



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK

2024-2025

This handbook is subject to change over the course of the year. Changes will be communicated in our newsletters, school announcements, and noted in red as they are made here after publication in August.

WNESU Elementary Handbook

Family Handbook Table of Contents

Academic Standards	3	Phone Usage	23
After-School Program	3	Playground Use	23
Asbestos Notice	3	Progress Reports/Parent-Teacher Conferences	23
Assessment	4	Residency Requirements	24
Attendance	5	Restorative Practices	24
Behavior Management/Expectations and Response Plan	8	School-Based Counseling Services	24
Birthday/Party Invitations	10	School Books	25
Bus Guidelines/Behavior Expectations	10	School Calendar	25
Child Find Notice	12	School Closing/Delayed Opening/Early Dismissal	25
Communication	13	School Day and Procedures	26
Contacting Teachers/Staff/School	13	School Dress	26
Controversial and Sensitive Issues	14	Schools Within WNESU	26
Emergency Preparedness	14	Section 504	27
Extreme Heat Procedures	14	Snacks and Food from Home	28 kr istin ewill iams 17@ gmai l.co m
Faculty and Staff	15	Special Education	28
Federal Funding Support (Title 1 Information)	15	Student Assistance Program	29
Field Trips	18	Technology	29
Food Service - <i>Farm-to-School Café</i>	18	Title IX	30
Health Office	19	Video Surveillance	31

Education for Homeless Children and Youth	20	Visitors/Volunteers	32
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	21	Appendix A: Procedures	32
Mission Statement/Vision/Core Values	21	Appendix B: Policies	34
Multi-Tiered System of Support	21		

Academic Standards

English Language Arts and Mathematics

We follow the [Common Core State Standards](#) (CCSS) for ELA and Mathematics. Our primary research-based curricular programs are EL Education and Illustrative Mathematics.

Science

We follow the [Next Generation Science Standards](#) (NGSS) to guide instruction in the following domains: Physical Science, Life Science, Earth and Space Science, and Engineering.

Social Studies

We follow the [College, Career, and Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards](#) (C3) to guide the teaching of civics, economics, geography, and history.

Art and Music

Both art and music follow the [National Core Arts Standards](#) to guide instruction in creating; performing/presenting/producing; responding; and connecting.

Physical Education

We follow the [National Physical Education Standards](#) to guide instruction in physical education.

- [Grade Level Outcomes for Physical Education K-12](#)

After-School Program

Rockingham Schools (CES and SRES): For 24/25 school year, Rockingham Schools have contracted with the [Healthy Kids After-Schools Program](#). This ASP program will be open to students in K-4. This is an outside organization coming into each Rockingham school to run these programs. Times will be 3-6 pm M-F. Please see link to apply for this for-fee ASP program, handbook, and overview of student/family expectations.

Westminster Center School: Westminster’s After School Program is funded through a 21st Century Grant. Programming is offered Monday through Friday from 3:15-4:45. For more information or to sign your child up for ASP, contact Kim Budzik at kim.budzik@wnesu.com

Grafton Elementary School: Grafton Elementary School does not currently offer an after-school program. We encourage families to consider other options for after-school care.

Asbestos Notice

The Windham Northeast Supervisory Union composed of Saxtons River Elementary School, Central Elementary School, Westminster Center School, Grafton Elementary School, Bellows Falls Middle School, and Bellows Falls Union High School hereby provide the following notice in compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) 40 CFR 763.93 [g.] [4] Requires that written notification be given that the following schools/buildings have Asbestos Management Plans for the safe control and maintenance of asbestos containing materials found in their buildings. These Management Plans are available and accessible to the public at the administrative office of each facility listed above.

Assessment

Assessment is a key part of the instruction cycle. The feedback from assessments helps students grow and the information teachers get helps inform instruction. On-going formative assessments happen every day so as to adjust instruction and meet the needs of students. We do have several assessments we use to help us determine needs, guide instruction, benchmark progress and inform levels of support necessary for individual students. These include:

NWEA MAP	Measures of Academic Progress is a norm-referenced measure of student growth over time. MAP assessments, joined with other data points, provide detailed, actionable data about where each child is on his or her unique learning path. MAP assessments differ from other data sources used to inform instruction by being nationally normed, by tracking student progress throughout the year and across school years, and by being linked to software tools that can assist teachers and administrators in planning instruction.
Other Literacy Assessments	DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Assessments are used to determine strengths and areas of need. Instruction is adjusted accordingly and growth is measured over time. <u>Diagnostic Assessments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Letter/Sound ID ● PASS (Phonological Awareness Skills Screener) ● PAST (Phonological Awareness Screening Test) ● QPS (Quick Phonics Screener) ● WtW Spelling Inventory
VT CAP (grades 3-6)	Vermont Comprehensive Assessment Program computer-based assessment of both Math and English Language Arts is part of our requirements under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The State of Vermont uses it to monitor progress over time.
Universal Screener for Number Sense	Forefront is a universal screener administered in a one-on-one environment to identify student needs and strengths. This data is used to guide instruction and measured over time

(grades K-6)	
Other Math Assessments	<p><u>Diagnostic Assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PNOA/ENOA (Primary Number and Operations Assessment/Early Number and Operations Assessment) ● HLA (High Leverage Assessments)

Attendance

Windham County Attendance Best Practices

As daily school attendance is critical to successful school performance, we want all students and their families in Windham County Pre-K-12 students to have support in ensuring student attendance at school. The WNESU process and procedures to ensure that students are in school and learning follows below.

Process and Expectations:

Absences

It is our shared responsibility to be sure that every child is safe and accounted for on every school day. If your child is absent from school please notify the school within 30 minutes of your school’s start time.

Unreported Absences

The school will contact the parent/guardian at home or at work. If a child is not in school on a given day and we have **not** received notification from the parent/guardian and are not able to contact the parent/guardian, this means that we are not able to verify the child’s location. We will then contact the police/sheriff’s department as early in the day as possible and appropriate for a welfare check. This is solely to ensure our student is safe. We will then make another outreach to the parent/guardian to make a plan to prevent further unreported absences.

Tardiness

Being on time sets a positive tone for the day and emphasizes the importance of education. Students are expected to arrive at school no later than the stated start time for your school. Students arriving after this time are considered late and will be marked tardy. Tardiness happens from time to time but regularly coming in late means the student misses the opportunity to be greeted by everyone, eat breakfast, settle into the day, learn the schedule for the day and generally get off to a positive start. If a trend of tardiness begins to appear, we will ask the parent/guardian to create a plan with the school to ensure that students arrive on time.

Approach

We utilize a team approach for school attendance, including the child, their family, and school officials to explore with the student and family what obstacles are hindering school attendance. A student-centered plan will be developed to increase school attendance. Follow-up steps are set to assess if the plan is working for the student and the family. Records are kept in school files of all contacts related to this plan made with the family of the student. Interventions of last resort regarding attendance typically involve the Windham County State’s Attorney and the Department of Children and Families.

Involvement of those agencies happen after habitual absences and very low family involvement with the school.

