



Regional School Unit 5
Durham • Freeport • Pownal

"To inspire and support every learner by challenging minds, building character, sparking creativity, and nurturing passions."

Becky Foley, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools
Rick Kusturin, Director of Finance & Human Resources

Cynthia Alexander, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Bonnie Violette, Ph.D., Director of Instructional Support

TO: Candy deCsipkes, Lindsey Furtney, Maddy Vertenten

FROM: Cynthia Alexander

DATE: October 20, 2020

RE: Policy Meeting – November 6, 2020

The Policy Sub-Committee is scheduled to meet on Friday, November 6, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://networkmaine.zoom.us/j/89997193596>

Meeting ID: 899 9719 3596

Agenda

BEB - Board Member Use of Social Media
BIA - New Board of Directors Member Orientation
IKFC - Credit for Private Tutoring
JHB - Truancy
KB - Parent Involvement in Education
KBF - Parent Involvement in Title I

BOARD MEMBER USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Board recognizes that many, if not most, of its members are active users of social media, including but not limited to, online platforms and other digital media such as blogs and personal websites. The Board understands that while social media can be a positive tool for supporting schools and encouraging community engagement, Board members need to be aware of the legal and ethical considerations that arise when they post, “message,” or otherwise interact with others on social media platforms.

It is not the intent of this policy to interfere with or restrict a Board members’ freedom of speech, but to set standards for social media conduct that are consistent with law and Board policy, including the Board’s Code of Ethics.

- I. Board members shall comply with the following provisions whenever engaged on social media:
 - A. Board members shall not post on social media or engage in online discussions as a substitute for deliberations at Board meetings. Board members should be aware that social media activity can be perceived as a meeting if a sufficient number (a quorum) of Board members are involved on the site to influence or determine the course of action that will be taken by the Board, even if other people are posting to the site as well.
 - B. Board members should be aware that any posting that pertains to school unit matters may create a “record” that is subject to laws and regulations pertaining to the retention and disposition of local government records, and to discovery in legal proceedings involving the Board or the school unit.
 - C. Board members shall avoid disclosing confidential or personally identifiable information about students and school unit employees. Board members shall comply with the same standards as school employees with regard to confidential information.

Board members shall not disclose matters or discussions that have taken place in executive sessions.

II. The following ethical guidelines pertain to the aforementioned provisions, which Board members should adhere to whenever engaged in the use of social media:

- A. Conduct themselves on social media in a manner that reflects well on the Board and on the school unit, and with the decorum expected of an elected official;**
- B. Recognize that they have no authority to speak on behalf of the Board unless specifically designated to do so, and make it clear that they are speaking in their individual capacity;**
- C. Feel free to invite the public to upcoming school district events, share information about public hearings on bills that affect the schools, and share links to public information about the district (e.g. the proposed budget), and the like, but be clear that they are doing so as an individual and not in any official capacity;**
- D. Avoid posting or responding in anger about school unit matters;**
- E. Refrain from harassing, defaming, or disparaging others for any reason, including racial, religious, or other personal characteristics;**
- F. Keep deliberations within meetings of the Board;**
- G. Take care to avoid disclosing confidential or personally identifiable information about students and school unit employees;**
- H. Take care to avoid disclosing Board discussions that have taken place in executive sessions, as all matters in executive sessions are completely confidential;**
- I. Avoid posting information that is intentionally misleading or inaccurate or which has not been released to the public;**
- J. Never make a promise that they will vote in a particular way;**
- K. Avoid posting content that indicates they have reached an opinion on a matter pending before the Board;**
- L. Direct persons presenting concerns or complaints through social media to follow the Board's policy pertaining to public concerns and complaints;**
- M. When summarizing discussion or action that took place at Board meetings, share only information from open meetings and make it clear that the posting is not an official record of the meeting.**

- N. Retain electronic records, including the Board member's own posts and content others post to the Board member's account when required to do so by law, regulations, or legal process.**
- O. Comply with the school unit's acceptable use rules, as applicable to school unit employees, when using school-unit owned devices or technology resources, or when accessing the Internet through the school unit's network using a personal device.**

