

JICH Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

The RSU 1 Board of Directors 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 collaborative effort among school staff, students, parents, law enforcement and organizations concerned with the use and abuse of substances by school-aged youth.

In order to promote the safety, health and well being of students, the Board of Directors endorses a three-pronged approach to address the issue of drug and alcohol use; prevention/education, intervention and enforcement. 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, fortified wine or other intoxicating liquor. Nor shall a student manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use or be under the influence of natural or synthetically occurring "bath salts," Central Nervous System (CNS) stimulants (i.e. amphetamines), any narcotic analgesic drug, hallucinogenic drugs, CNS Depressants (i.e. barbiturates), any cannabis (i.e. marijuana), dissociative anesthetics, inhalants, or anabolic steroids; 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. This includes the use of prescription and over the counter medications that are not used as medicinally intended. This further includes the use of any substance, such as food, aerosols, glue, acetone, herbs and spices and any thing used to change one's current state of body and mind (i.e. to get "high", "buzzed", drunk, etc.).

No student shall be in possession of drug paraphernalia. Drug paraphernalia is to include, but not limited to, any equipment, product or material that is modified for making, using, or concealing drugs, typically for recreational purposes.

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. Enforcement

Violation of the terms of this policy will constitute grounds for student discipline, including suspension and/or expulsion. Local law enforcement may also be notified of violations of this policy.

Corrective measures, beyond disciplinary actions for a violation, will be considered by the administrator, who may recommend actions that may range from mandatory in-school counseling to a treatment recommendation. If treatment is recommended, parents/guardians will bear the cost.

Administrators and Athletic Directors may be more restrictive in the applicability of this policy when engaging parents and students in contracts as a precondition to participate in extracurricular or co-curricular activities.

C. Co-Curricular/Extracurricular Activities

Additional constraints are placed on students who elect to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities such as sports or after school clubs. Agreeing to the constraints and conduct rules is a precondition to participating in these activities. These agreements are in the form of pledges and must be signed by parent and student. Coaches and activity sponsors shall foster a process for the acceptance of these agreements that reinforces the values of the program and the concept that one's word of honor in a pledge is inviolable.

Activity sponsors, coaches, teachers, administrators, and parents should communicate with one another to head off problems and continually reinforce the importance of honor and integrity in the context of the pledge. While every student and every situation may be unique, it is imperative that those charged with administering the policies and contracted do so with consistency, fairness, and in the best interest of all students and the educational environment.

D. Prevention/Education

The school department will provide information and activities focused on educating students about drugs and alcohol and abstaining from their use. Such information and activities will address the legal, social, and health consequences of use and abuse of substances and will provide information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use and abuse substances. The School Department will work in partnership with students, parents/guardians and local law enforcement officials to eliminate these risks for students.

a. The Role of Parents/Guardians

The Board believes that parents/guardians play a crucial role in preventing high-risk behaviors in their children, including use and abuse of substances. In fact, teens who learn from their parents/guardians about the effects of substances -- and who know that their parents/guardians are monitoring their behavior -- are less likely to use and abuse substances. Parents/guardians should aim to help decrease the social acceptance of adults hosting/furnishing for minors by actively communicating with other parents/guardians in the school community and with local law enforcement.

b. The Role of the School

The school should provide parents/guardians with as much information on their crucial role as is practicable, including practical tips, useful facts, and valuable statewide resources to help parents/guardians monitor and prevent substance abuse by their teens. Information is made available to students through curriculum beginning at the elementary level. Additionally, administrators should make information available through special events, dedicated newsletters, announcements, correspondence, and the sponsorship of ongoing prevention programs.

c. The Role of Students

Any active student organization that promotes healthy attitudes and norms among youth and helps to decrease the social acceptance of high-risk behaviors should be encouraged, supported and recognized for its special service.

d. The Role of School Staff

Any school staff member who has reason to suspect that a student has violated this policy is expected to report the incident to the appropriate administrator. The School Department must provide ongoing training to school staff and administrators in identifying prohibited substances and their physical effects and behaviors associated with their use.

E. Intervention

The school unit will establish a collaborative approach to intervene with students with drug/alcohol problems. Each school will establish collaborative staff groups that may consist of: a counselor, teachers, administrators, school nurse, and if available, a School Resource Officer. Students will be assisted in addressing their substance abuse 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.

F. Policy Communication

Effective communication between caring partners in our educational system can create a figurative safety net to identify when a student may be engaged in risky behavior and to share in developing solutions to educate, inform, and otherwise surround the student with support. As parents, teachers, coaches, administrators, counselors, and school resources officers see each student in a different context, they all play critical roles in the development of this communication network. This is the concept behind the use of collaborative groups to assess, address and monitor students' behavior and substance abuse issues, as well as potential counseling needs. Two-way communication is an imperative part of an effective substance abuse prevention program. It is the responsibility of school administrators to oversee this process and to ensure all staff members adhere to a proactive approach to communicating student support issues to families, caregivers, and other collaborative group members.

G. Notice

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

JJIAB -- Extra Curricular Activity Participation Regulation

JKD -- Suspension of Students

JKE -- Expulsion of Students

JLCD -- Medication Policy

JRA -- Student Education Records and Information

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