



RESPECT. CARING. INCLUSIVENESS. INTEGRITY. RESPONSIBILITY. COURAGE.

GRISWOLD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Family/Student Handbook

2025-2026

**303 Slater Avenue
Griswold, CT 06351
(860) 376-7610**



Welcome to Griswold Elementary School!

We're excited to share this handbook with you! Inside, you'll find helpful information about our school day, policies, and procedures. We encourage you to take a moment to get familiar with it.

On behalf of the faculty and staff at GES, we are thrilled to be working with you and your child. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out to us during school hours, 8:00 a.m.-4:00p.m, at 860-376-7610. If you call after hours, simply leave a message, and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

We are confident that your child will have a joyful and enriching experience here at GES!

Sincerely,



Joseph Bordeau, Principal



Jacqueline Love, Assistant Principal

GRISWOLD PUBLIC SCHOOLS Mission and Vision /

GRISWOLD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Goals

Mission

Griswold Public Schools educate for excellence by ensuring our students are connected, by nurturing individual student talent, and by fostering a future-focused mindset.

Vision

Graduates of Griswold Public Schools journey into the future as engaged citizens, effective communicators, critical thinkers, and resilient problem solvers.

2025-2026 GOALS for Griswold Elementary School

By June 2026, GES will reduce chronic absenteeism by 15% by prioritizing Kindness in the Classroom as our Tier 1 SEL program, alongside targeted attendance interventions, family outreach, and incentives that foster a positive school culture and climate. (SEL)

By June 2026, every GES grade level will embed personalized and blended learning into teacher-selected units, aiming for a 15% increase in student achievement and growth on AIMSweb Reading and Math data. (Personalized and Blended Learning)

By June 2026, GES teachers will use universal, research-based Tier 1 instructional strategies, aiming for a 15% increase in student achievement and growth, as measured by district benchmark assessments in reading and math.
(Research-Based Instruction)

By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, Griswold Elementary School will increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding proficiency on the SBAC Reading assessment by 5%, through focused literacy instruction and targeted reading interventions.

By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, Griswold Middle School will increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding proficiency on the SBAC Math assessment by 5%, through targeted instruction and intervention strategies.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

A.M. Drop Off

- **Time:** Drop off between 8:40-8:55 a.m. (No supervision before 8:40 a.m.)
- **Location:** Main entrance of the building.
- **Procedure:**
 - Drive around to the front for drop-off.
 - If parking in the high school lot, walk your child to the main entrance.
 - After 8:55 a.m., parents must come into the Main Office to fill out a tardy slip.

P.M. Pick Up

- **Time:** Dismissal Time between 3:00-3:15
- **Location:** Main entrance of the building.
- **Procedure:**
 - Sign out and pick up your child(ren) outside the main entrance.
 - Children will exit through the main entrance after being signed out.
 - Parents/guardians must show a picture ID when signing out their children.

Important Notes

- **Changes to Dismissal:** Notify the office **NO LATER** than 2:30 p.m. if there are any changes to your child's dismissal procedure.
- **Safety and Planning:** This ensures that our office staff can communicate changes and notify the homeroom teacher in advance for a smooth dismissal process.

Bus Changes

Parents must send a note to school each time their child needs to ride a different bus, get off at a different stop, or walk instead of taking the bus. A single note may be submitted for a change for a significant period of time. (example: they need to ride a different bus for a week or longer). All notes must be submitted to the main office. Office personnel will then issue the appropriate bus passes. Telephone calls are not acceptable for this purpose.

All notes must include:

- student's first and last name
- student's homeroom teacher
- street address where the child will be going
- bus number to this address

Cafeteria

Breakfast is available daily; cost is \$.250 and includes milk. Students that qualify for free/reduced lunch will receive FREE breakfast

Lunch is also available daily; cost is \$4.00 and includes milk. Milk is also available to students who choose to bring a lunch from home, cost is \$.50. Students that qualify for free/reduced lunch will receive FREE lunch.

Food Services: [W Food Service Griswold Charging Policy.docx](#)

Change in Dismissal Procedures

- If a child's dismissal plan needs to change (example: they are taking a different bus other than their normal bus on a given day), the parent needs to send a signed note to the school indicating the change, send a signed fax, or write an email. The parent should call the school indicating that they are sending a fax or email.
- The parent may call the school to indicate a change in their child's dismissal plan if the change is for their regular bus dismissal or pick-up. **Please call the school prior to 2:30 if the child will be a pickup. The parent will need to report to the pick-up area with an ID at the end of the day.**
- A family member must be 16 years-old in order to be added to the emergency list and for a sibling from GES to be released to that family member.

Daily Schedule: Full Day & Early Dismissal

Kindergarten thru Grade 4:

- Full Day: 8:40-3:10
- Early Dismissal: 8:40-1:10

Preschool:

- AM Session, 9:00-11:30
- PM Session, 12:00-3:00

Note: No PM Session on Early Dismissal days due to inclement weather.

Delays, Closings, & Cancellations

In the event of inclement weather, school closing/delay notices will be broadcast by our local TV and Radio stations.

In addition, GPS utilizes a telephone messaging service to communicate with families about emergency situations, school events and important issues impacting the students. Please be sure the office is kept up to date with the most recent contact information.

Note: In case of inclement weather the school may close early. Please do not assume an early closing is the same as a half day. Parents are responsible for making the necessary child care arrangements in case of a weather emergency and informing your child ahead of time of the arrangements.

Early Parent Dismissal for Students

Written prior notice is required for early dismissal. If it is necessary to take your child from school before the regular dismissal time, please send a note to your child's teacher and the office stating the reason, date, and time you will come for him/her. Parents must report to the office, show a picture ID and sign his/her child out.

Entering the Building

Press the button (located on the right) outside of the main entrance. You will be let into the main office. Please have your identification ready for the office staff.

