

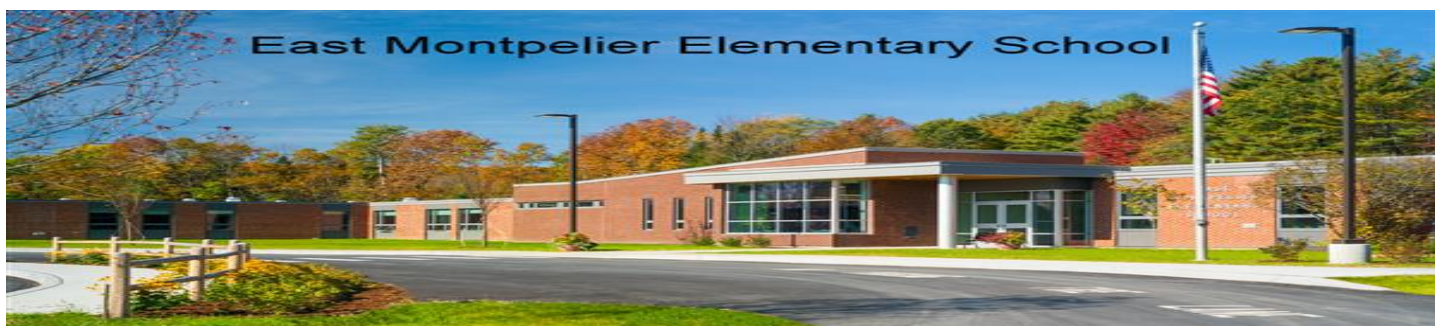
East Montpelier Elementary Student and Family Handbook 2025-2026



Washington Central Unified Union School District Mission Statement:
WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.

EMES Mission Statement

The purpose of our school is to teach all children to become competent, caring citizens and life-long learners through challenging and relevant curriculum.



August, 2025

Dear Families,

I want to extend a warm welcome to the 2025-2026 school year. We are eager and excited to welcome your children back to school on August 27th, and are looking forward to what another year of learning will bring for all of us! Working and learning with a dedicated staff, families, and community is an honor, and I am proud to be part of EMES. We value a strong partnership with families and know that your involvement and support are critical to each child's success. Given this, we will continue to share school news and events through all-school newsletters, Friday folders, classroom blogs and news, email messages, our school website, and *Infinte Campus Messenger*. I encourage you to communicate with your child's teacher and with myself. It will continue to be my priority to hear your concerns, opinions, and celebrations!

Provided within this handbook is important information that will be a resource for you throughout the school year. Included are the WCUUSD school policies, the school calendar, general rules and expectations, and student programs and services. We ask that families review this information together, and if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

Warm regards,
Alicia Lyford, EMES Principal

Dear Families,

As we begin the 2025-2026 school year, I want to wish you a warm welcome and extend gratitude to you for being such an essential part of our Washington Central community. The first day of school is always filled with excitement and anticipation, and we are eager to see the growth, learning, and joy that the year ahead will bring.

At Washington Central, our work is guided by a deep commitment to students. Everything we do — from curriculum design to community partnerships — is centered on creating the best possible learning experiences for your children. We believe that every child deserves to feel safe, supported, and challenged to reach their fullest potential.

We also know that students thrive when families and schools work hand-in-hand. Your voice, your care, and your involvement make a tremendous difference. This handbook is one of the ways we share important information to keep you connected with what's happening in our schools. Please use it as a resource throughout the year, and never hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher, school leadership, or myself if you have questions or ideas to share.

As we move into this school year, I want to affirm our shared commitment: **to nurture curiosity, to foster belonging, and to help every student grow.** Together, rooted in our values and united in partnership, we can create schools where every child feels known, valued, and inspired to learn.

Thank you for trusting us with your children. It is an honor to serve them — and to work alongside you.

With gratitude,
Steven Dellinger-Pate
Superintendent, Washington Central Unified Union School District

WASHINGTON CENTRAL UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF

Superintendent	Steven Dellinger-Pate
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent	Melissa Tuller
Human Resources Director	Heidi Dimick
District Operations Manager	Timothy Couture
Director of Curric/Instruct/Assessment	Jennifer Miller-Arsenault
Director of Special Services	Julia Pritchard
Administrative Assistant - Special Services	Lynnea Timpone
Business Administrator	Susanne Gann
Benefits Specialist	Holly Poulin
Payroll Specialist	
Accounts Payable Accountant	Elizabeth Guthrie
Financial Accountant	Tom Hamlin
Medicaid Clerk	Rebecca Bicknell
Food Service Director	Rob Scholtz

BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

The WCUUSD School Board meets on the third Wednesday of the month. Board contact information and meeting resources can be found at the district website at <https://www.wcsu32.org/domain/36>

WCUUSD Board Members

Board Chair: Flor Diaz Smith: East Montpelier Vice Chair: Ursula Stanley: Middlesex Elizabeth Brown: Calais Amelia Contrada: East Montpelier Natasha Eckart: Worcester Jonathan Goddard: Berlin Daniel Keeney: Calais	Michelle Ksepka: Calais McKalyn Leclerc: Worcester Chris McVeigh: Middlesex Diane Nichols-Fleming: Berlin Kealy Sloan: Berlin Zach Sullivan: East Montpelier Patrick Whelley: Middlesex Julia Hewitt: Worcester
---	--

EMES Staff Directory:

First	Last	Position	Email
Alicia	Lyford	Principal	alyford@u32.org
Jodi	Parker	Admin Assistant to Principal	jparker@u32.org
Susie	Deforge	Admin Assistant/Para	sudeforge@u32.org
Heather	Clark-Warner	Pre-K Teacher	hclark-warner@u32.org
Jillian	Zeilenga	Kindergarten Teacher	jzeilenga@u32.org
Jessica	Fecura	Grade 1 Teacher	jfecura@u32.org
Noelle	Drown	Grade 2/3 Teacher	ndrown@u32.org
Jennifer	Fitch	Grade 2/3 Teacher	jfitch@u32.org
Laura	Giammusso	Grade 2/3 Teacher	lgiammusso@U32.org
Claire	Gallagher	Grade 4/5 Teacher	clgallagher@u32.org
Jenny	Bradley	Grade 4/5 Teacher	jbradley@u32.org
Ellen	Shedd	Grade 4/5 Teacher	eshedd@u32.org
Dave	Willard	Grade 6 Teacher	dwillard@u32.org
Mary Beth	Langevin	School Counselor/ Health	mlangevin@u32.org
Amber	Larrabee	School Nurse	alarrabee@U32.org
Michael	Sherwin	Behavior Support Coach	msherwin@u32.org
Liz	Bevins	Literacy Interventionist	lbevins@u32.org
Christine	Christiano	Math Interventionist	cchristiano@u32.org
Cathie	Ely	Literacy Interventionist	cely@u32.org
Lisa	Gariboldi	Math Interventionist	lgariboldi@u32.org
Michael	Blanchard	Physical Ed Teacher	mblanchard@u32.org
Rory	Woodard	Library/Media Specialist	rwoodard@U32.org
Jennifer	Campbell	Visual Arts Teacher	jcampbell@u32.org
Kenna	Lund	Music Teacher	klund@U32.org
Dawn	Dumas	Special Educator	ddumas@u32.org
Karla	Eberlein	Special Educator	keberlein@u32.org

Carrie	Fitz	Special Educator	cfitz@u32.org
Hilary	Paquet	Special Educator	hpaquet@u32.org
Gwyn	Gauthier	S/L Pathologist	ggauthier@u32.org
Kim	Brown	Para-educator	kbrown@u32.org
Victoria	Capitanelli	Para-educator	vcapitanelli@u32.org
Robin	Gannon	Para-educator	rgannon@u32.org
Katrina	Kilpatrick	Para-educator	kkilpatrick@u32.org
Danielle	Laquerre	Para-educator	dlaquerre@u32.org
Kayla	Pearce	Para-educator	kpearce@u32.org
Melissa	Purchase	Para-educator	mpurchase@u32.org
Bernadette	Skrocki	Para-educator	bskirocki@u32.org
Melanie	White	Para-educator	mwhite@u32.org
Todd	Hill	Maintenance Lead/ Head Custodian	thill@u32.org
Bruce	Blow	Custodian	bblow@u32.org
Belinda	Matheson	Custodian	bmatheson@u32.org
Michael	Utton	Custodian	mutton@u32.org
Anne	Finegan	Food Service Agent/Cook	afinegan@u32.org
Jennifer	Wiater	Assistant Cook	jwiater@u32.org
Kim	Bolduc	Community Connections Site Coordinator/ Pre-K Director	kbolduc@u32.org
Julie	Wood	Community Connections Pre- K Assistant	jwood@u32.org
Guiliana	Jensen	Community Connections Pre-K Assistant	gjensen@u32.org

Washington Central Unified Union School District

WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.

Dear Parents, Students, and Community Members,

On behalf of your school board, it is my sincere pleasure to welcome you to the 2025–2026 school year. Each new year brings fresh beginnings, and even in a world that can sometimes feel overwhelming, our schools remain a place of hope, connection, and belonging. It is truly a privilege to be part of a moment that matters so much, to be together with our communities and students.

As we open our doors to new and returning students, we carry forward our shared commitment to ensuring every child has access to a safe, inclusive, and academically meaningful education. We are grateful for our teachers, staff, and administrators who dedicate themselves to the promise of every student, and for the families and community members whose support makes this work possible.

To our students: welcome back. This year is your opportunity to learn, grow, and lead. Be curious, be kind, and extend a hand of friendship and inclusivity to everyone you encounter. This is your school. Together, let's create a culture where every student feels valued and every voice matters. As I have said on more than one occasion, be the change you wish to see in the world, for you will soon be its next leaders. Every day counts.

There is much in the news these days about changes that may be coming to all Vermont school districts in the next few years with regard to district and supervisory union structure. But whatever those changes turn out to be; and whatever our governing structure ultimately becomes; we will always remain committed to providing our students with the tools and learning environments they need to thrive and flourish as learners and individuals. We will continue to build on our strategic plan, adhere to our core beliefs, and work to ensure that every student receives a safe, accessible, welcoming, inclusive, and academically sound education. Public education is important. It is the cornerstone of our democracy and it gives every child the opportunity to learn in an environment that celebrates diversity and cultivates a shared vision of a just society.

It is too early at this point to know exactly what may be coming down the road, but it is not too early to strengthen our commitment to understanding the needs of our students; to support our community schools; and to carry out the work of implementing our strategic plan:

- Building and nurturing a culture of well-being and inclusion;
- Challenging and empowering every student through evidence-based instruction strategies, curriculum, and various educational opportunities; and
- Fostering and committing to responsible leadership that engages the community and communicates transparently. We are on the threshold of a new school year, a new beginning, and I am grateful for the privilege and opportunity to serve on your school board. I look forward to a year of learning, growth, and to working with our communities and students in this important endeavor.