Team Membership

We rely on school staff to support improved attendance. If needed at a later stage, staff from state and community agencies, as well as parent liaison supports, will assist. Team meetings can be part of EST, 504, IEP, Act 264, Youth Services, and other necessary support for the student.

Procedure

WNESU School staff typically will use the following procedures to support families with school attendance, however families should be aware that every situation is different, so this is a **not** to be interpreted as the sole protocol:

Tardiness

After five tardy days

School personnel contacts family in person or by phone

Letter to go out to family from principal

After seven tardy days

Letter to go out to family from principal

Parent meeting scheduled with counselor and teacher

After ten tardy days

Letter to go out family from principal

Parent meeting scheduled by school staff, with principal, counselor, teacher, and any other necessary school staff.

At the meeting, a release of information may be signed by the family to allow discussion between the school and outside agencies if necessary.

Absences

After five absent days

School personnel contact family in person or by phone, AND by mail.

Based on the previous year, families may be referred to community supports or state agencies once an absence trend is identified.

After ten absent days

Letter to go out to family including, if appropriate, a request for information related to any medical diagnoses that your student may be experiencing that is preventing them from attending school.

Parent meeting scheduled with Educational Support Team (EST) or Attendance Committee and school personnel (including teacher, counselor, and principal.)

A referral to community supports may be necessary at this stage.

After fifteen absent days

Letter to go out to family

Parent meeting scheduled according to guidelines established in Act 264 with school personnel and representatives from outside agencies. These could include DCF, designated mental health, family support, and truancy agencies, as well as law enforcement.

Subsequent Absences

Depending on the situation, the school will continue to refer to community supports and will determine if a referral to DCF or the State's Attorney will be necessary.

Family Court Involvement: State's Attorney

An affidavit goes to Windham County State's Attorney detailing the amount of absences, records of outreach between the school and the family, and what supports have already been put in place.

The State's Attorney will review the materials and determine if they believe the student is a Child in Need of Services.

If the State's Attorney makes this determination, a prosecutor will file a case in the Windham County Family Court to formally intervene with the student's habitual absences.

Family Court

This is to ensure that a plan will be followed to remedy the absences and have your student regularly go back to school.

The Family Court judge evaluates any case filed by the State's Attorney and determines if conditions need to be imposed on the family related to your student's attendance. If a case is brought, you will be entitled to an attorney for both you and your student.

Please note: The School is not formally involved with truancy cases brought by the State's Attorney (meaning that the school is **not** suing your family). Any truancy cases in Court are brought by the State of Vermont.

Schools have been encouraged to consider making referrals earlier than the timelines set forth here, if a student struggled with attendance last year and shows signs of similar issues in the previous school year.

Behavior Management, Expectations, and Response Plan

WNESU Elementary Schools are Responsive Classroom Schools: “Responsive Classroom is a student-centered, social and emotional learning approach to teaching and discipline. It consists of a set of research, and evidence-based practices designed to create safe, joyful, and engaging classrooms and school communities for both students and teachers.”

In our work with students, we believe that relationships come first. We foster these relationships by listening and respecting the uniqueness of the individual child. We believe in proactive behavior management for individuals and for the school. We celebrate small successes and recognize growth. We honor the learning environment and have high expectations of preserving it. We balance the needs of the individual with that of the whole community.

Teachers and staff maintain a safe, kind, and rigorous learning environment across settings in the school, and whenever possible, allow students to work through the difficulties within the setting in which they are occurring.

WNESU Elementary schools believe that in order to provide an optimum educational atmosphere, all students will:

- Use words and actions that demonstrate respect for others and for themselves
- Maintain an environment that is free from the threat of emotional or physical danger
- Use words and actions that support and encourage learning
- Arrive on time and be prepared to learn
- Maintain a clean, attractive, and secure environment

The flow charts below will give you a sense of our plans and expected responses for school-wide discipline.

The behavior response system at WNESU Elementary Schools is designed to assist students in making appropriate choices and taking responsibility for their own actions. Some of the Preventative Measures include:

- Community building
- Creating Rules based on hopes and dreams
- Knowing, anticipating, and planning for individual student needs
- Reinforcing language
- Interactive modeling of all expectations
- Positive and continuous communication with home.
- Private take a break in a quiet space
- Removal from classroom
- Collaborative Problem-Solving Conference (create a plan for success and help the student learn necessary lagging skills)
- Phone call home
- Miss remainder of the time block.

Quick Response by Teacher

- Proximity
- Reminding language/looks
- Redirecting Language
- Silent Signal

Level 1 Responses

Examples of Level 1 Behaviors: Rude/Disrespect, Disruption, Refusal, Truancy/Tardy

Responses to Level 1 behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Break (take a walk, get a drink, quiet place to work)
- Take a Break
- Take-a-break in a Buddy Classroom

Problem-solving steps may include:

- Student conference
- Interactive Modeling: Practice, Practice, Practice
- Other logical consequences as determined by the teacher in charge at the time of the infraction

Level 2 Responses

Examples of Level 2 Behaviors: Tech Misuse, Dishonesty/Cheating, and Defiance/Noncompliance

Responses to Level II behaviors include, but are not limited to:

Logical Consequences including:

- Apology of Action (Classroom or individual repair of harm)
- Loss of Privilege (related to offense)
 - Recess
 - Lunch (with peers)
 - Bus
 - After School Program
 - Field Trips
 - Choices
 - Freedom of movement (ie. walking in halls alone)
- Take a break
- You break it, you fix it:
 - Physical items
 - Trust
 - Relationships
 - Time

Level 3 - Responses * Parents Notified*

Examples of Level 3 behaviors include: Hand on/Horseplay, Aggression (*throwing objects, threatening gestures/comments, intimidation/retaliation, directed obscenities, physical assaults*), microaggressions, theft, destruction of property, and inappropriate location/out of bounds, use or possession of restricted substances

Responses to Level III behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Take-a-break
- Removal from classroom
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Bus Suspension
- Team/Family meeting
- Immediate Removal from the school building
- Police or other authorities called
- Staff who are trained in WNESU's response protocol will respond appropriately

Please note this is a menu and not all of the responses will be used in any or every situation. Please also note that we believe in progressive discipline and continued or repeated violations will be treated with increased number and severity consequences. Students' age and disability will be considered when determining appropriate consequences in accordance with the Students with Disabilities Act (IDEA)(PL-142), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973, Title II, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991.

Birthdays/Party Invitations

Please help prevent hurt feelings by sending party invitations either by mail or electronically rather than distributing them during school. Delivery of invitations in a classroom can only occur if ALL students in that group are invited. If you choose to send an edible item on your child's birthday, please contact your child's school to learn more about their practices for sharing treats.

Food for celebrations and/or special occasions:

There are special times throughout the year when classrooms have a celebration that may include snacks or drinks we would not eat as part of a nutritious snack. The decision of which foods to serve for such occasions will be made by classroom teachers. Do not send in treats without first coordinating with the classroom teacher, even for birthdays. Food and drinks for such occasions might include baked goods/frozen treats for celebrations, hot chocolate for winter sports, and mints/lifesavers for testing. We explain to children the different reasons for choosing various foods.