Lost & Found

Students/Parents may check for items in the Lost & Found area located outside of the library. Items left unclaimed longer than 30 days will be donated to charity. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

Parking

Parking Guidelines

To ensure a smooth and safe experience for everyone, please take note of our parking guidelines:

- **Handicapped Parking:** Limited parking is available in front of the school, primarily for handicapped access.
- **Additional Parking:** More parking spaces are available near the GHS tennis courts.
- **Short-Term Parking:** Parents staying for 30 minutes or less may use the designated spaces in front of the building.
- **Afternoon Pick-Up (2:30-3:30 PM):** If you are picking up your child during this time, please park at Griswold High School. Visitor parking in front of the school is not accessible during these hours, except for vehicles with a handicap pass, due to bus safety regulations.
- **Designated Spaces Only:** Please park in the designated parking spaces to ensure the safety and convenience of all.

Regularly Scheduled Dismissal Pick up (Between 3pm-3:15pm)

- Parent/Guardian waits outside the front main entrance
- Show picture ID and verify name with staff in the main entrance foyer
- Staff will release the child/children from the gymnasium to meet you outside of the front main entrance

Sign Out Procedure

Office Notified Prior to 2:30 p.m.: We kindly ask that you call the office in advance so that we can have your child ready

- Parent/Guardian report to the main office
- Show Picture ID

- Verify name & ID
- Student will be called to the office

Visitors/Volunteers

To ensure the safety of our students, all visitors to Griswold Public Schools are required to present a photo ID during school hours. Acceptable forms of ID include a license or state/federal-issued photo ID.

Safety Measures:

- **RAPTOR Visitor Management Software:** Background checks are conducted using this system to help us maintain a secure environment.
- **Photo ID and Visitor Badge:** All visitors, volunteers, parents attending school field trips, and contractors must present a photo ID and wear a VISITOR badge during their visit.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us keep our school community safe!

Get Involved!

Parents and community members are always welcomed and encouraged to volunteer their time and services to the GES community. Your involvement makes a positive difference!

Walking to School

All students living within a one mile radius of Griswold Elementary School are required to walk to school per the Board of Education policy. Students who walk are expected to be at school no earlier than the assigned school time (8:40 am). Parents who desire to have their children ride bicycles to school should send a note indicating that the child has their permission to do so. If a child is going to ride a bicycle to school, she/he must wear a helmet per state law. If they do not have a helmet, the parent will be required to pick up their child/bike or drop off the child's helmet before the end of the day.

Website/Teacher Email

Visit <http://www.griswold.k12.ct.us> to access teacher emails and the Griswold Public Schools and Griswold Elementary School website.

Wednesday Notices

Notices and newsletters from the Main Office will be sent home through email every Wednesday. Parents are encouraged to make a habit of reading their emails weekly. Please be sure that the

main office has the most up to date email. On occasion, additional important information from your child's teacher may come home on different days. You can access the Weekly Wednesday Folders here at <https://ges.griswoldpublicschools.org/about/wednesday-folders>.

POLICIES and PROCEDURES

Attendance Policy

Attendance Procedure (Grades K-8)

We value regular attendance as it is crucial for your child's academic success. Here's what you need to know about our attendance procedures:

Reporting Absences: If your child is absent, please contact the school by 9:00 a.m. with either a call to the office at (860-376-7610) OR send an email to gesattendance@griswoldpublicschools.org, stating the reason for the absence.

School Notification: The school will notify you by telephone if your child is absent. A record of these attempts will be kept in the main office and reviewed during monthly meetings with our attendance committee, which includes support staff, administration, the secretary, and the nurse.

Addressing Truancy:

If your child has four unexcused absences in a month or ten in a school year, we will arrange a meeting with you to discuss and address the reasons for their absences. This meeting will be held within ten days of identifying your child as truant. If you are unable to attend, the meeting will still be held, and we will document your absence. We will work together to develop a plan to improve your child's attendance.

Continued Truancy:

If there is no cooperation in resolving the truancy issue, the building principal or designee will notify the Superintendent. The Superintendent may file a written complaint with the Superior Court under the Family with Service Needs law.

Educational Evaluation: Before filing a complaint, a PPT meeting may be held to determine if an educational evaluation is necessary.

Habitual Truancy: After twenty unexcused absences, your child will be identified as habitually truant.

Support and Services: We will coordinate services and refer truants and habitual truants to community agencies that provide child and family services.

Thank you for your cooperation in ensuring your child's regular attendance and success at school.

Absentee Procedures, State Law

A. Parent's' Responsibilities:

Parents and those who have the care of children five years of age and over and under eighteen, are obligated by Connecticut law to require their children to attend school regularly during the hours and terms school is in session. The responsibility for regular attendance rests with the students' parents, guardians or with the students themselves when they become of legal age.

B. Griswold Elementary School Responsibilities:

Effective July 1, 1991, Connecticut legislators passed a law, Public Act 91-303, outlining specific mandates for public schools. All of the mandates outline early intervention efforts as well as a last resort action in dealing with truants and habitual truants. The Griswold Elementary School Attendance Committee meets bi-weekly to discuss truancy issues for students in Grades K - 4 to enforce the mandate. The mandates require:

- notification of parents, in writing, of their obligations to cause their children to attend school,
- an effort to obtain contact telephone numbers of parents for the purpose of necessary school-parent communication,
- a system of monitoring individual unexcused absences on a daily basis,
- communication to parents about the absence of their children when it appears that such parents and school personnel are not aware of the absence or the reason for the absence,
- A parent meeting will be held when a child, enrolled in grades K - 4, is determined to be a truant (truant is defined as a child who has 4 unexcused absences from school in one month or 10 unexcused absences in a school year). Such meeting shall take place within 10 school days of the date the child is determined to be a truant,
- coordination of services with and referral of children to community agencies,

- the optional referral to the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters of all children determined to be a truant,
- the mandatory referral to the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters of all children determined to be a habitual truant (habitual truant is a child who has 20 unexcused absences in a school year),
- letters will be routinely sent home after every 9 days a student is absent or tardy regardless of reasons, and
- any other policies and procedures the Griswold Board of Education deems to be appropriate and necessary.

