

EUT COMMITMENT TO STANDARDS FOR ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR

The EUT believes that promoting ethical and responsible behavior is an essential part of its educational mission. The EUT recognizes that ethics, constructive attitudes, responsible behavior, and “character” are important if a student is to leave school as a “Responsible and Involved Citizen” as described in the Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results. The EUT also recognizes that Maine law requires the adoption of a student code of conduct consistent with statewide standards for student behavior developed by the Commissioner of the Department of Education in compliance with 20-A MRSA §254(11).

The EUT seeks to create and maintain a school climate in which ethical and responsible behavior can flourish. The EUT believes that instilling a sense of ethics and responsibility in students requires setting positive expectations for student behavior as well as establishing disciplinary consequences for behavior that violates policy or school rules. Further, the EUT believes that in order to teach ethical and responsible behavior, adults who interact with students must strive to model and reinforce ethical and responsible behavior. To that end, the EUT supports an active partnership between schools and parents.

Recognizing that collaboratively identified core values are the foundation for a school culture that encourages and reinforces ethical and responsible student behavior, the EUT is committed to the establishment and implementation of a process for identifying shared values and setting and enforcing standards for behavior, including prescription of consequences for unacceptable behavior. The process for identifying such shared values will invite and include the participation of the Director, school administrators, staff, parents, students and the community. Core values will be reviewed periodically, with opportunity for public participation. The Director or a designee is charged to develop a process to assess the EUT’s progress toward achievement of an ethical and responsible school culture.

Following the identification of core values, the EUT, with input from administrators, staff, parents, students and members of the community will adopt a Student Code of Conduct consistent with statewide standards of student behavior¹, that shall, as required by law:

- A. Define unacceptable student behavior;
- B. Establish standards of student responsibility for behavior;
- C. Prescribe consequences for violation of the Student Code of Conduct, including first-time violations, when appropriate;

¹ The statewide standards are the “core values” identified in the report of the Commission for Ethical and Responsible Student Behavior, Taking Responsibility: Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior in Maine Schools and Communities. The core values are: Respect; Honesty; Compassion; Fairness; Responsibility; and Courage. The Code of Conduct must be “consistent with”, not identical to, the statewide standards developed under 20-A MRSA § 254(11). This provides an opportunity for communities to identify their own core values and articulate what the “look like” is when applied to behavior. The core values serve as a basis for school system expectations for student conduct

- D. Describe appropriate procedures for referring students in need of special services to those services;

- E. Establish criteria to determine when further assessment of a current individual education plan is necessary, based on removal of a student from class;
- F. Establish policies and procedures concerning the removal of disruptive or violent students from a classroom or a school bus, as well as student disciplinary and placement decisions, when appropriate; and
- G. Establish guidelines and criteria concerning the appropriate circumstances when the Superintendent/designee may provide information to the local police or other appropriate law enforcement authorities regarding an offense that involves violence committed by any person on school grounds or other school property.

The Student Code of Conduct will be reviewed periodically by the Director, with input from administration, staff, parents, students and members of the community.

Students, parents, staff, and the community will be informed of the Student Code of Conduct through handbooks and/or other means selected by the Director/designee.

Ethics and Curriculum

The EUT encourages integration of ethics into content areas of the curriculum, as appropriate. The EUT also encourages school administrators and staff to provide students with meaningful opportunities to apply values and ethical and responsible behavior through activities such as problem solving, service learning, restorative justice, peer mediation, and student government/leadership development.

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

Adopted: February 2022