Arts – Writing	8-20	120 minutes
Mathematics	8-20	90 minutes
Science	8-20	80 minutes
Social Studies	8-20	70 minutes

- ❖ Each section of the test is scored individually.
- ❖ You can retake a section of the HiSET® over if you do not pass it.
- ❖ When you finish each section of the HiSET® your transcript will be filed with the State of Maine Department of Education. You do not have to complete the entire series in one session.
- ❖ You will be awarded a Maine Equivalency Diploma, (HiSET®) when you pass all five subject areas by scoring a minimum of 2 out of 6 on the essay portion of the Language Arts – Writing test, 8 out of 20 on each of the five subtests with a total scaled score of at least 45 out of the possible 100.

Join the many other people who have taken this big step to continue their education. Study what you need to pass the test. Pre-testing, tutoring, academic advising and official testing services are free for Maine residents (non-residents must pay a fee of \$100), convenient, and confidential. Find out more about getting your HiSET® Diploma. We look forward to hearing from you!

Students applying to the HiSET program must have a valid, government, photo ID prior to testing. Students do not need the ID to begin preparations. Students may request a copy of our HiSET informational brochure or make an appointment to meet with staff for more information. Testing times, information, and policies are subject to change at the discretion of Maine Department of Education or HiSET.

### **Adult Diploma Program**

High School Completion courses are FREE to Maine Residents. RSU 25 Adult and Community Education students are subject to the following schedule of required credits to graduate based on their original year of graduation. Students must complete both the credit requirement and the core course

requirements. Additional courses may be taken to meet student's college entrance requirements if needed.

**Adult Education Graduation Requirements (Subject to changes with Maine adult education rules and regulations and will change with the graduating class of 2021)**

1. 

<b>Year</b>	<b>Credits</b>
1990 to date	20
1985 – 1989	19
1984	18
1977 – 1983	16
2. Each student must attend a minimum of 1 hour during a 90 day period to remain enrolled in adult education programming. Students may apply to re-enroll but will be required at a minimum to complete a new Intake and CASAS assessments prior to resuming instruction. Approval for enrollment and re-enrollment is at the Adult Education Director's discretion.
3. All students must earn the following core credits plus electives needed to fulfill the requirements for graduation as listed in #1:

**English - 4 credits**

**Math - 4 credits**

**Science - 4 credits**  
(1 credit must be in Biology (with lab), 1 credit may be a STEM credit)

**Social Studies - 3 credits**  
(1 credit must be in U.S. History)

**Fine Arts - 1 credit**

**Electives - remaining credits needed**

**Proficiencies and Workshops Required: Computer Proficiency, Financial Literacy Proficiency, Post-Secondary and/or Career Pathways Workshops.**

### **Maine College and Career Transitions**

College and Career Transition courses are FREE to students accepted in our Maine College Transitions programs for the 2024-2025 school year. Students can enroll to prepare for college, certificate courses, employment, and other credentials of value. We have a broad array of services that include academic courses, employability skills, academic advising, digital literacy instruction, and other assistance. An adult education staff member will meet with students to explain the program and ascertain if the student is eligible under grant parameters.

### **Workforce Training**

Workforce training includes any activity outside of Maine College Transitions that assists a student in preparing for employment. These include a wide range of online courses, on site certificate courses, and other activities.

## **Enrichment**

Any of our courses and programs may be taken for Enrichment rather than credit or certification. Because of Adult Education and grant funding and guidelines, course fees may apply to courses and programs that would otherwise be free if they are taken for enrichment purposes. We also provide a variety of Enrichment courses in response to our Community's needs and wants. Our staff also believe that learning is a life-long process and should include opportunities to supplement academic and workforce training courses to enrich all facets of our lives. Enrichment courses do not typically include homework, credit, or grades.

## RSU 25 Adult and Community Education Standards-Based Education Scoring Conversion

4.0= 100 (A+)	3.9= 99 (A+)
3.8= 98 (A+)	3.7= 96 (A)
<u>3.6= 95 (A)</u>	<u>Exceeds the Standard</u>
3.5= 94 (A)	3.4= 92 (B+)
3.3= 90 (B)	3.2= 89 (B)
3.1= 87 (B)	
<u>3.0= 85 (B-)</u>	<u>Meets the Standard</u>
2.9= 84 (C+)	2.8= 82 (C)
2.7= 80 (C)	2.6= 78 (C)
2.5= 77 (C-)	
<u>2.4= 76 (C-)</u>	<u>Partially Meets the Standard</u>
2.3= 74 (D)	2.2= 73 (D)
2.1= 71 (D-)	2.0= 70 (D-)
1.9= 68 (F)	1.8= 67 (F)
1.7= 66 (F)	1.6= 65 (F)
1.5= 64 (F)	1.4= 63 (F)
1.3= 62 (F)	1.2= 60 (F)
1.1= 59 (F)	
<u>1.0= 58 (F)</u>	<u>Does Not Meet the Standard</u>

### **Course Completion Procedure**

A RSU 25 Adult and Community Education student who has not attended a minimum of one hour during any 90 period is automatically dis-enrolled from adult education programming effective with the last date of attendance. A student may apply to re-enroll at any point in time. Acceptance is at the adult education director's approval and must include at minimum a new Intake and CASAS Assessments. A student whose work is incomplete for a course/learning experience is expected to complete the missing work to receive credit for that course/learning experience as soon as possible upon re-enrollment. Students in this situation are expected to work with the instructor and their academic advisor to develop a course/learning experience completion plan.



A student who is incomplete upon disenrollment has the next semester to get caught up in their missed standards or they will no longer be eligible to earn credit in that class/learning experience. Unless otherwise documented in the student's approved course/learning experience completion plan, failure to complete missing work/assignments prior to the end of the next semester shall result in the student retaking the entire course/learning experience.

Students who have an Incomplete in a fall Semester course/learning experience have the Spring Semester to complete their standards for the course for which they were Incomplete. If they do not complete the standards in that time, they will be required to retake the course/learning experience to earn credit.

Students who have an Incomplete in a winter/spring semester course have the Summer Semester to complete their Standards for the course/learning experience for which they were Incomplete. If they do not complete the Standards in that time, they will be required to retake the course/learning experience to earn credit.

Students who have an Incomplete in a summer semester course/learning experience have the fall semester to complete their standards for the course/learning experience for which they were Incomplete. If they do not complete the standards in that time, they will be required to retake the course/learning experience to earn credit.

Students who have a 504 or IEP plan will follow the outline for the student's program of study.

The director shall be responsible for making the final decision regarding the completion of the course/learning experience. Dissatisfaction with the director's decision may be appealed to the Superintendent. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

**Definitions:**

**Fall Semester:** Is defined as September 1 through December 31.

**Winter Semester:** Is defined as January 1 through March 31.

**Spring Semester:** Is defined as April 1 through June 30.

**Summer Semester:** Is defined as July 1 through August 31.

## General Information

This handbook is intended to serve as a general guide to rules, practices and procedures employed at RSU 25 Adult and Community Education. It is impossible to address every situation in this general manner. Therefore, it should be understood that individual situations will be addressed at the discretion of the Director.

**School Resource Officer Policy:** The RSU 25 School Board wants to assure the safe environment of our schools. A School Resource Officer (SRO) is a certified law enforcement officer who is permanently assigned to provide coverage to a school or a group of schools. The SRO is specifically trained to perform three roles: a law enforcement officer; law-related counselor; and law-related education teacher. The SRO will provide a visible and positive image for law enforcement and bring expertise into schools that will help young people make more positive choices in their lives. The SRO also works to protect the school environment and to maintain an atmosphere where teachers feel safe to teach and students feel safe to learn.

**Attendance Policy:** Regular attendance as outlined in a student's Individual Learning Plan is necessary for all students who expect a successful learning experience. RSU 25 Adult and Community Education recognizes that the responsibility for student attendance rests both with the student and the parents of students who have not yet attained age 18. In turn the school accepts full responsibility for providing an educational climate and curriculum that permits all students the opportunity to pursue an appropriate education program.

Certain courses require mandatory attendance for professional certification or safety reasons. Welding courses require students to attend the first 3 hours of instruction and demonstrate safety procedures back to the instructor in order to remain in the course. This is for maintenance and safety reasons and there will be no exceptions. Excused absences will result in a refund of student enrollment fees for Welding courses and the student will have the option of enrolling in the next scheduled course. They will not be permitted to continue in the current course. Healthcare courses that include licensing or certification have specific requirements for attendance and include reductions in grade for absenteeism and lateness to class, regardless of whether it is excused or unexcused. Students will be informed of specific course requirements prior to commitment to the course.

**Absences:** RSU 25 Adult and Community Education makes every effort to provide the scheduling and accessibility options needed for students to attend classes in person or through Distance Learning and still meet family, work, and life commitments. Student are required to contact our office when they will be absent from or late to class. Notice should be made prior to class whenever possible. Students who are habitually absent or late to their scheduled classes regardless of whether or not it is excused may be required to meet with their academic advisor and/or instructors to determine if a permanent schedule change needs to be made. Every effort is made to work with students to complete their studies.

Adult Education state policy for academic courses requires that a 90 day period without an hour of attendance by the student results in an automatic dis-enrollment unless said student has requested and received prior approval for a planned absence. Dis-enrollment may result in loss of credit for incomplete courses. Dis-enrolled students may apply to re-enroll but must complete, at a minimum, a new Intake and CASAS assessments. Re-enrollment is at the discretion of the Director and student may be requested to explain what has changed that would resolve attendance issues.

Certificate and Licensing courses may have additional attendance requirements for completion. Students will be notified of these requirements prior to commitment to the course.

Welding Introduction and Advanced courses require that a student complete the first session (3 hours) and demonstrate back safety procedures to the instructor for safety purposes in order to remain in the course. Students who do not complete the first session and demonstration will be provided a full refund and removed from the class for safety purposes. Students may re-enroll in the next available course in which they are able to satisfy the attendance requirements. Students must attend the safety portion for EACH course they attend, regardless of how many times that they have attended. Students who cannot make the safety portion of either the Introduction or the Advanced class may attend the safety portion of the other course with prior permission of the Adult Education Director. In order for permission to be granted, the courses must be held within two weeks of each other.

**Procedure upon Return from Absence:**

- A. Students who have been absent or late are expected to make up work missed. Work not made up will result in an incomplete grade, loss of credit, or grade reduction.
- B. Students whose absence has resulted in disenrollment must report to the adult education office to apply for re-enrollment and schedule and complete an Intake and CASAS Assessments prior to returning to their courses. The adult education director has discretion for approval of re-enrollment. Additional activities (academic advising, formal meetings, etc.) may be required for student to return to the program. Dis-enrollment may result in the loss of credit for any courses not completed prior to dis-enrollment.

**Appeal Process for Lost Credit:** To appeal the loss of credit for violation of the absence limits, a student may request a hearing to present evidence as to why his/her absences are excusable. The hearing will be held before a standing committee composed of the Adult Education Director, Coordinator, and at least one Teacher. If the student is a minor, at least one parent or legal guardian must accompany the student. After deliberation of the committee, a written decision will be provided to the student. Students are allowed to be represented and/or accompanied by a person or persons of their choice.

The request for the hearing must be made to the Adult Education Coordinator. Absences based on extra vacation, truancy, tardiness, early dismissal, (with the exception of medical and legal appointments), and class cutting may not be appealed.

It is the student's responsibility to provide clear documentation for all medical and legal matters prior to the appeal process. Any student dissatisfied with the decision of the attendance review committee may appeal within ten calendar days to the Superintendent of Schools. If dissatisfied at the Superintendent level, a student may appeal to the School Board at its regularly scheduled meeting.

Adult Education students enrolled in FREE classes who have lost credit due to excessive absences are NOT expected to continue to attend their current classes through to completion. Adult Education students would enroll in the next available session for that course. The course must be retaken in its entirety. If a class is no longer offered as a FREE course for whatever reason, the lost credit may be earned at the student's expense through the successful completion of an approved course.

Adult Education students enrolled in Tuition classes who have lost credit due to excessive absences may choose but are not required by Adult Education to attend classes through to completion. Students should be aware of attendance requirements by agencies, courts, or others outside of the Adult Education program that may require continued attendance. Students in this situation will be receiving course grades to the end of the course and these will be recorded in the transcript with NO CREDIT. If the student in this situation displays behavior that is disruptive to the instruction-learning process or if the student refuses to participate in the work of that class, the

teacher involved will refer that student to the administration for appropriate action. If the student is excluded from the class, he/she will receive a grade of zero.

Lost credit may be earned at the student's expense through the successful completion of an approved course.

**Appeal Process for Expulsion from Adult Education Courses or Programs:** Students who have been expelled from Adult Education may appeal to the RSU 25 Superintendent and that decision will be final.

**Tardiness to School and Class:** Managed Enrolled Courses: Students should be in their classrooms for attendance at least 5 minutes prior to class start time. After this time, students need to report to the office prior to entering the class. Student tardiness to class will initially be dealt with by the individual classroom teacher. Chronic tardiness will jeopardize a student's grade and his or her ability to earn credit for that course.

Individually Scheduled Tutoring/Courses: Schedules are set with each individual instructor. Student tardiness to class will initially be dealt with by the individual classroom teacher. Chronic tardiness may result in an academic advisor meeting to determine if a permanent schedule change should be made.

Certain courses require mandatory attendance for professional certification or safety reasons. Students will be advised in writing of attendance requirements that differ from policies stated in this handbook. Healthcare certification courses typically have a tiered schedule for grade reduction based on attendance and tardiness. Welding requires students attend the first session (3 hours) plus demonstrate safety back to instructor to remain in the class for maintenance and safety reasons.