C. Excused Absence or Unexcused Absence:

Effective July 8, 2011, Connecticut legislators signed into a law, Public Act 11-136, Section 18, which required the State Board of Education to define “excused” and “unexcused” absences. The State Board of Education policy states: “A student is considered to be ‘in attendance’ if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent.” In accordance with the law, and pursuant to Griswold's attendance policy, a student who is not “in attendance” is considered absent.

The State Board of Education defines two levels of criteria for an absence to be considered an excused absence:

Level	Total # of Days Absent (both excused and unexcused)	Acceptable Reasons for a Student Absence to Be Considered Excused	Documentation Required within 10 days
1	One through nine	Any reason that the student's parent or guardian approves	Parent or guardian note only

2	10 and above	• Student illness (to be deemed excused; an appropriately licensed medical professional must verify all student illnesses, absences, regardless of the absence's length). • Student's observance of a religious holiday. • Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family • Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required) • The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (parental documentation is not required for this reason). • Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators.	Parent or guardian note and in some cases additional documentation.
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Note: the first nine absences in a school year can be deemed excused for any reason the parent or guardian approves, the 10th and each subsequent absence establish a more stringent and specific set of reasons for the absence to be qualified as excused.

D. Written Notes for Absences:

Whenever a student is absent from school, no matter what the reason or circumstance, a note of explanation from the parent must accompany the student upon his/her return to school. *Note: the first nine absences in a school year can be deemed excused for any reason the parent or guardian approves, the 10th and each subsequent absence establish a more stringent and specific set of reasons for the absence to be qualified as excused and must include specific written documentation or reasons.* If notification is not received by school personnel within 10 days of his/her return to school, the absence will be considered unexcused for purposes of school attendance records. This is the case even though the parent has reported the absence through the call-in system. The written note should include the following information:

- the date the note is written,
- the name(s) of the student(s) involved,

- the reasons for the absence(s),
- the date(s) of the absence(s), and
- the signature of the parent or guardian. This information is vital to assure the accurate processing of the note.

E. Doctor's Note Requirement:

A doctor's note is required for any one of the following:

- If a child has five consecutive absences or has any absence after accumulating 10 days of absences, the note must accompany him/her on their return:
 - o child's name
 - o date child was seen by physician
 - o number of days required absence from school

Anytime a child is hospitalized and /or sustains an injury that requires absence from phys. ed., recess, or physical activity (i.e. fractures, strains, sprains) a note must accompany the child on his/her return to school. This note must include:

- name of child
- date of hospitalization and/or injury
- restrictions required
- length of time required for restrictions
- any medication necessary for child at school

Note: a doctor's order form must be submitted to the school nurse.

F. Absentee Call-in System:

- If you know that your child is going to be absent from school, please call the office or leave a message at 376-7610.
- If leaving a message please provide the following information:
 - o the parent/guardian's FULL name,

- o the child's FULL name and grade,
- o the reason for the absence, and the date of the absence. *Please speak slowly and clearly.*
- In order for an absence to be considered excused, a written note from the parent/guardian must accompany the child upon return to school. Follow-up written excuse notes are required to verify the authenticity of the telephone message.

Challenging Behavior

Under state law, it is the policy of the Griswold Board of Education that any form of challenging behavior, whether in the classroom, on school property, or at school-sponsored events, is expressly forbidden. Under the new state regulations, bullying is now a subset of “challenging behavior”.

“Challenging Behavior” means any behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes with or is at risk of interfering with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.

“Bullying” means unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

Challenging behavior, which may include acts of bullying, in violation of Board policy, must occur on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity. School officials are authorized to impose discipline for such conduct (off campus) only if such conduct markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day to day operations of the school.

Types of Conduct

1. Physical intimidation and/or attacks.
2. Verbal taunts, teasing, cruel rumors, false accusations, name-calling, and put-downs, including taunts based on ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected and/or individual characteristics, and social isolation.
3. Oral or written threats and intimidation (including use of electronic devices and social media, including off-campus actions if they negatively affect school performance).
4. Threatening gestures or actions.

Investigation

The Assistant Principal/ School Climate Specialist or their designee is responsible for the investigation of all challenging behavior reports. Formal reports may be made in writing or

orally by students, parents, or guardians ([link to form.](#)) The Challenging Behavior report form should be used to report alleged bullying incidents.

Anonymous reports may be made whereby students request their name be withheld. Should anonymity be requested, the Assistant Principal will meet with students but no disciplinary action may be taken solely on an anonymous report. Challenging Behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in how serious it is and what impact it has on the victim and students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of Challenging Behavior. Interventions assigned by the administration may be disciplinary or non-disciplinary, such as counseling, mediation, education, and/or social skills training. Bullying behavior by any student in Griswold Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

Bullying

The Board of Education promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited. ***Definition of Bullying—(1) “Bullying” means an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive, which (A) causes physical or emotional harm to an individual, (B) places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or (C) infringes on the rights or opportunities of an individual at school.*** (See Board of Education Policy Handbook for further explanation). The policy encourages students to report bullying and does permit anonymous reporting. Parents or guardians may report situations in writing to the school through a Student Conflicting Reporting form. Copies of these forms are located in the main office or on the school website under Student Resources. School administrators, along with support staff, will investigate the reports and determine which action is appropriate. The Safe School Climate Plan outlines how Griswold Elementary School is proactive in promoting a secure and positive school climate and the investigation process of any bullying reports brought to the school's attention. This document is located on the school website under Student Resources.