Bus: Guidelines and Behavior Expectations

[WNESU 2024-25 Bus Routes](#)

The Windham Northeast Supervisory Union school bus drivers perform a very important and responsible job every day. The passengers we carry are our children and the children of the communities we serve. The way we drive, act, look and the way we keep our equipment reflects our professional attitude and our commitment to the safe transportation of our precious cargo. It is our goal to maintain an efficient transportation system that assures each student a safe, comfortable ride to and from school. In addition, we must comply with all state laws and school policies, including the reporting of suspected abuse or neglect and possible harassment, bullying, and hazing. In order to do this, it is important that we follow procedures, which are easily understood by all students, parents, and employees. It is critically important that students do their part so that our drivers are not distracted by inappropriate behavior, endangering all the students on board.

Transportation is a privilege, not a right. We strive to achieve the goal of transporting our students safely and efficiently. To achieve this goal, we expect all students to follow these expectations:

Positive Bus Behaviors:

Follow the driver's directions and be respectful to the driver and other adults on the bus at all times.

1. Be kind and courteous to others.
2. Talk quietly.
3. Stay in your seat
4. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
5. Behave as you are expected to when you are in school.

The WNESU bus discipline system divides problematic behaviors into two categories—Level 1 and Severe. Level 1 offenses can be judged to be severe if they are repeated and/or result in distracting the driver.

Level 1 Offenses:

- ❖ Standing up or changing seats while the bus is moving.
- ❖ Eating or drinking on the bus without permission to do so.
- ❖ Speaking loudly, yelling, or making other unnecessary noise.
- ❖ Occasional use of profanity.
- ❖ Littering or spitting inside the bus.
- ❖ Improper boarding or departing.
- ❖ Bringing questionable items on the bus.
- ❖ Throwing objects on the bus.
- ❖ Diverting the driver's attention.
- ❖ Any other objectionable behavior.

Level 1 Consequences:

The following disciplinary procedures will be used for Level 1 offenses:

1. First Violation: At the first Level 1 offense, commencing with the beginning of the school year, the bus driver will verbally warn the student.
2. Second Violation: If the student fails to comply with this warning, or if there are subsequent violations of any kind, the bus driver will report the incident to the building principal or designee by using the reporting system employed by the district. The principal or designee will notify the parent/guardian of the infraction and any disciplinary measures as soon as is possible, ideally no later than 12 hours after an incident occurs. Suspension of riding privileges from all WNESU buses for 1-3 days may occur as a result of the second violation.
3. Third Violation: A third reported violation shall result in the suspension of bus riding privileges for the student for a minimum of 2 to 4 days.
4. Further Level 1 violations will be treated as severe.

Severe Behavior Offenses:

- ❖ Disrespectful behavior directed at the bus driver or at other adults on the bus.
- ❖ Refusal to follow instructions from the bus driver.
- ❖ Refusal to stay in an assigned seat.
- ❖ Pervasive use of profanity.
- ❖ Throwing litter or other objects out the window.

- ❖ Hanging any body parts outside of the window.
- ❖ Destruction of property or vandalism.
- ❖ Use of drugs, alcohol, or nicotine products in any form.
- ❖ Using matches or lighters.
- ❖ Bringing potentially dangerous objects onto the bus.
- ❖ Possible harassment or bullying.
- ❖ Fighting, pushing, or tripping others.
- ❖ Any other behavior that has the potential to endanger others.
- ❖ Items from the Level 1 list that are judged to be severe in nature.

Severe Behavior Consequences:

Severe behavior at any time may result in more serious disciplinary measures whether the student has received previous warnings or bus reports or not but shall always result in at least a 2-10 day suspension from riding all non-essential WNESU buses.

Suspension of Bus Riding Privileges:

After a severe behavior violation, suspension of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year is a disciplinary option at the discretion of the building principal as are additional days of suspension. Repeated severe violations may also result in extended suspensions.

Based on administrative review or investigation of an incident of either Level 1 or Severe Behavior, suspension from riding the bus may occur at any time. In addition, some serious bus behaviors can result in disciplinary consequences at school and/or reports to law enforcement.

Appeals of Bus Suspensions:

A parent or guardian may appeal a suspension of a student's riding privileges if such appeal is delivered in writing to the superintendent of schools. The decision of the superintendent shall be final. Temporary suspensions of 3 days or less may not be

Returning to Riding the Bus:

The overarching goal of this disciplinary system is for an offending student to be able to return to riding the bus with no more behavior problems. Before a student is reinstated on the bus, the school may determine that a meeting between the parent/guardian, student, building level principal, and/or transportation supervisor or bus driver needs to take place in order to ensure the student's success.

Child Find Notice

In compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-446), we are required to locate and identify all school-age children, who may have a disability, and provide them with an appropriate education and developmental screening.

The Early Childhood Special Education program of Windham Northeast Supervisory Union provides free developmental screening to all preschool children and infants throughout the school year on an individual basis by appointment. If you have a child and you are concerned about his or her development, you may call the Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator at (802) 460-7827 to make an appointment. The purpose of this process is to locate children with disabilities who would benefit from early identification and intervention.

Any person having information regarding students with disabilities, who are not receiving a free, appropriate public education, should contact the Director of Student Services, at (802) 463-1612 or at the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union, 5111 US Route 5, PO Box 92, Westminster Station, VT 05159.

Communication

WNESU schools use Remind App as their primary form of communication. Each school sends out a weekly newsletter. Stay up to date on the school calendar and events happening in the school by following the school's Facebook page or visiting our school's website.

- SRES: [Facebook](#) and [Website](#)
- CES: [Facebook](#) and [Website](#)
- WCS: [Facebook](#) and [Website](#)
- GES: [Facebook](#) and [Website](#)

Contacting Teachers/Staff/School

You may contact teachers in WNESU by calling the main office. All teachers/staff have voice mail which can be accessed at any time.

Email addresses can be accessed from our website or the standard email address is first name.last name@wnesu.com (i.e. john.smith@wnesu.com). Faculty and staff have email capability and access.

WNESU schools use a web-based program to provide parents/guardians with access to confidential web-enabled pages. Access information is sent to parents/guardians in the summer mailing prior to the start of school; it is also available on the school website.

Please note:

If you provide us with your email address, **all** WNESU information will be available to the Parent Portal via your email address. Please be sure to provide us with an accurate email address. Also, please update us on any changes to keep your email address current.

If you do **not** provide us with your email address, **all** WNESU information will be mailed to your home (including report cards, etc.). If you would like to receive both, please notify WNESU by September 15, 2024.

Controversial & Sensitive Issues

In the course of a student's education at school, topics may be presented which could cause discomfort in light of a student's or families' background or personal beliefs. If this occurs, students and/or their parents/guardians may request an alternative educational experience. This request can be made to the student's teacher, counselor, or administrator.

Emergency Preparedness

Safety drills, in which every person leaves the building, are a requirement by state law and a safety measure. When we have fire drills, attendance will be taken and any absences will be reported to the office. Drills should be taken seriously, as they are practiced for what could be an authentic emergency. Any student who intentionally sets a fire or activates a false alarm will be reported to the State Police. Vermont Schools are also directed to practice a variety of emergency drills, including:

- "Hold"
- "Secure"
- "Lockdown"
- "Evacuation"
- "Shelter"

Our development and fine-tuning of these procedures continue. We always keep in mind the emotional and mental well-being of students when planning drills.