Legal reference: 1 MRSA § 401 et seq.
20-A MRSA § 6001-6002
20 USC § 1232g

Cross Reference: BBAA–Board of Directors Member Authority and Responsibilities
BCA–Board of Directors Member Code of Ethics
BEC–Executive Sessions
GBJ–Personnel Records and Files
JRA–Student Education Records and Information
KE–Public Concerns and Complaints

Adopted:

NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBER ORIENTATION

In order that newly elected Board of Director members may cast informed votes and function effectively as Board members, the Board and Superintendent will extend to them the fullest measures of courtesy and cooperation and will make every reasonable effort to assist newly elected Board members in understanding the Board's functions, policies, procedures and current issues.

- A. In the interim between a new member's election or appointment and ~~his/her~~ their assuming office, the Board of Directors, through the Superintendent, will invite new members to attend meetings, except those held in executive session, and provide new members with agenda, minutes and reports applicable to those meetings. During the time between election or appointment and the assumption of office, the status of the future-member remains that of a private citizen and not that of an elected or appointed official.
- B. The Board of Directors, through the Superintendent/designee, will provide new members with copies of information on how to access appropriate publications, such as the Board of Directors policy manual, student handbook(s), collective bargaining agreements and current budget documents.
- C. The Board of Directors, through the Superintendent, will remind Board members of their obligation to complete, not later than the 120th day after the date of taking the oath of office, training on the requirements of Maine's Freedom of Access Law. The ~~Chair~~ Superintendent will provide Board members with information regarding available training options. Each Board member shall attest by means of a written or electronic record that ~~he/she has~~ they have completed the training and provide a copy of such record to the Superintendent's Office. To facilitate documentation of training, the Superintendent will make available to Board members copies of the State's sample Certification of Completion of Access Training form.
- D. The Board of Directors will encourage new members to attend appropriate in-district and out-of-district orientation and/or School Boardsmanship workshops. Reimbursement for such activities must be approved in advance by the Board of Directors Chair, in consultation with the Superintendent, and is subject to the availability of funds.
- E. The Chair and Superintendent will schedule and arrange for an orientation session for new Board members as soon as practicable after election or appointment. A reasonable amount of time will be provided for discussion of:
 - 1. The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors and individual members;

2. Basic operational procedures of the Board of Directors;
3. Placement of items on the agenda;
4. The role of committees, subcommittees and advisory committees;
5. How and why executive sessions may be held;
6. What is considered confidential or privileged information;
7. Appropriate responses of an individual member when a request or complaint is made directly to ~~him/her~~ them by a student, parent or member of the community;
8. How the Board of Directors responds to complaints involving personnel;
9. General information about the school system and its resources;
10. How Board of Director members, in fulfilling their duties, may request information concerning schools and District operations, finances and personnel;
11. How to use social media appropriately as a member of the Board:
- ~~11.~~ 12. How Board of Director members may make arrangements to visit schools, and the protocol for such visits;
- ~~12.~~ 13. Protocol for dealing with the media; and
- ~~13.~~ 14. Other relevant topics.

All Board of Director members will be invited to the orientation session and encouraged to attend. The orientation is intended to serve as a useful review of basic boardsmanship concepts for experienced members as well as an opportunity to provide information and counsel to new Board members.

Legal Reference: 1 MRSA § 412

Cross Reference: BIC - Board of Directors Member Freedom of Access Training

Adopted: November 18, 2009
Reviewed: April 27, 2011
Reviewed: March 26, 2014

CREDIT FOR PRIVATE TUTORING

Policy

It is the policy of RSU No. 5 to encourage all students to complete their studies in all academic subjects during the regular school year or in an approved summer school program. The use of private tutors for make-up work or for taking academic subjects for the first time is not recommended.