**Unexcused Tardy:** Examples of unexcused tardiness to school include: oversleeping, staying with a friend, attending a concert or other activity the night before, or missing a ride. Adult Education understands that adults have work, family, and life commitments that K-12 students may not experience. Our staff makes every effort to work with students to create a schedule that takes these factors into account. Students not in managed enrolled courses typically work with their instructors to create a schedule that can be changed weekly if work and/or other concerns require they do so. For this reason, it is expected that there will be little to no unexcused tardiness. Chronic unexcused tardiness may result in an academic advising meeting to determine if a permanent schedule change should be made.

**Dismissals:** All student dismissals must go through the adult education main office. The school administration reserves the right to refuse dismissal notes. Adult Education understands that adults have work, family, and life commitments that K-12 students may not experience. Our staff makes every effort to work with students to create a schedule that takes these factors into account. Students not in managed enrolled courses typically work with their instructors to create a schedule that can be changed weekly if work, doctor appointments, agency appointments, and/or other concerns require they do so. For this reason, it is expected that there will be little to no dismissals. Students in managed enrolled high school diploma courses who miss more than two classes will not receive credit for those courses. Students in individual courses should plan schedules with their instructors to allow for needed time away from class.

**Accident Procedures:** Any accident resulting in even a minor injury should be reported to a teacher and to an administrator. **(The supervisor of the activity must file an accident report with the adult education main office within 24 hours of the incident.)** Parents of minor students will be notified by the Adult Education Director if an accident report is deemed necessary to be completed.

**Emergency Information:** In case of an emergency, we need to be able to reach a parent or guardian for minor students and a person authorized for emergency contact for adult students. Therefore, parents and adult students, please notify the office immediately of any change in address, telephone number, person to contact in case of emergency, or place of employment.

**Break/Coffee Area:** Please ask staff if you need the use of our refrigerator. Be sure to sanitize or wash your hands before using the equipment and/or supplies. Staff routinely cleans the refrigerators and unmarked items may be tossed for sanitary reasons. Cooking instructors often stock refrigerator prior to courses. Students should not help themselves to anything they do not bring to class without express permission from the adult education office. If and when snacks are made available to students, those items will be clearly marked for student use. Adult Education will be using disposable utensils, cups, and plates during the 2024-2025 school year.

The adult education office provides a Keurig machine for students use. Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and other drink pods are free to students. Students may also use any sugar, creamer, cups, napkins placed on the Keurig table free of charge.

**Computer Lab, Technology Devices, and Internet Use: BEVERAGES ARE PERMITTED IN THE COMPUTER LAB BUT MUST HAVE A SECURE COVER.** Covers are available on the Keurig table for students who do not have a covered travel mug or drink container. **STUDENTS MUST KEEP CAP ON BOTTLED DRINKS WHEN NOT ACTIVELY USING THEM.** Students, staff, and community members wishing to use the computer lab or technology available in adult education must first read Student Computer/Internet Use Rules and sign Student Compute/Internet Use Policy IJNDB – student Computer/Internet use and IJNBD - R Acknowledgement Form (IJNDB-E 11.26.19). Student Online Learning Platforms and Video Communication and Email Forms may be required to be read and signed based on student enrollment program.

The use of the Internet at school is a privilege for all students. It is to be used for educational purposes that have been assigned by a teacher. In appropriate use of the Internet and/or violation of the Internet policy will result in incremental consequences and/or the loss of privileges including the potential loss of use of the adult education technology. Damage or loss of school technology equipment due to negligence would result in the parent/guardian/student being responsible for repair or replacement (see RSU 25 policy IJNDB-R 11.26.19).

**Care of School Property/Vandalism:** The school department, our custodians and the community take pride in maintaining a good school facility and equipment. Defacing of school property constitutes vandalism, and it will be treated as such under the discipline policy. The student must make monetary restitution for damage(s) incurred. Legal/police action may be sought for more serious offenses.

**Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Use by Students:** Adult Education students typically do not engage in extra-curricular activities. However, if the student is co-enrolled with day school or attending credit recovery classes at adult education, it is acknowledged that said student may be involved in extra-curricular activities in the K-12 system. If the student is involved in extra-curricular school activities, there will be a consequence for violating the chemical use and/or Tobacco Use policies, including suspension and/or removal from the activity. (see RSU 25 policy: JJIE 11.26.19)

**Visitor Pass:** Adult education students are not permitted in K-12 areas during day school hours without a pass. Adult education students who violate this policy should be prepared to be stopped and questioned by staff. Students violating this policy are required to meet with the Adult Education Director prior to a decision as to whether student will be allowed to return to class. Violations of this policy may result in a reminder of policy, removal from class or expulsion from the adult education program. Removal from class or expulsion from the

adult education program is at the discretion of the Adult Education Director. In the case of dual enrolled students or credit recovery students, removal from class or expulsion from the adult education program is at the discretion of the Adult Education Director and/or building principal.

**Electronic Devices:** In order to preserve the climate, safety and atmosphere for student learning, it is necessary that all students abide by the guidelines set by School administration that set appropriate times and places that electronic devices may be used during the school day. In general, the use of electronic devices are not permitted at any time during adult education school hours as they would be perceived to be a distraction to our primary goal. Additionally, students need to accept all responsibility for securing their devices and we cannot be responsible for any lost devices during school. (see RSU 25 policy: JFCK-R 11.26.19)

Certain workforce training courses include use of electronic devices as they pertain to the job and the instructor will notify you if they are permitted during these activities.

In addition, Adult Education students taking HiSET and Certification exams may not have electronic devices in the testing rooms under any circumstances, especially those that contain cameras or recording capabilities. Students taking other assessments will be advised of policies regarding electronic devices prior to testing. Locked storage can be provided to students who request it for their devices. Examiner and Proctor use of electronic devices are subject to the individual assessment's policies in addition to RSU 25 Policies.

**Communication Devices:** Students are allowed to use the office phones only in case of an emergency or illness. Phone calls requested by a student to out-of-state colleges for the purpose of financial aid, admission information, etc., should be done at the expense of the student. Emergency situations may be considered through the main office.

Any use of cellular telephones and other electronic devices that violates any School Board policy, administrative procedure or school rule is strictly prohibited. Examples of prohibitive behaviors are, but not limited to: accessing, viewing, posting, forwarding, downloading or displaying any materials that are defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing and/or illegal is prohibited. Evidence of illegal activities involving electronic devices will be referred to law enforcement and upon request the device(s) may be turned over to law enforcement.

Cell Phones and Electronic devices may be subject to search if there is reasonable suspicion that a student is violating School Board policies, procedures or school rules, or engaging in other misconduct. Devices may be confiscated and retained as evidence pending the outcome of any disciplinary procedures. The use of cameras, including camera phones or video recorders, is strictly prohibited in locker rooms, restrooms.

In addition, Adult Education students taking HiSET exams may not have cell phones in the testing rooms under any circumstances. Students taking other assessments will be advised of policies regarding cell phones prior to testing. Certification and licensure exams routinely prohibit cell phones and electronic devices. Most other assessments we use permit the phone to be out of reach of the student or turned off and not accessible by the student but still within sight of the student. Locked storage can be provided to students who request it for their cell phones. Examiners and Proctors use of cell phones are subject to the individual assessment's policies in addition to RSU 25 Policies.

**Fire and Safety Drills:** All RSU 25 Adult and Community Education students and staff engage in various preparedness safety drills during the school year to ensure an appropriate response should an incident occur in reality. Anything from "lockdown" status to a building evacuation is possible, both of which are rehearsed. Each

room has directions for exiting for fire drills. When the alarm sounds, all students are to leave the building as quickly and as orderly as possible. Students are to move beyond the first row of cars and remain on the school grounds during the time of the drill.

**Homework/Make-up Work:** Homework is an important part of the educational process. It helps to reinforce previously taught skills, encourages exploration of new topics, and helps to develop responsibility. Students will be responsible for completing homework when assigned.

Homework is assigned on a regular basis at the discretion of the classroom teachers and is included in the calculation of the student's final grade. Adult Education students are permitted to use adult education facilities such as the computer lab and study space to complete some of their work in school. However, it is the student's responsibility to make appointments with the adult education office beforehand. When absent, it is the student's responsibility to acquire make-up work from his/her teachers and schedule the necessary appointments for help. Homework is expected to be done regularly and passed in on a timely manner designated by the teacher. Students who miss classes because of illness or excused absence must meet with their teachers upon their return to school. At this time, arrangements must be made between the student and teacher. Some certification courses do not allow for make-up work. Students will be notified in advance if a course does not permit make up work.

There is no expectation of make up for enrichment classes. Students should refer to our course catalog for our enrollment and registration policies. Students who have questions should contact the adult education office preferably prior to enrollment but must be prior to the start of course. Students with unexpected emergency situations should contact the adult education office as soon as reasonably possible.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is one of the most serious academic crimes that can be committed. It is described in Webster's Dictionary as the "unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work." RSU 25 values the concept of intellectual property and is committed to teach students the ethics and mechanics of documentation. If a student submits work that has violated standards of academic honesty, a consequence including but not limited to a reduced grade, completion of an alternative assessment, and or suspension may be assigned.

**Honor Rolls:** RSU 25 Adult Education does not typically present Honor Rolls due to staggered course start dates and rolling enrollments. There are certain courses that do recognize student achievements and these are usually presented at graduation.

**National Honor Society:** RSU 25 Adult and Community Education does not currently participate in the Adult Education National Honor Society due to staggered course start dates and rolling enrollments.

**Lost and Found:** Found articles should be turned in at the Adult Education office. Lost articles should be reported to the Adult Education office. Articles not claimed after a reasonable length of time will be donated to the Bucksport Community Concerns. Never, never leave valuables where they might be stolen...locker rooms, break room, etc. School officials are not responsible for lost or stolen articles or money.

**School Dances:** Adult Education students will be considered guests from another school for the purpose of dances within the district. As such, adult education students must be approved by administration two days prior to the dance.

**Student Parking/Vehicle Privileges/Expectations:** Parking and driving on school grounds is a privilege. With that privilege comes a responsibility for all drivers to drive slowly and cautiously while on school roadways and

parking lots. Abuse of those privileges will result in loss of parking and driving privileges on school grounds temporarily or for the balance of the year. Bucksport High School rules will apply for BHS and/or Co-enrolled students attending Adult Education. All local and state traffic laws are in effect while on school grounds.

**Textbooks and Library Books:** All our books are the property of RSU 25 Adult and Community Education unless students are informed otherwise. Once they have been issued, they are the responsibility of the student, and if defaced, destroyed, or lost, a prorated charge will be charged to the student. All textbooks should be covered. Certified Clinical Medical Assistant, Phlebotomy Technician, and Pharmacy Technician textbooks, workbooks, and handouts are paid for by the student as part of their course fees and are the property of the individual student.

RSU 25 Adult and Community Education ITV Students must follow the rules of the lending University Library in the use of the corresponding library's books.

**Visitors:** The term “visitor” shall apply to any person on school grounds or in school buildings who is not an employee or student of the school. All Adult Education visitors shall report to the Adult Education main office upon arrival, and sign in. Students wishing to bring another student to visit RSU 25 Adult and Community Education must get permission from their teachers and an administrator at least one week in advance. The visitation must be because of a school-sponsored activity or educationally based (i.e. transfer or enrolling). However, appointments with teachers, counselors and/or administrators can be made in advance. (RSU 25 policy K1 11.29.19)

**Withdrawal and Transfer:** To withdraw or transfer from RSU 25 Adult and Community Education the student must:

1. Obtain note from parent/guardian authorizing withdrawal or transfer (applies to students ages 16 to 18).
2. Obtain appropriate forms from the Adult Education main office.
3. Have the forms filled out by teachers, return all books and property, and make sure all fees, if any, are paid.
4. Take the completed forms to the Adult Education main office for final clearance.

**Dress Code:** RSU 25 strives to provide a safe and caring environment where all students can learn without emotional or physical threat or unnecessary distractions that disrupt the educational process. Every person in the RSU 25 School System shall be treated in a fair, equitable and respectful manner. In keeping with these goals, students and their parents/guardians, staff and visitors to the school are asked to make responsible decisions about their choice of dress that reflects respect for themselves and others. Policies and procedures do not allow the wearing of any apparel that advocates or advertises the use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs. We also request that the clothing you wear to school and/or accessories worn be appropriate for an academic environment while not being a distraction to learning as the primary function of our school. Please refer to RSU 25 Policy JCDB 1.27.22– Dress Code, provided in this handbook.

In addition, some workforce training classes require articles of clothing in order to participate. For example, phlebotomy students must wear a scrub jacket as part of their safety equipment. Students will not be permitted to engage in workforce training activities without required safety personal protective equipment. Some workforce training activities require students to dress “work” appropriate for their chosen career, i.e. scrubs for health care students. Students will be notified when activities will require work attire.



**Certification, National, and High School Equivalency Exam Dress Codes:** Students should be aware these exams are “high stakes” exams meaning that they result in a certification, licensure, or diploma. All have dress codes in addition to RSU 25 policies designed to prevent inappropriate activity during testing. These dress codes must be adhered to in order for students to sit for their exams. RSU 25 Staff does not make the rules for these exams but we are required to enforce them to continue to offer students the convenience of testing at our site.

If you are not sure if something may or may not be worn, check with one of your teachers or the director before you wear it to school.

**Fragrances, Perfumes, Colognes:** Due to staff and student sensitivities to fragrances, perfumes, and colognes, RSU 25 Adult and Community Education respectfully requests that you refrain from wearing these during the time that you are a student or staff member here. In addition, students in health care training courses will find that most employers no longer permit them to wear fragrances due to patient sensitivities. For that reason, we request that our health care students do not wear fragrances as part of their workforce training curriculum.