Extreme Heat Procedure

During the months of August/September and May/June, the District uses both the forecast and actual temperature and humidity readings in schools with classrooms without air conditioning. When these readings exceed the recommended guidelines for safety, the Superintendent may cancel school for the next day for specific school buildings in the SU due to excessive heat. The following are taken into consideration when deciding to cancel or dismiss school early:

- Building temperature/humidity (*Higher than 85 degrees Fahrenheit.*)
- The heat Index inside the building will be looked at when the building temperature reaches 85 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Outdoor temperature, relative humidity, and heat index during school & bus hours.
- The WNESU school remote option will only be used in extreme situations due to the potential logistical issues and the hardship that may cause our parents. The Superintendent will decide on remote learning with a consultation with Principals as early as possible to allow adequate notification to parents.
- The decision will be made based on a school-by-school basis.

WNESU Administration has worked with all WNESU principals on best practices and set an established routine for relief that includes utilizing the gym for classes and moving outside when appropriate.

III. **Definition A. Heat Index** – As published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the measure of how hot it feels when relative humidity is factored in with the actual air temperature.

Faculty and Staff

All employee emails follow the same firstname.lastname@wnesu.com. Please find all employees listed on the school's website.

Andy Haas	Superintendent	802-463-9958
Deb Kardane	Director of Instruction and Innovation	802-463-9958
Shelley Wilson	Director of Family and Student Systems	802-463-9958
	Director of Student Support Services	802-463-9958
James Vezina	Business Manager	802-463-9958
Stan Budzik	Transportation Director	802-463-9958, option 1

- [CES Faculty and Staff](#)
- [WCS Faculty and Staff](#)
- [GES Faculty and Staff](#)
- [SRES Faculty and Staff](#)

WNESU Federal Funding Support (Title I) Information

Overview

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) or Title I was designed to provide instructional help for students experiencing academic difficulty. Funding is given directly to the schools and is based upon the number of families who are considered “low-income”. WNESU is required to provide funding and other resources to increase parent involvement in their child’s education. Schools are required to use instructional strategies based on scientifically based research and to implement parental involvement activities.

Schools enrolling at least 30 percent of students from economically disadvantaged families are eligible to use Title I funds for school wide programs that serve all children in the school. Title I programming support in WNESU is available to all schools and all of our students, regardless of income level.

Funds are used to promote:

1. High academic/achievement for all children
2. Initiatives for Safe and Healthy Schools
3. Improved communication between school and home
4. An enriched and accelerated educational program
5. Professional development for staff
6. Meaningful opportunities for family engagement

Teacher Qualifications

Families have a right to ask for and receive information about the qualifications of their child's teacher. Information can be found by visiting an online portal at <https://alis.edlicensing.vermont.gov>. If you do not have computer access, please contact the WNESU Superintendent's office at 802-463-9958

WNESU Assessments

WNESU utilizes a wide array of assessment tools to document students' academic progress. The following is a summary of assessments for the coming school year.

Reading:

Universal Tools (for all students)

Grades 3-11: VT-CAP: Vermont State Assessment

Grades K-8: Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)

Grades K-11: NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

Grades K-6: Words their Way Spelling Inventory

Diagnostic Tools (for students in need of additional support)

Phonological Awareness Skills Screener

Quick Phonics Screener

Mathematics:

Universal Tools

Grades 3-11: VT-CAP: Vermont State Assessment

Grades K-11: NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

Grades K-6: Universal Screener for Number Sense (USNS)

Diagnostic Tools (for students in need of additional support)

Primary Number and Operations Assessment (PNOA)

All-Learners Network High Leverage Assessments

Family Engagement

WNESU values the partnerships we build with our students' families. Title 1 schools are required to complete several specific actions to involve parents. To meet part of these requirements, our schools routinely host parent engagement events and parent conferences throughout the year.

School Home Compact

The WNESU School and Home Compact is an agreement between home and school regarding our mission to promote a safe, caring and supportive environment where students can succeed. We strive to have our parents, teachers, and community members actively involved in our students' learning. Effective schools support student learning through a partnership between families and school personnel. We invite you to join us in using the following compact to guide our work together.

WNESU HOME-TO-SCHOOL COMPACT

SCHOOL AGREEMENT:

We believe all children can learn and succeed in school. Therefore, we will:

- provide high-quality instruction.
- provide a school environment that encourages positive relationships.
- teach students to resolve conflicts in an appropriate and positive manner.
- provide meaningful homework when appropriate that supports student learning.
- use methods of assessment that enable us to monitor the learning of individual students and plan for effective instruction.
- collaborate with one another, students, families, and the community so that students will experience success.
- commit ourselves to ongoing professional development and continuous improvement.
- communicate with parents keeping them informed of their child's progress in a variety of ways.
- pursue the joy of learning together.

PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT:

It is important that I encourage my child in the learning process. Therefore I will:

- see that my child attends school regularly and on time.
- stay in close contact with my child's teachers.
- motivate and help my child with homework.
- read with my child and let my child see me read.
- support the school discipline policies as stated in the school handbook.
- encourage my child's learning with a healthy lifestyle (nutrition, hygiene, sleep)

STUDENT AGREEMENT:

As a student of WNESU, I contribute to the standard of excellence. Therefore, I will:

- help create a safe and positive school climate.
- always work to the best of my ability.

- attend school regularly and be ready to learn every day.
- be an active and positive member of the school and community.
- read at home.
- follow the classroom and school rules.
- accept responsibility for my own actions.
- ask for help when needed and give help when asked.
- treat everyone, including myself with respect.
- resolve conflict peacefully.
- make healthy and positive choices.
- get to bed on time and remain rested and ready for learning

Field Trips

Field trips are frequently built into studies for children in our schools. Teachers at various grade levels plan these experiential learning opportunities to enhance student engagement, gain life experiences, and to extend learning into the community. These trips range from local (e.g., farms, town offices, historical markers) to wide-ranging (e.g., Burlington, Seacoast of NH, Sturbridge Village).

We ask parents to sign a blanket field trip approval for local trips that are within WNESU. (A form is sent home at the beginning of the year.) We then notify parents in advance of a local trip. For longer-ranging trips, we ask parent permission. Frequently students can be supported/supervised by just school staff on trips. However, there are times when we need a greater adult-to-student ratio and ask for parent volunteers to chaperone. Siblings cannot attend field trips.

- ❖ Field trip transportation is provided by the school. All students participating in the field trip will use the provided transportation. All field trips shall be taken by school bus unless special arrangements are made in advance.
- ❖ A signed release form from a parent or guardian will be required of all students before the student will be allowed on the field trip.
- ❖ Siblings are not permitted to attend field trips as trips are connected to the curriculum and classroom learning. We also feel chaperons need to have undivided attention in order to ensure the safety of all our children.
- ❖ Home-schooled children are welcome to attend field trips as part of their study plan.