However, the Board understands that there are special circumstances which may require the use of private tutors. Lack of transportation may make it difficult for students to attend approved summer school programs offered in this area. Students may find it difficult to schedule make-up courses during their remaining school years. In addition, some students plan their academic programs without sufficient thought to future schooling; consequently, they arrive at their junior and/or senior years unable to meet prerequisites set for admission by post-secondary schools and colleges. Therefore, credit will be granted for private tutoring under special circumstances. Such circumstances are listed below.

General

All private tutoring must be done by teachers certified by the Maine Department of Education in the subject areas to be taught. The tutor must plan the student's educational program in cooperation with a teacher in RSU No. 5 who regularly teaches the course to be studied. The tutoring program will follow the prescribed objectives of the course as it is offered in the regular school program.

All private tutoring must be approved in advance by the school principal or guidance counselor in order to be eligible for credit.

Specifics

Make-up Work (Make-up Courses): Students using private tutors for make-up work must meet with the tutor for a minimum of sixteen (16) hours of instruction to complete their program. In addition to the requisites listed above, tutors working with students who failed during the regular academic year must administer some appropriate diagnostic test to identify academic deficiencies. A standardized test is preferable, however, testimony of deficiencies identified by the regular classroom teacher is acceptable. The tutor and student will concentrate on these past areas of deficiency in order to bring the skills of the student to the minimum acceptable standards. Full academic credit will be granted once a letter is received from the tutor verifying that attendance requirements have been met and that the areas of deficiencies have been addressed and that the student has passed the final exam written by the school.

New Courses: In rare instances students may find it necessary to take academic courses through private tutors for the first time. In order for credit to be granted in these instances, the student must meet with the tutor for a minimum of thirty-two (32) hours of student-teacher instruction. In addition, the program must be carefully planned at the outset between the tutor and the teacher

of the course during the academic year. All course prerequisites and procedures shall be jointly developed between the tutor and the regular teacher following the prescribed course objectives.

The student must meet the minimum level of skill development required by the school in order to receive credit. This will be determined by administering the school's final exam to the student. A letter from the private tutor certifying that the student has met with him/her for the minimum thirty-two (32) hours, has completed the course objectives and has passed the final exam must be submitted to the school before credit will be granted. Full credit will be granted if all these requirements are met.

Adopted: February 24, 2010
Reviewed: December 12, 2012

TRUANCY

TRUANCY DEFINED

A student is truant if he/she is required to attend school or alternative instruction under Maine compulsory attendance law (20-A MRSA § 5001-A) and he/she:

- A. Has completed grade 6 and has the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year; or
- B. Is at least 7 years of age and has not completed grade 6 and has the equivalent of 7 full days of unexcused absences or 5 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year.

ATTENDANCE COORDINATORS

In accordance with Maine law, the Superintendent shall appoint one or more attendance coordinators. The duties of the attendance coordinator include, but are not limited to:

- A. Interviewing a student whose attendance is irregular and meeting with the student and the parents to determine the cause of the irregular attendance and filing a written report with the principal;
- B. Filing an annual report with the Superintendent summarizing school year activities, findings and recommendations regarding truants;
- C. Serving as a member of the dropout prevention committee; and
- D. Serving as the liaison between the school and the local law enforcement agency in matters pertaining to student absenteeism under Maine law.

TRUANCY PROCEDURES

As required by law, the following procedure shall be followed when a student is truant.

- A. The principal, upon determining that a student is truant, shall notify the Superintendent of the student's truancy within five school days of the last unexcused absence.
- B. Within in five school days of notification, the Superintendent/designee will refer the student who has been determined to be truant to the school's student assistance team.
- C. The student assistance team will meet to determine the cause of the truancy and assess the effect of the student's absences, as well as any future absences for the student. If it is determined that a negative effect exists, the student assistance team

shall develop an intervention plan to address the student's absences and the negative effect of these absences.

An intervention plan may include, but is not limited to:

1. Frequent communication between the teacher and the family;
2. Changes in the learning environment;
3. Mentoring;
4. Student counseling;
5. Tutoring, including peer tutoring;
6. Placement into different classes;
7. Evaluation for alternative education programs;
8. Attendance contracts;
9. Referral to other agencies for family services; and
10. Other interventions including but not limited to referral to the school attendance coordinator, student assistance team, or dropout prevention committee.