**Harassment, Bullying, and Hazing Policies:** RSU 25 policies and procedures strictly forbid harassment bullying, or hazing in any form to take place. Harassment takes many forms including verbal abuse (such as name calling or taunting), discrimination, intimidation, and sexual harassment. Bullying is any expression or action which harms or places a student in fear of harm (including damaging the student’s property) or which interferes with the student’s rights. Bullying also includes Cyber-Bullying. Students and parents should realize that bullying or harassment done over the internet via texting, e-mail, Facebook, Snapchat, instant messaging, etc. are nonetheless as harmful and inappropriate as if done face-to-face. Depending on the extent of the connection to the school, schools can take disciplinary action against involved students. Hazing is any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers a person’s mental or physical health.

Harassment, bullying, and/or hazing is detrimental to student learning and achievement. It interferes with the mission of the schools to educate their students and disrupts the operations of the schools. Harassment, bullying, and/or hazing affects not only students who are targets but also those who participate and witness such behavior. Any student who engages in conduct that constitutes this type of behavior shall be subject to disciplinary consequences. Students should be aware that bullying does not mean “talking trash”, trading insults, or similar interactions among friends. Students who have been bullied or observe incidents are encouraged to report this behavior to a staff member or administration. Acts of reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an incident of bullying are prohibited. Any student who is determined to have falsely accused another of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary consequences. Consequences may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension, expulsion, and/or reports to law enforcement officials. (see RSU 25 policy:JICK 11.29.19)

Students are encouraged to make use of the following procedure in dealing with bullying, harassment, or hazing:

1. Politely, respectfully ask the person(s) to stop.
2. Report the incident to a teacher or administrator ASAP! This allows the administration to act quickly.
3. Reports may be made anonymously via the RSU 25 website on both the “Students” and “Parents” tabs.

Know that the incident will be followed up on, which includes fact-finding and appropriate consequences for those accountable for harassing, bullying, or hazing behavior. Depending on the extend of the issue, disciplinary consequences may include but are not limited to restorative conferencing, in- or out-of-school suspension, expulsion, and possible referral to law enforcement. Parents of minor age students will be involved in any incidents of bullying, harassment, or hazing. (See RSU 25 policies AC 6.13.23, ACAA 11.25.191, ACAA-R 11.25.19, ACAD 11.25.19, JIC 11.26.19, JICK 11.26.19, JICK-R 11.26.19, and JICK-E1 11.26.19).

**Weapons, Violence & School Safety:** To insure the safety of everyone, RSU 25 has a comprehensive Weapons, Violence and School Safety Policy. Violations of these policies will result in out of school suspension and/or school expulsion. Legal authorities will be notified. Prohibited items include but are not limited to firearms, ammunition, knives, chains, lasers, lighters, matches, BB guns, pellet guns, any other type of gun, ammunition, explosives, cross-bows, brass knuckles, switchblades, knives, chains, clubs, Kung Fu stars and nun-chucks.

Articles such as bats, belts, picks, pencils, compasses, objects capable of ignition, files, tools or replicas of weapons (including toys), not necessarily designed to be a weapon, used to inflict bodily harm, intimidate or harass another person are a violation. **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. **Be careful during hunting season NOT to leave your gun in your vehicle!** School officials will confiscate these items and turn them over expeditiously to the local police authorities.

Note: Nothing in this policy shall prevent the school system from offering instructional activities related to firearms or other objects that are generally considered weapons (e.g., bows & arrows).  
(see RSU 25 Policy: JICIA 11.26.19)

### **Bomb Threats**

The Board recognizes that bomb threats are a significant concern to the school unit. Whether real and carried out or intended as a prank or for some other purpose, a bomb threat represents a potential danger to the safety and welfare of students and staff and to the integrity of school property. Bomb threats disrupt the instructional program and learning environment and also place significant demands on school financial resources and public safety services. These effects occur even when such threats prove to be false. Any bomb threat will be regarded as an extremely serious matter, subjected to disciplinary action, and treated accordingly. The Board directs the Superintendent to react promptly and appropriately to information concerning bomb threats and to initiate or recommend suitable disciplinary action.

### **Student Disciplinary Consequences:**

Making a bomb threat is a crime under Maine law. Any student suspected of making a bomb threat shall be reported to law enforcement authorities for investigation and possible prosecution. Apart from any penalty imposed by law, and without regard to the existence or status of criminal charges, a student who makes a bomb threat shall be subject to disciplinary action by the school. The administration may suspend and/or recommend for expulsion any student who makes a bomb threat. The making of a bomb threat will be considered deliberately disobedient and deliberately disorderly within the meaning of 20-A M.R.S.A. § 1001(9) and will be grounds for expulsion if found necessary for the peace and usefulness of the school. In addition, a student who is found after hearing by the Board to have brought a bomb to school shall be expelled from school for at least one year in accordance with 20-A M.R.S.A. § 1001(9-A) and Policy JICIA, except that the Superintendent may modify the requirement for expulsion based on individual circumstances. (RSU25 Policy EBCC)

**Student Code of Conduct:** The RSU #25 school board in support of the aims of public education, believes that individual responsibility and mutual respect are essential. Nurturing the maturing process in each youth is of primary importance. This process, critical to the future of our democratic society, is closely linked with the

balance that must be maintained between authority and self-discipline as the individual moves from a child's dependence on authority towards the more mature behavior of self-control.

The expectations of this code apply to every student and extend to all school activities including travel to and from school functions held on school property and any other situation(s) in which the student's conduct is likely to have an adverse effect on either school discipline or the safety and welfare of others. Behavior related to a child's disability will be managed consistently with applicable laws and regulations.

**Board Policies Related to Student Conduct may be accessed on the district website:**

- Bomb Threat and School Safety Policy (File: EBBG)
- Chemical Health Policy (File: JCDAC)
- Disciplinary Removal of Students with Disabilities (File: JFK)
- Disciplinary Removal of Students with Disabilities Administrative Procedure (JKF-R)
- Expulsion of Students (File: JKE)
- Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students (File: ACAA)
- Hazing (File: JICFA)
- Identification of Students with Disabilities (File: IHBAA)
- Student Computer and Internet Use Rules (File: IJNDB)
- Student Discipline (File: JK)
- Suspension of Students (File: JKD)
- Weapons, Violence, and School Safety (File: JICIA)

The expectations of this code apply to every student and extend to all school activities including travel to and from school functions held on school property and any other situation(s) in which the student's conduct is likely to have an adverse effect on either school discipline or the safety and welfare of others. Behavior related to a child's disability will be managed consistently with applicable laws and regulations.

**Student Discipline:** It is essential for schools to maintain a safe and orderly environment that 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 in accordance with School Board 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. **This policy applies to behavior on school property, on school-sponsored trips and at school-sponsored events.**

The board 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.
- E. **The Board will be notified in a timely manner about suspensions related to substance abuse, weapons, violence, hazing/bullying/harassment, or a bomb threat or other terrorist threat, in addition to violations specified in the Administrative Procedures accompanying this policy.**

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 principal/designee. (see RSU 25 Policy JIC 11.26.19)

**School Sponsored Events:** School sponsored events are an extension of the regular school day and basic school rules and regulations are applicable. Appropriate behavior is expected at all school events.

### **RSU 25 Policy and Notification Statement on Diversity/Title IX**

It is the policy of the RSU 25 not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX may be directed to Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Compliance Officer at the Superintendent of Schools Office, 62 Mechanic Street, Bucksport, Maine 04416, Telephone: 469-7311 or to the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C.

**Guidelines for Military Recruiters:** Adult Education students may request space to meet with a Military Recruiter. Recruiters should report directly to the Adult Education office upon entering the building. All meetings should be scheduled in advance as space is limited. Please give advance notice if you will need any information from the Adult Education office – i.e. transcripts, letter indicating progress towards graduation, etc. Our office hours are 9:00a.m. until 4:00p.m. Students who will miss school for an out of town military visit, ASVAB testing, etc. are required to notify adult education staff of any classes they will be missing. Students age 16 to 18 must complete a Permission Slip with parent signature. The form must be returned to the adult education office 3 days before the visit or test.

**Home Schooling:** Requests to fulfill the compulsory school attendance law through equivalent instruction by home schooling shall be made by the parent to the Department of Education with a copy submitted to the Superintendent. The Superintendent may review such applications and may submit comment to the Department of Education within 30 days of receipt. (see RSU 25 Policy: IHBG 11.26.19)

**Posting of Materials:** The posting of any materials within the adult education section of the school is a matter for the adult education director and the building principal to approve within the guidelines of the RSU policy on “distributing and posting materials” (see RSU 25 policy KHC 11.26.19 on the district website).

**Complaints or Concerns:** When questions, concerns or complaints arise involving any school related issues, channeling of these concerns should be accomplished using the following “chain of command” sequence that originates closest to the individual involved:

1. Staff Member
2. Director
3. Superintendent
4. School Board

**Handbook Disclaimer:** Please note that it is not possible for a handbook to be all-inclusive in covering every possible matter of importance pertaining to schools. However, administration reserves the right to act accordingly in the best interest of all on all matters that arise. That may or may not include changing terms of the handbook at any time without notice. Additionally, should there be a conflict between the handbook and Board policies, policies will dictate the decision-making process. (see RSU25.org website for School Board policies and procedures)

## **ASBESTOS ABATEMENT PROGRAM**

Regional School Unit 25  
September 6, 2011

## Parent/Employee Notification Statement

By law, we are required to notify each parent of the Asbestos Abatement Program each year. The Division of Safety and Environmental Services, Maine Department of Administration, has delivered asbestos management plans to each school district in the state. The plans, prepared under contract, are mandated by the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986. Using bond funds approved by the voters in 1987, the Division conducted an in-depth survey of every school building in the state, whether owned or leased, to identify the location and condition of asbestos containing materials inside the school buildings. The resulting management plans provide that information for school officials as well as recommendations for required response actions for required response actions for each identified asbestos containing material location. Management plans will be available at each school building and the Superintendent's office for inspection by any interested party. The Miles Lane School and Bucksport Middle School are excluded from this notification; there is no asbestos material in these schools. A copy of the report for the High School is attached for High School parents and the Jewett School for Kindergarten parents.

The Division of Safety and Environmental Services will continue its program of assisting schools on an abbreviated program with an abatement program for high priority asbestos problems. In these cases, the Division will arrange for the design and conduct of a removal or repair program, including close supervision of each project by an industrial hygienist.

Also using bond funds, training has been offered to management and maintenance staff in each school district to insure careful handling of asbestos materials on a day to day basis. School personnel are responsible under the law for continuing surveillance of remaining materials, notification of parents and employees about asbestos related incidents on activities in the schools and the management of any asbestos fiber releases which are required by maintenance activity or occur accidentally. Regional School Unit 25 school personnel began their training program in March 1989 with the designated person. School personnel have done the six month surveillance and it is recorded in the Operation & Maintenance Program. Regional School Unit 25 has an Emergency Response Team. The Division will assist with genuine emergencies using its Asbestos Abatement Response Teams. The three year re-inspection has been completed as of December 2009. All records are up to date.

A number of areas in the school system were identified as having ACBM with potential for damage such as floor tiles. The report recommended that the material be monitored under the facilities Operations and Maintenance Plan and generally presents no hazard if maintained properly. Regional School Unit 25 has an O & M Program which is required by law.

### **School Board Approved Policies**

## DRESS CODE

Regional School Unit 25 (RSU 25) strives to provide a safe and caring environment where all students can learn without emotional or physical threat or unnecessary distractions that disrupt the educational process. Every person in RSU 25 shall be treated in a fair, equitable and respectful manner. In keeping with these goals, students and their parents/guardians, staff and visitors to the district schools are asked to make responsible decisions about their choice of dress that reflects respect for themselves and others.

Following are dress code requirements for students, staff and school personnel:

Clothing shall be neat, clean and appropriate for an educational setting. Revealing apparel (including but not limited to transparent or see-through tops, tank tops, tube tops, spaghetti straps, backless dresses, very short skirts and shorts) is not allowed. Skirts and shorts must be no shorter than mid-thigh. Pants must be fastened and worn at the waist. Excessive rips, tears and holes are not acceptable. Underclothing must not be visible. Midriffs must be covered at all times.

Inappropriate graphics or words on clothing that contain violent, illegal, discriminatory, obscene, or drug/alcohol/tobacco messages are not allowed. Gang-related apparel, including insignias, colors, mottos, or symbols, is considered inappropriate for school attire and are prohibited. School Administrators have the authority to prohibit any other messages that they determine to be disruptive to the school's learning environment.

Outerwear such as jackets and coats shall be stored in lockers during the school day.

Head-wear may be worn as long as it meets the guidance for appropriate attire. Students will remove head-wear during the Pledge of Allegiance, and at the request of staff members if it pertains to academic integrity (i.e. while students are taking a test) or school safety.

Accessories that could pose a safety hazard to others or themselves or that could be used in a destructive manner are not allowed. This includes but is not limited to heavy chains, chokers, spiked or studded jewelry. Sunglasses are not to be worn in school unless prescribed by a physician.

Foot apparel must be worn at all times for safety purposes. It is especially important in the prevention of playground injuries where high heels, platforms and flip-flops can cause injuries to feet and ankles. For safety reasons, school administrators will use their discretion in prohibiting anything that interferes with safety, such as excessively long or baggy pants, excessively high platforms, etc.