On behalf of the School Board, Flor Diaz Smith School Board Chair

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Student Learning Outcomes and Transferable Skills	9
Getting Started	10
General Information	11
Food Service and Transportation	16
Community Connections	18
WCUUSD Pre-K	19
WCUUSD Communications Guidelines	26
Hazing, Harassment, Bullying, and Title IX Due process	28
Multi-Level Systems Of Support (MLSS)	30
WCUUSD Comprehensive Discipline Plan	31
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsive Classroom• Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports• Restorative Practices and Trauma Informed Practices	
Supports for Students Experiencing Homelessness	45
School Health Services	45
School Counseling Services	50
Board Policies and Disclosures	51
<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Responsible Computer, Internet & Network Use (Policy D3)2. Notice of Non-Discrimination (Policy A22)3. Rehabilitation & Americans with Disabilities Act 34 C.F.R SS 300.125, 300.503 & 300.5044. Prevention of Hazing, Harassment and Bullying (HHB) of Students5. School Board of Directors' Policy: Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying (Policy C10)6. Procedures for Addressing Reports of Hazing, Harassment or Bullying7. Dissemination of Information, Training, and Data Reporting8. Reporting to Other Agencies:9. Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Students10. Mandated Reporting11. New Americans12. Wellness Programs (See full WCUUSD policy, C9)13. Periodic Release Time Courses14. Periodic Hearing and Vision Screening15. Concussions and Other Head Injuries	

- 16. FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy)**
- 17. Department of Education Rule 4500 - Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools**
- 18. Asbestos Management Plan**
- 19. Tobacco Prohibition (See full WCUUSD policy, B7)**
- 20. Drug Free and Alcohol Free Workplace (See full WCUUSD policy, B3)**
- 21. Alcohol and Drug Abuse (See full WCUUSD policy, C2)**
- 22. Weapons/Firearms (See full WCUUSD policy, C5)**
- 23. Free Public Education**
- 24. Access to Information (See Student Education Records WCUUSD policy, C1)**
- 25. Equal Opportunity (1964 Civil Rights Act) 34 C.F.R. § 100.6(d)**
- 26. Title IX 34 C.E.R. §§ 106.8 (b) & 106.8 (a) (1)**
- 27. Act 1**

Student Learning Outcomes and Transferable Skills

WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity, and power to contribute to their local and global communities. More specifically, WCUUSD students will meet or exceed rigorous standards for:

Core knowledge of essential academic subjects, including:

- Literacy
- Mathematical Content and Practices
- Scientific Inquiry and Content Knowledge
- Global Citizenship
- Physical Education and Health
- Artistic Expression
- Financial Literacy

Transferable skills and behaviors that prepare them for lifelong learning and success, including:

- Creative and Practical Problem Solving
- Effective and Expressive Communication
- Engaged Citizenship
- Working Independently and Collaboratively
- Informed, Integrated and Critical Thinking
- Self-Awareness and Self-Direction

WCUUSD Humanity and Justice Coalition Vision Statement

The Washington Central Unified Union School District is dedicated to taking concrete actions that provide a safer and more supportive learning environment that is free of barriers; one that affirms the identity of each of us and acknowledges and celebrates differences to create a sense of belonging for each person connected to our schools. The school district is committed to creating inclusive educational opportunities that are relevant both historically and culturally, addressing the impacts of bias, prejudice, and discrimination while building more opportunity for us to thrive rather than merely survive. This statement represents a commitment within our school district to acknowledge and end oppression and oppressive systems, to center our full humanity of all in our community, and to keep broadening our perspectives. These identities — including and not limited to race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ethnicity, marital status, family composition, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, varying physical and mental abilities, and socioeconomic status — carry socially constructed meaning and value. Our commitment is to the development of cultural humility and personal growth that is best supported in a climate that respects differences and provides a sense of belonging and inclusion.

Getting Started



Registration

Before a student can successfully be enrolled in WCUUSD, all student registration forms must be completed and turned in. If a student is on an IEP then the main office must have a copy so that they may in turn give it to the special educators or the file sent through EdDoc to the special educators.

To register your child, please go to the WCUUSD website (<https://www.wcsu32.org/WCUUSD>) then click on the "Online Registration" icon on the upper right-hand side of the screen. You can also use this link: <https://wcsu32vt.infinitecampus.org/campus/OLRLogin/washington>

Parents or guardians are encouraged to call to arrange a time to register new students, meet with the counselor and office, and tour the school.

When registering a student a "Transfer of Records" form must be signed by the parent/guardian so that the sending school can legally release the school records to us. Copies of the most recent report card can be very helpful to your child's new teacher while we are waiting on this transfer.

Please bring the following to the school to register your child or be prepared to attach photos to the online registration:

- Proof of residency (2)
- Student's birth certificate
- Any court orders or custody documents pertaining to student, restricting access to the student by other family members or any safety alerts must be given to the office
- Student's immunization record
- Any medical concerns or medication orders must be given to the school nurse

Change Of Address or Phone

If your address, phone number, or other contact information on your registration form changes during the school year you must update your Parent Portal information on Infinite Campus or the office must be notified in writing.

Transfers

If you plan to move to a different school, please notify the office as soon as possible to ensure a smooth transition for your child.

Educational Placement Guidelines

Children who are five years old by September 1st are eligible to attend kindergarten. Children who are three years old by September 1st are eligible to attend pre-kindergarten, provided there is space available.

Much thought and team collaboration is given to placing students. Our goal is to create equitable and balanced class lists that could be assigned to any of our skilled teachers. Many hours of examination and discussion between a variety of teachers and staff goes into creating thoughtful

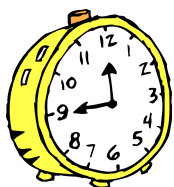
lists that are good for all children. Class placements for the following year happen each spring and students and parents are notified on the June report card.

Considerations that enter into placement are:

- *Academic Level in both Math and Reading
- *Social and Emotional Supports
- *Social connections
- *Identified Academic Supports (504, IEP, etc)

Should you have specific concerns, please contact the principal.

General Information



School Hours:

Kindergarten through Grade 6

Student Arrival: 8:45-9:00 A.M.

Breakfast: 8:45-9:05 A.M. Instruction begins promptly at 9:00 A.M.

Pre-Kindergarten Sessions

Tuesday - Friday Morning Session: 8:45 - 11:30

Tuesday - Friday Afternoon Session: 12:50 - 3:30

Dismissal: 3:30 P.M., Wednesday at 3:00 P.M.

School Calendar:

The **School Calendar** is available on our school website. It can also be found at the end of the family handbook.

Attendance:

State statutes require that children must attend school between the ages of 6 and 16 or until they have completed the tenth grade.

Regular attendance is an important factor in school success. Washington County's State's Attorney's office requires that we notify you after your child has missed 5, 10, 15 and 20 days of school regardless of whether those absences are excused or not. Click [here](#) for a link to the WCUUSD truancy procedure flowchart.

Absences, Tardiness, And Early Dismissal:

- Students are expected to be in their classrooms by 9:00am each morning when teachers take attendance. Students who arrive after 9:00am will be considered tardy and will need to check in with the main office so that attendance records and hot lunch count are correct.
- Please notify the school office if your child will be absent or tardy (802-223-7936). You can also use EMES Release Notes to email us: releasenotesemes@u32.org.

- Please contact the school office prior to 2:00 P.M. if your child's transportation plans will be different than normal.
- To ensure the safety of all our students, those who are picked up from school for early dismissal must sign out at the office or be dismissed by their teacher or office staff on duty at the regular dismissal time.
- Only parents/guardians may pick up a student. Please provide an authorizing note to the office at the start of the school day if someone other than a parent/guardian will be picking up your child.

Classroom Schedules:

In order to provide an appropriately balanced literacy block, at least 90 minutes is designated for literacy instruction for every grade, daily. Likewise, mathematics instruction is scheduled for at least 80 minutes a day.

Your child's teacher will provide you a daily schedule of their individual class which will include core academics, Allied Arts, lunch and recess.

Homework Practices:

Homework is intended to support and strengthen student learning. Homework provides connections between a student's family and school, and can offer insight in regard to what children are learning. Homework will always support necessary accommodations in regard to individual students. Reading to and with children when they're young, and having students read independently as they grow is critical to their reading growth. Playing math games with your children will also support their numeracy skills.

Statement of Purpose K - 3	Homework is intended to support and strengthen student learning. Homework provides connections between a student's family and school, and can offer insight in regard to what children are learning.
Working Agreements for K-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-Play, be a family, no stress, get to bed at a good time • 1st - Reading with and to kids, math games once a week • 2nd - Suggested reading 20 minutes every night or every other night, send math games home to play • 3rd - Thoughtful share (accountability to each other), every month a student has 2 times to share; strong connection to the curriculum, plenty of time to complete the assignment. <p>Potential addition: Mindfulness homework for</p>

	families.
Statement of Purpose 4 – 6	Homework is intended to support and strengthen student learning. It helps teach responsibility as well as accountability, and should be completed independently by the student. Homework provides connections between a student’s family and school, and can offer insight in regard to what children are learning. Materials necessary for homework should be available for students and not pose a hardship for the family.
Working Agreements for 4 - 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should not exceed the 10-minute per grade level rule • Should always include reading

Outdoor Classrooms:

We are so fortunate to have wonderful outdoor spaces for our classrooms to take learning outside. We are also fortunate to have the beautiful recreation fields attached to our playground! We know that being outdoors is beneficial for all and take advantage of these spaces when we can.

Visitors and Volunteers:

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit and/or volunteer. Please schedule your visit, in advance, with your child’s teacher and/or the principal. When you arrive during the school day you will be buzzed in from the front office. We care deeply about your child’s safety so please help us keep your child safe by signing in and out at the office when you visit the school, and please be certain to wear a visitor’s pass at all times other than drop off and dismissal.

If you are interested in volunteering, you must complete a [Volunteer Application Form and Consent for Release of Registry Information form](#) before volunteering. These forms are available on our website or at your school’s office. Please note they may take up to 6 -8 weeks to process. In addition, if you are planning on driving a student on a field trip, you must complete the *Driver Verification Form* and provide proof of adequate insurance.

Emergency School Closings:

School cancellations and/or delayed starts will be announced through our Infinite Campus Voice Messenger Notification system. Also, they are announced on radio stations WDEV, WSKI, WORK , WNCS and televised on WCAX. Information is also available online at:

<http://corp.sover.net/schoolclosing>

- In the case of a delayed start, buses will pick up students 2 hours later than normally scheduled, unless announced otherwise.
- Preschool sessions will arrive 2 hours later than normally scheduled

- Parents/Guardians will receive an **IC Voice Messenger** call on your home/contact (#1) number.
- For an early closing parents/guardians will receive an **IC Voice Messenger** call on every number you provide.
- Please keep your contact numbers **updated** at the main office to ensure that you are promptly notified of a cancellation/delay/early closing or bus delay.

Student Progress Reports and Parent Conferences:

Students receive report cards at the end of the 2nd and 4th quarters. Teachers and parents meet to discuss students progress at the end of the 1st and 3rd quarters. In addition, parents will receive regular updates on their child's progress via the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. The timeline is as follows:

- Parent conference on progress: 11/10/25
- 2nd Marking Period Ends: 1/16/26
- Parent conference on progress: 3/20/26
- 4th Marking Period Ends: 6/16/26

Student Attire Guidelines:

As per Vermont Agency of Education, WCUUSD has a legal obligation to provide a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment. Thus, student dress must be viewpoint neutral.

Students are not allowed to wear clothing with a printed message, word, phrase, picture or graphic that contains profanity, obscenity, or the promotion of any illegal activity or violence. Further, such articles of clothing may not contain communications that violate school policies (e.g., Title IX or the District's Policy for the Prevention of Hazing, Harassment and Bullying).

Students wearing an article of clothing that is deemed to be in violation of this administrative rule by the building Principal, after considering First Amendment protections for free speech, will be required to change or cover the clothing.

These rules also apply across all school settings (physical education class, after school clubs, co-curricular activities and dances).

Please note: According to the State Department of Education's General Counsel, courts have, as a rule, supported school's rights to implement dress codes that conform to reasonable standards of appropriateness and decency. It has generally been accepted that these codes are not an infringement of free speech.

"Tips and tricks" for student attire that keep students comfortable and prepared for the day:

- Weather, playground conditions, and comfort during a variety of learning activities should be considered in choosing clothes to wear to school.
- Additional shoes must be brought and worn for classroom use if boots are worn outdoors.
- Sneakers are required for physical education classes.

- Platform/high heeled shoes should not be worn during school for safety reasons and any shoe that can easily slip off (cros without a strap or flip flops) make climbing on structures or running at recess a hazard.
- Please label your student's clothing and property. A lost and found area is maintained; however, items not claimed are donated to a charity organization periodically.

Money, Personal Property, Electronic Devices & Phones

The risk of losing and/or damaging personal property is significant at school. Students are *strongly encouraged* to leave electronic items at home. However, in the event that personal property is being used as part of the educational program, or an after school event, students are encouraged to have a parent transport the item and/or have the student/parent drop it off at the office for safe keeping during the school day.

In addition, students are not permitted to use cellular phones at school. However, in the event a student must have a cell phone for after school use, they may drop it off in the principal's office or with the classroom teacher upon arrival at school.

