

Rules for Teachers — 1915

1. You will not marry during the term of your contract.
2. You are not to keep company with men.
3. You must be home between the hours of 8 PM and 6 AM unless at a school function.
4. You may not loiter downtown in any of the ice cream stores.
5. You may not travel beyond the city limits unless you have permission of the chairman of the school board.
6. You may not ride in carriages or automobiles with any man except your father or brother.
7. You may not smoke cigarettes.
8. You may not dress in bright colors.
9. You may under no circumstances dye your hair.
10. You must wear at least 2 petticoats.
11. Your dresses may not be any shorter than 2 inches above the ankles.
12. To keep the classroom neat and clean you must sweep the floor once a day, scrub the floor with hot soapy water once a week, clean the blackboards once a day and start the fire at 7 AM to have the school warm by 8 AM when the scholars arrive.

School Rules — 1872

1. Will fill lamps, trim wicks and clean chimneys.
2. Each morning teacher will bring bucket of water and a scuttle of coal for the days session.
3. Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs to the individual taste of the pupils.
4. Men teachers may take one evening each week for courting purposes or two evenings a week if they attend church regularly.
5. After 10 hours in school the teachers may spend the remaining time reading the Bible or any other good book.
6. Women teachers who marry or engage in unseemly conduct will be dismissed.
7. Every teacher should lay aside for each pay day a goodly sum of his earnings for his benefit during his declining years so that he will not become a burden on society.
8. Any teacher who smokes, uses liquor in any form, frequents pool or public halls, or gets shaved in a barber shop will give good reason to suspect his worth, intention, integrity and honesty.
9. The teacher who performs his labor faithfully and without fault for five years will be given an increase of \$.25 per week in his pay providing the Board of Education approves.

The sources for these “rules” are unknown; thus we cannot attest to their authenticity—only to their verisimilitude and charming quaintness. They have been used for years by the New Hampshire Historical Society Museum as part of its *Going to School* outreach lesson, but they also appear independently on numerous other websites from Auckland to England.

The rules from 1872 have been variously attributed to an 1872 posting in Monroe County, Iowa; to a one-room school in a small town in Maine; and to an unspecified Arizona schoolhouse. The 1915 rules are attributed to a Sacramento teachers’ contract and elsewhere to an unspecified 1915 magazine.

Enjoy.