

**STUDENT USE OF DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

The school community supports a policy of **total abstinence** from alcohol and illegal drugs, and abides by a policy of **zero tolerance** toward alcohol and illegal drug use. We also support a policy which prohibits abuse of all legal drugs including over-the-counter medications, prescription drugs and inhalants. Any student who brings prescription drugs onto the school site for ingestion, as prescribed by his or her doctor, will notify the nurse and, if warranted, the prescription will be kept in the nurse's office.

The school board recognizes the use of alcohol and illegal drugs, or dependency thereon, as a serious health, safety, legal, and security problem. Therefore, students are strictly prohibited from manufacturing, transporting, distributing, selling (or representing they are selling), dispensing (or representing they are dispensing), possessing, using, or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol on the school site. "School site" means any school buildings and land, the drug-free school zone defined by RSA 318-B:27, and any school-owned vehicle or any other vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities. School site also includes off-school property during any school-sanctioned activities, events, or functions such as field trips or athletic events, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school district.

Controlled drugs are defined to be those drugs prohibited by New Hampshire State Law as defined in RSA Ch. 318-B. Alcoholic beverages will not be permitted on school property at any time. The New Hampshire State Statute states: "No person shall drink or have in his possession any intoxicating beverage while in attendance as a spectator or otherwise at any place where a school interscholastic contest is being conducted. Whoever violates the provisions of this section shall be fined not more than fifty dollars or imprisoned for not more than thirty days or both."

The school will maintain a list of area resources for substance abuse counseling and rehabilitation.

The school community believes that substance abuse is primarily a **medical issue**; thus, the intent is to provide medical assistance and support for those who are identified as potentially or actually in need. Disciplinary and legal matters will also be addressed.

Students suspected of violating any or all of the prohibitions stated in this policy will be referred immediately to the dean of students.

- I. In the event a student appears to be under the influence of alcohol or some other drug on the school site, the student can expect the following:
  - A. The parent will be immediately notified by the school authorities and asked to come to the school.
  - B. The school nurse will conduct an "impairment assessment." The school's youth

specialist and the student's school counselor and advisor will be notified. If the impairment assessment indicates probable substance use, Section II will go into effect. (In the event student denies being under the influence of a drug and challenges the nurse's assessment, the student has the option of taking a blood or urine screen at a medical facility within 24 hours, with a report of the findings sent to the school's youth specialist. If the results are negative, there will be no further consequences. If the results are positive, Section II will go into effect.)

C. In severe cases, when the parents or the school doctor cannot or do not come to the school within the necessary response time, the nurse is authorized to call an ambulance to take the student to the hospital. Parents will be notified of this action and will be responsible for any incurred expenses.

II. A student found in possession and/or use of alcohol or other illegal drugs on the school site can expect the following:

A. The parent and the police will be immediately notified by school authorities.

B. First Offense: Suspension out of school for 10 school days with no credit for work missed. The suspension may be reduced to three days out of school if the student enrolls in a Challenge Program, or similar experience, with an opportunity to earn credit for work missed. The student must be enrolled within one week and the program completed within six weeks. The student and parents must sign a release of information form for Souhegan's youth specialist. A written report, including a certified addictions counselor's recommendations, must be sent to the youth specialist. Recommendations should be included in the report and must be complied with for a calendar year. If any parts of this option B are not complied with, or completed, option A will be automatically and immediately invoked. (Note: If convicted in court for possession or use of illegal substances, the student will lose his/her driver's license for not less than 90 days but not more than one year. Ref. NH law 263.56-b.)

C. Second Offense: Suspension out of school for 10 school with a recommendation to the superintendent for an additional 10 days suspension with no credit for work missed. The suspension may be reduced five days with no recommendation for an additional 10 days if the student completes a substance abuse assessment under the direction of a CAC, with appropriate signed information release forms to Souhegan's youth specialist, and full compliance with treatment recommendations for a minimum of one year, and the student must enroll in a more intensive program than that which was completed at the first offense. Also, the student may earn partial credit (up to 70%) for work missed.

D. Three or More Offenses: The school board reserves the right to suspend a student for an extended period of time, or permanently, for the failure to conform to this policy, as authorized by RSA 193:13 (Suspension and Dismissal of Pupils).

***Statutory Reference:***

*RSA Ch. 318-B*

*RSA 571-C:2*

**REVISED: May 1996**