Loss or damage to all personal items (sporting equipment, clothing, jewelry, etc.,) is the responsibility of the student and family, not the school. All such items are brought to school at the student's own risk.

If students are observed using an electronic device/phone without permission, their teacher will take the device away from the student and request parents to pick it up at the school office.

Emergency Drills:

Fire and safety drills must continue to occur according to state regulations. Further guidance can be found [here](#).

Field Trips and Fundraisers:

- Teachers will provide parents/guardians field trip permission forms prior to all field trips. All students are required to have a signed permission form before participating.
- In nearly all cases, transportation will be provided without asking volunteers to drive. In the rare cases we may need drivers, WCUUSD must have a copy of your current insurance and registration cards, as well as a copy of your driver's license for anyone who volunteers to drive for a field trip. The vehicle used must have proper safety equipment. In order to avoid the last-minute rush, we welcome getting a copy of your license, registration and insurance cards at the beginning of the year to have on file. Insurance coverage must be comprehensive and in the amount of \$100,000 / \$300,000 per injury/accident. In addition, volunteer drivers must file a signed *Driver Verification form*, a *Volunteer Application Form* and *Consent for Release of Registry Information* form at the school office well in advance of any trip so that the appropriate background checks can be completed. *Please note that this process may take up to 6 -8 weeks to complete.*
- A child weighing more than twenty pounds and over one year old (until their eighth birthday), must use a belt-positioning car seat or booster seat as appropriate. A child eight through fifteen years old must use a car seat or seat belt as appropriate. The driver of the vehicle is responsible

for the appropriateness of the restraint system and being sure children are lawfully secured.

Seasonal Events, Classroom Parties, and WCUUSD Nutrition Practices:

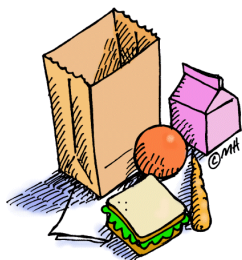
Classroom celebrations are often held in classrooms during the year. Classroom teachers plan these events. Please contact your child's classroom teacher if you would like to help. *Please do not distribute private party invitations at school unless all students in the class are invited.*

Please contact your child's teacher regarding birthday "treats" and other special events.

The WCUUSD Nutrition Policy promotes healthy eating behaviors. Celebrations are encouraged and are ideally not food-oriented. Any celebrations that include food should be rare and consideration given for healthy food choices, allergies, and intolerances. All food brought into school for lunch, snacks and/or celebrations should promote healthy food choices. Please do not send soda or candy to school with your child.

You will be notified by the school nurse (or the classroom teacher) if there is a child needing special accommodations for an allergy in your child's classroom.

Food Service



Students need healthy meals to learn. Washington Central Unified Union School District offers healthy meals every school day. In School Year 2025-2026, all students will receive free breakfast and lunch at school. The State of Vermont has provided money to do this through the Universal School Meals Act. We need your help to keep providing free meals to all students in future years. Please fill out the application for free and reduced price school meals on the website or ask for a copy from your school. If many families fill out and return this form, we will get more money from the federal government for free school meals now and in the future. We will also get more money for other school programs. You may also fill out the form online in the Infinite Campus Parent Portal at <https://wcsu32vt.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/washington.jsp>

Transportation



Bus Transportation

We know that many of our families rely on school buses to access school. Families and students will work to ensure safe transportation for all by adhering to the following:

EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

Daily transportation is a privilege afforded to each WCUUSD student. It is the responsibility of every person riding the bus to follow the rules. Bus riders will behave in a way that supports the physical and emotional safety and well-being of all passengers. All buses are equipped with cameras

that can be viewed only by the principal or designee.

Riders shall:

- wait for the bus at a safe distance away from the road;
- stay well away from the bus until it stops, line up and take your turn boarding the bus;
- stay seated, facing forward with seat belts fastened while the bus is in motion;
- leave your seat only when the bus comes to a full stop at your destination;
- use a gentle voice with respectful language and actions;
- follow all reasonable requests of the school bus driver;
- Have guardian/parent permission on file (in the office) if changing your after school destination;
- follow the bus evacuation procedures during practice drills and emergencies;
- avoid physical conflicts;
- keep arms, legs, head and/or other objects out of the aisles and inside windows;
- respect property;
- Do not eat and drink on the bus.

Bus Discipline Procedures

School staff and bus drivers periodically review the “Expectations for School Bus Safety” with all students. Students receive specific, positive feedback on their safe bus behavior. If a student does not demonstrate appropriate bus behavior the following procedures will be used:

- **Initial verbal reminder:** The bus driver clearly states the bus behavior guidelines and the expectation that the student needs to follow in order to ride the bus.
- **1st referral:** After verbal reminder(s), the bus driver (at their discretion) completes a behavior report form and delivers it to the principal or principal designee. The principal/designee will meet with the student to review the expectations. A parent/guardian may be contacted. Bus referrals may result in the loss of extra recess time.
- **2nd referral:** The principal/designee will conference with the student and contact a parent/guardian; the student may be suspended from the bus for one day (*i.e. parent/guardian must provide transportation for one school day*).
- **3rd referral:** The principal/designee will conference with the student and contact a parent/guardian. The student may be suspended for five days. Furthermore, the student may have a hearing with the School Board. The Board determines when/if the student may ride the bus again.

Bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. Please support your child to make sure they can be successful getting to and from school.

Bike Riders

Students riding bikes to and from school must have written parent permission on file in the office

before riding. Bikes may be kept at the designated areas of your child's school building. Bike riders will be dismissed after all buses have left the school grounds to ensure rider safety.

First Student, Inc. – Student Transportation Company
1234 U.S. Route 2 Berlin, VT 05602
Phone 229-4404 FAX 229-1817

Call First Student directly at 229-4404 for bus issues after 4:00 pm.

Community Connections Before and After Care

Community Connections Before Care, After Care and PreK CC program

Community Connections will offer four programs this year to support EMES families. We are a state licensed program accepting state childcare subsidies and are often a families' cheapest and most convenient childcare option.

1. Before Care - Before care starts at 7:30 every day school is in session and runs until 8:30. Before care will be in the gym, library, or outside. At 8:30, students are released to the care of EMES staff and are then dismissed to their classrooms. Fees are \$10-16/day (sliding scale) to use this program. If there is a delayed start at EMES, before care will begin on the same delayed time. For example, if the delay is a two (2) hour delay, before care will start at 9:30 that day.

2. After care – After care runs from 3:35 – 5:30 every day school is in session. Every morning the list of that day's attendees is update to which all classroom teachers have access. That list is updated during the day as students' plans change. Aftercare students will come to Community Connections during regular dismissal. Aftercare programs take place in the cafeteria or gym and outside on the playground when possible. Fees are \$14-\$20/day. We allow same-day drop-ins with approval from Kim or Heather, if we have the space and staff to accommodate the request, 24-48 hours' notice is preferred, if possible. If there is an early dismissal or all afterschool activities at EMES or in the District are canceled, CC after care will be canceled.

3. Preschool – CC preschool is a state licensed daycare located at the school. We care for preschool-aged students (3, 4, and 5 years old) during the periods when they are not attending the school-based Prekindergarten. This year, we are operating sessions to complement the two different EMES Prekindergarten sessions, morning and afternoon. Julie Wood is the program lead and head teacher for our preschool this year. The CC preschool will be in session every day that school is in session. Delays and closures are the same as the school's.

4. In service and vacation day camps - Community Connections offers day camps during many of the vacations and in service days to give parents a convenient option for care during days that EMES is not open. These camps may involve some types of field trips and run from 8:00 to 5:00. Fees range from \$55 to \$70/day. We will distribute information about these camps a few weeks before they occur.

Please register in advance for the [Community Connections](#) program with our Site Coordinator, Heather Anderson, at handerson@u32.org, or Kimberly Bolduc, who can be reached at kbolduc@u32.org.

We are always looking for new staff and volunteers to help with our programs. We offer competitive salaries and a discount on fees for children of staff members. If you have a love of children or a hobby, such as archery, digital video, chess, etc., and you would like to share, please give Kim a call with any questions at 802/223-7936 ext. 305 or email kboduc@u32.org.

WCUUSD Pre-K Programs



Welcome to the Washington Central Unified Union School District (WCUUSD) and your local elementary school. Our pre-kindergarten programs are part of the local elementary schools which serve students in grades Pre-K through 6. We are looking forward to working and playing with your child in the classroom and having your family involved in our learning activities.

Our Program Philosophy

WCUUSD believes that a high-quality early childhood setting provides a safe and nurturing environment to promote a young child's mastery of skills in the areas of social/emotional, physical, language and cognitive development. Individual differences are anticipated and planned for within an inclusive classroom setting. Through meaningful opportunities for children to reach their highest potential, children become active members of a caring community of learners. Our early childhood programs foster family involvement and support developing relationships between children, families, childhood peers, and school personnel.

About Our Programs

The WCUUSD pre-kindergartens serve children ages three to five who live in the towns of Berlin, Calais, East Montpelier, Middlesex, and Worcester. Our main objective is to provide a positive atmosphere to promote the social, physical, intellectual, and emotional growth of your child. We believe children learn by doing. We also believe children learn through play. Pre-kindergarten offers an environment for children to learn and grow through active exploration and interaction with adults, peers, and materials. Pre-k offers a variety of learning areas that include: dramatic play, blocks, science, early literacy and language, early math, art, music, and motor activities. Children work individually, in small groups and in large groups. Teachers facilitate children's involvement through encouragement and positive modeling. Teachers match and respect each child's developing abilities and recognize each child as an individual by supporting their overall development. Teachers are currently licensed in Early Childhood Education by the State of Vermont. Other staff members meet the requirements of highly qualified para educators.

All of our pre-kindergarten programs have achieved quality recognition through Vermont's Step Ahead Recognition System, or STARS, and are licensed by the VT Department of Children and Families.

The WCUUSD pre-kindergarten curriculum is based on NAEYC's Curriculum Standards for Developmentally Appropriate Practices for teaching and learning in each of the following areas: social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. In addition, the *Vermont Early Learning*

Standards (2015), a companion guide to the *Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities*, provide more specific guidance for teachers related to the content and skills that become the base of experiences for children in a wide variety of curriculum areas. As required by Act 62, Vermont's law regarding pre-kindergarten education, students will be assessed using the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool. This assessment tool also informs classroom practices.

Inclusion through Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)

WCUUSD pre-kindergartens are inclusive educational environments. The Early Childhood Special Education Program serves young children with special needs in each of the WCUUSD towns. Children must demonstrate a medical need or a significant delay in one or more areas of development such as small and large muscle development, social and emotional development, speech and language, self-help or adaptive skills, or cognitive skills. When children are identified as having special needs, a team that includes parents, the ECSE teacher, the classroom teacher, and administrator, and special services providers meets to plan for the child's education and create an individualized education plan (IEP).

Extra Support

Children who may need extra support in the pre-kindergarten program to better prepare them for kindergarten may work with the ECSE teachers. The ECSE teachers work with children, often in small groups, to expand on developmental skills, such as gross motor, fine motor, self-help, concepts, and speech and language skills on an as-needed basis. The ECSE teachers also collaborate with the classroom teacher to ensure that all children are successful in the classroom.

The ECSE teachers can also help families in accessing outside resources, such as Head Start, child care, and medical, dental, or mental health providers.

Contacting Teachers and the Principal

We value our interaction with parents and believe that through open communication, we will best be able to meet the needs of your child(ren). Please feel free to contact us either in person before or after class time, by phone, through email, or through a note. We will get back to you as soon as possible.

Pre-Kindergarten Hours and Calendar

Pre-kindergarten programs operate on the WCUUSD school calendar. If WCSU is closed due to weather or other reasons the pre-kindergarten is also closed. If there is a delayed opening, the pre-kindergarten may be delayed or closed in the morning. Please listen to the local radio stations or check the local Vermont television stations for cancellations. Please note that in the case of bad weather resulting in an early school closure, you will be notified by the school. Each school may have different program hours please check with your town's Principal or Teacher on the delay or closure policy.