Students, and staff shall comply with dress code expectations. If a student does not meet dress code guidelines, they will not be permitted in class until appropriate clothing is secured. Repeated violations of the dress code will result in further disciplinary action.

Exceptions to dress code guidelines may be allowed by administration for special events (proms, spirit days, etc.) or individual exceptions (health, religious, etc.)

If you are not sure if something may or may not be worn, check with one of your teachers or principal before you wear it to school. All employees are expected to enforce the dress code policy. School administrators shall have final authority in all dress code matters.

Adopted: July 21, 2015

## STUDENT EDUCATION RECORDS AND INFORMATION

The RSU 25 shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) and all other federal and state laws and regulations concerning confidentiality and maintenance of student records and student information.

### A. Directory Information

RSU 25 designates the following student information as directory information: name, participation and grade level of students in recognized activities and sports, height and weight of student athletes, dates of attendance in the school unit, and honors and awards received. RSU 25 may disclose directory information if it has provided notice to parents (and eligible students over 18) and has not received timely written notice refusing permission to designate such information as directory information.

### B. Military Recruiters/Higher Education Access to Information

Under federal law, military recruiters and institutions of higher education are entitled to receive the names, addresses and telephone numbers of secondary students and RSU 25 must comply with any such request, provided that parents have been notified of their right to request that this information not be released without their prior written consent.

### C. Information on the Internet

Under Maine law, RSU 25 shall not publish on the Internet any information that identifies a student, including but not limited to the student’s full name, photograph, personal biography, e-mail address, home address, date of birth, social security number and parents’ names, without written parental consent.

### D. Transfer of Student Records

As required by Maine law, RSU 25 sends student education records to a school unit to which a student applies for transfer, including disciplinary records, attendance records, special education records and health records (except for confidential health records for which consent for dissemination has not been obtained).

### E. Designation of Law Enforcement Unit

School units may disclose student education records without parental consent to personnel of its law enforcement unit, provided that they have been designated as school officials with legitimate educational interests for the purpose of compliance with FERPA.

The Board hereby designates its School Resource Officer(s) Bucksport Police Department or Hancock County Sheriff/Maine State Police as law enforcement unit for the purpose of disclosure of student education records under FERPA.

### F. Health or Safety Emergencies



As permitted by FERPA, the school unit may disclose personally identifiable information from a student's educational record to appropriate parties, including parents of an eligible student, if taking into account the totality of the circumstances, it determines that there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals and knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. In the event of disclosure, the school unit will record the articulable and significant threat that formed the basis for the disclosure and the parties to whom the school unit has disclosed and maintain such record with the student's educational record.

#### G. Administrative Procedures and Notices

The Superintendent is responsible for developing and implementing any administrative procedures and parent notices necessary to comply with the applicable laws and regulations concerning student education records and information. Notices shall be distributed annually to parents and eligible students concerning their rights under these laws and regulations. A copy of this policy shall be posted in each school.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99  
20 U.S.C. § 7908  
20-A M.R.S.A. §§ 6001, 6001-B  
Ch. 101, 125 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rules)

Cross Reference: JRA-E – Annual Notice of Student Education Records and  
Information Rights  
JRA-R – Education Records and Information Administrative Procedure  
ILD – Student Surveys

Adopted: February 23, 2010

Reviewed: September 2011

Reviewed: March 19, 2018

RSU 25 Policy: AC

#### NONDISCRIMINATION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The school unit does not discriminate on the basis of sex or other protected categories in its education programs and activities, as required by federal and state laws/regulations.

Discrimination against and harassment of school employees because of actual or perceived race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry or national origin, age, familial status, disability, or genetic information are prohibited.

Discrimination against and harassment of students because of actual or perceived race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry or national origin, or disability are prohibited. For the purpose of this policy, "race" includes traits associated with race, including hair texture, Afro hairstyles, and protective hairstyles, including braids, twists, and locs.

The Board directs the school administration to implement a continuing program designed to prevent discrimination against all applicants, employees, students and other individuals having access rights to school premises and activities.

The school unit has designated and authorized an Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator who is responsible for ensuring compliance with all federal and state requirements relating to nondiscrimination, including sexual harassment. The Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator is a person with direct access to the Superintendent.

The school unit has implemented complaint procedures for resolving complaints of discrimination/harassment and sexual harassment under this policy. The school unit provides required notices of these complaint procedures and how they can be accessed, as well as the school unit's compliance with federal and state civil rights laws and regulations to all applicants for employment, employees, students, parents and other interested parties.

Legal Reference:      Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-261),  
                                         amending Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000 (e) et  
                                         seq.)  
                                         Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.); 34  
                                         C.F.R. Part 106 (Title IX regulations)  
                                         Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d)  
                                         Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (29 U.S.C. § 621 et seq.)  
                                         Equal Pay Act of 1963 (29 U.S.C. § 206)  
                                         Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) (29 U.S.C. § 794 et  
                                         seq.), as amended  
                                         Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.), as amended  
                                         Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. § 2000ff et seq.)  
                                         Maine Human Rights Act (5 MRSA § 4551 et seq.), as amended

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RSU 25 Policy: AC

Cross Reference:      Regional School Unit 25 Affirmative Action Plan  
                                         ACAA – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students  
                                         ACAA-R – Student Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment  
                                         Complaint Procedures  
                                         ACAB – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of School Employees  
                                         ACAB-R – Employee Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual  
                                         Harassment Complaint Procedures

Adopted: October 20, 2009

Reviewed: November 5, 2022

RSU 25 Policy: ACAA

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HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

Harassment of students because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry or national origin, or disability is prohibited. Such conduct is a violation of Board policy and may constitute illegal discrimination under state and federal laws.

For the purpose of this policy, “race” includes traits associated with race, including hair texture, Afro hairstyles, and protective hairstyles, including braids, twists, and locs.

School employees, fellow students, volunteers, visitors to the schools, and other persons with whom students may interact in order to pursue or engage in education programs and activities, are required to refrain from such conduct.

Harassment and sexual harassment of students by school employees is considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Harassment and sexual harassment of students by other students is considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. The Superintendent will determine appropriate sanctions for harassment of students by persons other than school employees and students.

A. Harassment

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, verbal abuse and other offensive conduct based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry or national origin, or disability. Harassment that rises to the level of physical assault, battery and/or abuse, and/or bullying behavior are also addressed in Board Policies JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety and JICK – Bullying.

B. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is addressed under federal and state laws/regulations. The scope and definitions of sexual harassment under these laws differ, as described below.

1. TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Under the federal Title IX regulations, sexual harassment includes the following conduct on the basis of sex which takes place within the context of the school unit’s education programs and activities:

- a. “Quid pro quo” sexual harassment by a school employee: Conditioning a school aid, benefit or service (such as a better grade or a college recommendation) on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
- b. “Hostile environment” sexual harassment: Unwelcome conduct based on sex that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies an individual’s equal access to the school unit’s education programs and activities; or
- c. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking as these terms are defined in federal laws.

## 2. Sexual Harassment Under Maine Law

Under Maine law, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature in the following situations:

- a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student’s educational benefits;
- b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions on educational benefits; or
- c. Such conduct has the purpose and effect of substantially interfering with a student’s academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

## C. Reports and Complaints of Harassment or Sexual Harassment

All school employees are required to report possible incidents of harassment or sexual harassment involving students to the Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator. Failure to report such incidents may result in disciplinary action.

Students, parents/legal guardians and other individuals are strongly encouraged to report possible incidents of harassment or sexual harassment involving students to the Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator. The Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator is also available to

answer questions and provide assistance to any individual who is unsure whether harassment or sexual harassment has occurred.

All reports and complaints of harassment or sexual harassment against students shall be addressed through the Student Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedures (ACAA-R).

Legal Reference: Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq., as amended; 28 C.F.R. § 35.107)  
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) (29 U.S.C. § 794 et seq., as amended; 34 C.F.R. § 104.7)  
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 USC § 1681, et seq.); 34 C.F.R. Part 106  
Clery Act (20 U.S.C. §1092(f)(6)(A)(v) - definition of sexual assault)  
Violence Against Women Act (34 U.S.C. § 1092(f)(6)(A)(v) – definition of sexual assault; 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(10) – dating violence; 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(3) – definition of stalking; 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(8) – definition of domestic violence)  
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC § 2000d)  
Maine Human Rights Act, 5 MRSA § 4551 et seq.  
20-A MRSA § 6553  
MHRC/MDOE Joint Rule Chapter 94-348 and 05-071, Ch. 4

Cross Reference: ACAA-R – Student Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures  
AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action  
ACAD – Hazing  
GBEB – Staff Conduct with Students  
JFCK – Student Use of Cellular Telephones and Other Electronic Devices  
JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety  
JICK – Bullying

Revised: July 18, 2023

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RSU 25 Policy: ACAA-R  
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**Student Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures**

The Board has adopted these student procedures in order to provide prompt and equitable resolution of reports and complaints of unlawful discrimination and harassment of students, including sexual harassment, as described in policies AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action and ACAA – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students.

Complaints alleging unlawful harassment or discrimination against employees based on a protected category should be addressed through the Board’s Employee Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures (ACAB-R).

Any individual who is unsure about whether unlawful discrimination or harassment has occurred and/or or which complaint procedure applies is encouraged to contact the Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator.

**Katie Hodgins, Title IX Coordinator**  
**62 Mechanic Street, Bucksport, Maine**  
**207-469-7311**  
[katie.hodgins@rsu25.org](mailto:katie.hodgins@rsu25.org)

## **Section 1. Definitions**

For purposes of these complaint procedures, the following definitions will be used. The Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator shall assess all reports and complaints to ensure that they are addressed under the appropriate policy and complaint procedure.

### **A. Discrimination/Harassment Complaint Procedure Definitions**

1. “Discrimination or harassment”: Discrimination or harassment on the basis of an individual’s membership in a protected category, which, for students, includes race (including traits associated with race involving hair texture, Afro hairstyles and protective hairstyles such as braids, twists and locs), color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, national origin or disability.
2. “Discrimination”: Treating individuals differently, or interfering with or preventing them from enjoying the advantages or privileges afforded to others because of their membership in a protected category.
3. “Harassment”: Oral, written, graphic, electronic or physical conduct relating to an individual’s actual or perceived membership in a protected category that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit that individual’s ability to participate in the school unit’s programs or activities by creating a hostile, intimidating or offensive environment.
4. “Sexual harassment”: Under Maine law, this means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature in the following situations:
  - a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student’s educational benefits;
  - b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions on educational benefits; or
  - c. Such conduct has the purpose and effect of substantially interfering with a student’s academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

RSU 25 Policy: ACAA-R  
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5. “Sexual orientation”: Under Maine law, this means a person’s “actual or perceived heterosexuality, bisexuality, homosexuality or gender identity or expression.”
6. “Gender identity”: Under Maine law, this means “the gender-related identity, appearance, mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of an individual, regardless of the individual’s assigned sex at birth.”
7. “Complaint” is defined as an allegation that a student has been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, national origin or disability (and not otherwise addressed in the Title IX regulations and Section 3 of ACAA-R).
8. Complaints of bullying not involving the protected categories or definitions described above may be addressed under Board Policy JICK – Bullying and Cyberbullying of Students.

**B. Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure Definitions**

1. “Sexual Harassment”: Under the federal Title IX regulations, sexual harassment includes the following conduct on the basis of sex which takes place within the context of the school unit’s education programs and activities:
  - a. “Quid pro quo” sexual harassment by a school employee: Conditioning a school aid, benefit or service (such as a better grade or a college recommendation) on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
  - b. “Hostile environment” sexual harassment: Unwelcome conduct based on sex that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies an individual’s equal access to the school unit’s education programs and activities; or
  - c. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking as these terms are defined in federal laws.
2. “Report”: Under the Title IX regulations, any individual may make a report of sexual harassment involving a student, whether the individual is the alleged victim or not. School employees are required to report possible incidents of sexual harassment involving a student. A report must be made to the Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator. A report triggers certain actions by the AAO/Title IX Coordinator for the alleged victim of sexual harassment, but an investigation is not conducted unless a “Formal Complaint” is filed.
3. “Formal Complaint”: Under the Title IX regulations, the alleged victim of sexual harassment can file a written complaint that triggers the complaint procedure in Section 3 of ACAA-R. Only a student and/or their parent/legal guardian (and in certain circumstances, the AAO/Title IX Coordinator) may file a formal complaint.

RSU 25 Policy: ACAA-R  
Page 3 of 13

4. “Student”: For the purposes of this procedure, a student is an individual who is enrolled or participating in the school unit’s education programs and activities, or is attempting to enroll or participate.

## **Section 2. Discrimination/Harassment Complaint Procedure**

This procedure should be used for any complaint of unlawful harassment or discrimination complaint based on a protected category which does not involve Title IX sexual harassment (which is addressed in Section 3).

### **A. How to Make A Complaint**

1. School employees are required to promptly make a report to the AAO/Title IX Coordinator if they have reason to believe that a student has been discriminated against or harassed.
2. Students (and others) who believe that they, or another student has been harassed or discriminated against should report their concern promptly to the AAO/Title IX Coordinator.
3. The individual making the report must provide basic information in writing concerning the allegation of harassment or discrimination (i.e., date, time, location, individual(s) who allegedly engaged in harassment or discrimination, description of allegation) to the AAO/Title IX Coordinator.
4. If an individual is unsure as to whether unlawful discrimination or harassment has occurred, or who need assistance in preparing a written complaint, they are encouraged to discuss the matter with the AAO/Title IX Coordinator.
5. Individuals will not be retaliated against for reporting suspected discrimination or harassment, or for participating in an investigation. Retaliation is illegal under federal and state nondiscrimination laws, and any retaliation will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge for employees, and expulsion for students.
6. Individuals are encouraged to utilize the school unit's complaint procedure. However, individuals are hereby notified that they also have the right to report incidents of discrimination or harassment to the Maine Human Rights Commission, 51 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333 (telephone: 207-624-6290) and/or to the federal Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA 02109-3921 (telephone: 617-289-0111).

