

BOMB THREATS

Any bomb threat will be regarded as an extremely serious matter and treated accordingly. Whether real and carried out or intended as a prank or for some other purpose, a bomb threat represents a potential danger to the safety and welfare of students and staff and to school property. False or real, bomb threats disrupt the learning process and impact school financial resources and public safety services.

The Board directs the Superintendent to react promptly and appropriately to information concerning bomb threats and to initiate or recommend suitable disciplinary action.

A. Conduct Prohibited

No person shall make, or communicate by any means, whether verbal or non-verbal, a threat that a bomb has been, or will be, placed on school premises. Because of the potential for evacuation of the schools and other disruption of school operations, placement of a bomb or of a 'look-alike' bomb on school premises will be considered a threat for the purpose of this policy.

B. Definitions

A 'bomb' means an explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket, missile, mine, 'Molotov cocktail', or other destructive device.

1. A 'look-alike bomb' means any apparatus or object that conveys the appearance of a bomb or other destructive device.
2. A 'bomb threat' is the communication, by any means, whether verbal or non-verbal, that a bomb has been, or will be, placed on school premises, including possession or placement of a bomb or look-alike bomb on school premises.
3. 'School premises' means any school property and any location where any school activities may take place.

C. Development of Bomb Threat Procedures

The Superintendent/designee shall be responsible for developing and implementing procedures specific to bomb threats as part of the school unit's Crisis Response Plan. These procedures are intended to inform administrators and staff of appropriate protocols to follow in the event that a bomb threat is received and should include provisions to address:

1. Threat assessment (for the purpose of identifying a response that is in proportion to the threat, in light of what is necessary to ensure safety);
2. Building evacuation and re-entry (including selection of potential alternative sites for those who are evacuated);
3. Who is in charge, and when;
4. Communications contacts and mandatory bomb threat reporting;
5. Parent notification process;
6. Training for staff members; and
7. Support services for students and staff.

The initial bomb threat procedure will be subject to approval by the Board. The Superintendent/designee will be responsible for overseeing a review or evaluation of bomb threat procedures prior to the Board's required annual approval of the school unit's Crisis Response Plan, or following implementation of the procedure in response to a specific threat.

D. Reporting of Bomb Threats

A student who learns of a bomb threat or the existence of a bomb on school premises must immediately report such information to the building principal, teacher, the School Resource Officer or other employee in a position of authority. Principals shall be responsible for establishing procedures for handling bomb threat telephone calls.

An employee of the school unit who learns of a bomb threat shall immediately inform the building administrator. The building administrator shall immediately take appropriate steps to protect the safety of students and staff in accordance with the school unit's bomb threat procedure, as developed under Section C, and inform the Superintendent of the threat.

All bomb threats shall be reported immediately to the local law enforcement authority, as provided in the bomb threat procedures in each school. Once the call is reported to the Police or Sheriff, the school is a crime scene and falls under the authority of law enforcement. A search of the premises will be made by the officiating authority.

School administrators shall consult with police officials to determine when the building can be re-occupied. Teachers will supervise students to the safe conclusion of the process. Students who do not return to their classroom shall be considered absent without permission.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for reporting any bomb threat to the Department of Education within two business days of the incident. Reports will include the name of the school, the date and time of the threat, the medium used to communicate the threat, and whether or not the perpetrators have been apprehended.

E. Student Disciplinary Consequences

Making a bomb threat is a crime under Maine law. Any student suspected of making a bomb threat shall be reported to law enforcement authorities for investigation and possible prosecution. Apart from any penalty imposed by law, and without regard to the existence or status of criminal charges, a student who makes a bomb threat shall be subject to disciplinary action by the school.

The administration may suspend and/or recommend for expulsion any student who makes a bomb threat. The making of a bomb threat will be considered deliberately disobedient and deliberately disorderly within the meaning of 20-A M.R.S.A. § 1001(9) and will be grounds for expulsion if found necessary for the peace and usefulness of the school.

In addition, a student who is found after hearing by the Board to have brought a bomb to school shall be expelled from school for at least one year in accordance with 20-A M.R.S.A. § 1001(9-A) and Policy JICIA, except that the Superintendent may modify the requirement for expulsion based on individual circumstances.

A student who has been identified through the PET process as having a disability and whose conduct in violation of this policy is related to the disability shall be disciplined as provided in Policy JKF.

F. Aiding Other Students in Making Bomb Threats

A student who knowingly encourages, causes, aids or assists another student in making or communicating a bomb threat shall be subject to the disciplinary consequences described in Section E of this policy.

G. Failure to Report a Bomb Threat

A student who fails to report information or knowledge of a bomb threat or the existence of a bomb or other destructive device in a school building or on school property may be subject to disciplinary consequences, which may include suspension and/or expulsion.

H. Staff Disciplinary Consequences

A school system employee who makes or communicates a bomb threat will be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Disciplinary action taken shall be consistent with collective bargaining agreements, other employment agreements and Board policies.

A school system employee who fails to report information or knowledge of a bomb threat or the existence of a bomb on school premises will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

I. Civil Liability

The school unit reserves the right to bring suit against any individual responsible for a violation of this policy and to seek restitution and other damages as permitted by law.

J. Lost Instructional Time

All time lost because of bomb threats will be made up by means to be determined by the Superintendent in consultation with the Board, which may include Saturday classes and extension of the school year.

K. Notification through Student Handbook

All student handbooks shall address the school unit's bomb threat policy and procedures and explain the educational consequences of bomb threats. In addition, student handbooks shall notify students and parents that bomb threats violate Board policy and civil and criminal law.

Legal References: 18 USC §§ 921; 8921
 17-A MRSA § 210
 20-A MRSA §§ 263; 1001(9); 1001(9-A); 1001(17); 1001(18)

Cross References:

Policy EBCA - Crisis Response
 Policy JKF – Disciplinary Removal of Students with Disabilities
 Policy JICIA - Weapons, Violence and School Safety
 Policy JK - Student Discipline
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