Absences / Arrivals and Dismissals

Please call the school if your child will be late or absent. If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please send a note to school. If we receive no notice from you, we will contact you to

ensure that your child is in your care. When your child returns after an absence, please send a note stating the reason for the absence, if this information has not been communicated previously.

If your child comes to school late, they must sign in at the front office (or be signed in by a parent/guardian). Students should check in with the cafeteria or school office if they need to sign up for lunch/snack, as outlined in the Family Handbook (as applicable).

If your family attends CC please include them when you email or make contact regarding an absence, late arrival or early dismissal.

Arrival and Dismissal in Pre-Kindergarten

Upon arrival and pick-up, please sign your child in and out on the daily attendance chart. The sign-in/sign-out chart will be located by the classroom door. Please request assistance from the pre-k staff for further clarification.

Parents who bring their children to the pre-k room may be asked to help them with their outerwear. Check with your child's teacher regarding specific arrival and dismissal procedures.

A parent must notify the teacher in writing, if someone other than a parent is picking up your child. A child will not be released until the teacher or principal receives verification from the parent.

Should your child ride the bus home (if applicable), it is the policy of the bus company that a pre-k child must be met by an authorized adult. If there is no authorized adult present when the bus arrives at the stop, the pre-k student will be returned to the school.

Separation or Saying "Goodbye"

Many children find it hard at first to say goodbye to their parents when coming to school. We encourage you to spend at least part of a morning visiting the pre-kindergarten with your child before you bring them to stay alone. Try to act confident in yourself. If you seem anxious and unsure about leaving your child at school, your child will pick up on those feelings and start to wonder if there is something to be worried about. We have also found that careful discussion of school with children at home relieves their anxiety about beginning or coming to school. It is helpful to tell them how often they will attend pre-k, how long they will be there, and when you will be back to get them. Plan on staying for 5-10 minutes the first couple of days looking around the room and playing with your child. A longer or shorter amount of time may make separation harder. We do ask that you say goodbye to your child when you are leaving, even though this may produce a fresh flood of tears and protests. In our experience, "sneaking out" while children are engaged in play may lead to greater separation anxiety on the child's part. We also ask that when you say goodbye you follow through and leave, so that your child develops a sense of predictability. Separation can be hard for children, but regular routine and honesty on the parents' part make it easier. Remember that many teachers are parents and have been through this themselves. Rarely have we seen a child cry for a long time. Rest assured that by the time you get to your car, your child will be busy and happy. If your child is having an especially hard time, please be assured that we will call you at home or at work.

Schedule of the Day

Each day provides time for play, projects, a circle time, snack, and outdoor play (weather permitting). Generally, the sequence of the scheduled activities is followed consistently; however, it

may change due to weather, activity level of the group, special projects, and availability of other programs in the building.

Classroom Cubbies

Each child is provided with a cubby and/or a hook for keeping outdoor clothing, extra clothes, finished artwork, and other treasures. Please send in a complete change of clothing (including socks and underwear). An extra sweater or a t-shirt may come in handy for our fickle Vermont weather.

Clothing

Please remember that our pre-kindergarten students love to get messy! As such, play clothes are recommended. Children should come dressed for the day in clothing that does not hamper their free activity. We spend part of almost every day outside, so please supply your child with outerwear appropriate to the season and the weather – sweater, coat, raincoat, snow pants, snow boots, mud boots, hat, mittens, etc. Please label all items!

We often have a number of children with the same boots, sneakers, etc. We also encourage children to bring backpacks to school daily. It is helpful if the backpack is large enough to contain snow clothes, art work, and parent notes. The backpacks with wheels work well for three-and four-year olds.

Snack

Each elementary school has its own procedure for snack. Your child's pre-kindergarten teacher will provide more information about snack time at your school.

Universally, we feel that good nutrition is crucial to every child's well-being. We encourage simple nutritious snacks including: fresh fruit, cheese, pretzels, crackers, unsweetened cereal, dried fruit, yogurt, muffins, bagels or apple sauce.

Some of our students have severe food allergies. Should there be a child with food allergies in your child's classroom, you will be informed as necessary.

Toys

Books and materials that relate to topics that are being explored are generally welcome, as are items such as fall leaves, seashells, found treasures or mementos from a trip. Some children may have a need to bring a security blanket or a stuffed toy especially in the fall when the school routine is new. In general though, toys should be left at home.

We discourage your children from playing with weapons. In no instance may children bring toy guns or other weapons to school.

Illness

In group settings such as ours, infections spread rapidly. For that reason we urge parents to observe the following guidelines if your child seems sick and you're trying to decide whether to send him/her to school on a particular day. If your child has had any of the following symptoms in the past 24 hours, please do not send him/her to school:

1. fever

2. conjunctivitis (pinkeye)
3. unexplained rash
4. diarrhea
5. vomiting
6. severe cold (please remember that if your child has a thick colored discharge from his/her nose, it is considered an infection and he/she should not be at school)
7. contagious or infectious diseases such as: bronchitis, strep throat, measles (red or German), chicken pox, mumps, roseola, etc.
8. infestations, such as lice or scabies, contact the nurse for treatment options

A child must be on medication and free of fever and vomiting for any of the above illnesses if deemed necessary for at least 24 hours and/or be medically improved before returning to school.

If your child develops a fever or other symptoms during school hours, your child may be brought to the school nurse. If necessary, we will call you to ask that you take your child home.

Immunizations

In compliance with Vermont child care regulations, we require that parents provide evidence of their child's immunizations at the time of registration, according to the Vermont immunization schedule unless exempted for medical, religious, or moral reasons. These immunization records are updated annually and monitored by our school nurses.

Holidays

Our pre-kindergarten programs respect diversity of all kinds. We also believe in the importance of traditions. Holidays are special times when families celebrate and pass on traditions to children. We will plan and create celebrations at various intervals during the year with the children. We enjoy celebrating children's birthdays and learning about other holidays that may be special to individual families.

We recognize that customs and traditions among pre-k families are diverse; therefore, we do not sponsor or endorse any particular set of holiday practices. In addition, we do not emphasize the religious aspects of traditional holidays.

Please talk to the staff about any concerns you may have about classroom celebrations and holidays.

Discipline

The Preschool program aligns with the District's Responsive Classroom.

The pre-kindergarten program is designed to foster a safe, fair, nurturing environment in which children learn to express their feelings, communicate clearly, and develop creative solutions to conflict. Learning to deal with conflict fairly and to treat each other with kindness is part of the natural growth process of children. The purpose of discipline is to guide and encourage, which is a learning process.

We encourage self-discipline and ask the children to respect themselves, others, and school property. We model, role-play, and teach the children alternative methods of solving a problem. The teacher may take the child aside to calm down and prepare to return to the group.

Teachers will communicate regularly with parents about their own child's progress in these areas. They cannot speak specifically about the behavior of other children.

Parent Participation

Parents are always welcome and encouraged to visit school and participate in their child's daily activities. Some ways that parents can be involved include:

- visiting class, possibly to share a story, a musical instrument or to do an activity relating to a project
- sending messages to children in their mailboxes

In addition, parents participate by:

- keeping informed by reading newsletters and taking note of our documentation panels and notices on the parent communication board
- sharing their understanding, joy, and frustrations regarding their child's development
- contributing ideas, questions or resources
- completing the annual parent survey each spring

Watch for the teacher's regular newsletter to come home with lots of information about classroom activities, great ideas for home, finger plays, recipes, and other information.

Parent-teacher conferences will be held in the fall and again in the spring. In addition, we encourage parents to speak with their child's teacher regularly during drop-off and pick-up times. We ask parents to inform us of any unusual conditions that we should be aware of in order to help us interact with and support your child (i.e. parent away, emotional upset, sleepless nights, etc.) during the school day.

Student Records and Confidentiality

The WCUUSD pre-kindergartens follow the federal legislation known as FERPA (Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act). In addition, each of our schools has adopted a policy related to parents' rights regarding confidentiality.

In general, this means that parents and legal guardians of children have the right to review their child's records and request copies of specific documents. If you have concerns about any documents in your child's file, you may request to have them removed or provide a written explanation to accompany the documents. In terms of confidentiality, the school will not share specific information about your child with outside agencies or providers without your specific written permission. Within the school, information will be shared with other educators on a "need to know" basis.

More information about these matters is contained in your school's Family Handbook.

Responsibilities for Child Welfare and Safety

It is our responsibility to inform you of the Vermont statutory requirements on child abuse and neglect.

The Agency of Human Services Department for Children and Families/Child Development Division Licensing Regulations require all staff, as mandated reporters, to report any suspected instances of abuse or neglect to the appropriate state agency.

Smoke Free Environments

All WCUUSD schools are smoke free environments in accordance with Vermont statutes. Smoking is not allowed anywhere on school grounds at any of our schools.

Field Trips

A field trip is a hands-on addition to the educational experience. We try to take trips to supplement our learning themes at school. Notices will go home in advance of field trips. Volunteers will be needed to help chaperone the trips. If transportation is used, all children must be in the proper child restraint system for their age/weight. No child is permitted in the front seat with functional air bags. Drivers on the trip will need a valid driver's license and the vehicle shall be registered and insured according to state law. If you are driving a child which is not your own, there must be two adults in the car at all times. All volunteers in the classroom or as a driver, must have a volunteer application and a criminal background check Level 1 before permitted to be with children.

Concerns and Complaints

We want to hear from you if you have a concern or complaint that you believe we should address. WCUUSD school policies ask that you first address your concern to the employee involved. If your concern is not adequately resolved through this process, please take your concern to the school's principal. If your concern is not adequately addressed at this level, please contact WCUUSD Superintendent, Meagan Roy, at 802-229-0553

Additional Pre-Kindergarten Information

WCUUSD and each of our elementary schools have websites with information for parents regarding school programs and policies. You can access our websites using the following addresses:

<http://www.wcsu32.org/>

<http://berlinschool.org/>

<http://www.calaisschool.org/>

<http://www.dotyschool.org/>

<http://emontpelierschool.org/>

<http://www.rumney.org/>

In addition, you can find general information regarding Vermont child care regulations and STARS accreditation at the following websites:

Vermont Licensing Regulations

<http://www.state.vt.us/srs/childcare/licensing/license.htm>

Information regarding STARS Accreditation

<http://www.dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/stars>

Finally, the Child Care Consumer Concern Line telephone number is 1-800-540-7942

Pre-Kindergarten Hours and Calendar

Pre-kindergarten programs operate on the WCUUSD school calendar. *If there is a delayed opening for EMES*, the EMES Pre-K will also have a delayed opening.

Tuesday - Friday morning session: 8:45 - 11:30

Tuesday - Friday afternoon session: 12:50 - 3:30

WCUUSD Communication Guidelines



Positive communication patterns between home/school and school/ home are foundational to a healthy learning community. This section is designed to share how we intend to communicate with you and how we would appreciate you communicating with us.

School communication will come via the email account you've identified, our school website <https://www.wcsu32.org/Domain/278> and occasionally paper mailings or copies. If you do not have internet or email accessibility, please contact your school office. You can expect regular school newsletters from the principal which will be sent via email and posted on our school website, typically on Fridays. This will keep you up-to-date about the great experiences we are planning, as well as needs within our learning community. In general, if you have a question about our learning community or upcoming events after checking these resources, please contact your school's main office.

If there are times you have questions regarding your child's experience at school, please feel free to email the principal or set up an appointment through the main office to discuss. Direct communication when a concern or celebration arises is always appreciated.

When communication in a timely manner is critical, the school may choose to call you directly. We prefer not to bother you at work, but will do so if we feel the need is pressing. The reasons for the phone call include, but are not limited to: medical emergencies, discipline issues, or similar emergent situations.

If you need to speak with a teacher, please schedule a time with the teacher (either directly or through the office). The time right before school is an important time for teachers to finish preparations for the day, and is not a good time for unplanned conferences, even quick ones. If you have critical information to share with your child's teacher please stop by the office and we will

make sure we get it to them immediately.