Food Service - *Farm-to-School Café*

MENU

The Farm-to-School Café, Windham Northeast's independent School Nutrition program always has something new cooking in your school kitchen. With trained chefs in charge of the menu, school meals will never be the same. We use

the best local ingredients and serve up meals that nourish and inspire. Get ready to change the way you look at school lunch and breakfast with offerings like Shepherd's Pie and Sloppy Joe's made with 100% Vermont grass-fed beef, homemade pancakes, and french toast with real syrup from Windham County, and self-serve salad bars brimming with local organic veggies in every school, every day. We look forward to making sure there's something for everyone with fun and healthy choices including everyone's favorite classics, and exciting new items all made from scratch by our chefs in our kitchens. We are proud that some of the best food in the world is grown here in Vermont, and we can't wait to make it a healthy, delicious part of your child's day. Menus are sent home monthly. It is expected that meals are pre-paid for.

If your child has a food allergy and needs their school meal menu altered in any way, please provide a doctor's note to our school nurse. We are only able to make accommodations for meals with a doctor's note.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call your school cafeteria or Harley Sterling Director of Food Service Programs.

For further information please go to the WNESU FoodService Page located on the WNESU website under Parent Info.

Health Office

Annual Routine Screenings, which consist of hearing and vision, are done at each grade level according to state requirements. If you have questions about these screenings or would like to request an earlier check or recheck, or would like to opt out of having your child screened, please notify the nurse. Immunizations are reviewed yearly for each student. All students must be vaccinated according to State requirements or supply the school with a signed immunization exemption form. This form must be reviewed and signed every year. Exemption laws have changed, so please be sure you know the expectations around vaccination. Call the school nurse with any questions.

Illness: All well children are expected to be in school every day. Any child with a temperature elevation of 100 degrees or more, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea should stay home until symptoms are gone. Students who demonstrate these symptoms during the school day will be sent home. A student must be free of fever and vomiting, without the aid of medication, for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Medication: Whenever possible, medicine should be administered at home. Occasionally, however, medicine must be taken during school hours. If your child takes medicine during the day while at school, the following procedures must be followed:

- ❖ The school must have written or verbal orders from the child's physician giving the name of the physician, the name of the drug, the dosage, and when the medicine must be given.
- ❖ All medication (prescription and nonprescription) must be in the container properly labeled by a pharmacy or physician which gives the name of the physician, the name of the drug, the dosage, and when the medicine must be given.
- ❖ We must have written permission from the parent or legal guardian.

- ❖ All communication about medications should be made through the nurse.

Over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, ibuprofen, cough syrup, and Tums can be administered at school with your consent at the beginning of the year. This permission form comes home in August and signing it covers the entire school year. Please call your school's Nurse, with any questions regarding the medication procedures.

Education for Homeless Children and Youth

Vermont's Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program ensures that students experiencing homelessness have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education provided to other Vermont children, with the opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards. The EHCY program is authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act, and seeks to identify and address the challenges that children and youth experiencing homelessness may face in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school.

McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless [42 U.S.C. §11434(a)(2)]

The term "homeless children and youth" means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes children and youths who:

- Share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- Live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Live in emergency or transitional shelters
- Are abandoned in hospitals
- Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not normally used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Are migratory and qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described in the above situations

Rights of Eligible Children and Youth

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act guarantees educational rights and supports for students experiencing homelessness. In general, McKinney-Vento eligible students have a right to:

- Equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, as is provided to other children and youth [42 U.S.C. §11431(1)]
- Immediate enrollment, even when records normally required for enrollment are not present [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(C)]

- Remain in the school of origin, if it is in the student’s best interest, in order to maintain educational stability [42 U.S.C. §11432 (g)(3)(A)]
- Access all educational and related services for which they are eligible [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(6)(A)(iii)], including Title I services and free school meals
- Full participation in school, which may include participation in extracurricular activities [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(F)(iii)]
- Transportation, provided by the LEA, to and from the school of origin [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)]

If you are experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, please contact our school’s McKinney-Vento Coordinator (see below) or our WNESU District Liaison, Shelley Wilson, at 802-460-1492 or shelley.wilson@wnesu.com.

- SRES: Laura Hazard, 802-869-2637 or laura.hazard@wnesu.com
- CES: Kerry Kennedy, 802-463-4346 or kerry.kennedy@wnesu.com
- WCS: Jennie Perry, at 802-722-3241 or jennie.perry@wnesu.com
- GES: Angela Cartier, 802-874-5224 or angela.cartier@wnesu.com

Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) makes special education and related services a federal entitlement for students with disabilities. It requires that these students be offered a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and focuses on parent participation, procedural safeguards, and confidentiality. Amendments have extended the entitlement for education to students three to five and addressed the needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. States receiving federal education funds are required to identify and evaluate students with disabilities and offer them an individualized education plan (IEP) or, in the case of infants and toddlers, an individual family service plan (IFSP) of special education and related services.

Mission Statement/Vision/Core Values

- [CES](#)
- [WCS](#)
- [GES](#)
- [SRES](#)

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support in WNESU

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (referred to as MTSS) is a systemic approach to decision-making for excellence and equity within a culture of continuous improvement that focuses on successful outcomes for all students. This systemic approach:

- Supports the collaboration of all adults to meet the academic, behavioral, social and emotional needs of all students,
- Provides a layered system of high-quality, evidence-based instruction, intervention, and assessment practices that are matched to student strengths and needs,
- Relies on the effective and timely use of meaningful data,
- Helps districts and their schools organize resources to accelerate the learning of every student, and
- Engages and develops the collective expertise of educators, students, family and community partnerships.

WNESU schools comply with 16 V.S.A. § 2902 by ensuring that each school in our district maintains a tiered system of academic and behavioral supports for the purpose of providing all students with the opportunity to succeed or to be challenged in the general education environment.

Universal Supports

Educators often refer to **Tier 1 supports** as “universal” because they are provided to every student. Strong Tier 1 practices are essential for strengthening school climate, relationships, and classroom instruction. Examples of Tier 1 supports include:

- High-quality core instruction.
- Embedding social-emotional learning into curriculum and assessment.
- Cultivating a positive and inclusive school climate.

Many school districts create Tier 1 school climate teams or embed Tier 1 supports into school improvement planning.

Targeted Supports

Tier 2 supports are targeted, additional interventions delivered to students who are not responding to Tier 1 supports. Typically, around 15 to 20% of students will receive Tier 2 support, which are often given in small group settings.

WNESU Schools convene MTSS School-level and CARES (Coordination, Assessment, Response, Education) teams to identify at-risk students who need more targeted support and use data from multiple domains to determine appropriate interventions.

Intensive Supports

Tier 3 supports refer to intensive services that 1 to 5% of students receive if they continue to struggle and require even more individualized intervention or +support. It is also for students who are undergoing more of an acute challenge.

Educational Support Teams (EST Teams)

An EST is a collaborative team that has regularly scheduled meetings at the school level and is a statutory requirement under 16 V.S.A. §2902. EST meetings are part of the WNESU MTSS continuum of student support and parent/guardian/family participation is a vital component of the process.