Bus Expectations

Policy 5131.1 (a-c) excerpts

Responsibility for the safe transportation of the students lies with the Griswold Board of Education and, in order to carry out that responsibility, certain rules and regulations regarding bus discipline have been established. Free bus transportation is provided to students (including vocational technical school students) who are eligible based upon the transportation policy of the Board of Education. Riding a bus to school is a privilege, not a right. Your child has the right to

safe transportation to and from school each day. Certain rules and regulations regarding bus discipline have been established. The bus driver is in complete charge of all student passengers and is responsible for the enforcement of all rules and regulations concerning bus discipline. All school rules apply at the bus stop and on the bus. Video cameras may be used on school transportation vehicles transporting students to and from curricular and extracurricular activities. Should a parent have a bus concern, please contact the bus company directly and ask to speak to the manager, Lou Schuler at 860-376-2860.

Operator Roles and Responsibilities

- The operator shall be in complete charge of all passengers and shall be responsible for the enforcement of all rules and regulations concerning bus discipline.
- Enforcement shall be carried out in a safe and courteous manner.
- The driver shall warn any and all students who violate any of the regulations or who may endanger the safety of any passenger.
- Students may be assigned seats by the driver and/or school administration for an indefinite period of time.
- If students violate these regulations after being properly warned, the bus driver shall notify the school administration in writing of the infraction. Forms for reporting shall be furnished by the school system.
- Bus drivers may not evict a student passenger from the bus. In emergency situations, the driver may return to the school where the eviction will be handled by the school administration.
- Only the school administration or the Griswold Board of Education has the authority to deny transportation to a student.
- Passengers shall follow the instructions of the driver at all times to provide and maintain maximum safety for all.

Student Behavior While Boarding and Departing the Bus

Students will:

- be at the designated bus stop at the designated time. For kindergarten students only, it is required that a guardian be present when the child is dropped off.

- wait for the bus on the shoulder of the highway, or sidewalk if available, in the designated area.
- wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to board.
- **not cross to the other side of the street for pick-up until the bus has arrived and has its flashers on.**
- enter the bus in an orderly manner without pushing, crowding, loud talking or horseplay.
- not bring articles of any injurious or objectionable nature aboard the bus.
- depart in an orderly manner without pushing, crowding, loud talking or horseplay.
- go directly to their destination after leaving the bus.

Section 4-Student Behavior on the Bus

Students will:

- remain seated and facing forward until ready to depart the bus.
- Follow directions the driver gives at all times.
- not exhibit aggressive behavior (fighting, pushing, tripping, etc.).
- refrain from putting any part of their body out of any window.
- not throw objects in or out of the bus.
- not use tobacco, drugs, or any controlled substance
- refrain from spitting or littering.
- maintain appropriate indoor voices
- not tamper with bus equipment
- not swear and/or use vulgar language.
- not distract the driver.
- not open windows without permission

Violation Procedure

- The first reported and confirmed violation shall require the driver to fill out a written report, on a form supplied by the school system, and turn in the report to school administration. A copy of the report may be mailed to the parent(s) upon request and the original filed in the school office. The families are notified by administration.
- The second reported and confirmed violation shall follow the same procedures used in the first violation with the following additions. The student may be relieved of the privilege to ride pending a meeting by the student and parents with the building administration at which time the principal or assistant principal shall determine when the privilege to ride will be restored. Maximum loss of riding privilege is ten days.
- With a third reported and confirmed violation, the student shall be relieved of the privilege to ride and may be suspended from school (all suspensions and expulsions will be in accordance with Board policies and state statutes) pending a meeting by the student, parents, and bus driver with the building administration at which time the principal or assistant principal shall determine whether the student may be relieved permanently of the privilege to ride and when the student shall be permitted to return to school.

Note: Behavior that warrants a suspension will be handled according to the Board policy covering suspension and expulsion. In addition, students and their parents shall be held liable for any damage or abuse caused by them. Serious 1st or 2nd offenses may result in immediate loss of riding privilege, as well as suspension from school. If a student loses his privilege to ride the school bus, either temporarily or permanently, parents will be responsible for ensuring that their child gets to school.

Cafeteria/Lunch Expectations

You deserve to enjoy your meal in a clean, safe, and warm environment. With so many of us sharing the cafeteria, it can get lively and busy. To keep our space pleasant for everyone, let's remember to follow the cafeteria rules. Thank you for your cooperation!

Cafe Student Behavior Responsibilities:

- Enter calmly and find your seat at your table.
- Please wait patiently in the lunch line.
- Show respect to our wonderful cafeteria staff and duty staff.
- Talk quietly using calm and appropriate voices.

- Keep our space clean by tidying up your area after eating.
- Be safe with your food: keep it on your tray and enjoy your meal without throwing it.
- Enjoy your food here: please don't take food or drinks out of the cafeteria without permission.
- Assigned seats: if you have one, please sit there each day.
- Dismissal: will be by table. Ensure your area is clean and everyone at your table is calm and ready.
- Raise your hand if you need assistance or need to leave your seat; staff will help you.
- Please do not share home lunch or hot lunch with friends.
- Lunch or recess detention: if assigned, please go immediately to the designated area.

Thank you for making our cafeteria a great place for everyone!

Celebrations/Birthdays

Birthdays and other celebrations are a wonderful way to add fun to our school day! To ensure everyone's feelings are valued, we kindly ask that birthday invitations not be sent through the classroom teacher unless all students are invited or specific arrangements have been made with the teacher. If you plan to bring food for a celebration, we encourage you to choose healthy options that contribute positively to our students' well-being. Please keep celebrations brief, as determined by the classroom teacher, and have a conversation with your child's teacher beforehand to make sure all students, especially those with food allergies, are safe. Let's work together to make every celebration special and inclusive!