School-home Communication Concerns About Your Student:

Concern	Who to contact:	How to contact
Academic Concern	Classroom Teacher	Call main office and leave a message or email classroom teacher
Behavioral Concern	Classroom Teacher/Behavior coach	Call main office and leave a message or email classroom teacher
Social/ Emotional Concern	School Counselor/Classroom Teacher	Call main office and leave a message or email classroom teacher or school counselor
IEP Questions	Case Manager	Call main office and leave a message or email Case Manager
504 Questions	Case Manager	Call main office and leave a message or email Case Manager
Lunch Account	Food Service Coordinator	Call the office and ask for the kitchen
Technology Question	Technology Integrationist	Contact your school library media specialist/technology integrationist
After School Program	Community Connections Coord.	kbolduc@u32.org
Bullying/ Harassment Concerns	Principal, school counselor, or behavior coach	Contact school office for direction
Transportation	First Student	229-4404
Building & Grounds	Maintenance	Contact school office for direction
Student Health	School Nurse	Contact school office for

		direction
School Policy	Principal	Contact school office for direction or go to the district website
Concern regarding a staff member	Meet with the staff member first	Email staff member to set up a meeting or phone call
If a problem persists after initial contact	Principal	Contact school office for direction
Problem unresolved by Principal	Superintendent	sdpate@u32.org or 229-0553
All other questions or concerns	Main office	Contact school office for direction

Hazing, Harassment, Bullying, and Title IX

Bullying, Hazing, Harassment, and Retaliation are behaviors that our school is obligated to take steps to prevent and legally bound to respond to if they occur. Every member of the school community has the right to be treated respectfully and the right to a safe and healthy learning environment. Bullying and cyberbullying may significantly impact the environment at school and the ability of students to learn. If you have concerns that a child you know has experienced bullying, please reach out to the designated employee, listed below, for the child's school.

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and violence, in all educational institutions that receive federal funds. Under Title IX, a school must promptly investigate and address any teacher-student or student-student harassment of which it is aware and can be legally responsible for failing to do so. Sexual harassment is unwanted or unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that interferes unreasonably with a student's ability to learn, study, work, achieve, or participate in school activities. Sexual harassment need not occur on school property—it can happen off school grounds in any school-related program or activity or through electronic means.

Procedures relating to these behaviors are strongly guided by state statute, school board policy, and procedures recommended by the State Agency of Education. Because of this, only those trained to identify and investigate inappropriate conduct are qualified to determine what is or is not ultimately HHB or Title IX. As with any type of student misconduct, early interventions and supports are key. Because we have a legal obligation to follow through in very specific ways you may find the explanations and letters related to this area of discipline very formal, and as such, not as

approachable as our typical school communication- especially for elementary aged children. Please be aware that this area is heavily prescribed and procedures and communications are crafted to uphold the law and ensure a safe environment for all to learn in. While the policies and procedures are formal, we strive to make them as developmentally appropriate as possible, while still following the letter of the law in the documentation. If you have questions about this area, please reach out to the school principal and we would be happy to explain it in plain terms. Below are the Policies as well as the Procedures for HHB and Title IX.

Due process

In resolving disciplinary problems, school personnel take care to provide each student his or her due process rights. Due process means that the school provides a student with the guarantees of:

- ☐ **Presentation:** The student is informed of the charges being brought against him or her.
- ☐ The student is notified of the rights to be deprived (i.e., the right to attend school and participate in school events).
- ☐ **Hearing:** The student is given an opportunity to present his or her side of the story.
- ☐ **Fairness:** The student is treated in a fair manner in the determination of fault and the assignment of consequences.

Note: *There are situations in which prior notice and hearing cannot be provided. A student whose continuing presence poses an immediate threat to his or her personal safety or welfare, or to the safety and welfare of others, to the preservation of property, or whose continuing presence at school disrupts school routine or the program of instruction may be removed from school immediately. In such cases, the required notice and hearing requirements must follow as soon as practical.*

Determinations as to whether or not a student's presence poses such threats is made by the school administrator in charge on a case-by-case basis and, if challenged, must be supported by evidence that would lead a rational person to conclude that such threats were clearly present.

Designated Employees differ in each building. Please contact your school office for information on employees of the Washington Central Unified Union School District have been designated by the District to receive complaints of bullying and/or harassment pursuant to this policy and 16 V.S.A § 570a(a)(7) and 16 V.S.A § 570c(7) and under Federal anti-discrimination laws.

Multi-Layered Systems Of Support (MLSS)

Schools in WCUUSD utilize Multi-Layered Systems of Support for students. In this way, we ensure that we are responding to student needs and utilizing our school resources equitably.

Layer 1: Is the core classroom (universal) instruction that is designed by the classroom teacher for all students. It is culturally responsive and trauma informed, and addresses grade-level standards.

Instruction is differentiated and there are multiple ways for students to demonstrate mastery. Accommodations and modifications are made for students as needed, based on student performance data.

Layer 2: Follow-up small group and individual instruction for students in the core classroom, provided by classroom teachers. This layer is designed to catch students who may not have gotten it during first instruction. It is on-grade-level instruction, intended for additional time and practice and is based on student performance data.

Layer 3: This is targeted intervention, intended to work on a specific skills(s), based on student need. The intent is to target instructional gaps and close those gaps in order for students to reach grade-level expectations. Often, this instruction is intended to “backfill” a gap in learning, is based on student performance data, and is often provided by an instructional interventionist.

Layer 4: This intensified intervention, intended to work on specific skills(s), and is based on student need. This layer is considered “specialized” content instruction and is focused on out-of-grade level content in order to fill gaps in learning, based on student performance data. Students at this layer often have EST plans and are seen by instructional interventionists.

Layer 5: This specialized intervention and instruction is based on a comprehensive evaluation and is intended to work on specific skill(s), as determined by an evaluation and planning team. A student who is eligible for special education may have an identified disability in one or more areas. If the student is eligible for special education services, an individual education program (IEP) is developed to address the individual needs of the learner. This is based on information gathered in the evaluation and classroom. Parent input is an important part of this process. Services are provided by a licensed educator, most often a special educator or instructional interventionist under consultation with a special educator.

Layer 6: This intensively specialized instruction focuses on instruction and support around personal care and life skills. An alternate curriculum and delivery model is provided to students in targeted areas, based on a comprehensive evaluation as determined by an evaluation and planning team. Services are provided by licensed educators, special educators, and related service providers and are based on an alternative curriculum.

For a copy of Parental Rights in Special Education, contact the school's Special Educators-or the WCUUSD Director of Support Services (Kerra Holden 229-0553).

Speech And Language Services: Children who are eligible for speech and/or language services are seen by the speech and language pathologist.

Notice of Non-Discrimination (Policy A22)

The board will not unlawfully discriminate in its programs and activities against any person or group on any basis prohibited by federal or state law, and will provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The district shall make reasonable accommodations to the known physical or mental limitations of

an otherwise qualified handicapped applicant or employee unless the district can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its program or activity.

The superintendent or their designee shall prepare for board review and approval guidance to applicants and employees regarding requests for reasonable accommodations, including provisions for undue hardship.

Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the Washington Central Unified Union School District are hereby notified that this district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, political affiliation, or marital status in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

A person has been designated by the WCUUSD to coordinate the district's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other non-discrimination laws or regulations. The designated coordinator is identified in the procedure accompanying this policy along with information on how that person may be contacted.

Any person having inquiries concerning the WCUUSD's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 or other state or federal non-discrimination laws or regulations is directed to contact the non-discrimination coordinator described above.

Washington Central Unified Union School District Comprehensive Discipline Plan

Last update August, 2019

Introduction:

WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity, and power to contribute to their local and global communities. Our schools' Student Discipline Plan has been created with this mission in mind. Learning how to be part of our school community is an integral part of achieving proficiency in our WCUUSD Student Learning Outcomes, particularly in the area of Transferable Skills. The Comprehensive Discipline Plan includes all students, is intended to teach expected behaviors, and help students learn the skills necessary to make a positive contribution to our school community.

Training for Teachers and Staff:

Training in the use and application of this Comprehensive Discipline Plan will be provided at the beginning of each school year to assure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities when encountering student misconduct. Training in Responsive Classroom strategies is offered annually and all professional staff must be trained in this approach within their first two years of employment in WCUUSD.

Informing Parents and Students of the Comprehensive Discipline Plan:

The Family Handbook includes a complete description of the Comprehensive Discipline Plan. One copy of the Family Handbook will be provided annually to each family, either at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. The plan is also available on our school website and in hard copy at the school office.

Philosophy:

We believe in a positive and safe environment where the values of belonging, respect, and trust are encouraged and practiced. Parents, students, school personnel, the school board, and community members are valued partners in fostering this environment. We believe that every person in the school community is responsible for his or her actions and the consequences for both positive and negative behaviors.

Given that the word, 'discipline' comes from the Latin word '*discere*' "to learn"; we believe that discipline is a process that all students can learn to use independently. The goal of school discipline is to support the development of essential internal values and controls that help learners succeed in all aspects of their lives.

Significant Threats or Crisis Situations

WCUUSD schools use strategies to help de-escalate a behavioral crisis and respond to dangerous behaviors when necessary in a manner that preserves the safety and dignity of all involved. Appointed staff members (school Crisis Teams) have been trained and attend refresher training annually. For crisis situations ranging from death to bomb threats or weapons offenses, WCUUSD schools use the information and follow the practices outlined in the Vermont School Crisis Guide. This includes specific contact information, procedures for action and documentation.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is not permitted at our school. Plagiarism is defined as copying the thoughts, writings, inventions, etc., of another person without acknowledgement in order to claim credit for those ideas or creations as one's own original work. Elementary students who plagiarize will receive a consequence determined by the classroom teacher and the principal.

Participation in School Sponsored Activities:

Participants in school sponsored activities, members of athletic teams or clubs and students planning to attend field trips may be barred or suspended from those activities or otherwise disciplined by school authorities for on or off-campus misconduct that violates the rules governing participation in those activities.

A student who is barred or suspended from participation in school sponsored activities due to misconduct, but is not suspended from school, may appeal the action to the principal. The principal, or if the principal is not available, their designee, will discuss the circumstances of the action and the allegations of misconduct with the student and with the student's parents or guardian if requested. The principal may ask others who have relevant information to be present

for the discussion. The suspension will remain in effect until the principal has discussed the incident with the student and has explained their decision to the student and/or the parent/guardian. The decision of the principal will be final.

Off Campus Behavior:

Students may be disciplined for misconduct that does not occur on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be shown. For purposes of this plan, such misconduct is referred to as “off-campus misconduct.” Discipline that follows this plan may be imposed when off-campus behavior has the effect of interfering with another student’s ability to learn or teacher’s ability to teach. Discipline for off-campus misconduct may be necessary to protect the safety and well-being of other students, teachers, school property, or the student’s own physical or emotional safety, or when the misconduct has a direct and immediate tendency to subvert the authority of the school by encouraging disorder or insubordination. When such impact in school is found, discipline consistent with Student Misconduct Procedures may be imposed.

Examples of off-campus misconduct that impacts the school may result in disciplinary action include but are not limited to:

- Bullying, including cyber-bullying that impacts students in the school
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Criminal conduct
- Possession, consumption or sale of illegal substances
- Violation of rules governing eligibility to participate in school sponsored activities

Department of Education Rule 4500- Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools

The VT Department of Education adopted a rule that became effective August 15, 2011 regarding the use of seclusion and physical restraint in all Vermont Schools. By seclusion, the rule is referring to the confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is prevented or reasonably believes he/she will be prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include time-out where a student is not left alone and is under adult supervision. By physical restraint the rule is referring to the use of physical force to prevent an imminent and substantial risk of bodily harm to the student or others. Restraint and seclusion will only be used as a last resort, in situations in which a student is at risk of harming themselves or others. This rule requires schools to have a crisis team that is trained in state-approved physical intervention techniques and inform parents’ in the event that seclusion or physical restraint is required, and develop proactive and de-escalating interventions. For more information, please contact your child’s school principal.



Responsive Classroom (RC)

Responsive Classroom is a research-based approach that offers practical strategies for bringing social and academic learning together. The premise is that continual teaching, modeling, and reinforcement of positive behavior will support children's positive behaviors, reduce discipline needs, and promote a climate of greater learning. The seven principles of RC are the following:

1. The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
2. How children learn is as important as what they learn.
3. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
4. There is a set of social skills children need in order to be academically and socially successful: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.
5. Knowing the families of the children we teach and working with them as partners is essential.