Failure of the student or the student's parent(s) to appear at scheduled meetings does not preclude school administrators from implementing a plan to address a student's truancy.

- D. The student and his/her parents/guardians shall be invited to attend any meetings scheduled to discuss the student's truancy and the intervention plan.
- E. If the Superintendent/designee is unable to correct the student's truancy, the Superintendent/designee shall serve or cause to be served upon the parent(s) in-hand or by registered mail a written notice that the student's attendance is required by law. The notice shall:
 1. State that the student is required to attend school pursuant to 20-A MRSA §5001-A (the compulsory attendance law);
 2. Explain the parent's right to inspect the student's attendance records, attendance coordinator's reports, and principal's reports;
 3. Explain that the failure to send the student to school and maintain the student in regular attendance is a civil violation in accordance with 20-A

MRSA § 5053-A and will jeopardize the student's status in the grade he/she is in;

4. State that the Superintendent/designee may notify local law enforcement authorities of a violation of 20-A MRSA § 5053-A and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) of a violation under and 20-A MRSA § 5051-A(1)(C); and
 5. Outline the plan developed to address the student's truancy and the steps that have been taken to implement that plan.
- F. Prior to notifying local law enforcement authorities, the Superintendent/ designee shall schedule at least one meeting of the student assistance team as required by law and paragraph B of this policy and may invite a local prosecutor.
- G. If after three school days after the service of the notice described in paragraph E of this policy the student remains truant and the parent(s) and student refuse to attend the meeting referred to in paragraph F, the Superintendent/designee shall report the facts of the unlawful absence to local law enforcement authorities. Local law enforcement may proceed with enforcement action against the parent unless the student is at once placed in an appropriate school or otherwise meets the requirements of the compulsory attendance law.

ANNUAL REPORT TO COMMISSIONER

The Superintendent shall submit an annual report regarding truancy to the Commissioner by October 1. The report must identify the number of truants in the school administrative unit in the preceding school year; describe the school unit's efforts to deal with truancy; account for actions brought to enforce the truancy law; and include any other information on truancy requested by the Commissioner.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §§ 5001-A; 5051-A-5054-A
22 MRSA § 4002

Cross Reference: JEA – Compulsory Attendance
JFC – Dropout Prevention—Student Withdrawal from School
JLF – Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Adopted: November 18, 2009
Revised: January 23, 2013
Revised: March 26, 2014

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

The Board of Directors recognizes that a student's education is a responsibility shared by the school, the student, and the family. Research indicates that involvement of parents in support of the child's education increases student achievement. Schools and parents must work as partners if the school system is to meet its goal of educating students effectively.

It is the intent of the Board that the school system promote parent involvement by:

- A. Establishing meaningful two-way communication between school, teachers and home;
- B. Promoting responsible parenting;
- C. Encouraging parents to play an integral role in assisting student learning;
- D. Assisting parents in their efforts to support, reinforce, and extend their children's learning;
- E. Informs parents about school programs and curriculum and provide opportunities for input;
- F. Providing opportunities for parent input in school programs and curriculum;
- G. Respecting parents as partners in decisions affecting children and families;
- H. Welcoming parents as visitors to the schools;
- I. Engaging in meaningful parent-teacher conferences to discuss student progress toward meeting the content standards of the system of Learning Results and other learning goals, individual instructional needs and student welfare issues;
- J. Communicating with parents about school system policies and regulations;
- K. Encouraging parents to volunteer in the schools and school-related activities;
- L. Encouraging parent involvement through PTO groups and Board and school advisory committees;
- M. Supporting appropriate professional development opportunities that enable staff members to increase the effectiveness of parent involvement strategies;
- N. Encouraging school administrators to set expectations and create a climate conducive to parent participation;
- O. Developing methods to accommodate and support parent involvement for parents with special needs, such as limited English proficiency; and
- P. Assessing the effectiveness of parent involvement efforts.