Healthy food choice ideas for classroom celebration	Non-food ideas for classroom celebrations:
● Low-fat or nonfat plain or flavored milk, 100% juice, water, flavored/sparkling water (without added sugars or sweeteners), sparkling punch (seltzer and 100% fruit juice)	● Read a book to the whole class ● A pencil, pen or eraser for each child ● Arts and crafts activity with the class

● Pretzels, low-fat popcorn, rice cakes, bread sticks, whole wheat crackers, graham crackers, animal crackers, Low-fat muffins ● Dried fruits (raisins, cranberries, apricots, banana chips), 100% fruit snacks ● Veggie trays with low-fat dip, celery and carrots with peanut butter and raisins ● Fresh fruit assortment ● Low-fat ice cream, yogurt, sherbet	● Play a game with the class ● Volunteer in the classroom
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Class Assignments

When class lists are developed, our goal is to construct a heterogeneous group of learners. Balance of boys and girls, academic and social information provided to us from parents and teachers, and special learning considerations such as special school district services are all considered when placing students. This is not a simple process and is one that requires a great deal of thought and planning. A well balanced class allows students and teachers to perform at their best. Please note, for grades 1-4, class placements are determined by the beginning of June. Placements for Kindergarten and Pre K are done in the summer. Specific teacher requests may be considered, but ultimately the decision for placement will be decided by building administration. We make every effort to meet all students' needs and we are confident that this process allows us to do an effective job of developing class lists. We greatly appreciate the level of trust that you have in us to educate your child.

Conferences/Family Questions

A common conference day is scheduled in the Fall and Spring; however families wishing to meet with teachers may do so at any time with an appointment. Families are advised to contact their child's teacher with any question(s) they may have. Contact your teacher through email, send in a note, or call at 860-376-7610 if you wish to schedule a meeting or have a question/concern.

Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior

At Griswold Elementary School we believe in treating students with dignity and fairness and that all students, like all adults, make mistakes and poor choices at times. We also believe that every child deserves the opportunity for a positive learning experience without having disruptions to

their learning environment because of disruptive behaviors by others. Through the implementation of consequences for inappropriate behavior, it is our intention that these consequences will be positive learning experiences for the student. We also believe that one size doesn't fit all. For many behaviors, many considerations are taken into account before a decision is made regarding the consequence.

These considerations include, but are not limited to, the following attributes:

- the developmental age/level of the student
- whether the student has had previous issues with one of the character traits previously during the year
- the specific circumstances of the incident
- how the student handles the discussion about the incident with the teacher or administrator and is/isn't reflective and/or remorseful
- The intent of the behavior
- The cause of the behavior

A consequence for behavior in many cases is handled by the classroom teacher within the class or the teacher on duty if the problem takes place during recess. With these types of behaviors/consequences, the teacher will contact the parent regarding the concern.

Additional consequences for inappropriate behavior may include the following:

- Reprimand: A discussion of the infraction and a review of expected behaviors.
- Lunch/recess detention/support: At times students may be asked to work with a teacher during recess for extra help, to make up work, or as a consequence for inappropriate behavior.
- After School Detention: Assignment of time after school in a setting supervised by a teacher or administration.
- Parent Contact: A telephone call or letter to parents informing them of their child's misconduct and a review of the expected behaviors with them.
- Parent Conference: In order to avoid placing a student on ISS or OSS, there are times when the school administration will send the student home with notification that the student is not to return to school the next day without being accompanied by his/her parent or

guardian. A conference is then held to discuss the inappropriate behavior and expected behavior.

- In-School Suspension (ISS): Assignment to an area in the school that is isolated from other students and is under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff. Work for the day may be provided by the teaching team or may be a punishment exercise assigned by the office. If the student's behavior is inappropriate or unacceptable while on in-school suspension, then an out-of-school suspension has to be considered.
- Suspension from School (OSS): Exclusion from school for a period of time up to and including ten (10) school days. Parents will be called to the school to take their child home as soon as possible.
- Expulsion from School: Exclusion from school for up to one (1) year. In such cases:
 1. The student will be placed on suspension for up to ten (10) days while the incident is fully investigated. A written communication will be issued to the parents or guardian from the school principal's office.
 2. The student and his/her family will be notified in writing from the Superintendent's office of a hearing before the Griswold Board of Education. This information will include the rights that the student and his/her family have along with information about the expulsion law.
 3. The student and his/her family will have an opportunity to speak on his/her behalf at the hearing and has the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at the hearing. The student may be represented by counsel.
 4. Following the hearing, the Board of Education will make a decision as to the extent of further disciplinary action. This could result in expulsion from school for a period of one (1) full year beginning with the date of the hearing.

The following behaviors may be subject to suspension, expulsion, and/or police involvement, dependent on aforementioned considerations (pg.29)

- a student in possession of a weapon, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol;
- a student caught starting a fire or pulling a fire alarm;
- a student who assaults or threatens to assault or otherwise harm another student or staff member;

- a student who engages in bullying, harassment or intimidation, or any act that injures, degrades, or disgraces a student or staff member;
- a student who willfully destroys or vandalizes school property.

Dress and Grooming

The overall appearance of our student body contributes to the positive atmosphere of our school. While personal choice in appearance is important, it's also our responsibility to ensure a healthy and safe environment for everyone. Most importantly, students should choose attire that does not compromise the health and safety of themselves or others.

Dress and Grooming Guidelines

At our school, we believe that a well-groomed appearance and proper personal hygiene contribute to a positive learning environment. Here are some guidelines to help everyone stay comfortable, safe, and ready to learn:

- **Dress to Impress:** Students should maintain a neat appearance and practice good personal hygiene.
- **Health and Safety First:** When choosing school attire, consider factors that ensure your health and safety.
- **Label Your Coats:** To prevent loss, please label all coats with your child's name.
- **Safe Footwear:** Wear shoes that are safe for running and playing. Heels and "flip-flop" sandals are not suitable for safety reasons.
- **P.E. Class Ready:** Rubber-soled sneakers should be worn for all P.E. classes.
- **Respectful Attire:** Clothing or accessories should be respectful and safe. Items that are rude, vulgar, unsafe, illegal, or disruptive, including those advertising alcohol, drugs, or inappropriate messages, are not allowed.
- **Beachwear:** Attire designed for beach activities, such as exposed torsos, baggy pants revealing undergarments, short shorts, midriff tops, muscle shirts, and spaghetti straps, are not appropriate for school.
- **Headwear:** Hats, sweatbands, bandannas, and hoodies with hoods up are not permitted, unless it's a designated "spirit day."
- **Outerwear:** Keep jackets, coats, book bags, and backpacks in lockers or homerooms.