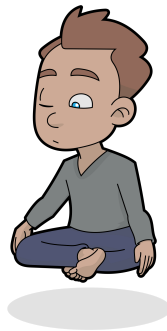
These principles are manifested through key teaching strategies including morning meeting, rules and logical consequences, guided discovery, academic choice, classroom organization, and family communication. RC strategies reinforce skills through emphasis on "using your words" and developing assertiveness rather than aggression.

EMES Expectations:

Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful (and don't forget to be Awesome!)

Violations of School-Wide Expectations:

Violations of schoolwide expectations will result in use of the following guidelines. Please note that these are a menu of potential violations rather than an all inclusive list of behaviors and responses.



Level One Behaviors

- Off-task behaviors
- Inappropriate verbal and non-verbal interactions (minor)
- Inattention to classroom work
- Unprepared for class
- Minor physical contact
- Minor to moderate disruption
- Non-responsive to adult direction
- Minor violation of school-wide behavior expectations
- Improper use of school and/or others' property including minor property damage

Adult Next Steps (calm voice, calm body)

- Ignore behavior
- Give a reminder
- Redirect to an expected behavior
- In-class self-regulation activity (by choice or teacher reminder)

Level Two Behaviors

- Includes all Level 1 behaviors in which student's behavior remains non-compliant
- Threats against persons or property
- Physically/verbally aggressive
- Physical contact
- Major violations of school-wide expectations

Adult Next Steps

- Call response team for co-regulation support
- Development of behavior plan
- Check-in/check-out
- Scheduled in or out of class self-regulation breaks
- Parental notification and involvement

Level Three Behaviors

- Includes all Level 1 and 2 behaviors in which the student remains non-compliant
- Leaving school grounds
- Substantiated bullying or harassment
- Physical altercations
- Damage to property
- Verbal aggression or threat
- Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs
- Weapons possession, threat, or actual use

Adult Next Steps and Logical Consequences for Inappropriate Actions

- In-school suspension (ISS)
- Suspension
- Referral for behavioral evaluation
- Interagency referral and planning
- Consideration for placement in alternative program. Parental notification and involvement
- Recommendation to School Board for long-term suspension or expulsion

Due Process for Disciplinary Action

Our school follows the rules and procedures as set forth in the Vermont Department of Education Regulation 4300 Disciplinary Action, Section 4311 Procedures when dealing with suspensions and expulsions of a student as well as School Board Policy F1, Student Conduct Discipline Policy. The school follows 4312 for students who are or may be qualified individuals with disabilities under

Section 504 as well as all federal requirements. The school follows section 4313 for procedures for students eligible for special education as well as all relevant federal requirements.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)



Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS):

The purpose of PBiS in our schools is to create a positive school climate by explicitly teaching, modeling and promoting school-wide behavioral expectations. In addition, by providing specific, actionable feedback along with the use of data, we are able to make decisions about resources and supports that will enhance student learning.

The PBIS Leadership Team supports this purpose by developing structures for teaching expected behaviors, creating student behavioral support systems, and applying data-based decision making to discipline, academics and social/emotional learning. Our Team promotes staff, family and community involvement at all levels of implementation.

School-Wide Expectations:

Each school has an individual set of school-wide expectations that speak to the culture of each building. Check in with your individual school for specifics on the universal expectations for your child's school.

Feedback System:

It is widely accepted that it takes about seven to ten positive comments to achieve the same salience as (or, "outweigh") one critical comment. Accordingly, PBiS includes specific procedures and strategies for making positive feedback frequent and highly visible. For us, this positive feedback system tracks meeting expectations for classroom and whole-school celebrations. All staff members are trained to highlight examples of meeting and exceeding behavioral expectations. Students work together to earn classroom celebrations as well as All School celebrations.

Universal EMES School-Wide Expectations

Location	Safe	Respectful	Responsible
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Voice Level 0-3 <input type="checkbox"/> Walk <input type="checkbox"/> Body in own space	<input type="checkbox"/> Follow directions <input type="checkbox"/> Whole body listening	<input type="checkbox"/> Be prepared (body, mind, belongings) <input type="checkbox"/> Belongings in

		<input type="checkbox"/> Take care of classroom materials	own space
Hallway	<input type="checkbox"/> Voice 0 for transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Voice 1 for conversations <input type="checkbox"/> Walk on right <input type="checkbox"/> Single file for transition	<input type="checkbox"/> Respect art, displays, and walls <input type="checkbox"/> Respect belongings	<input type="checkbox"/> Keep belongings tidy <input type="checkbox"/> Go directly to destination
Cafeteria	<input type="checkbox"/> Voice level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Sit until dismissed <input type="checkbox"/> Walk	<input type="checkbox"/> Use manners <input type="checkbox"/> Eat only your own food <input type="checkbox"/> Include others - all seats are open	<input type="checkbox"/> Recycle, compost, and trash <input type="checkbox"/> Clean your area before leaving
Recess	<input type="checkbox"/> Use equipment/nature items appropriately <input type="checkbox"/> Be in assigned area	<input type="checkbox"/> Follow directions <input type="checkbox"/> Include others <input type="checkbox"/> Take care of equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> Return equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Dress for weather <input type="checkbox"/> Line up when directed
Bathroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Voice 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Keep toilet, walls, floor, and sink clean <input type="checkbox"/> Return to room promptly	<input type="checkbox"/> Respect others' privacy <input type="checkbox"/> Knock on stall door before you enter	<input type="checkbox"/> Flush toilet <input type="checkbox"/> Wash hands <input type="checkbox"/> Report problems to your teacher
Assemblies	<input type="checkbox"/> Voice 0 unless asking questions <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to quiet signal immediately	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole body listening	<input type="checkbox"/> Sit on bottom <input type="checkbox"/> Sit with your class

Targeted/Secondary Prevention Components of PBiS

Also called “Tier 2” supports, these program components are designed for students who need additional, somewhat individualized strategies to meet behavioral expectations, and are provided based on data around student need to ensure equity. Typically, 10-15% of students will require this level of support to be successful in meeting expectations. Often, Tier 2 supports appear to be

amplified Tier 1 strategies like setting a daily goal for an individual student. Below is a sample of some Tier 2 supports:

<i>Support Name</i>	<i>Description</i>
Check-In/Check-Out (CICO)	Students are paired with a “point person” – a trusted adult other than their classroom teacher – with whom they set goals each morning and reflect on successes and challenges each afternoon.
Social Cognition Groups	Students work individually or in small groups with teachers trained in Social Cognition to support the development of skills needed to have positive and successful peer interactions.
Academic Supports – small group and individual tutoring with reading specialist, classroom teachers, and paraeducators	Students will continue to receive the academic support they need to meet academic standards through general and special education programming. Individual and small group work on academics is considered a behavioral support in cases where academic struggles lead to problem behaviors.
Simple Behavior Plans	Simple, classroom teacher-managed behavior plans may be developed for students who need a little extra support, but for whom CICO is not a good fit. These will most typically be developed through the EST (Educational Support Team) process.

Restorative Practices



Restorative Practice (RP) is an emerging social science that studies how to strengthen relationships between individuals as well as social connections within communities. Restorative Practices can be applied to a variety of settings including schools.

The basic tenets of Restorative Practices include:

- Restoration - the primary aim of Restorative Practice is to address and repair harm.
- Neutrality - restorative processes are fair and unbiased toward participants.
- Safety - processes and practice aim to ensure the safety of all participants and create a safe space for the expression of feelings and views about harm that has been caused.

- Accessibility - restorative processes are non-discriminatory and available to all those affected by conflict and harm.
- Respect - restorative processes are respectful of the dignity of all participants and those affected by the harm caused.

Restorative Practice is used with fidelity at U-32 and is a practice we are beginning to explore in greater depth at the elementary level as it aligns nicely with Responsive Classroom. In order to positively grow this practice, teachers are provided opportunities to receive this training annually.

Trauma Informed Practices



WCUUSD has been working to transform our system to include a “trauma-informed” approach. So many of our students have issues around trauma (poverty, neglect, abuse, illness, family crisis, grief, disability, etc.) and it is important for us to reframe our thinking about trauma in education - describing developmental trauma as chronic, early exposure, often perpetrated by people in caretaking roles. The concept of trauma, in a broader sense, can be categorized in a number of ways: abuse (physical, sexual, emotional); neglect and deprivation; domestic violence in the home; and preoccupied parents (mental illness, substance abuse, internet addiction.) The positive note to remember is the brain is regenerative and resilience is something that can be developed when our approach with children is trauma-informed or trauma-transformed. We are learning that trauma can impact the way the brain functions and when children are impacted by trauma early in life or over long periods, this toxic stress can challenge the way children learn and relate to their world. When we look at the demographics of our student population, it is clear that the number of risk factors that our students are experiencing is greater than they have been in decades, and these numbers are only expected to rise. In response to this need, our staff is engaging in professional development to differentiate our approach to challenging behaviors to be more trauma-informed. This is similar to how we differentiate in math and literacy to be more responsive to our students’ academic needs, and requires a lot of work around reframing how we see challenging behaviors while responding to students’ social and emotional needs.

When challenging behaviors occur at school that interrupts the learning for individuals or peers, they need to be addressed in a way that stops the interruption from learning and repairs any damage. Our traditional model of pairing a problem behavior with a consequence can be really effective for many issues, however, it is more challenging when there is an underlying factor of toxic stress or trauma causing the behavior. Oftentimes, it can be unclear if a child has been impacted by trauma or chronic stress. Part of the professional development we have been engaging in focuses on identifying the difference between *misbehavior* versus *stress behavior*.

Adopting a trauma-informed approach does not mean we are throwing out traditional discipline. It means we are learning to be goal oriented and responsive in our practice. If the traditional response

to a challenging behavior works, use it. You can tell it is working if the behavior is not repeated. For example, if a child runs down the hallway to be the first in line at lunch and is asked to walk back, and they follow the direction and do not repeat the behavior. However, what if this child is lacking food security and is running down the hall because he is hungry? Directing him to walk back will not address the underlying stressor and he will likely keep running down the hall.

Some key understandings for identifying and responding appropriately to misbehavior versus stress behavior:

- Traditional discipline was never designed for youth who are at-risk
- Punishment and the threat of punishment activates the ***stress response system***—the very system that likely causes the acting out
- Traditional discipline creates an “us versus them” feel and increases stress
- Traditional discipline focuses on the negative attributes of the child, again increasing stress and alienation
- Responsive, trauma-informed practices:
 - Focuses on the importance of co-regulation, connections, and calming strategies
 - Focuses on intentional use of language, and what certain words mean to the youth exposed to trauma
 - Tries to work with instead of in opposition to the youth
 - Prioritizes the preservation of the relationship
 - Examines deficits in skill and unmet needs, not lack of will or negative intention

MISBEHAVIOR VERSUS STRESS BEHAVIOR

Misbehavior	Stress Behavior
Explainable by the youth...	Lack of reasonable explanation...
...In a reasonably linear fashion	...which is not linear and clear, and...
Once they are calmed down to baseline	The story often sounds implausible and abounds with self-protection in the form of...
In a way that generally makes sense	Circularity, time traveling, primitive defenses

The youth can usually state his/her motivation and has some awareness of <u>stressor</u>	The youth often cannot state clear motivation and often cannot identify accurate <u>stressor</u>
The behavior typically responds to traditional discipline: FBA, Incentives, Threats (often stated as if-then statements)	The youth is typically non-responsive to traditional discipline
Actions are motivated by fear, anger, desire, connection seeking	Actions and behaviors are motivated by survival

Response to Behaviors:

All WCUUSD schools classify problem behavior into three tiers or levels. In general, Level 1 behaviors will be addressed by the teacher or other supervising adult. Level 2 behaviors may be handled by an administrator and will result in documentation of the challenge. Level 3 behaviors are dictated by school board policies. Please note that repeated incidents of Level 1 behaviors can, and often should, be treated as Level 2 incidents.

