



SUBSTANCE USE/ABUSE BY STUDENTS

The Regional School Unit-24 (RSU) Board (RSUB) is committed to providing a quality learning environment for all students. A quality learning environment includes schools that are free from the detrimental effects of illegal substances. The RSUB recognizes that substance abuse and dependency are treatable diseases.

To promote and provide a quality learning environment within all RSU schools, the RSUB endorses a three-prong approach to prevent, discourage, and eliminate substance use by students. This three pronged approach will address prevention leading to elimination through education; intervention; and discipline.

In order to promote the highest possible standards of learning, as well as the safety, health and well-being of students, it is the policy of the RSUB that no student(s) shall use, possess, furnish, be under the influence of, or be in the presence of, any substance and/or paraphernalia designed for, or utilized in, the use of such substances while on any RSU property or when attending any RSU sponsored event.

DEFINITIONS:

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

Substance: Any substance whether illicit or licit, that when used, affects mental processes, including, but not limited to cognition, behavior, and/or personality. Included are scheduled drugs as defined in Title 17-A, Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, Chapter 45 and/or regulated by the Federal Controlled Substances Act (Title 21 Chapter 13 of the United States Code: Drug Abuse Prevention and Control). This includes, but is not limited, to alcohol, inhalants, steroids, cannabis, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, narcotics and any prescription medication(s) not prescribed by licensed Medical Professionals specifically for the individual student that has it in his/her possession.

Attendance at School: includes but is not limited to the following circumstances; any time a student is traveling to and from school or a school sponsored activity (whether by bus or private vehicle), any time a student is on RSU property whether during, before or after school hours; and any time a student is representing any RSU school off RSU property but on an RSU sponsored trip/activity.

RSU Sponsored Activity: whether graded or non-graded, but is not limited to, any Co-Curricular Activity (CCA), field trips, class trips, dances, or other similar education and recreational activities.

Student: a person enrolled in any RSU educational program, including "Adult Education" classes, or attending a school sponsored activity normally intended for RSU students, regardless of whether this person takes educational classes, and/or any person "home schooled" or "alternatively schooled" or otherwise not attending classes at an RSU school but who is on RSU property or attending any RSU sponsored activity relating to their course of education..

RSU Student Assistance Team (RSUSAT): The RSUSAT consists of any and/or all of the following RSU Personnel: School Nurse, Guidance Councilor, Social Worker, Building Administrator (BA) and Assistant BA (ABA). This RSUSAT may be expanded if/as required by the BA, utilizing whomever he/she feels is appropriate for any particular situation. Students may be referred to any individual member. Team members will meet informally as they feel necessary to maintain continuity between members and to monitor student(s) progress and to maintain team continuity concerning all students the team is serving.

Self-Referral: The requesting of assistance from a Teacher, Administrator, or RSUSAT member PRIOR to being involved in any substance abuse incident and/or investigation, whether or not the student has knowledge that such investigation is in progress. *Students may self refer one time only!*

Parent: “Refers to the student’s parent(s) and/or Legal Guardian.

Release of Information by Student/Parent Required: Any student referred to the RSUSAT and/or other Professional(s) for an evaluation will be required to sign a “release of information form,” (as will the parent), PRIOR to any such referral, so RSUSAT members may monitor the student’s progress.

In the Presence Of: Any student that finds himself/herself in a situation where he/she knowingly, or could reasonably be expected to have knowledge of, substance(s) are present and/or are being used and does not take steps to extricate him/her self from the area in a timely manner. “Timely manner” will be determined by the BA during his/her investigation.

Communication

This policy will be posted on the RSU website and printed in all student handbooks. Parents and students involved in any CCA must sign a contract stating they have read, understood, and will follow the terms of this policy, as well as RSU Policy JJIE.

Prevention

The RSU will provide students with information and activities focused on prevention of substance use/abuse. Programs will be provided that teach students the dangers of use/abuse, how to resist peer pressure and will address the legal, social and health consequences of substance abuse.

Roles of RSU Professional Staff:

1. Will become familiar with this policy and its impact on students.
2. Will assist in educating all students about the scope and purpose of this policy.
3. If a student appears to be in violation of this policy, necessary action shall be initiated to secure the health and safety of all students.
4. Must be familiar with the resources available to students that are seeking assistance with a substance abuse problem, and will treat any/all such requests for assistance as confidential and direct the student to the RSUSAT. .
5. All staff members shall report any actual or suspected violations of this policy to their BA immediately.