If a student wears inappropriate clothing, they may be asked to:

1. Call home for a change of clothes.
2. Be given a clean article of clothing to cover the present clothing.
3. Turn the clothing inside out for the day and be requested not to wear it again.

Let's all work together to maintain a positive and safe school environment!

Field Trips/Chaperones

Field trips are seen as an appropriate continuation of the instructional process when they serve educational purposes that are directly relevant to the school curriculum. Written parental permission is required for any student to attend a field trip. Parents are asked to return forms as quickly as possible. To ensure the safety of all children, we must request that siblings do not accompany students on field trips. We also require that students who are attending a field trip travel to and from the field trip destination with their classmates, not with a parent. Parents should not plan to pick up their child from a field trip destination, unless it is an emergency and a signed note at the field trip destination is required.

Chaperones

For some trips, parents may be needed as chaperones. However, we cannot take extra chaperones. In order for trips to function smoothly, we ask that all chaperones be aware of the following:

- Chaperones are expected to follow the guidelines set up by the trip coordinators and/or homeroom teachers. Chaperones should not bring younger children with them on field trips.
- Chaperones will travel with the school group on buses/vehicles designated by the school. No private vehicles may be taken, unless this has been arranged in advance.
- Chaperones will be responsible for a designated group of students. This includes taking attendance; monitoring behavior and making sure students stay on schedule.
- Chaperones and students must remain with their assigned groups at all times.
- Chaperones are asked to dress appropriately as a model for our students.
- Chaperones may not smoke at any time on a field trip as field trips are considered part of the school day.
- Chaperones must have a form of ID with them.

Fire/Evacuation/Lockdown Drills

For the protection and safety of all persons, it is imperative that all students and staff leave the building walking in single file. This exit should be done quickly and quietly; without running. Evacuation drills will be held regularly.

School evacuation instructions are posted in every classroom and should be followed exactly.

There are two levels of evacuation drills:

Level 1 - A Level 1 drill is similar to a fire drill in that the children and adults leave the building and go to a designated area a safe distance from the building.

Level 2 - A Level 2 drill is an evacuation that necessitates the children and adults moving to another location away from the building and surrounding area. The Level 2 designated area for GES is the high school unless otherwise indicated by the school administration.

A lockdown drill is a practice in case there is a situation where there may be a possible threat to the welfare of the students and staff. In a lockdown drill, an announcement is made over the intercommunication system and all students move quickly and quietly to a classroom that is then locked from the inside. The students and staff remain quiet in the classroom until a clear signal has been given.

Harassment

We want our school to be a fair place where people treat each other with kindness and respect. Harassment or hazing of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes “picking on” other students or staff members and name calling. Racial or religious language meant to insult others is forbidden.

Sexual harassment is illegal. Sexual harassment means unwanted sexually-oriented words or actions that hurt or humiliate people. It is behavior or words that:

- are directed at a person because of his/her gender,
- are uninvited, unwanted, and unwelcome,
- cause a person to feel uncomfortable or offended,
- create an environment that makes learning difficult, or
- may be repeated or may be very offensive on a one-time basis.

Any reports of harassment will be investigated by the Griswold Elementary School Crisis Team. A formal harassment complaint can be completed on the student ***conflict reporting form***, located in the ***GES Safe School Climate Plan***. If a report of harassment is confirmed after an investigation takes place, the student committing the harassment is subject to disciplinary action that may include suspension or expulsion, depending on a number of factors such as:

- Severity of the harassment incident(s)
- Age, developmental awareness of the student
- Other pertinent information that may correlate to the incident

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act

School aged children have certain rights or protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act (NCLB).

Your child(ren) has the right to:

- Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children is disseminated on request where such children receive services.
- Homeless children & youth are identified by school personnel and through coordination with other agencies.
- Homeless children enroll in and have a full opportunity to succeed in school.

Please contact Griswold Schools' Homeless Liaison, Jessica Simoneau (GES School Counselor) at 860-376-7610 for more information.

Medications

Medication for students needing medication during the school day must be brought to the nurse's office by the parent/guardian. Connecticut State Law requires a statement on file in the nurse's office signed by physician and parent, describing medication, dosage, and possible side effects. **All medications (including aspirin) must be kept by the nurse and distributed by her at the appropriate times.** All medication which needs to be given during school hours is given by the school nurse. In her absence the principal, assistant principal or teacher may administer medications.

DO NOT send medication of any kind in any amount to school with your child with instructions for him/her to "take it on his/her own." They will not be permitted to assume this responsibility.

If your child must receive medication during school hours, please abide by the following:

- An order from the doctor must be completed and signed. This must include the name of the medication, the dosage, and length of time to be given. No medication may be given without a written doctor's order.
- Medications must be in a pharmacy bottle labeled with:
 - the student's name
 - the name of the medication
 - what time it is to be given

Nonresident Students

Any request to attend Griswold Public Schools by any non-resident must be made formal in writing to the Griswold's Superintendent of Schools for consideration (BOE Policy).

Photographing Students

As part of the registration packet each year, parents are asked to sign permission forms for their child to be photographed as part of our school activities and events. These pictures could possibly be used in school, on our district/school website, or on the district/school social media page. For any consideration outside of the school, we will contact the parent first. Classroom volunteers or other adults should not take pictures of students in the class. This is to protect each child's right to privacy.

Pledge of Allegiance

"Each local and regional board of education shall develop a policy to ensure that time is available each school day for students in the schools under its jurisdiction to recite the Pledge of Allegiance." The Pledge will be at approximately 8:55.