Behavior and Consequence Rubric:

Please use the following chart as a menu of possible outcomes. It is not meant to be an exhaustive listing of all the possible behaviors or consequences, nor should it be read as a prescriptive set of responses.

Level One Behaviors: Primary Responsibility - Teacher or Supervising Adult

Student Behaviors	Teacher/Staff Response	Repair and Restore
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Off-task behaviors• Minor to moderate disruption in class, hallways, cafeteria, etc.• Inappropriate verbal and non-verbal interactions (minor)• Non-responsive to initial teacher/staff direction• Inattention to classroom work• Unprepared for class• Minor violation of school-wide behavior expectations• Improper use of school and/or others' property including minor property damage• Minor prohibited physical contact	<p>(calm voice, calm body)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reminder - direct, concise directions in as few words as possible: "Who can remind me how...What does it look like to...Can you show me..."• Redirection - non-verbal cues (i.e., eye contact, proximity, shoulders touch, etc.), supportive guidance back to task• Ignore behavior• Reflective/empathic listening• Modeling, problem-solving, practicing behaviors, offer limited choices• Access in-class self-regulation activity (by choice or teacher reminder)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access the option of in-class self-regulation break• Work accountability• Restitution/Apology of Action <p>Logical Consequences for Inappropriate Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Related to the misbehavior• Respectful of the child• Reasonable response• Revealed ahead of time <p>Potential Adult Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent notification and involvement by the teacher• Positive reinforcement for following school-wide expectations

Level Two Behaviors: Primary Responsibility - Teacher, Staff and Student Response Team (i.e., Behavior Support, Guidance, Other Teachers, Principal)

Student Behaviors	Teacher/Staff Response	Repair and Restore
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes all Level 1 behaviors in which student's behavior remains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-compliant Uncooperative Disruptive to their learning or other students' learning Threats against persons or property Physically/verbally aggressive Prohibited physical contact Major violations of school-wide expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct student to classroom self-regulation intervention Set clear limits consistent with school-wide behavior expectations Document behavior with Office Discipline Referral <p><i>*If two attempts at self-regulation are unsuccessful a member of the Student Response Team will be called to help co-regulate the student's behavior</i></p> <p><i>*Office Discipline Referrals are filled out when the Student Response Team is called</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work accountability Restorative Circles/Processing <p>Logical Consequences for Inappropriate Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Related to the misbehavior Respectful of the child Reasonable response When possible, revealed ahead of time <p>Potential Adult Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call response team for co-regulation support Development of individual plan with student (proactive steps) Develop informal behavior plan (check in, check out, scheduled in-class self-regulation breaks) Parental notification and involvement

Level Three Behaviors: Primary Responsibility - School Administration

Student Behaviors	Teacher/Staff Response	Repair and Restore
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes all Level 1 and 2 behaviors in which the student remains non-compliant, uncooperative and/or disruptive to their learning responsibilities • Weapons possession, threat, or actual use • Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs • Harassment • Serious verbal aggression or threat • Serious damage to property • Serious physical altercations • Chronic violation of school or class rules • Potential bullying • Leaving school grounds • Flagrant insolence • Unlawful activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to Administrator • Seek help of EST and other school-wide supports • Participation in parent conferences and re-entry meetings • Provide work for in-school or out-of-school suspension • Provide documentation of student behaviors to Administration, Educational Support Team, Special Education, and/or others as needed • Participate in formulation of Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavioral Intervention Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due process hearing • Restorative Circles/Processing <p>Logical Consequences for Inappropriate Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-school suspension (ISS), suspension, or reassignment • Assignment of school improvement tasks or restitution • Consideration for placement in alternative program <p>Potential Adult Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental notification and involvement • Referral for behavioral evaluation • Interagency referral and planning • Recommendation to School Board for long-term suspension or expulsion • Home-school coordination and support • Denial of annual advancement or grade-level based on attendance requirements

In the case of immediate threat to person or property, the Crisis Team will be convened to create a response plan appropriate to the situation.

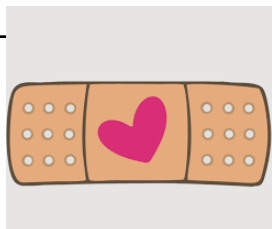
Supports for and Rights of Students Experiencing Homelessness or Housing Insecurity

The McKinney-Vento Act provides specific support for students experiencing homelessness and protects WCUUSD students from educational disruptions due to housing challenges. In the 2018-2019 school year, over 1,000 Vermont students experienced homelessness; Current rates of homelessness are expected to be higher given the housing crisis in Vermont.

Homelessness is defined as a lack of fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and can include shared housing, living in a motel or campground or a transitional/emergency shelter, among other circumstances. Students who experience homelessness have a right to remain in their home school, access their education, participate in their school community, and to receive necessary learning interventions and support. WCUUSD has a legal obligation to ensure these educational rights to our students.

For more information about the McKinney-Vento Act and to learn about the protections afforded to WCUUSD students, please contact WCUUSD's Homeless Liaison, Kerra Holden, at (802)229-0553 ext 1308 or kholden@u32.org.

School Health Services



The school nurse provides health services for your child's school. Our School Nurses are available from 8:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. Monday – Friday. Please contact them directly with any questions or concerns that may arise during the year.

Responsibilities of the School Nurse include:

- Maintaining School Health Records, collecting updated emergency and health information annually on students, evaluating student immunization records and facilitating compliance with state requirements.
- Preparing, implementing, and evaluating individual student health care plans as needed
- Providing health services for illness and injuries, reporting communicable diseases as required and administration of medications in accordance with the Vermont School Health Services Standards of Practice (see details below).
- Reporting suspected child abuse and /or neglect.
- Communicating with families regarding health related issues.
- Performing vision and hearing screenings as mandated by state laws.
- Providing health education information to students and staff.
- Collaborating with administration in support of a healthy school environment and participating as a member of school teams to improve student health outcomes.

- Member of the Crisis Team.

Health Office Recommendations For Health Absences

Below are some guidelines for when a child should be kept home from school due to illness. Open communication with your school nurse is the best way to ensure that the correct decision is made. The guidelines below are the basics; situations/illnesses will surface that require a clinical assessment from the school nurse, and oftentimes a reflection of current guidelines put forth by the CDC and the Vermont Department of Health. Sometimes the decision to send a student home, or to keep a student home is simple, other times it is not so clear. Knowing when to return to school after an illness is one of those times that can be tough to judge. This year, unlike last year, we are allowing students to return to school following an illness as long as they are: 1.) ready to access their learning, 2.) are largely recovered from their symptoms, and 3.) are fever-free and/or vomit/diarrhea-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication.

When making a clinical decisions surrounding health absences, school nurses will consider health history, trends in illnesses present at school, length of illness and whether or not the student is at the beginning and more contagious stage of illness, or whether they are on the tail-end with lingering symptoms, and recommendations from the CDC/VT DOH. These decisions are rarely cut and dry. Thank you for your communication and patience as we work to navigate illness at school following a pandemic.

- **Stay home when newly sick:** Whether you have new symptoms of COVID-19, the flu, or another contagious illness, please stay home if you are sick and call your healthcare provider if needed. This helps keep germs from spreading, protects those who may be at risk of serious illness, and gives you a chance to get well.
- **We know that people with new symptoms are more likely to be contagious and so would like people coming down with something to stay home. If you have lingering symptoms that have vastly improved; i.e. cough, runny nose, please feel free to return to school.**
- **Fever** (greater than 100°): Your child's temperature should be back to normal (less than 99°) for at least 24 hours before returning to school without the aid of medication.
- **Coughing** (excessive): Your child's cough should be "dry" sounding and easily controlled by a drink of water or cough drop before returning to school.
- **Vomiting or Diarrhea:** Your child should be able to eat food and drink liquids without vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Red or Draining Eyes:** Please keep your child at home and check with a physician to ensure your child does not have conjunctivitis. If being treated for an infection please follow the Infection recommendation below.
- **Excessive Nasal Drainage:** Please keep your child at home and check with a physician to ensure your child does not have an infection. If being treated for an infection please follow the Infection recommendation below.

- **Unusual Rash:** Please keep your child at home and check with a physician to ensure that the rash is not contagious. If being treated for an infection please follow the Infection recommendation below.
- **Infection:** If your child has been tested or treated for any contagious infection, please have them stay at home until test results are available. If positive for infection, they should have had their medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school. This is to best ensure the infection has not spread and your child does not have a medication reaction/allergic response in school. If medication is to be given at school, please contact Nurse Maria prior to your child returning to school to make arrangements. Parents/Guardians must personally give the medicine to the Health Office with the medication permission form. Forms can be found on the website or requested from the school.

Annual Wellness Visits:

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that all children have an annual well-care visit.

Head Lice:

A note about head lice: Head lice are not a major health hazard. It is, however, a nuisance which can often result in hardship for those involved. It is strongly recommended that parents do weekly head checks as part of their child's hygiene routine. Information will be posted on the website about prevention and the treatment. An informational sheet will be sent home in a newsletter at the beginning of the year. If a child is found to have lice at school, the parents will be notified so that treatment can begin. The school nurse will check students in a classroom where a student with lice has been identified. A letter will be sent home to notify all families in the class. Repeat checks will be performed to individual students and classrooms until no lice or nits have been found for 2 weeks.

Health Screening

Vision and Hearing screenings are conducted yearly as mandated by State Laws. (16 V.S.A §1422) Parents are notified of any unusual findings.

Health Education

The school nurse, health educator, and school counselor act as resources to teachers in wellness promotion and disease prevention. Topics include nutrition, dental health, hygiene, communicable diseases, puberty, making healthy choices and anti-tobacco education. Health topics are also incorporated by classroom teachers in science and social studies classes.

Immunization Compliance

Vermont Law states that in order to enter school, children must meet certain immunization requirements. The school must be provided with an immunization record from a school, health department or physician showing that your child has received the following vaccines:

- 5 doses of DPT (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis) vaccine
- 4 doses of Polio vaccine

- 2 doses of MMR (Measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine
- 2 doses of Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine

Forms are available in the health office for exemptions and to report chickenpox illness.

Please note that the above are MINIMAL requirements for immunization. Students who do not meet requirements must either be admitted provisionally or have a signed exemption on file in order to attend school. Additional information about immunizations can be found [here](#).

Medications

Whenever possible, children's medications should be scheduled to be taken at home. When a child must take medication at school, please keep the following in mind:

- ALL medications must be kept in the nurse's office. The only exceptions are for emergency medications such as Epi-Pens and asthma inhalers and only when *written medical authorization* and *written parent permission* are on file in the nurse's office.
- Prescription Medications: *Written medical authorization (separate from the prescription label on the medicine container)* and *written parent permission* must be on file in the nurse's office before prescription medication will be given at school.
- Non-Prescription (Over-The-Counter) Medications: *Written parent permission* must be given to the school nurse before non-prescription medication will be given at school. A doctor's order is not required.
- Medications must be brought to school in their original properly-labeled containers. Medicine that cannot be identified will not be given at school. If medicine comes to school unlabeled (in a baggie or a rolled up tissue) we will not allow a student to take it.
- Medication must be brought to school by a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult. For safety reasons, students may not carry their medications. (Medically necessary exceptions will be made with a written doctor's order.)
- Medication orders must be renewed each school year. We cannot use last year's paperwork.
- Doctor's orders and parent permission may be faxed to school at 223-3736.
- Medication forms are available on the school's website and in the nurse's office.
- Unused medication may be picked up at school by a parent, guardian, or other designated adult. Medications not picked up by the end of the last teacher workday in June will be destroyed; medications cannot be left at school over the summer.