EST meetings have shared agendas, identified roles for participants, and norms to ensure that they are safe, ordered, and productive. The EST has an effective process for documenting discussion and all decisions made in the meetings. School EST includes an administrator, teachers, a school psychologist, school counselor(s), parents/guardians, a social worker, and other staff with behavioral and/or academic expertise.

The EST relies on student data. This data may refer to a student's academic progress, school behavior, or both. Student referrals may be brought to the team through a referral process or the team may use screening assessments to identify students who might need additional support. Student data is also used to determine the effectiveness of interventions.

WNESU EST teams should consider the following when developing interventions:

- An EST plan is typically intended to address a clearly defined concern – one that is measurable. • The EST plan includes the current level of performance, the desired change, and a schedule for review.
- The plan should clearly define what will be done, by whom, where, and when.
- The plan should address ways to enhance the capacity of the general classroom to support/accommodate the student.
- Review dates should be frequent, typically from 4 to 8 school weeks.
- If the student is not showing adequate progress when the plan is reviewed, consider changing the plan.

Phone Usage

Students will be allowed to use the classroom or office telephones in the **case of an emergency only**. Please plan play visits and after-school activities before coming to school, as the office phone is for school business and emergencies. Students always need teacher permission to use the phone for any purpose. We keep classroom interruptions to a minimum. If a parent needs to contact their child, please call the office and leave a message. In the case of an emergency, we will inform the child as soon as appropriate. **Children cannot use cell phones during the day** – all calls must come through the school phone. Students are allowed to have cell phones in backpacks, turned off. Students observed with electronics out during the day will have the items confiscated until the end of the day.

Playground Use

Our school playground is reserved for school use only from 7:00 AM until 5:00 PM each school day. Our students will be using the playground throughout this time for recess, outdoor learning, and after-school activities. The general public is asked not to use our playgrounds during school days.

Progress Reports and Parent-Teacher Conferences

Reporting Student Progress

WNESU is committed to ongoing communication with parents about their child's progress across the year. Progress will be shared in a variety of ways including student conferences, progress reports, and formal report cards. Conferences will occur twice across the year in November and March. At this time, assessment results and progress updates will be shared with an opportunity for face-to-face discussion. Formal report cards will be sent home at the end of each semester (January and June).

The school year is divided into two reporting periods. In November and March, individual conferences will be scheduled for each family. **Conference days are marked on the WNESU school calendar.** Your child's teacher will contact you to set up this conference. Additional conferences are always available and may be scheduled by you or the school as necessary. Please schedule these in advance with your child's teacher so that he or she may be well-prepared to meet with you. The office will be happy to assist you with setting up a meeting time or you may email the teacher directly.

Residency Requirements

All students must meet State law in terms of residency requirements. A child may be enrolled in the school district in which their parent/guardian resides. Proof of residency may be requested at any time.

Restorative Practices

Restorative Practices build and nurture relationships, which in turn create a positive and healthy school community that is just and equitable.

To achieve this, students and staff engage in weekly community building circles covering an array of topics. When a conflict does arise, affected individuals repair harm collaboratively by reflecting on the impact on individuals and the community, and working to restore relationships. Along the way, students build empathy and deepen their accountability to one another.



Image is from Schools for Children Inc.

School-Based Counseling Services

School-Based Counseling Services

School-based clinician services are clinical supports offered to students who are experiencing challenges reaching educational goals. School-Based Counseling extends services to students in ways that build individual strengths and empower families to effectively use formal and informative community resources. They assist students with difficulties in the school, home, or community. This may include emotional, health, attendance, behavior, academic failure/underachievement, substance abuse, and/or family issues.

Highlights include:

- Supportive counseling
- Individual and group therapy
- Classroom supports
- Crisis response
- Parent support

School Books

Textbooks and library books may be taken home with teacher permission. Books should be returned in the same manner and condition in which they were received. If a book is lost or damaged, the student/family is expected to pay for it.

School Calendar

updated calendar and events [click here](#)

School Closing/Delayed Opening/Early Dismissal

On days when school must be closed or the normal schedule altered because of emergency situations (weather, mechanical problems, etc.) the appropriate announcement will be made via the SchoolMessenger emergency notification system utilized by WNESU. The hope of this system is that when there is a school cancellation or emergency, all individuals who wish to be notified will be. To be on the SchoolMessenger notification list for the WNESU group, parents/guardians should complete the information form and submit it to the main office.. The notification for a school closing will normally be announced by 6:30 a.m. The appropriate announcement will also be made on the following radio stations WCAX and WKNE. A delayed opening simply means that the bus should arrive later and that school will start later. School closing/early dismissal will normally be announced by 11:30 a.m. If there is a school closing please refer to the WNESU school calendar on the WNESU webpage.

ACCESS TO ACADEMIC INFORMATION

WNESU schools use a web-based program to provide parents/guardians with access to confidential web-enabled pages. Access information is sent to parents/guardians in the summer mailing prior to the start of school; it also available on the school website.

Please note:

If you provide us with your email address, **all** WNESU information, including report cards will be sent to your email address. Please be sure to provide us with an accurate email address. Also, please update us on any changes to keep your email address current.

If you do **not** provide us with your email address, **all** school information will be mailed to your home (including report cards, etc.). If you would like to receive both, please notify **your child's school** by September 15, 2024.

School Day and Procedures

We have a day full of learning and each moment is intentionally planned to provide the best experience possible for students. Below is an outline of what to expect and how to comply with our procedures for arrival and dismissal.

- [SRES](#)
- [CES](#)
- [WCS](#)
- [GES](#)

School Dress

School clothing should be functional and reflect the attitude of the student's job: learning. The fit and style of clothing cannot make undergarments easily seen or displayed. For safety reasons, shoes, such as clogs (Crocs), flip flops or sandals without backs and open-toed shoes may not be worn in school. Sneakers are always a good choice. Clothing may not bear crude, profane, violent, insulting, or suggestive pictures or words. If a child comes to school wearing inappropriate clothing, families will be contacted to bring a change of clothes or we will provide them with other clothing. Since sunglasses, hoods, and hats may obscure part of a person's face, making it harder to identify them, they may not be worn in the building. If a student's accessories interfere with his/her ability to learn, interfere with the learning of others, and/or are unsafe, the student will be asked to remove the item and place it in his/her backpack.

Winter outerwear

-Students should wear or bring snow pants, boots, hats, and gloves with them to school when there is snow on the ground or in the forecast. If a child is not wearing boots when there is snow on the ground, they will remain on the blacktop during recess time.

-40 Degrees or below, students will be expected to bring a jacket outside during recess. For more information, please refer to the [Child Care Weather Watch](#)

Schools Within Windham Northeast

Preschool

In addition to hosting a program in our building, we partner with private preschools and Head Start to provide tuition for up to 10 hours of instruction a week. Parents must complete an application to enroll children in preschool programs. If you know of any child aged from birth to five, please contact Jennifer Keenan at jennifer.keenan@wnesu.com.