Recess Expectations

Playground Safety Guidelines: To ensure our playground is a safe and fun place for everyone, we have established some important rules. Teachers will review these with students periodically, and we ask that you also go over them with your child.

For a Safe and Fun Playground:

- **Enjoy Without Contact:** Contact sports are not allowed to keep everyone safe.

- **Leave Electronics at Home:** Handheld electronic games, cell phones, and other technological equipment should stay at home.
- **No Trading Cards:** Trading of cards like Yu-Gi-Oh, Pokemon, or sports-related cards is not permitted.
- **Safe Toys Only:** Hard balls, bats, and hard plastic toys (like frisbees) are not allowed.
- **Respect Personal Space:** Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- **Speak Kindly:** Use appropriate language.
- **Be Inclusive:** Include all children in games and activities

Using Equipment & Playground Safely:

- **Slide Safely:** Sit forward on slides (no standing, lying on stomachs, or going backwards).
- **Climb Up, Not Down:** No climbing up slides.
- **Bar and Rail Safety:** No flipping over bars or rails.
- **Take Turns:** Use equipment one at a time.
- **Ground Rules:** No handling wood chips, gravel, or rocks.

Winter Playground Use:

- **Dress Warmly:** Wear jackets, boots, gloves, hats, etc., to enjoy winter recess.
- **Weather Watch:** During severe weather, recess will be moved indoors for everyone's safety.

Let's work together to make the playground a safe and happy place for all our students!

Using the Child Care Weather Watch guidelines include the following:

- Temperatures 20 degrees Fahrenheit* and above, students will attend outdoor recess for the full recess period.
- Temperatures 15- 20 degrees Fahrenheit*, students will go outside for 10 minutes of recess and spend the remainder of recess indoors.
- Temperatures below 15 degrees Fahrenheit*, students will remain inside for recess.

Note: this is a “RealFeel” temperature from Accuweather.com, which combines the temperature and wind chill factor to indicate what the weather actually FEELS like!

Report Cards

Report Cards and Standards-Based Reporting

We’re excited to share your child’s progress with you! Report cards will be issued three times a year for students, providing a comprehensive record of academic progress, conduct, and effort.

Standards-Based Reporting:

Standards represent the learning and developmental goals each student is expected to achieve by the end of the school year. For example, a second-grade standard might be "writes in complete sentences," which falls under the Language Arts category. Students are graded based on their progress toward meeting these standards.

Report Card Schedule:

Students in Grades K, 1, 2, 3, and 4 will receive report cards each trimester (three times per year). All trimester 1, 2, and 3 report cards will be emailed home to families. We encourage you to review these report cards to celebrate your child’s achievements and to understand areas where they may need additional support.

Retention/Promotion

- Retention is only considered when all avenues for encouraging student growth have been exhausted. Parents will be kept informed of student achievement and will be notified if retention becomes a consideration for their child.
- When retention does become a consideration, a parent conference will be arranged by the teacher. This will allow an open dialogue about the child’s progress, attitude and abilities as well as a time to assess the advantages and disadvantages of retention.
- The final decision concerning student retention shall be a collaborative one between the parent, classroom teacher and the administration. Parental and support staff opinions will serve as primary criteria in the decision making process.

Smoke Free Environment

The Griswold Public School campus is a designated smoke-free zone. Smoking is prohibited in school, on school grounds, at school-related or sponsored events, or on school buses. Further, you may not be in possession of cigarettes or any other tobacco product in school. You are also not to be in possession of a lighter or matches in school or on school buses.

Student Assessments

AIMSweb Testing for Grades K-4: Students will complete AIMSweb testing in the fall, winter and spring. AIMSweb is a widely used computer based assessment tool designed to monitor and measure students' academic progress in early literacy, reading, and math skills. It provides valuable insights into students' development and helps identify areas where they may need additional support.

SBAC Testing for Grades 3 & 4: In addition, students in grades 3-4 will also participate in the Smarter Balance Tests (SBAC). Based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), these computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks are administered in the Spring in English language arts (ELA)/literacy and mathematics. They are designed to provide valid, reliable and fair measures of students' progress toward and attainment of the knowledge and skills required to be college and career-ready.

Student Nutrition

(Student Wellness Policy)

The Griswold Board of Education recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. The Board is committed to providing a school environment that promotes student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement.

Tardy Policy

Any child who arrives at school after 8:55 must report to the office with a parent/guardian to obtain a tardy note which they will hand to his/her classroom teacher. Each absence and tardy will become a part of the child's attendance record.

Use of Dogs to Sweep School Property

The Board permits the administration to invite law enforcement agencies to sweep school property with dogs trained for the purpose of detecting the presence of illegal substances, when necessary to protect the health and safety of students, employees or property or to detect the presence of illegal substances or contraband, including alcohol and/or drugs.

The use of trained canine sniffing dogs and their associated law enforcement personnel is for the purpose of “alerting” on property only, and is subject to the following:

1. Parents and students shall be notified of this policy through its inclusion in the student/ parent handbook, and the Superintendent and Principal or their designees, shall explain the policies and procedures followed in sweeps and searches to students and staff on an annual basis. Once notification has been given to parents and students through the handbook and assembly respectively, the school district will have met its obligation to advertise the sweep and search policy and associated procedures. Additional notices need not be given and actual times or dates of planned sweeps need not be released in advance.
2. The Superintendent shall authorize the sweep. Immediately prior to the sweep, an announcement will be made for students and staff to 'stay put' in their classrooms while the sweep is taking place. Representatives from school administration shall accompany dogs and handlers while on school premises.
3. The Board shall be informed by the Superintendent of Schools that a sweep has taken place.
4. Parents shall be informed through the school's mass communication system by the Superintendent of Schools that a sweep has taken place.
5. All school property which students have access to during the day, such as lockers, classrooms, parking areas and storage areas may be swept.
6. Individuals shall not be subjected to a search by dogs.
 - Dogs shall not be used in rooms occupied by persons except for demonstration purposes. The handler and representative from school administration will always be present with the dogs.
 - When used for demonstration purposes, the dog may not sniff any student and/or staff.
7. Only the dog's official handler will determine what constitutes an alert by the dog. If the dog alerts on a particular item or place, that locker or vehicle will be identified for later search. Upon completion of the sweep, the school administration will then search the identified property in the presence of a witness.
8. Searches that disclose evidence of misconduct shall result in disciplinary consequences in accordance with Board Policy.