### **B. Complaint Handling and Investigation**

1. The AAO/Title IX Coordinator will promptly inform the Superintendent and the person who is the subject of the complaint (respondent) that a complaint has been received.
2. The AAO/Title IX Coordinator may pursue an informal resolution of the complaint with the agreement of the parties involved. Any party to the complaint may decide to end the informal resolution process and pursue the formal process at any point. Any informal resolution is subject to the approval of the parties and the Superintendent, who shall consider whether the

resolution is in the best interest of the school unit and the parties in light of the particular circumstances and applicable policies and laws.



3. The AAO/Title IX Coordinator may implement supportive measures to a student to reduce the risk of further discrimination or harassment to a student while an investigation is pending. Examples of supportive measures include, but are not limited to, ordering no contact between the individuals involved or changing classes.
4. The complaint will be investigated by a trained internal or external individual designated by the Superintendent and the AAO/Title IX Coordinator. Any complaint about an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor's authority. Any complaint about the Superintendent should be submitted to the Chair of the Board, who should consult with legal counsel concerning the handling and investigation of the complaint.
5. The investigator shall consult with the AAO/Title IX Coordinator as agreed during the investigation process.
6. The respondent will be provided with an opportunity to be heard as part of the investigation. The complainant shall not be required to attend meetings with the respondent, but may choose to do so as part of an informal resolution process.
7. The complainant and the respondent may suggest witnesses to be interviewed and/or submit materials they believe are relevant to the complaint.
8. If the complaint is against an employee of the school unit, any rights conferred under an applicable collective bargaining agreement shall be applied.
9. Privacy rights of all parties to the complaint shall be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.
10. The investigation shall be completed within 40 business days of receiving the complaint, if practicable. Reasonable extensions of time for good reason shall be allowed.
11. The investigator shall provide a written report and findings to the AAO/Title IX Coordinator.

**C. Findings and Subsequent Actions**

1. The AAO/Title IX Coordinator shall consult with the Superintendent concerning the investigation and findings.
2. If there is a finding that discrimination or harassment occurred, the AAO/Title IX Coordinator, in consultation with the Superintendent shall:
  - a. Determine what remedial action, if any, is required to end the discrimination or harassment, remedy its effect and prevent recurrence; and
  - b. Determine what disciplinary action should be taken against the individual(s) who engaged in discrimination or harassment, if any.

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3. Inform the complainant and the respondent in writing of the results of the investigation and its resolution (in accordance with applicable state and federal privacy laws).

## **D. Appeals**

1. After the conclusion of the investigation, the complainant or respondent may seek an appeal of the findings solely on the basis of either: (a) prejudicial procedural error or (b) the discovery of previously unavailable relevant evidence that could significantly impact the outcome.
2. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent within five business days after receiving notice of the resolution.
3. Upon receipt of a valid appeal, the Superintendent shall provide notice to the other party, along with an opportunity to provide a written statement within five business days.
4. The Superintendent shall review the available documentation and may conduct further investigation if deemed appropriate.
5. The Superintendent's decision on the appeal shall be provided to the parties within 10 business days, if practicable. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

## **E. Records**

The AAO/Title IX Coordinator shall keep a written record of the complaint process.

### **Section 3. Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure**

This section should be used only for complaints of Title IX sexual harassment as defined in Section 1.B.1.

#### **A. How to Make A Report**

1. School employees who have reason to believe that a student has been subjected to sexual harassment are required to promptly make a report to the AAO/Title IX Coordinator.
2. Students, parents/legal guardians or other individuals who believe a student has been sexually harassed are encouraged to make a report to the AAO/Title IX Coordinator.
3. If the individual making the report is the alleged victim, or if the alleged victim is identified by the individual making the report, the AAO/Title IX Coordinator will meet with the alleged victim to discuss supportive measures that may be appropriate in the particular circumstances and explain the process for filing a formal complaint.
  - a. Supportive measures are individualized measures designed to ensure the student can continue to access educational programs and activities (such as requiring no contact between individuals or changing classes).
  - b. Supportive measures may be continued even if the alleged victim chooses not to file a formal complaint, if appropriate under the particular circumstances.

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4. The school unit cannot provide an informal resolution process for resolving a report unless a formal complaint is filed.
5. Individuals will not be retaliated against for reporting sexual harassment, or for participating

in an investigation. Retaliation is illegal under federal and state nondiscrimination laws, and any retaliation will result in disciplinary actions, up to and including discharge for employees, or expulsion for students.

6. Any student (or their parent/legal guardian) who believes they have been the victim of sexual harassment is encouraged to utilize the school unit's complaint procedure. However, students (and their parents/legal guardians) are hereby notified that they also have the right to report sexual harassment to the Maine Human Rights Commission, 51 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333 (telephone: 207-624-6290) and/or to the federal Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA 02109-3921 (telephone: 617-289-0111).
7. The Superintendent shall be informed of all reports and formal complaints of sexual harassment.

## **B. How to Make A Formal Complaint**

1. An alleged student victim and/or their parent/legal guardian may file a formal written complaint requesting investigation of alleged Title IX sexual harassment. The written complaint must include basic information concerning the allegation of sexual harassment (i.e., date, time, location, individual(s) who allegedly engaged in sexual harassment, description of allegation).

Students who need assistance in preparing a formal written complaint are encouraged to consult with the AAO/Title IX Coordinator.

2. In certain circumstances, the AAO/Title IX Coordinator may file a formal complaint even when the alleged victim chooses not to. Examples include if the respondent (person alleged to have engaged in sexual harassment) has been found responsible for previous sexual harassment or there is a safety threat within the school unit). In such cases, the alleged victim is not a party to the case, but will receive notices as required by the Title IX regulations at specific points in the complaint process.
3. In accordance with the Title IX regulations, the AAO/Title IX Coordinator must dismiss a formal complaint under this Title IX procedure if: a) the conduct alleged in the formal complaint does not constitute sexual harassment under the Title IX regulations and this policy; or b) if the conduct alleged did not occur within the scope of the school unit's education programs and activities, or c) did not occur in the United States.
4. In accordance with the Title IX regulations, the AAO/Title IX Coordinator may dismiss a formal complaint under this Title IX procedure if: a) a complainant withdraws the formal complaint, or withdraws particular allegations within the complaint; b) the respondent is no longer employed by or enrolled in the school unit; or c) there are specific circumstances that prevent the school unit from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding

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the formal complaint. However, if the conduct potentially violates other policies or laws, it may be addressed through the applicable Board policy/procedure.

5. If a formal complaint is dismissed under this Title IX procedure, the AAO/Title IX Coordinator will promptly and simultaneously send written notices to the parties explaining

the reasons. Parties have the opportunity to appeal dismissals in accordance with subsection I below.

6. If the conduct alleged in a formal complaint potentially violates other laws, Board policies and/or professional expectations, the school unit may address the conduct under Section 2 or another applicable Board policy/procedure.

### **C. Emergency Removal or Administrative Leave**

1. The Superintendent may remove a student respondent from education programs and activities on an emergency basis during the complaint procedure:
  - a. If there is a determination (following an individualized safety and risk analysis) that there is an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of an individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment. Examples of such circumstances might include, but are not limited to, a continued threat of violence against a complainant by a respondent, or a respondent's threat of self-harm due to the allegations.
  - b. The respondent (and their parent/legal guardian) will be provided notice of the emergency removal, and will be provided an opportunity to challenge the decision following the removal (this is an opportunity to be heard, not a hearing). The respondent has the burden to demonstrate why the emergency removal was unreasonable.
2. The Superintendent may place an employee respondent on administrative leave during the complaint procedure in accordance with any applicable State laws, school policies and collective bargaining agreement provisions.
3. Any decision to remove a respondent from education programs and activities on an emergency basis or place an employee on administrative leave shall be made in compliance with any applicable disability laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **D. Notice to Parties of Formal Complaint**

1. The Title IX Coordinator will provide to the parties written notice of the formal complaint and allegations of sexual harassment potentially constituting prohibited conduct under the Title IX regulations and this procedure. The notice shall include:
  - Notice regarding the complaint procedure and the availability of an informal resolution process;
  - Sufficient details known at the time (including identities of parties, if known; the conduct alleged that potentially violates Title IX; and the date and location of the

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alleged incident, if known), with sufficient time to prepare before any initial interview (not less than five business days);

- As required by the Title IX regulations, a statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination of responsibility will be made at the conclusion of the complaint; and that the parties may inspect and

- review evidence;
  - Notice that the parties may each have an advisor of their choice (who may be an attorney);
  - Notice that knowingly making false statements or submitting false information during the complaint process is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action;
  - Notice of the name of the investigator, with sufficient time (no less than three business days) to raise concerns of conflict of interest or bias.
2. If additional allegations become known at a later time, notice of the additional allegations will be provided to the parties.
  3. The AAO/Title IX Coordinator will discuss supportive measures with each party and implement such measures as appropriate.

## **E. Informal Resolution Process**

After a formal complaint has been filed, and if the AAO/Title IX Coordinator believes the circumstances are appropriate, the AAO/Title IX Coordinator may offer the parties the opportunity to participate in an informal resolution process to resolve the complaint without completing the investigation and determination process. Informal resolutions cannot be used to resolve a formal complaint where a student is the complainant and the respondent is an employee.

Informal resolutions can take many forms, depending on the particular case. Examples include, but are not limited to, facilitated discussions between the parties; restorative justice; acknowledgment of responsibility by a respondent; apologies; disciplinary actions against a respondent or a requirement to engage in specific services; or supportive measures. Both parties must voluntarily agree in writing to participate in an informal resolution process, and either party can withdraw from the process at any time. The Superintendent must agree to the terms of any informal resolution reached between the parties. If an informal resolution agreement is reached, it must be signed by both parties and the school unit. Any such signed agreement is final and binding according to its terms.

If an informal resolution process does not resolve the formal complaint, nothing from the informal resolution process may be considered as evidence in the subsequent investigation or determination.

## **F. Investigation**

1. The complaint will be investigated by a trained internal or external individual designated by the Superintendent and AAO/Title IX Coordinator. Any complaint about an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor's authority. Any complaint about the Superintendent should be submitted to the Chair of the Board, who should consult with legal counsel concerning the handling and investigation of the complaint.
2. The investigator shall consult with the AAO/Title IX Coordinator as agreed during the investigation process.
3. If the complaint is against an employee of the school unit, rights conferred under an applicable collective bargaining agreement shall be applied, to the extent they do not conflict with the

Title IX regulatory requirements.

4. Privacy rights of all parties to the complaint shall be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.
5. The investigator will:
  - a. Meet with each party after they have received appropriate notice of any meeting and its purpose, with sufficient time to prepare.
  - b. Allow parties to have their advisor at all meetings related to the complaint, although advisors may not speak on behalf of a party or interfere with the process.
  - c. Allow parties a reasonable opportunity to identify witnesses and submit favorable and unfavorable evidence.
  - d. Interview witnesses and conduct such other activities that will assist in ascertaining facts (site visits, review of documents, etc.).
  - e. Consider evidence that is relevant and directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint.
  - f. During the course of the investigation, provide both parties with an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence that is obtained in the investigation that is directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint (including evidence which the school unit does not intend to rely upon in reaching a determination of responsibility), and favorable and unfavorable evidence.
  - g. Prior to completion of the investigation report, provide each party and advisor (if any) the evidence subject to inspection and review, and provide the parties with ten business days to submit a written response.
  - h. Consider the parties' written responses to the evidence prior to completing the investigation report.
  - i. Create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and send the report to the parties and advisors (if any), for their review and written responses within ten business days of receipt.
  - j. After receipt of the parties' written responses (if any), forward the investigation report and party responses to the assigned decision maker.
6. The investigation shall be concluded within 40 business days if practicable. Reasonable extension of time for good reason shall be allowed.

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#### **G. Determination of Responsibility**

1. The decision maker shall provide the parties with the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that the party wants asked of another party or witness within five calendar business days of when the decision maker received the investigation report and party responses.

- a. The decision maker shall explain to a party proposing questions if the decision maker excludes a question as not relevant.
2. Each party shall be provided the opportunity to review the responses of another party and/or witness, and to ask limited written follow-up questions within five business days of receiving the answers.
3. Each party will receive a copy of the responses to any follow-up questions.
4. The decision maker shall review the investigation report, the parties' responses and other relevant materials, applying the preponderance of the evidence standard ("more likely than not").
5. The decision maker shall issue a written determination, which shall include the following:
  - a. Identification of all the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment as defined in the Title IX regulations and this policy;
  - b. A description of the procedural steps taken from receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather other evidence, and meetings held;
  - c. A determination regarding responsibility as to each allegation and findings of fact supporting the determinations;
  - d. A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions the school unit imposes on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the school unit's programs and activities will be provided to the complainant;
  - e. The school unit's appeal procedure and permissible bases for the parties to appeal the determination.
6. The written determination shall be provided to the parties simultaneously. The determination concerning responsibility becomes final either on the date that the school unit provides the parties with the written determination of the results of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or if an appeal is not filed, the date on which the appeal would no longer be considered timely.

