

Haverhill School Committee
Policy JK
STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The Haverhill School Committee affirms the right of every student in the Haverhill Public Schools to have the benefit of an education in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and which is characterized by care and respect. Recognizing that more time spent on discipline can mean less time spent on learning, the School Committee expects that efforts will be made to encourage good behavior and discourage bad behavior. Teaching and learning can only take place when everyone behaves with care and respect of others. Students and teachers cannot work together where there is fear, disorder, or violence.

The school Committee recognizes that discipline is the dual responsibility of the home and the school. Discipline, most simply stated, is the practice enforcing simple rules that facilitate learning and minimize disruption. Helping students to learn behavior patterns that will enable them to be responsible contributing members of society is a natural part of the education process that is shared between home and school.

Essential elements to an appropriate effort in this area include:

1. A consistent approach to the handling of disciplinary situations, as determined and enunciated by the principals and their respective site councils.
2. Supervision that encourages appropriate behavior among students.
3. Clear communication including, but not limited to a student handbook distributed to students, staff, and parents which specifies behavior consistent with a Code of Conduct.
4. Timely communication with parents when disciplinary issues arise.
5. Recognizing and helping students who are having difficulty meeting behavior guidelines.

In order to ensure that all students and staff are made aware of their specific rights and responsibilities, a student handbook shall be developed by each school with input sought from its Site Council. The school principal shall be responsible, at the start of each school year, for distribution of and orientation to the handbook.

The practice of discipline throughout the school system will adhere to School Committee Policy and will be under the general direction of the Superintendent of Schools for purposes of cogency and consistency. Additionally, the School Committee directs all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including due process and right of appeal be an integral part of all disciplinary procedures.

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