The Board expects parents to:

- A. Make every effort to provide for the physical well being of their children;
- B. Establish a home environment that supports learning and appropriate behavior;
- C. Strive to prepare the student emotionally and socially so that the student is receptive to learning, discipline, and behavioral expectations;
- D. Have students attend school regularly and on time;
- E. Help students to develop good study habits;
- F. Monitor their student's learning progress;
- G. See that their child participates in remedial activities and/or additional instruction, as recommended, to provide them with the opportunity to progress toward meeting the content standards of the system of Learning Results and other instructional goals and objectives;
- H. Review their children's homework and reinforce reading, math, and other skills;
- I. Become familiar with school rules and procedures;
- J. Discuss problems and concerns with appropriate persons;
- K. Participate in conferences with teachers and other professional staff;
- L. Cooperate with the schools system to develop a positive self-concept and positive outlook on learning for each child;
- M. When practicable, volunteer in the schools and/or in support of school activities;
- N. When practicable, participate in PTO groups, advisory committees and other opportunities to support student learning; and
- O. Provide feedback concerning the effectiveness of the schools' parent involvement efforts.

Cross Reference: KBF - Parent Involvement in Title I

Adopted: August 25, 2010

Reviewed: March 27, 2013

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN TITLE I

The Board of Directors endorses the parent involvement goals of Title I and encourages the regular participation by parents/guardians in all aspects of the school system's Title I programs.

For the purpose of this policy, "parents/guardians" includes other family members involved in supervising the child's schooling.

I. DISTRICT-LEVEL PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

In compliance with federal law, the school unit will develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to parents of children participating in the school system's Title I programs a written district-level parent involvement policy.

Annually, parents/guardians will have opportunities to participate in the evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the school unit's parent involvement policy and in using the findings of the evaluation to design strategies for more effective parent involvement and to make revisions to the policy.

II. SCHOOL-PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

As required by law, each school in the school unit that receives Title I funds shall jointly develop with parents/guardians of children served in the program a school parent/guardian involvement policy, including "School-Parent Compact" outlining the manner in which parents, school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement in meeting State standards. The school policy will be distributed to parents/guardians of children participating in the school's Title I programs.

The "School-Parent Compact" shall:

- A. Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment enabling children in the Title I program to meet the State's academic achievement standards;
- B. Indicate the ways in which parents will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, monitoring television watching, volunteering in the classroom, and participating, as appropriate, in decisions related to their children's education and positive use of extra-curricular time; and

- C. Address the importance of parent-teacher communication on an ongoing basis, with, at a minimum, parent-teacher conferences, frequent reports to parents, and reasonable access to staff.

III. PARENT INVOLVEMENT MEETINGS

Each school receiving Title I funds shall convene an annual meeting to which all parents/guardians of eligible children shall be invited to inform them about the school's participation in Title I and to involve them in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's Title I programs and the parent involvement policy.

In addition to the required annual meeting, at least one other meeting shall be held at various times of the day and/or evenings for parents/guardians of students participating in Title I programs.

These meetings shall be used to provide parents with:

- A. Information about programs the school provides under Title I;
- B. A description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency level students are expected to meet;
- C. Opportunities to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children; and
- D. The opportunity to submit comments to the district level if they are dissatisfied with the school-wide Title I program.

Title I funding, if sufficient, may be used to facilitate parent/guardian attendance at meetings through the payment of transportation and childcare costs.

IV. PARENT RELATIONS

Parents/guardians of children identified for participation in a Title I program shall receive from the building principal and Title I staff an explanation of the reasons supporting their child's selection, a set of objectives to be addressed, and a description of the services to be provided. Parents will receive regular reports on their child's progress and be provided opportunities to meet with the classroom and Title I teachers. Parents will also receive training, materials, and suggestions as to how they can assist in the education of their children at home.

V. DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Superintendent/designee shall be responsible for ensuring that the school unit's Title I plan, programs, and parent involvement policies comply with applicable law and regulations and for developing administrative procedures, as needed, to implement this policy.

Legal References: 20 U.S.C. § 6318

Adopted: July 8, 2009

Reviewed: March 27, 2013