## **H. Remedies, Discipline and Other Actions**

### **1. Remedies**

Remedies are measures used to ensure that the complainant has equal access to the school unit's

education programs and activities following the decision maker's determination. Such remedies may include supportive measures, and may include other appropriate measures, depending upon the determination and the needs of the complainant. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for implementing remedies and providing any needed assistance to the Complainant.

## **2. Discipline and Other Actions - Students**

The following are of the types of discipline and other actions that may be imposed on a student when there is a determination that they are responsible for one or more violations involving sexual harassment:

- In or out of school suspension.
- Expulsion.
- Restorative justice.
- Requirement to engage in education or counseling program.

## **3. Discipline and Other Actions – Employees**

The following are examples of the types of disciplinary actions that may be imposed on an employee when there is a determination that they are responsible for one or more violations involving sexual harassment:

- Written warning.
- Probation.
- Demotion.
- Suspension without pay.
- Discharge.

The following are examples of other types of actions that may be imposed on an employee when there is a determination of responsibility:

- Performance improvement plan.
- Counseling.
- Training.
- Loss of leadership/stipend position.

## **I. Appeals**

The parties have the opportunity to appeal a determination regarding responsibility, and from dismissals of formal complaints. Under the Title IX regulations, appeals are allowed on the following grounds:

1. A procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
2. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal of the formal complaint was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; or
3. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision maker had a conflict of interest or bias for

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or against complainants or respondents generally, or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

An appeal must be filed in writing within five business days of receiving the determination, stating the grounds for the appeal and including any relevant documentation in support of the appeal. Appeals submitted after this deadline are not timely and shall not be considered.

1. Appeals must be filed with the Superintendent, who will consider the appeal.
2. The Superintendent shall notify the other party in writing of the appeal and will allow both parties to submit a written statement in support of or challenging, the determination of the decision maker.
3. The Superintendent shall conduct an impartial review of the appeal, including consideration of the written record of the matter, and may consult with legal counsel or other school unit officials in making their decision.
4. The Superintendent shall issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and rationale for the result, and provide the written decision simultaneously to the parties. The decision will either deny the appeal; grant the appeal and remand to the decision maker for further consideration; or grant the appeal by revising the disciplinary or other action(s).

## **J. Records**

Records in connection with sexual harassment reports and the complaint process shall be maintained for a minimum of seven years.

Legal Reference: Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq., as amended; 28 C.F.R. § 35.107)  
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) (29 U.S.C. § 794 et seq., as amended; 34 C.F.R. § 104.7)  
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 USC § 1681, et seq.); 34 C.F.R. Part 106  
Clery Act (20 U.S.C. §1092(f)(6)(A)(v) - definition of sexual assault)  
Violence Against Women Act (34 U.S.C. § 1092(f)(6)(A)(v) – definition of sexual assault; 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(10) – dating violence; 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(3) – definition of stalking; 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(8) – definition of domestic violence)  
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC § 2000d)  
Maine Human Rights Act, 5 MRSA § 4551 et seq.  
20-A MRSA § 6553  
MHRC/MDOE Joint Rule Chapter 94-348 and 05-071, ch. 4

Cross Reference: ACAA – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students

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AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action  
ACAD a– H zing  
GBEB – Staff Conduct with Students  
JFCK – Student Use of Cellular Telephones and Other Electronic Devices  
JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety

Adopted: October 20, 2009

Revised: July 18, 2023

RSU 25 Policy: ACAD

## HAZING

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.

Injurious hazing also includes any activity expected of a student as a condition of joining or maintaining membership in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers a student, regardless of the student's willingness to participate in the activity.

Injurious hazing activities of any type, either on or off school property, by any student, staff member, group or organization affiliated with this school unit, are inconsistent with the educational process and shall be prohibited at all times.

“Harassing behavior” includes acts of intimidation and any other conduct that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of a student or staff member.

“Acts of intimidation” include extortion, menacing, direct or indirect threats of violence, incidents of violence, bullying, statements or taunting of a malicious and/or derogatory nature that recklessly or intentionally endanger the mental or physical health of another person, and property damage or theft.

No administrator, faculty member, or other employee of the school unit shall encourage, permit, condone, or tolerate injurious hazing activities. No student, including leaders of any student organizations or school-sponsored teams, shall plan, encourage, or engage in injurious hazing activities.

Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate measures. Administrators, professional staff, and all other employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

In the case of an organization affiliated with this school unit that authorizes hazing, penalties may include rescission of permission for that organization to operate on school property or to receive any other benefit of affiliation with the school unit. Persons not associated with this school unit who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to ejection from school property and/or other measures as may be available under the law.

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These penalties shall be in addition to any civil or criminal penalties to which the violator or organization may be subject.

The Superintendent/designee shall be responsible for administering this policy. In the event that an individual or organization disagrees with an action—or lack of action—on the part of the Superintendent/designee as he/she

carries out the provisions of this policy, that individual or organization may appeal to the Board. The ruling of the Board with respect to the provisions of this policy shall be final.

This right to appeal does not apply to student suspensions of 10 days or less or to matters submitted to grievance procedures under applicable collective bargaining agreements. A copy of this policy shall be included in all school, parent, and employee handbooks or otherwise distributed to all school employees and students.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA § 6553

Cross Reference: ACAA - Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students  
ACAB - Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Employees  
JICIA - Weapons, Violence and School Safety

Adopted: October 20, 2009

Revised: July 18, 2023

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## BULLYING

The Board believes that bullying, including cyberbullying, is detrimental to student well-being and to student learning and achievement. It interferes with the mission of the schools to educate their students and disrupts the operations of the schools. Bullying affects not only students who are targets but also those who participate in and witness such behavior.

### Bullying Prohibited

Bullying, including “cyberbullying,” harassment and sexual harassment are not acceptable conduct in Regional School Unit 25 (RSU 25) and are prohibited.

Retaliation for the reporting of incidents of such behavior is also prohibited.

In adopting this policy, it is not the Board’s intent to prohibit students from expressing their ideas, including religious, political and philosophical views that may offend the sensibilities of others, or from engaging in civil debate. However, the Board does not condone and will take action in response to conduct that directly interferes with students’ rights at school under applicable laws or with the educational mission, operations, discipline or general welfare of the schools.

### Definitions

“Bullying” and “cyberbullying” have the same meaning in this policy as in Maine law:

## Bullying

“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:

A. Has, or a reasonable person would expect it to have, the effect of:

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

B. Interferes with the rights of a student by:

1. Creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment for the student; or
2. Interfering with the student’s academic performance or ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by the school; or

C. Is based on:

1. A student’s actual or perceived characteristics identified in 5 MRSA § 4602 or 4684-A (including race; color; ancestry; national origin; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; religion; physical or mental disability) or other distinguishing personal characteristics (such as socioeconomic status; age; physical appearance; weight; or family status); or
2. A student’s association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any other distinguishing characteristics; and that has the effect described in subparagraph A. or B. above.

## Cyberbullying

“Cyberbullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including but not limited to, a transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted by the use of any electronic device including, but not limited to, a computer, telephone, cellular telephone, text messaging device or personal digital assistant.

## Retaliation

Retaliation means an act or gesture against a student for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. Retaliation also includes reporting that is not made in good faith on an act of bullying.

## Application of Policy

This policy applies to bullying that:

- A. Takes place at school or on school grounds, at any school-sponsored or school-related activity or event or

while students are being transported to or from school or school-sponsored activities or events; or

- B. Takes place elsewhere or through the use of technology, but only if the bullying also infringes on the rights of the student at school as set forth in the definition of “bullying.”

#### Consequences for Policy Violations

##### Students

Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension, expulsion or a series of graduated consequences including alternative discipline or other behavioral interventions.

The Board retains the right to impose disciplinary consequences for bullying and other conduct that occurs at any time or place that substantially disrupts the instructional program, operations of the schools or welfare of students.

Any student violating this policy may also be subject to civil or criminal penalties.

##### School Employees and Others

Administrators, professional staff and all other employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal, and in accordance with any applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Volunteers, contractors and visitors who violate this policy will be excluded from school property until the Superintendent is satisfied that the person will comply with Maine’s bullying law and this policy.

Any person violating this policy may also be subject to civil or criminal penalties.

Any school-affiliated organization that authorizes or engages in bullying or retaliation is subject to forfeiture of Board approval/sanctioning and/or suspension or revocation of its permission to operate on school grounds.

##### Staff Training

RSU 25 will provide professional development and staff training in bullying prevention and response.

##### Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent/designee will be responsible for developing and implementing procedures in accordance with applicable law to implement this policy.

The Superintendent will designate the school principal and/or other school personnel to be responsible for implementation/enforcement of this policy and associated procedures on the school level.

A student or his/her parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Superintendent or designee related to the taking or not taking of disciplinary action in the course of implementing this policy may appeal, in writing, to the Superintendent within 14 calendar days of notice of the decision.

The Superintendent’s decision shall be final.

## Dissemination of Policy

The Superintendent will be responsible for providing this policy, any associated administrative procedures and the names of the person(s) responsible for implementing the policy/procedure at the school level in writing to students, parents, school employees and volunteers in handbooks, on the school unit's website and by such other means (if any) as may be determined by the Superintendent.

Legal Reference: 20-A M.R.S.A. § 1001(15), 6554

Cross Reference: AC - Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity  
ACAA-R - Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students  
ACAD – Hazing  
AD – Educational Philosophy/Mission  
ADAA – School System Commitment to Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior  
ADF - School District Commitment to Learning Results  
CHCAA - Student Handbooks  
GCI – Professional Staff Development  
IJNDB-R - Student Computer and Internet Use and Internet Safety  
JI - Student Rights and Responsibilities  
JIC - Student Code of Conduct  
JICC - Student Conduct on Buses  
JICIA - Weapons, Violence and School Safety JK - Student Discipline  
JKD - Suspension of Students  
JKE - Expulsion of Students  
KLG - Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities

Adopted: July 18, 2017

RSU 25 Policy: ADC

## TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS: USE AND POSSESSION OF TOBACCO AND ELECTRONIC SMOKING DEVICES

The Board recognizes that research shows that tobacco continues to be the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Maine and the United States, for both users and those exposed to second-hand smoke. The Board is also aware that a growing body of evidence suggests that the chemicals present in the aerosols (“vapor”) produced by electronic smoking devices, may pose significant long-term risks to health, as well the risk of addiction to nicotine.

The Board is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for students, staff, and visitors to the schools, including members of the community who use school facilities for recreational and other purposes.

To that end, and in compliance with applicable state and federal laws, all persons are prohibited from smoking and tobacco use in school buildings, on any school grounds (including parking lots), on school buses and school-owned or leased vehicles, and at all school sponsored events at

all times.

## DEFINITIONS:

For the purpose of this policy:

“Tobacco use” means smoking or the carrying or possession a tobacco product (22 MRSA §1578-B (1)(D)).

“Smoking” includes carrying or having in one’s possession a lighted or heated cigarette, cigar or pipe or heated tobacco or plant product intended for human consumption through inhalation whether natural or synthetic in any manner or any form. “Smoking” includes the use of an electronic smoking device (22 MRSA § 1541(6)).

“Tobacco product” means any product that is made from or derived from tobacco, or that contains nicotine, that is intended for human consumption or is likely to be consumed, whether smoked, heated, chewed, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled or ingested by any other means, including but not limited to a cigar, hookah, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff or snus.

“Tobacco product” also means an electronic smoking device and any component or accessory used in the consumption of a tobacco product such as filters, rolling papers, pipes and liquids used in electronic smoking devices whether or not they contain nicotine (22 MRSA § 1551(3)).

“At all times” means 24 hours per day, including all days when school is not in session and at all functions taking place on school grounds, including organized non-school-sponsored activities and events and casual recreational uses.

All persons are prohibited from selling, distributing, or dispensing tobacco products to students in school building, on school grounds or at school-sponsored events at all times.

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## CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATION

### STUDENTS:

The Superintendent/designee(s) shall be responsible for developing age-appropriate disciplinary guidelines for students violating this policy and for employing strategies, as practicable, to address prevention, education, and information about community programs for cessation assistance.

The Superintendent/designee shall refer to a law enforcement agency any student reasonably suspected of selling, dispensing or distributing tobacco products or vaping devices/products.

Parents/guardians will be notified of all violations involving their student and action taken by the school.

## **STAFF:**

School unit employees who violate this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal.

Any school unit employee suspected of selling, distributing or in any way dispensing tobacco products or vaping devices/products to students shall be referred to a law enforcement agency.

## **OTHER PERSONS IN VIOLATION:**

All other persons violating this policy, including parents, vendors/contractors, spectators at school events and other visitors shall be asked to refrain from use and reminded of the Board's policy. Persons who do not comply will be asked to leave school grounds. Failure to leave school grounds will be treated as trespassing and law enforcement personnel may be contacted.

Persons suspected of selling, distributing or in any way dispensing tobacco products or vaping devices/products to students shall be referred to an appropriate law enforcement agency.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENFORCEMENT**

The building principal/designee will be responsible for enforcing this policy at the school level.

## **NOTICE**

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Notice of this policy and disciplinary consequences for violations will be posted on the school unit's website and included in the student code of conduct and/or student handbooks and in annual employee communications.

Parents/ guardians shall also be notified in writing of the Board's policy at the beginning of the school year.

"Tobacco-free campus" signage will be posted in highly visible areas at entrances and on school grounds, including entrances to athletic facilities.

## **EDUCATION**

Age-appropriate tobacco/"vaping" prevention and awareness instruction will be incorporated into the school unit's health curriculum, in alignment with Maine's system of Learning Results and in support of the school unit's wellness policy goals, to educate students about the dangers of tobacco and vapor products and to encourage a tobacco and "vape-free" lifestyle.