Middle School

Bellows Falls Middle School is the designated middle school for SRES and CES students. Westminster and Grafton do not have a designated school for seventh and eighth grades. Students must register and provide proof of residency with

the Westminster Center School and then families may apply to area middle schools. Westminster will pay tuition to any state-approved independent school at the state rate.

Supervisory Union and District

Westminster Center School is within the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union. The central offices are located at 5111-US Rte. 5 Westminster Station, VT. The superintendent of schools is Andrew Haas. Parents with questions beyond the scope of the local school should contact the central office at (802) 463-9958.

Section 504 in WNESU

Section 504 in WNESU

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal civil rights statute prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability. It specifically prohibits discrimination against students with disabilities and guarantees them a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Every entity, including public and independent schools, that receives federal funding, directly or indirectly is subject to the requirements of Section 504. There is no federal or state funding provided to assist schools in complying with Section 504; all costs are the obligation of the general school district or independent school budget.

Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability which is defined in the Rehabilitation Act as a failure to provide students with disabilities the same opportunity to benefit from educational programs, services, or activities as provided to their nondisabled peers. This means that districts/schools must make programs and activities accessible as well as the buildings and grounds. As a civil rights statute, Section 504 focuses on ensuring a level of access to educational services (including both academic and extracurricular activities) that is equal to the level of access provided to non-disabled students. This includes providing eligible students who have a physical or mental disability with a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

34 C.F.R. §§104.7 and 104.8 require schools to notify parents and others that the school does not discriminate on the basis of handicap; the school's notice shall identify the responsible employee designated to coordinate compliance with Section 504 and of the availability of a grievance procedure to address complaints regarding Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

If you have questions about Section 504 eligibility for students, or need to discuss a grievance procedure, please contact WNESU District 504 Coordinator Shelley Wilson (shelley.wilson@wnesu.com) or your school building 504 coordinator/case manager (see below):

- SRES: Lauren Rogers, 802-869-2637 or lauren.rogers@wnesu.com
- CES: Alexa Martins, 802-463-4346 or alexa.martins@wnesu.com
- WCS: Jennie Perry, 802-722-3241 or jennie.perry@wnesu.com
- GES: Angela Cartier, 802-874-5224 or angela.cartier@wnesu.com

Snacks and Food From Home

Snacks:

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children avoid snacks high in sugar (like those containing high fructose corn syrup) and Hydrogenated oils (trans fats) whenever possible. Balanced, nutritious snacks can help children maintain energy and lengthen their attention span throughout the day. Healthy snacks can also round out the diet, helping to ensure that children are getting all of the nutrients they need to fuel their growth and development. Research has shown that children need a minimum of 5 fruits and vegetables a day for good health. These are loaded with vitamins and minerals, are low in fat, sugar, and salt, and high in fiber.

WNESU Schools supports healthy snack guidelines for the Fresh Snack, Home Snack, and Afterschool Snack. Our fresh snack program provides students with free fresh fruit or vegetables. Parents are welcome to send in a healthy snack for their child if they desire. Your child may still be encouraged to try a “No Thank You Portion” of a snack to just try it. Children often have to be introduced several times to a food to acquire a taste for it. We encourage sugary snacks to be saved for home.

Students are encouraged to drink water throughout the day and it is helpful for students to have a water bottle with them.

Food From Home:

Candy or drinks other than water are not allowed in school. We respect what families intend for their children to eat and therefore students are not permitted to share or trade food.

Special Education

Student Support Services focuses on academic outcomes, aspirations for our students, parent/community engagement, and regulatory compliance. Our goal is to help every child succeed. We provide our students with stability and continuity, new opportunities for inclusion, and higher-quality programs that are aligned with our district's goals of equity for all students. In collaboration with all WNESU schools, PreK-12, we strive to provide equitable opportunities to engage in high-quality instruction in the least restrictive environment, empowering each student to grow according to their ability.

Federal law guarantees every student the right to a free and appropriate public education regardless of disability. Special Education rules and regulations guarantee the right to an education in the “least restrictive environment.” WNESU values inclusion and equity for all students.

If you believe that your child is having difficulty making progress in a regular classroom due to a disability, you have the right to request an evaluation of your child to find out if your student has a disability and is eligible for special education services. Please contact Student Support Services at (802)463-1612, or your student’s teacher or principal, for this evaluation.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

The WNESU Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a district wide program that helps youth thrive, achieve success, and support them to make healthy choices. Some of the services offered are listed below:

- Screening and assessment tools are used to support individuals wanting support for personal and/or family problems that may result from alcohol and other substance misuse, as well as other risk factors.
- Students will encounter support services and learning opportunities targeted at Alcohol, Tobacco, and other Drug Prevention utilizing many programs including evidence-based programs to support informed decision making and general supports.
- Students are able to access individual and/or group services in order to help students achieve individual or family success, as identified and when those supports are available.
- Students that receive services or are returning from treatment programs can also access support with these transitions.
- Parents and Guardians are offered groups and learning opportunities to support families in a variety of ways including but not limited to topics related to prevention and intervention.

Students and/or their families can expect referrals and/or information about community resources and services including but not limited to services for alcohol, tobacco, and other substance misuse treatment and programs.

Technology

The Internet is nothing more, nor less, than a pathway to communicate with the entire world. Acceptable use of this mode of communication is the same as an acceptable use of any mode of communication, including face-to-face speech.

Defamatory, threatening, racially and ethnically offensive, or sexually harassing language is not only impolite and improper, but it is also illegal. In addition, any intentional actions improperly restricting or inhibiting other members from using and enjoying the Internet service, or intentionally interrupting, delaying, or overburdening the network is illegal, and carries potentially serious civil and criminal penalties for the offender. Finally, the transmission of any materials, information, or software protected by copyright or other ownership rights is in violation of state and federal laws. Users of our network and technology expressly agree not to engage in any of the activities outlined and will be sent home in the first few weeks of school to be signed. See Policy G11 for more details.

Online Resources Opt-Out Notice

We believe in leveraging technology to enrich your child's education, and we use various online applications to enhance their learning experience. These applications often require parental consent. We respect your choices and offer you the opportunity to opt out of granting consent for specific applications.

Opting out might impact your child's learning journey, potentially differing from their peers who use these applications. Alternative resources will be provided, but we encourage you to consider the benefits these applications offer.

For example, some of the applications we use include:

- **Google Workspace for Education:** Enabling collaborative projects and document creation. This includes features such as Google Classroom for managing assignments, Google Drive/Docs for collaboration, and Google Meets for hybrid learning.
- **Zoom:** Facilitating virtual classrooms and interactive discussions.
- **GoGuardian:** Supporting online learning management and student safety.

Our full application list can be provided upon request.

To exercise your opt-out choice, please complete the "Online Applications Opt-Out Form" available at our website wnesu.org/technology/forms. Opt-outs are by September 10th or within 10 days of enrolling within our schools. We value your partnership and the positive impact it has on your child's education.

Please contact us at helpdesk@wnesu.com with any questions regarding applications available at your child's school or with any questions about this opt-out process.

