

**BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
F 21: POLICY ON BOMB THREATS AND CONDUCT DURING BOMB
THREATS**

Former Policy JFCK

Bomb Threats

The Burlington Board of School Commissioners believes and has learned through experience that, a bomb threat, as defined below, is extremely disruptive to the educational activities of the Burlington schools, causes members of the Burlington school community to be fearful for their personal safety and/or the safety of their children, threatens destruction of school district property and can have a significant financial cost to the District. Accordingly, making a bomb threat is prohibited conduct.

Any student who makes a bomb threat will be in violation of this Policy and will be subject to serious discipline up to and including expulsion. As a result of the highly disruptive nature of bomb threats, the School Board will take the view that a student's violation of this Policy is exceedingly serious misconduct and, if a violation of the Policy is proven, the strictest penalties available will be considered by the Board. If a student is alleged to have violated this Policy, the procedures provided for in the Student Conduct and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures, F 13, will be followed.

A student's violation of this Policy will be a separate and distinct violation of District Policy with its own penalty, separate and apart from a violation of the State of Vermont's laws and any resulting penalty. Under Vermont criminal law, a student or other person who is convicted of participating in a bomb threat to a school may be sentenced to as much as two years in jail and a \$5,000 fine for the first offense, and subsequent offense may result in a penalty of up to five years in jail and a \$10,000 fine. See 13 V.S.A. §1753. In addition to the criminal liability described above, the School Board reserves the right to bring a lawsuit against anyone responsible for a bomb threat and to seek restitution and other damages permitted by law.

Definition of "bomb threat": As used in this Policy, "bomb threat" means making, attempting to make or participating in placing a suspicious device and/or any communication, including, but not limited to an oral or written communication, which a reasonable person would interpret to mean that a device or object could or will explode, combust, ignite or otherwise cause significant disruption, personal injury, property damage or other harm, at any Burlington school building; on Burlington school property, including school transportation vehicles; or during any Burlington school activity.

Cooperation in Bomb Threat Investigations and Evacuations

Bomb threats have a high potential to cause serious harm to members of the school community as well as property damage to District property. When a bomb threat is received, it is the School District's responsibility to take the steps it deems appropriate to ensure the safety of the school community members as well as District property. Misbehaving students can endanger the safety of peers and staff as well as themselves. Accordingly, all students shall assist staff by obeying all directions and maintaining an orderly and quiet demeanor during any activity connected with or resulting from a bomb threat. As a result of the high potential for serious harm to school community members, a student's failure to obey direction or maintain an orderly demeanor during activities connected with or resulting from a bomb threat will be considered serious misconduct and can result in serious disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. See Student Conduct and Discipline Policy and Procedures, F 13, for procedures to be followed if disciplinary action is pursued.

Legal References:

13 V.S.A. § 1753, False Public Alarms

16 V.S.A. § 1161a, Discipline

16 V.S.A. § 1162, Suspension or Dismissal of Pupils

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