As feasible, information regarding treatment and cessation resources will be made available to



students and school unit employees who want to quit.

## **ADVERTISING OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS**

Advertising of tobacco products is prohibited in school buildings, on school property, and in school publications.

Legal Reference: 22 MRSA §§ 1541, 1551, 1578-B  
Me. PL Ch. 61 (2019) ( An Act to Prohibit the Possession and Use of  
Electronic Smoking Devices on School Grounds )  
20 USC 6081-6084 ( Pro-Children Act of 1994 )

Cross Reference: JICA – Student Dress  
JL – Student Wellness  
KF – Community Use of School Facilities  
KHB – Advertising in the Schools

Adopted: January 27, 2010

Revised: August 20, 2019

Revised: October 18, 2022

RSU 25 Policy JICH

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE BY STUDENTS**

The RSU 25 School Board and staff of the school unit support a safe and healthy learning environment for students that is free of the detrimental effects of drugs and alcohol. Accomplishing this goal requires a cooperative effort among school staff, students, parents, law enforcement and organizations concerned with the use of drugs and alcohol by school-aged youth.

In order to promote the safety, health and wellbeing of students, the School Board endorses a three-pronged approach to address the issue of drug and alcohol use; prevention/education; intervention and discipline. The Superintendent is responsible for developing appropriate administrative procedures, curricula and programs to implement this policy.

### **A. Prohibited Conduct**

No student shall distribute, dispense, possess, use or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified wine or other intoxicating liquor. Nor shall a student manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid, any other controlled substance defined in federal and state laws/regulations, any look-alike substance, or any substance that is represented to be a controlled substance.

These prohibitions apply to any student who is on school property, who is in attendance at school or at any school-sponsored activity, or whose conduct at any time or place directly interferes with the operations, discipline or general welfare of the school.

## B. 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 established disciplinary procedures. Students may also be referred to law enforcement authorities for investigation and/or prosecution.

## C. Prevention/Education

The school unit will provide students with appropriate information and activities focused on educating students about drugs and alcohol and preventing their use. Programs shall teach students that the use of drugs and alcohol is wrong and harmful; how to resist peer pressure; and address the legal, social and health consequences of drug and alcohol abuse.

## D. Intervention

The school unit will establish a team approach to intervene with students with drug/alcohol problems. Students will be assisted in addressing their drug/alcohol problems and in continuing their educational program. Students will be provided with information and referral, if necessary, to aid them in obtaining assistance from appropriate community organizations. Student records concerning such interventions shall be kept confidential as required by state and federal laws.

## E. Policy Communication

The school unit shall distribute this policy and appropriate related information to staff, students and parents on an annual basis through handbooks and/or other means selected by the Superintendent and building administrators.

Legal Reference: 21 USC § 812 (Controlled Substances Act)  
21 CFR Part 1300.11-15  
P.L. 101-226 (Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989)  
17-A MRSA § 1101  
42 USC § 290dd-2  
42 CFR § 2.1 et seq.  
20-A MRSA §§ 1001(9); 4008

Cross Reference: GBEC – Drug-Free Workplace  
JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety  
JKD – Suspension of Students  
JKE – Expulsion of Students  
JLCD – Administering Medication to Students  
JRA – Student Records

Adopted: November 17, 2009

RSU 25 Policy: JICIA

## WEAPONS IN THE SCHOOLS POLICY

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 is required to immediately report incidents of prohibited conduct by students to the building administrator/designee for investigation and appropriate action.

### I. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Students, staff and all other persons 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. 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 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.

### II. 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.

### III. USE OF FIREARMS AND OTHER WEAPONS IN INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Nothing in this policy shall prevent the school system from offering instructional activities related to firearms or other objects that are generally considered weapons (e.g., bows and arrows) or from allowing a firearm or other object generally considered a weapon to be brought to school for instructional activities (e.g., archery, hunter safety) approved by the school system so long as appropriate safeguards have been adopted to ensure student and staff safety. No weapons may be used in instructional activities or brought to school for instructional activities unless the Superintendent/designee has given specific permission in advance.

### IV. NOTIFICATION TEAM/CONFIDENTIALITY

Maine law authorizes law enforcement officers and criminal justice agencies to share with a superintendent or principal information pertaining to a juvenile when the information is credible and indicates an imminent danger to the safety of students or school personnel on school grounds or at a school function. Maine law requires the District Attorney to notify the superintendent when a juvenile is charged with use or threatened use of force or is adjudicated as having committed one or more juvenile crimes that involve the use or threatened use of force.

Within ten days, or immediately if necessary for school safety, the Superintendent shall convene a notification team. The notification team must include the administrator/designee of the school building where the student attends, at least one classroom teacher to whom the student is assigned, a guidance counselor, and the student's parent/guardian. The notification team shall determine on this basis of need which school employees are entitled to receive information concerning allegations or adjudications of use or threatened use of force. Information received by the Superintendent/designee and disclosed to the notification team and/or disclosed to school employees is confidential and may not become part of the student's educational record.

The Superintendent shall ensure that confidentiality training is provided to all school employees who have access to this information.

### V. PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION/RISK ASSESSMENT

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to request an immediate psychological evaluation of a student who engages in conduct prohibited by this policy when, in his/her opinion, such an evaluation will assist in assessing the risk the student poses to school safety if the student were to remain in school.

The Superintendent is also authorized to request psychological evaluations of students who have been identified as posing a substantial risk of violent behavior. All such evaluations shall be performed at the school unit's expense.

If the parent/guardian and/or student refuses to permit a requested psychological evaluation, the Superintendent and the Board may draw any reasonable inferences from the student's behavior concerning the risk the student poses to school safety for purposes of determining appropriate

Legal References: 5 MRSA § 4681 et seq.  
15 M.R.S.A. §§ 3301-A; 3308(7)(E); 3009  
17-A MRSA §§ 2(9); 2(12-A)  
20 USCA § 7151 (Gun-Free Schools Act)  
20-A MRSA §§ 1001(9); 1001(9-A); 1055(11); 6552

Cross References: ACAA - 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  
JIH - Questioning and Searches of Students  
KLG - Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities

Adopted: October 20, 2009

RSU 25 Policy: EBCC

## **BOMB THREATS**

The Board recognizes that bomb threats are a significant concern to the school unit. Whether real and carried out or intended as a prank or for some other purpose, a bomb threat represents a potential danger to the safety and welfare of students and staff and to the integrity of school property. Bomb threats disrupt the instructional program and learning environment and also place significant demands on school financial resources and public safety services. These effects occur even when such threats prove to be false.

Any bomb threat will be regarded as an extremely serious matter and treated accordingly. The Board directs the Superintendent to react promptly and appropriately to information concerning bomb threats and to initiate or recommend suitable disciplinary action.

### **A. Conduct Prohibited**

No person shall make, or communicate by any means, whether verbal or non-verbal, a threat that a bomb has been, or will be, placed on school

premises. Because of the potential for evacuation of the schools and other disruption of school operations, placement of a bomb or of a “look-alike” bomb on school premises will be considered a threat for the purpose of this policy.

It is also a violation of Board policy to communicate by any means that any toxic or hazardous substance or material has been placed, or will be placed, on school premises with the intent to endanger the safety and welfare of students or staff and/or to disrupt the operations of the schools. For the purpose of this policy, “toxic or hazardous substance or material” means any material or substance, including biomedical materials or organisms, that, when placed as threatened, could be harmful to humans.

B. Definitions

1. A “bomb” means an explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket, missile, mine, “Molotov cocktail” or other destructive device.
2. A “look-alike bomb” means any apparatus or object that conveys the appearance of a bomb or other destructive device.
3. A “bomb threat” is the communication, by any means, whether verbal or non-verbal, that a bomb has been, or will be, placed on school premises, including possession or placement of a bomb or look-alike bomb on school premises.
4. “School premises” means any school property and any location where any school activities may take place.

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RSU 25 Policy: EBCC

C. Development of Bomb Threat Procedures

The Superintendent/designee shall be responsible for developing and implementing procedures specific to bomb threats as part of the school unit’s Emergency Management Plan. These procedures are intended to inform administrators and staff of appropriate protocols to follow in the event that a bomb threat is received and should include provisions to address:

1. Threat assessment (for the purpose of identifying a response that is in proportion to the threat, in light of what is necessary to ensure safety);
2. Building evacuation and re-entry (including selection of potential

- alternative sites for those who are evacuated);
3. Incident “command and control” (who is in charge, and when);
  4. Communications contacts and mandatory bomb threat reporting;
  5. Parent notification process;
  6. Training for staff members; and
  7. Support services for students and staff.

The initial bomb threat procedure will be subject to approval by the Board. The Superintendent/designee will be responsible for overseeing a review or evaluation of bomb threat procedures prior to the Board’s required annual approval of the school unit’s Crisis Response Plan, or following implementation of the procedure in response to a specific threat.

#### D. Reporting of Bomb Threats

A student who learns of a bomb threat or the existence of a bomb on school premises must immediately report such information to the building principal, teacher, the School Resource Officer or other employee in a position of authority.

An employee of the school unit who learns of a bomb threat shall immediately inform the building administrator. The building administrator shall immediately take appropriate steps to protect the safety of students and staff in accordance with the school unit’s bomb threat procedure, as developed under Section C, and inform the Superintendent of the threat. All bomb threats shall be reported immediately to the local law enforcement authority, as provided in the bomb threat procedures.

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The Superintendent shall be responsible for reporting any bomb threat to the Department of Education within two business days of the incident. Reports will include the name of the school, the date and time of the threat, the medium used to communicate the threat, and whether or not the perpetrators have been apprehended.

#### E. Student Disciplinary Consequences

Making a bomb threat is a crime under Maine law. Any student suspected of making a bomb threat shall be reported to law enforcement authorities for investigation and possible prosecution. Apart from any penalty imposed by law, and without regard to the existence or status of criminal charges, a

student who makes a bomb threat shall be subject to disciplinary action by the school.

The administration may suspend and/or recommend for expulsion any student who makes a bomb threat. The making of a bomb threat will be considered deliberately disobedient and deliberately disorderly within the meaning of 20-A M.R.S.A. § 1001(9) and will be grounds for expulsion if found necessary for the peace and usefulness of the school.

In addition, a student who is found after hearing by the Board to have brought a bomb to school shall be expelled from school for at least one year in accordance with 20-A M.R.S.A. § 1001(9-A) and Policy JICIA, except that the Superintendent may modify the requirement for expulsion based on individual circumstances.

A student who has been identified through the IEP process as having a disability and whose conduct in violation of this policy is related to the disability shall be disciplined as provided in Policy JKF.

F. Aiding Other Students in Making Bomb Threats

A student who knowingly encourages, causes, aids or assists another student in making or communicating a bomb threat shall be subject to the disciplinary consequences described in Section E of this policy.

G. Failure to Report a Bomb Threat

A student who fails to report information or knowledge of a bomb threat or the existence of a bomb or other destructive device in a school building or on school property may be subject to disciplinary consequences, which may include suspension and/or expulsion.

H. Staff Disciplinary Consequences

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RSU 25 Policy: EBCC

A school system employee who makes or communicates a bomb threat will be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Disciplinary action taken shall be consistent with collective bargaining agreements, other employment agreements and Board policies.

A school system employee who fails to report information or knowledge of a bomb threat or the existence of a bomb on school premises will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.



I. Civil Liability

The school unit reserves the right to bring suit against any individual responsible for a violation of this policy and to seek restitution and other damages as permitted by law.

J. Lost Instructional Time

Instructional time lost as a result of a bomb threat will be rescheduled at the earliest appropriate (or: practicable) opportunity, as determined by the Superintendent in consultation with the Board.

Time lost may be rescheduled on a weekend or vacation day, or after what would normally be the last day of the school year, except on days when schools must be closed as required by law.

K. Notification Through Student Handbook

All student handbooks shall address the school unit's bomb threat policy and procedures and explain the educational consequences of bomb threats. In addition, student handbooks shall notify students and parents that bomb threats violate Board policy and civil and criminal law.

Legal References: 18 U.S.C. §§ 921; 8921  
17-A M.R.S.A. § 210  
20-A M.R.S.A. §§ 263; 1001(9); 1001(9-A); 1001(17); 1001(18)  
Ch. 125 § 10.06 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rules)

Cross References: EBCA – Crisis Response Plan  
JKD – Suspension of Students  
JKE – Expulsion of Students  
JKF – Suspension/Expulsion of Students with Disabilities  
JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety  
Student Code of Conduct

Adopted: December 15, 2009

Revised: September 15, 2023

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RSU 25 Policy: JIH

## QUESTIONING AND SEARCHES OF STUDENTS

The RSU 25 School Board seeks to maintain a safe and orderly environment in the schools. The Superintendent, as well as building principals and assistant principals, are authorized to question and/or search students in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedures.

Students may not bring, possess or store at school any items or substances which are prohibited by law, Board policies and/or school rules, or which interfere with the operations, discipline or general welfare of the school.

Student use of all school storage facilities, including but not limited to lockers, desks, and parking lots, is a privilege granted by the school. All storage facilities are school property and remain under the control, custody and supervision of the school. Students have no expectation of privacy in school storage facilities or for any items placed in such storage facilities. The Superintendent, principal, or assistant principal have the authority to inspect and search storage facilities anywhere in RSU 25 and their contents on a random basis, with or without reasonable suspicion, and without notice or consent. Canine patrols may be used.

Students, their personal property, and their vehicles may be searched upon reasonable suspicion that they possess any items or substances which are prohibited by law, Board policies and/or school rules, or which interfere with the safety, operations, discipline or general welfare of the school.