Investigation and Evidence to Support Conclusion of Violation:

It shall be the responsibility of the BA involved to ensure an investigation is conducted on any/all infractions, allegations or information concerning possible violations of this policy. In any case where a violation is found to have occurred, a parent shall be contacted by the BA/ABA, and the student will be referred to the RSUSAT.

Intervention: (Basic for all students):

BA/ABA receives referral or information concerning Substance Abuse by a student;

1. Contacts student,
2. Notify an RSUSAT member to meet with student;
3. Ensures parent is notified, and;
4. Encourage family to seek help from RSUSAT and/or community agencies or organizations

Discipline:

For a Self Referral

A student who “Self-Refers,” is to be sent directly to the BA/ABA, who will notify the parent, then refer the student to an RSUSAT member, who will ensure a plan is developed and monitored to assist the student as appropriate/required.

Note: If the student does not follow through with the plan developed by the RSUSAT, the student will receive the discipline outlined below for “First Violation”

For Use, Possession or Under the Influence Of

Elementary and Middle School Students:

First Violation;

- a. BA/ABA will consult/notify law enforcement.
- b. Parents will be notified.
- c. The student and parents must meet with the appropriate school professional/RSUSAT, for support, observation, and possible action plan.
- d. At the discretion of the BA, student may be suspended for no more than 10 days and review option of expulsion hearing.
- e. BA will notify student and parent of consequence of subsequent violations.

Second Violation

- a. In addition to steps listed under First Violation:
- b. BA discretion of suspending student for not more that 10 school days, and reviewing the option of an Expulsion Hearing with Superintendent.
- c. The RSUSAT will require the student to have a clinical evaluation, and to follow the recommendations set forth by a certified substance abuse counselor. If the student’s parent(s) refuses a clinical evaluation, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) will normally be notified.
- d. Student (accompanied by a parent) must submit, in person, a “follow up plan” to the RSUSAT

Third and Subsequent Violation

- a. Steps (a) through (d) of second violation
- b. Review the requirement of an Expulsion Hearing with Superintendent.
- c. Parent and student shall meet with the Superintendent if requested by BA and/or Superintendent

High School, Adult Education, Home Schooled and/or Alternative Education Students

First Violation

- a. Law enforcement will be notified
- b. Parents will be notified (students under 18 years of age).
- c. BA/ABA/Adult Education Director (AED) shall meet with the student, (and parents if applicable)
- d. At the discretion of the BA/ABA the student may be referred to the appropriate school professional/RSUSAT for additional support, observation, and possible action plan.
- e. If applicable, student must follow plan set forth by the school RSUSAT
- f. BA may suspend student for up to ten (10) days and review option of expulsion hearing
- g. AED will normally remove student from any/all courses

Subsequent Violations

- a. Law enforcement will be notified
- b. Parents will be notified (students under 18 years of age)
- c. BA/ABA/Adult Education Director (AED) shall meet with the student (and parents if applicable)
- d. The student and parents shall meet with the appropriate school professional/RSUSAT
- e. The RSUSAT will normally require a substance abuse evaluation. If the student (parent) refuses a clinical evaluation, DHHS will be notified.
- f. Student (accompanied by parent) must submit, in person, a “follow up plan” to the RSUSAT
- g. BA may suspend student for up to ten (10) days and review option of expulsion hearing
- h. AED will normally remove student from any/all courses

For In the Presence Of:

- a. At the discretion of the BA, disciplinary action for a student that is “in the presence of” may be prescribed up to, but not to exceed, the limits specified for violations of “use, possession, or under the influence of” in this Policy!

For Furnishing:

- a. Student will be suspended for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days and referred to the Superintendent and RSUB for an Expulsion Hearing.

Appeals

Any student (or parents of a student) punished pursuant to this policy may appeal in writing within (14) fourteen days of the BA’s decision to the Superintendent. If not satisfied with the Superintendent’s decision, they may appeal to the RSUB. The RSUB will hear the appeal in executive session. The finding of the RSUB will be final!

NOTE: A Students Individual Education Plan (IEP), if applicable, **MUST** be considered and the Special Education Director must be involved prior to any disciplinary action being taken.

Ref: Title 17-A, Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, Chapter 45
Title 21 Chapter 13 of the United States Code: (Drug Abuse Prevention and Control)

Cross Reference: ADC – Tobacco Use and Possession
GBEC – Drug-Free Workplace
JICG - Tobacco use by students
JKD – Suspension of Students
JKE – Expulsion of Students
JRA – Student Educational Records

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