Weapons, Drugs, and Alcohol

You may not bring or threaten to bring any item to school which can be considered to be a firearm, dangerous instrument or deadly weapon.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- any firearm, any knife
- a chemical weapon or explosive such as mace, ammunition, or fireworks
- any device having a sharp point or edge, such as, but not limited to, an ice pick or razor
- any other dangerous instrument capable, in the opinion of the school administration, of inflicting injury, including laser pens
- any facsimile of the above
- any illegal substances (drugs), nor may you be in possession of drug paraphernalia. You may not use any illegal substance or paraphernalia in school, on school grounds, at school-related or sponsored events, or on school buses.
- possession of over-the-counter drugs or prescription drugs in school. Students needing medications during the school day must bring them to the Nurse's Office. All medications (including aspirin) must be kept by the school nurse and given by the nurse to the student at the appropriate times.
- alcoholic beverages cannot be brought and/or consumed in school, on school grounds, at school-related or sponsored events, or on school buses.

What Can Be Brought To School/What Should Not

It is each student's responsibility to care about the school and to keep it clean and safe, with a focus on learning.

- Gum is not permitted in school, unless permission has been given by the teacher and/or bus driver.
- Personal electronics such as tablets, iPads, cell phones, headphones, and other electronic toys are not allowed to be used in school. Some bus drivers allow students to have and use these items on the bus rides. They need to be put into backpacks before leaving the bus and may not be taken out until you return to the bus at the end of the day. If you decide to bring these items to school, it is at your own risk and the school is not responsible for any electronic item lost or stolen at school.

- Trading cards (Yu Gi Oh, Pokemon, sports related) are allowed on the school bus or at school, but cannot be traded. If you decide to bring these items to school, it is at your own risk and the school is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.
- Any items confiscated from a child at school can be picked up by a parent after school or may be given to you at the end of the day by the teacher.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

Grade Level/Nightly Reading

Each grade level has specific homework policies. Please follow the guidelines communicated by your classroom teacher. All students should read for 20 minutes each night. Our youngest students that are still learning to read can count time being read to by an adult as 20 minutes of their nightly reading.

Work Missed Due to Absence

- If a child is absent for one day, let the child rest so s/he is ready to come back to school the next day. Also, please make sure your child has completed the work that is due the day s/he is absent. With a one-day absence, the student will have sufficient time to make up the work once s/he returns to school without penalty. The teachers are flexible on the amount of time to make up the work, depending on the assignment. With a one day absence, parents do not need to contact the school to request the missing homework.
- If a student will be absent for longer than one day due to illness, homework can be requested. If a student is absent, the child should check with the classroom teacher to find out what has been missed.
- Parents are discouraged from taking extended vacations during the school year as it disrupts the educational process for their children. If parents decide to take an extended vacation during the school year, please let the school office and the child's homeroom teacher know as soon as possible. Teachers are not required to put a packet of work together for the child to complete during the absence. They will, however, give parents an overview of what the child will be missing so the parent can take the responsibility to help the child keep up with the rest of the class.

PROGRAMS and SERVICES

Building Use

The building is available to community members for use Monday through Friday during the evening. Parties interested in using the facilities should contact Diane Fasula at 860-376-7674 for more information. Please note that all school functions take precedence over community use. These forms may be picked up from the central office.

Counseling & Support Services

Support services are available to all students in the school based on individual needs. These services include individual counseling, group counseling, and agency referral and related services. Parents may contact the following staff for specific concerns at 860-376-7610 to make an appointment:

- School Counselor: Jordyn Drabinski
- School Social Worker: Alyssa Hancock
- School Psychologist: Jamie Anderson

PTO

The PTO is very active at GES. Meetings are scheduled on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 in the Library. PTO representatives can be contacted through email at GESPTO@griswoldpublicschools.org for specific questions.

Social Emotional Learning

The Social Emotional Learning program, Kindness in the Classroom, is fully implemented in all of our classrooms. The program provides a lesson based approach to Social Emotional Learning. A wonderful piece of the program is the connections that will be made in the classroom, school, community, and home. Our focus is on these character traits: RESPECT, CARING, INCLUSIVENESS, INTEGRITY, RESPONSIBILITY, and COURAGE with all of our students.

Student Incentives

Student of the Month

Each month, classroom teachers have the pleasure of selecting a student who has excelled in demonstrating our valued character traits: respect, caring, inclusiveness, integrity, responsibility,

and courage. Our Student of the Month program celebrates students who embody these qualities and exemplify what it means to be an exemplary individual.

Recognition and Celebration:

- **Certificate and Hall of Fame:** Students chosen as the Student of the Month receive a certificate and have their photo and certificate proudly displayed in our hallways.
- **Morning Announcements:** Each honored student will also be recognized during the morning announcements, celebrating their positive contributions to our school community.

Consistent Acknowledgement:

It's important to note that all of our students are regularly acknowledged for making good choices and showing our character traits within the classroom environment. The Student of the Month program serves as an additional incentive and support for students, providing extra recognition for their exceptional efforts.

By highlighting and celebrating these positive behaviors, we foster a supportive and encouraging school environment where every student can thrive.

Student Match

Students at GES are recommended for a BIG via a teacher, counselor, or other member of the GES community. The GES student (Little) is matched up with a GHS student (Big). Meeting times are arranged during school hours with minimum interruption to the school day. Contact the school counselor, Jordyn Drabinski, if you would like more information at 860-376-7610.