When special circumstances exist, including but not limited to a suspected ongoing violation of the Board's drug/alcohol or weapons policies, or when a potential threat to safety is identified, school administrators may search groups of students or the entire school body without individual suspicion.

If a search produces evidence that a student has violated or is violating the law, Board policies and/or school rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by the Superintendent, principal, or assistant principal and appropriate disciplinary action may be taken. Evidence may be forwarded to, and/or seized by law enforcement authorities as provided by law or as deemed appropriate by the building administrator(s) after conferring with the Superintendent.

A student who refuses to comply with a search directive may be subject to disciplinary action, including the disciplinary consequences for the suspected violation.

School staff, students and parents shall be informed of this policy on an annual basis through handbooks and/or other means selected by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement, with input from legal counsel, administrators, staff and others as appropriate, any administrative procedures necessary to carry out this policy. Such administrative procedures shall be subject to Board approval.

Cross Reference:     ADC- Tobacco Use and Possession  
                          ADC-R – Administrative Procedure  
                          EBCC – Bomb Threats  
                          JIH-E – Student Search Check List  
                          JIH-R – Question and Searches of Students- Administrative Procedures  
                          JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety  
                          JK – Student Discipline  
                          JICH – Chemical Use by Students  
                          KLG – Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities  
                          KLG-R- Administrative Procedure

Adopted: December 21, 2010

RSU 25 Policy IHBAC

## CHILD FIND

Regional School Unit 25 seeks to ensure that all children within its jurisdiction are identified, located and evaluated who are school-age 5 and under the age of 22 and who are in need of special education and supportive assistance. This includes homeless children, state wards, state agency clients, students who have been suspended or expelled, children attending private schools receiving home instruction, children incarcerated in county jails, children who have the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year, highly mobile children (including migrant or homeless), and children who are suspected of being disabled and in need of special education and supportive assistance even though they are advancing from grade to grade.

Regional School Unit 25 is responsible for Child Find for resident students attending private or public schools through public tuition payments or public contract and shall meet this duty either through appropriate arrangements with the receiving unit or school or through direct child find services by unit personnel or contracted personnel.

The school unit's Child Find responsibility shall be accomplished through a unit-wide process which, while not a definitive or final judgment of a student's capabilities or disability, is a possible indicator of special education needs. Final identification of students with disabilities and programming for such students occurs only after an appropriate evaluation and a determination by the IEP Team.

The school unit shall provide Child Find during the first 30 days of the school year or during the first 30 days of enrollment for transfer children, in addition to other Child Find activities provided by the school unit.

This Child Find process shall include obtaining data on each child through multiple measures, direct assessment, and parent information regarding the child's academic and functional performance, gross and fine motor skills, receptive and expressive language skills, vision, hearing and cognitive skills. RSU 25 may schedule Child Find activities during its annual kindergarten enrollment to assist in planning for necessary special education and related services at the start of the school year. If screening occurs in the spring prior to school entry, RSU 25 will refer the child to the regional CDS site within 10 school days.

If the Child Find process indicates that a student may require special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education, the student shall be referred to the IEP Team to determine the student's eligibility for special education services.

School staff, parents, or agency representatives or other individuals with knowledge of the child may refer children to the IEP team if they believe that the student, because of a disability, may be in need of special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education. Such a referral should follow the school unit's pre-referral and referral policy.

RSU 25 Policy: IHBAC

Legal Reference: 34 C.F.R. § 300.111 (2006)

Me. Dept. of Educ. Rule Ch. 101, IV 2(A), (C) (2015)

Me Dept. of Educ. Administrative Letter 1 (January 21, 2021)

Adopted: October 20, 2009

## STAFF CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS

The RSU 25 School Board expects all staff members, including teachers, coaches, counselors, administrators, and others to maintain the highest professional, moral, and ethical standards in their conduct with students. For the purposes of this policy, staff members also include school volunteers.

The RSU 25 Board recognizes that many staff members are themselves parents or relatives of students, and have positive relationships established through interactions beyond the bonds of RSU 25. As such the RSU 25 Board does not intend to diminish these relationships, but is defining appropriate staff behavior as it relates to students and defining the RSU 25 Boards expectations of staff in an effort to protect the physical and emotional health of our students.

The interactions and relationships between staff members and students should be based upon mutual respect and trust; an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students in and outside of the educational setting; and consistent with the educational mission of the schools.

Staff members are expected to be sensitive to the appearance of impropriety in their conduct with students. Staff members are encouraged to discuss issues with their building administrator or supervisor whenever they are unsure whether particular conduct may constitute a violation of this policy.

### Unacceptable Conduct

Examples of unacceptable conduct by staff members include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Any type of sexual or inappropriate physical contact with students or any other conduct that might be considered harassment under the Board's policy on Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students;
- B. Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention and friendship beyond the normal teacher-student relationship that displays a lack of fairness and equity for other students and is done for other than appropriate educational purposes.
- C. Associating with students in the capacity of a RSU 25 employee or volunteer, any situation or activity that includes the presence of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco or that could be considered sexually suggestive;
- D. For non-guidance/counseling staff, encouraging students to confide their personal or family problems and/or relationships. If a student initiates such discussions, staff members are expected to be supportive but to refer the student to appropriate guidance/counseling staff. In either case, staff involvement should be limited to a direct connection to the student's school performance;
- F. Sexual banter, allusions, jokes, or innuendos with students;
- G. Asking a student to keep a secret;

- H. Disclosing personal, sexual, family, employment concerns, or other private matters to one or more students;
- I. Addressing students with terms of endearment, pet names, or otherwise in an overly familiar manner; and allowing students to address you in such a manner;
- J. Maintaining personal contact with a student outside of school by methods such as but not limited to: phone, email, Instant Messenger or Internet chat rooms, social networking websites, or letters (beyond homework or other legitimate school business);

#### Conduct Requiring Caution

Before engaging in activities beyond the scope of normal school activities, staff members should review the activity with their building administrator and have prior written permission from the student's parent or guardian.

- A. Being alone with individual students out of the view of others;
- B. Visiting a student's home, or allowing students to visit the staff member's home; unless on official school business;
- C. Exchanging personal gifts (beyond the customary student-teacher gifts);
- D. Socializing or spending time with students (including but not limited to activities such as going out for meals or movies, shopping, traveling, and recreational activities) outside of school-sponsored events or except as participants in organized community activities.

#### Reporting Violations

Students and/or their parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to notify a building administrator if they believe a teacher or other staff member may be engaging in conduct that violates this policy.

Staff members are required to notify promptly the building administrator or Superintendent if they become aware of a situation that may constitute a violation of this policy.

No student, parent, guardian or staff member should undertake any investigation into suspected violations of this policy.

#### Disciplinary Action

Staff violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Violations involving sexual or other abuse will also result in referral to the Department of Human Services and/or law enforcement in accordance with the Board's policy on Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect.

#### Dissemination of Policy

This policy shall be included in all employee, student and volunteer handbooks.

Cross Reference:     ACAA - Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students  
                               GBEE – Employee Computer/Internet Use Policy  
                               GBEE-R – Employee Computer/Internet Rules

## PEST MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOL FACILITIES AND ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

The Board recognizes that structural and landscape pests can pose significant problems for people and school unit property, but that use of some pesticides may raise concerns among parents, students, and staff. It is therefore the policy of RSU 25 to incorporate Integrated Pest Management (IPM) principles and procedures for the control of structural and landscape pests. A copy of this policy shall be kept in every school and made available upon request to staff, parents, students, and the public.

IPM is a systematic approach to pest management that combines a variety of methods for managing pests, including monitoring; improved horticultural, sanitation, and food storage practices; pest exclusion and removal; biological control; and pesticides.

For the purpose of this policy, “pests” are populations of living organisms (animals, plants or microorganisms) that interfere with use of school facilities and grounds. “Pesticide” is defined as any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling or mitigating any pests and any substance or mixture of substances intended for use as a plant regulator, defoliant or desiccant.

The objective of the school unit’s IPM program is to provide effective pest control while minimizing pesticide use. The goals of the IPM program include managing pests to reduce any potential hazards to human health; preventing loss or damage to school structures or property; preventing pests from spreading beyond the site of infestation to other school property; and enhancing the quality of life for students, staff and others.

The Superintendent and/or designee shall develop and implement a Pest Management Plan consistent with the following IPM principles and procedures:

### A. Appointment of an IPM Coordinator

The Superintendent/designee will appoint an IPM Coordinator for the school unit. The IPM Coordinator will be the primary contact for pest control matters and will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the IPM plan, including making pest control decisions.

The IPM Coordinator will consult with the building principal and/or Superintendent before a decision is made to do a pesticide application for which notice is required and before providing notification of the planned application.

The IPM Coordinator’s responsibilities may include:

1. Recording and monitoring data and pest sightings by school staff and students;
2. Coordinating pest management with pest control contractors;
3. Recording and ensuring that maintenance and sanitation recommendations are carried out where feasible;

4. Ensuring that any pesticide use is done according to the school unit's Pest Management Plan and Chapter 27 Me. Dept. of Agriculture Board of Pesticides Control Rules ("Standards for Pesticide Applications and Public Notification in Schools");
5. Making the school system's pest management policy available in every school building;
6. Having available for parents and staff a copy of the Maine regulation pertaining to pesticide applications in schools (Chapter 27 Me. Dept. of Agriculture Board of Pesticides Control Rules ("Standards for Pesticide Applications and Public Notification in Schools")) and a record of prior pesticide applications and information about the pesticides used.
7. Initiating and coordinating notification of parents and staff of pesticide applications according to the school unit's notification procedure and posting notification signs as appropriate; and
8. Recording all pesticides used by either a professional applicator or school staff and maintaining other pest control data.

#### B. Identification of Specific Pest Thresholds

Routine inspection and accurate identification of pests are needed to recognize potential problems and determine when action should be taken.

Action thresholds for specific sites will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the IMP Coordinator in consultation with the building principal and/or Superintendent, and if necessary, with the advice of a professional pest control expert.

As pest management objectives will differ from site to site (e.g., maintaining healthy turf and specific playing surfaces on athletic fields; carpenter ant control in buildings or maintenance of ornamental plants), differences should be considered before setting an action threshold.

#### C. Pesticide Applicators

Any person who applies pesticides in school buildings or on school grounds, including school personnel, must possess a Maine pesticide applicators license and should be trained in the principles and practices of IPM. All pesticide use must be approved by the school unit's IPM Coordinator. Applicators must follow state regulations and label precautions and must comply with the IPM policy and pest management plan.

#### D. Selection, Use, and Storage of Pesticides

Pesticides should be used only when needed. Non-chemical pest management methods will be implemented whenever possible to provide the desired control. The choice of using a pesticide will be based on a review of other available options (sanitation, exclusion, mechanical means, trapping, biological control) and a determination that these options have not worked or are not feasible. When it has been determined that a pesticide must be used to achieve pest management goals, the least hazardous effective pesticide should be selected. Application should be conducted in a manner that, to the extent practicable using currently available technology, minimizes human risk.

Decisions concerning the particular pesticide to be used and the timing of pesticide application should take into consideration the use of the buildings or grounds to be treated.

Pesticide purchases should be limited to the amount expected to be used for a specific application or during the year. Pesticides will be stored and disposed of in accordance with label directions and state and federal regulations. Pesticides must be stored in an appropriate, secured location not accessible to students or unauthorized personnel.

#### E. Notification of Students, Staff, and Parents of Use of Pesticides

A notice will be provided to staff, students, and parents within the first two weeks of the school year briefly explaining the school unit's IPM/pesticide use policy including provisions for notification to parents and staff of specific planned pesticide applications in school buildings or on school grounds.

When required by regulations, the school will notify staff, students, and parents/guardians at least five days in advance of planned pesticide treatments in the school or on school grounds, including playgrounds and playing fields.

When required by regulations, signs will be posted at each point of access to the treated area and in a common area of the school at least two working days prior to the application and for at least 48 hours following the application in accordance with applicable Maine Board of Pesticides Control regulations.

#### F. Recordkeeping

When a pesticide has been used, records pertinent to the application including labels and material safety data sheets will be maintained at a designated central location for two years following application. Records are to be completed on the day the pesticide is applied. Pest surveillance records should be maintained to verify the need for pesticide treatments.

Legal Reference:     7 MRSA §§ 601-625  
                          22 MRSA §§ 1471-A-1471-X  
                          Ch. 27 Me. Dept. of Agriculture Board of Pesticides Control Rules  
                          (Standards for Pesticide Applications and Public Notification in Schools)

Cross Reference:     EBAA - Chemical Hazards

Adopted: December 15, 2009

**After reading and studying the student handbook, please complete "Handbook Agreement" and return, signed by student and parent (if applicable), to the adult education office. The RSU #25 Policy Committee is constantly changing/adding policies. We uphold the updated policies that are on our website at [www.rsu25.org](http://www.rsu25.org). Some of the policies in this handbook may change during the school year.**

**THANK YOU!**



**RSU 25 Adult and Community Education**  
**Student Handbook Agreement**

The 2024-25 RSU 25 Adult and Community Education Student Handbook can be found on the schools' website ([www.rsu25.maineadulted.org](http://www.rsu25.maineadulted.org) or [rsu25.org/departments/adult education](http://rsu25.org/departments/adult%20education)). If you would like a printed copy please contact the adult education main office and one will be provided for you.

I have read and understand the RSU 25 Adult and Community Education Student-Parent Handbook for the academic year 2024-2025. By signing this document, we are acknowledging the expectations for student behavior and responsibilities to ensure a safe, stimulating and nurturing learning climate for all students.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Please return signed document to the adult education office.*