Title IX

Sexual harassment is prohibited by Title IX, which ensures that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Our district is committed to preventing sexual harassment and addressing it promptly and effectively when it occurs. For detailed information, please refer to the following district policy:

[WNESU Title IX Policy \(District Policy C12\)](#)

Reporting Procedures

Any person may report sexual harassment whether relating to themselves or another person. A Report of Sexual Harassment may be made at any time, in person, by mail, by telephone, electronic mail, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report.

While the District strongly encourages Reports of Sexual Harassment to be made directly to the Title IX Coordinator, the report may be made to any District staff member, including, for instance, a counselor, teacher, or principal.

In cases where the Title IX Coordinator is the alleged respondent, the report or formal complaint may be made directly to the Superintendent, who shall thereafter fulfill the functions of the Title IX Coordinator regarding that report/complaint or delegate the function to another person.

Interim Title IX Coordinator:

Shelley Wilson, Director of Family and Student Systems

Email: shelley.wilson@wnesu.com

Phone: (802) 463-9958 ext 1301

Vermont Human Rights Commission:

Address: 14-16 Baldwin Street, Montpelier, VT 05633-6301

Voice: (800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480

TTY: (877) 294-9200

Fax: (802) 828-2481

Email: human.rights@state.vt.us

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office:

Address: U.S. Department of Education, 8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109-3921

Voice: (617) 289-0111

TDD: (877) 521-2172

Fax: (617) 289-0150

Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Video Surveillance

WNESU has adopted a Video Surveillance policy (E12). It outlines the procedures for “the installation and use of video cameras in public areas of the school, such as (but not limited to) school buses, hallways, auditoriums, lobbies, the cafeteria, and school grounds.” The intent of the cameras is to help maintain the safety and order of its students and staff and to assist in the investigation of incidents on school grounds including the school buses. School administration will supervise and control the video surveillance equipment and retain the right to use the video recordings in student disciplinary hearings, subject to Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) and federal and state laws. If necessary, the recordings may be turned over to the proper legal authorities for criminal prosecution if it is determined a crime has been committed. Recordings are not necessary for ensuring appropriate discipline will be recycled within sixty days.

Visitors/Volunteer - Ways Families Can Be Involved at School

We know that children are more likely to succeed when families and teachers work together to support learning. There are a number of ways to work with the school beyond offering your own child support.

Volunteers are always welcome and useful. Some areas where volunteers can assist are:

- ❖ Classroom Assistance
- ❖ Preparation of material
- ❖ Reading and sharing books with children
- ❖ Library work/assistance
- ❖ Art projects
- ❖ Gardening
- ❖ Classroom Celebrations
- ❖ Winter Sports

All volunteers must complete a criminal records check through the signing of a waiver that allows the WNESU to access online information. We do ask all volunteers to sign in and wear a name tag when in the school building.

Please consider joining the PTO and/or becoming a room parent to learn about specific volunteer and event opportunities.

Students and/or their families can expect referrals and/or information about community resources and services including but not limited to services for alcohol, tobacco, and other substance misuse treatment and programs.

Parents are always welcome in all WNESU schools. Visitors, students or adults, must check in at the kiosk in the main lobby. Visitor badges will be available and **must be worn**. Any parent/guardian who wishes to visit a school must contact the school principal at least 24 hours in advance and sign a confidentiality form. These forms are available in the main office. Anyone may be denied visiting privileges at the discretion of the administration.

Appendix A: Procedures

Assignment of Students

The faculty, administration, and school board are committed to ensuring that all school programs in the WNESU schools provide high-quality educational services to all students and that each school provides an equally excellent program through instruction and curriculum that meets the needs of all children.

In schools with multiple classrooms per grade (WCS and CES):

Placement of students in the classrooms must balance the needs of the child, the composition of the class, and the integrity of the educational program. The appropriate placement for all students will be initially considered by the faculty and Principal and shall include weighing the following factors:

- Class size;
- Heterogeneously balanced classes (gender, academic performance, effort, behavior)

- Relationships with siblings in the school; previous siblings with the teacher, etc.;
- Past peer interactions (negative and positive)
- Parent input and preference

Children will also be placed in heterogeneously balanced groupings. The teachers and principal will meet to construct the classrooms based on the criteria listed above. Families' input is welcome as one part of the process and should be discussed with the current teacher by May. The principal will make final placement determinations. Once assigned to a classroom, a student will only be reassigned for compelling reasons related to the above considerations. Decisions may be appealed to the superintendent/school board.

Entrance Age

The entrance age for kindergarten students in the district will be 5 years of age on or before September 1 of the enrollment year. Grade placement of all other newly-enrolled students will be determined by the building principal based on Policy G9- Grade Advancement: Retention, Promotion & Acceleration of Students.

Parent/Guardian Concerns

Parent/Guardian Concern Process

From time to time, a parent, community member or staff member might have a concern about actions taken by an administrator, individual teacher, paraprofessional, bus driver or another staff member. The staff would be glad to talk with any person who has a concern, try to understand the concern, and to help to resolve the situation. To this end, and to be sure that the process goes smoothly and fairly, we have adopted the following procedure.

1. A parent/Guardian, community member or staff member who has a concern should go directly to that person first to try to resolve the issue.
2. If the person who has the concern calls the administrator, school board, and/or superintendent, the aggrieved party will be encouraged to consult with the person with whom they have the concern.
3. The school board, as well as the superintendent, will turn the concerns over to the building administrator rather than take immediate action.
4. The building administrator will inform the staff person about the issue after he/she has encouraged the person voicing the complaint to talk with him/her.
5. If the issue cannot be resolved by talking with the staff member directly involved, then the building administrator will assist in solving the problem with the person and staff member.
6. Every attempt will be made to keep staff members informed about issues that arise. It is important that the process is fair and equitable and, to this end, every effort will be made by the administrator to provide available information.
7. Some issues may require confidentiality, which would prohibit the administrator from contacting the staff member (i.e. an issue that is a mandatory SRS report).

8. For the protection of children, as well as staff members, the building administrator will do his/her best to keep everyone informed and to act in the best interests of the school community.
9. If a teacher/staff person is a member of the union it is advisable that a union representative be present to document any concerns, which have been noted. (A union representative might or might not be present at a meeting between the administrator, the person making the contact, and the staff member. This is at the staff member's discretion).

Concerns with building-level administration should follow the above procedures, substituting superintendent for building administrator.

Restraint and Seclusion- Rule 4500

The purposes of State Board Rule 4500 are to create and maintain a positive and safe learning environment in schools; promote positive behavioral interventions and supports in schools; and ensure that students are not subjected to the inappropriate use of restraint or seclusion. Annually, at or before the beginning of the academic year, each school (defined in 4500.3(10)) shall inform all school personnel and parents of students enrolled in the school of the policies pertaining to the use of physical restraint and seclusion and the intent to emphasize the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports and its intention to avoid the use of physical restraint or seclusion to address targeted student behavior. This is also a reminder to make sure all staff receive adequate training and support for de-escalation strategies and personal safety as alternatives to the use of restraint and seclusion. Learn more about [Restraint and Seclusion in Schools](#).

Appendix B: Policies

For all policies and complete versions of those policies below please find our district policies on the [Supervisory Union's website](#). If you would like a hard copy of any of these policies, please contact your child's school.