General Asthma Emergency Plan:

Taken from [American Lung Association Guidance](#)

For non- nursing staff:

Should a child with symptoms of asthma (ie: excessive coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, or chest tightness) present to the health office, the following steps will be followed:

1. Help to an upright position; speak calmly and reassuringly
Follow individualized action/emergency plan for use of quick-relief inhaler

2. If a quick -relief inhaler or action/emergency plan is not available, call the nurse or send the student to the health office accompanied by a staff member.
3. Get emergency help from school nurse or designee if student has any of these:
 - a. Inhaler not helping
 - b. Breathing hard and fast
 - c. Nostrils open wide
 - d. Can't walk or talk well
4. Call 911 if not breathing, unconscious, lips are blue, struggling to breathe (hunched over or ribs show), or other signs of distress are present.
5. Notify parent or guardian

For parents/students:

Should a child with symptoms of asthma (ie: excessive coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, or chest tightness) present to the health office, the following steps will be followed:

1. Follow individualized action/emergency plan for use of quick-relief inhaler
2. If a quick -relief inhaler or action/emergency plan is not available, the nurse will assess the student, and call parent/guardian or emergency services as needed.
3. 911 will be called if not breathing, unconscious, lips are blue, struggling to breathe (hunched over or ribs show), or other signs of distress are present.
4. Notify parent/guardian.

School Counseling Services



Our school counselors are available to our school community five days each week. The comprehensive program consists of a variety of educational and support services provided by the counselor, parents, teachers, and administrators.

Developmental counseling services for students include periodic classroom instruction and individual and small group consultation, collaborative teaming, and resources/referral information. Services for parents may include consultation, referrals to local providers, crisis intervention, and informational presentations. The primary goal of these services is to enhance students' potential for personal, social and academic growth. Primary prevention is the goal of the classroom component.

Individual counseling is available to students on a short term basis, with parental consent. Referrals to outside services will be made if more support is recommended. Parents and/or teachers can initiate a referral for counseling by speaking directly to the school counselor. In the

case of minor problems or crisis situations, the school counselor is also available to meet with students on a short-term basis, without parental consent.

Also, small group counseling is available to students. Prior to the formation of counseling groups, a letter is sent to parents explaining the topic(s) to be offered and to request consent. Groups of 4-6 children of similar age are typically formed that may focus on issues such as separation, divorce, friendship, self-esteem, loss, etc.

In addition to these services, in some cases, schools also facilitate for outside counseling with counselors who provide office hours and sessions for our students. For more information on this, please contact your school counselor.

Board Policies and Disclosures

WCUUSD provides policies to ensure clear expectations for fair and equitable opportunities for all members of the learning community. Many of these policies speak directly to the rights and responsibilities of students and parents. We believe that these policies can assist parents and the school in effectively meeting the needs of our learners. This is not a comprehensive list of all WCUUSD School Board Policies.

In Vermont, local School Boards are responsible for enacting policies in many areas which affect students' education. In addition, the superintendent is responsible for seeing that schools comply with both federal and state laws and policies. We are required to restate certain laws and policies, which are included in this handbook. All policies are warned and discussed by the Board and interested citizens before they are adopted.

The complete Policy Handbook is available on the [district website](#).

Board policies listed:

1. Responsible Computer, Internet & Network Use (Policy D3, 7/1/19)
2. Notice of Non-Discrimination (Policy A22, 2/15/20)
3. Rehabilitation & Americans with Disabilities Act
4. Prevention of Hazing, Harassment or Bullying of Students
5. (Policy) Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying (Policy C10, 6/13/20)
6. Procedures for addressing reports of Hazing, Harassment or Bullying (C10-P, 6/3/20)
7. Dissemination of Information, Training, and Data Reporting
8. Reporting to Other Agencies
9. Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students
10. Mandated Reporting
11. New Americans
12. Wellness Programs (Nutrition and Wellness, Policy C9, 7/1/19)
13. Periodic Release Time Courses
14. Periodic Hearing and Vision Screening
15. Concussions and Other Head Injuries
16. FERPA
17. Use of Restraint and Seclusion (C34)

18. Asbestos Management Plan
19. Tobacco Prohibition (Policy B7, 3/15/20)
20. Drug Free and Alcohol Free Workplace (Policy B3, 5/13/20)
21. Alcohol and Drug Abuse (Policy C2, 6/13/20)
22. Weapons/Firearms (C5)
23. Free Public Education
24. Access to Information (See Student Education Records WCUUSD policy, C1, 5/20/20)
25. Equal Opportunity
26. Title IX
27. Act 1

1. Responsible Computer, Internet & Network Use (Policy D3)

The Washington Central Unified Union School District recognizes that information technology (IT) is integral to learning and educating today's children for success in the global community and fully supports the access of these electronic resources by students and staff. The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Create an environment that fosters the use of information technology in a manner that supports and enriches the curriculum, provides opportunities for collaboration, and enhances staff professional development.
2. Ensure the district takes appropriate measures to maintain the safety of everyone that accesses the district's information technology devices, network and web resources.
3. Comply with the requirements of applicable federal and state laws that regulate the provision of access to the internet and other electronic resources by school districts.

It is the policy of the Washington Central Unified Union School District to provide students and staff access to a multitude of information technology (IT) resources including the Internet. These resources provide opportunities to enhance learning and improve communication within our community and with the global community beyond. However, with the privilege of access comes the responsibility of students, teachers, staff and the public to exercise responsible use of these resources. The use by students, staff or others of district IT resources is a privilege, not a right.

The same rules and expectations govern student use of IT resources as apply to other student conduct and communications, including but not limited to the district's harassment and bullying policies.

The district's computer and network resources are the property of the district. Users shall have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, receive or display on or over the district's computers or network resources, including personal files and electronic communications.

The superintendent is responsible for establishing procedures governing use of IT resources consistent with the provisions of this policy. These procedures must include:

1. An annual process for educating students about responsible digital citizenship. As defined in this policy, a responsible digital citizen is one who:

Respect One's Self. Users will maintain appropriate standards of language and behavior when sharing information and images on social networking websites and elsewhere online. Users refrain from distributing personally identifiable information about themselves and others.

Respect Others. Users refrain from using technologies to bully, tease or harass other people. Users will report incidents of cyber bullying and harassment in accordance with the district's

policies on bullying and harassment. Users will also refrain from using another person's system account or password or from presenting themselves as another person.

Protects One's Self and Others. Users protect themselves and others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials and communications. They are responsible at all times for the proper use of their account by not sharing their system account password.

Respects Intellectual Property. Users suitably cite any and all use of websites, books, media, etc.

Protects Intellectual Property. Users request to use the software and media others produce.

4. Provisions necessary to ensure that Internet service providers and other contractors comply with applicable restrictions on the collection and disclosure of student data and any other confidential information stored in district electronic resources.

5. Technology protection measures that provide for the monitoring and filtering of online activities by all users of district IT, including measures that protect against access to content that is obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors.

6. Methods to address the following:

- Control of access by minors to sites on the Internet that include inappropriate content, such as content that is: Lewd, vulgar, or profane; Threatening; Harassing or discriminatory; Bullying Terroristic; Obscene or pornographic.
- The safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, social media sites, and other forms of direct electronic communications.
- Prevention of unauthorized online access by minors, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities.
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, dissemination of personal information regarding minors.
- Restriction of minors' access to materials harmful to them.

7. A process whereby authorized persons may temporarily disable the district's Internet filtering measures during use by an adult to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purpose.

Policy Application

This policy applies to anyone who accesses the district's network, collaboration and communication tools, and/or student information systems either on-site or via a remote location, and anyone who uses the district's IT devices either on or off-site.

Limitation/Disclaimer of Liability

The District is not liable for unacceptable use or violations of copyright restrictions or other laws, user mistakes or negligence, and costs incurred by users. The District is not responsible for ensuring the accuracy, age appropriateness, or usability of any information found on the District's electronic resources network including the Internet. The District is not responsible for any damage experienced, including, but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The District is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through or stored on the electronic resources system including the Internet, or for financial obligations arising through their unauthorized use.

Enforcement

The district reserves the right to revoke access privileges and/or administer appropriate disciplinary action for misuse of its IT resources. In the event there is an allegation that a user has violated this policy, the school district will handle the allegation consistent with the student disciplinary policy.

Allegations of staff member violations of this policy will be processed in accord with contractual agreements and legal requirements.

2. Notice of Non-Discrimination (Policy A22)

The board will not unlawfully discriminate in its programs and activities against any person or group on any basis prohibited by federal or state law, and will provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The district shall make reasonable accommodations to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified handicapped applicant or employee unless the district can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its program or activity.

The superintendent or their designee shall prepare for board review and approval guidance to applicants and employees regarding requests for reasonable accommodations, including provisions for undue hardship.

Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the Washington Central Unified Union School District are hereby notified that this district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, political affiliation or marital status in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

A person has been designated by the WCUUSD to coordinate the district's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other non-discrimination laws or regulations. The designated coordinator is identified in the procedure accompanying this policy along with information on how that person may be contacted.

Any person having inquiries concerning the WCUUSD's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 or other state or federal non-discrimination laws or regulations is directed to contact the non-discrimination coordinator described above.

3. Rehabilitation & Americans with Disabilities Act 34 C.F.R SS 300.125, 300.503 & 300.504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act are civil rights statutes that were enacted to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disabilities in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance or otherwise offered by a public school. The school district is bound by civil and professional ethics to protect its students, employees, parents and members of the public from discrimination on the basis of disability. An individual with disabilities is one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A 504 coordinator has been appointed in each school, along with procedures for supporting students and guaranteeing a free and appropriate education. Parent/student rights, along with a grievance process for disagreeing with any decisions, are available through the school office. 34C.FR § 104.7 & 104.8

4. Prevention of Hazing, Harassment and Bullying (HHB) of Students

Bullying, Hazing, Harassment, and Retaliation are behaviors that our school is obligated to take steps to prevent and legally bound to respond to if they occur. Procedures relating to these behaviors are strongly guided by state statute, school board policy, and procedures recommended by the State Agency of Education. Because of this, only those trained to identify and investigate

inappropriate conduct are qualified to determine what is or is not ultimately HHB. As with any type of student misconduct, early interventions and support are key. Because we have a legal obligation to follow through in very specific ways you may find the explanations and letters related to this area of discipline very formal, and as such, not as approachable as our typical school communication- especially for elementary aged children. Please be aware that this area is heavily prescribed and procedures and communications are crafted to uphold the law and ensure a safe environment for all to learn in. While the policies and procedures are formal, we strive to make them as developmentally appropriate as possible, while still following the letter of the law in the documentation. If you have questions about this area, please reach out to the school principal and we would be happy to explain it in plain terms. Below are the Policies as well as the Procedures for HHB.

5. School Board of Directors' Policy: Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying (Policy C10)

The Washington Central Unified Union School District 1 (hereinafter "District") is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect.

It is the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Harassment may also constitute a violation of Vermont's Public Accommodations Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and/or Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972.

It is also the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful hazing and bullying of students. Conduct which constitutes hazing may be subject to civil penalties.

The District shall address all complaints of harassment, hazing and bullying according to the procedures accompanying this policy, and shall take appropriate action against any person - subject to the jurisdiction of the board - who violates this policy. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a student for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment, bullying, or hazing as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the board's disciplinary policies or the school's code of conduct.

The procedures are expressly incorporated by reference as though fully included within this policy. The procedures are separated from the policy for ease of use as may be required.

Implementation:

The superintendent or his/her designee shall

1. Adopt a procedure directing staff, parents and guardians how to report violations of this policy and file complaints under this policy. (See Washington Central Unified Union School District Procedures on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students.)
2. Annually, select two or more designated employees to receive complaints of hazing, bullying and/or harassment at each school campus and publicize their availability in any publication of the District that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school.
3. Designate an Equity Coordinator to oversee all aspects of the implementation of this policy as it relates to obligations imposed by federal law regarding discrimination. This role may also be assigned to one or both of the Designated Employees.

4. Respond to notifications of possible violations of this policy in order to promptly and effectively address all complaints of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying.
5. Take action on substantiated complaints. In cases where hazing, harassment and/or bullying is substantiated, the District shall take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the hazing, harassment and/or bullying; prevent its recurrence; and to remedy the impact of the offending conduct on the victim(s), where appropriate. Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline.

Serious discipline may include termination for employees and, for students, expulsion or removal from school property. It may also involve penalties or sanctions for both organizations and individuals who engage in hazing. Revocation or suspension of an organization's permission to operate or exist within the District's purview may also be considered if that organization knowingly permits, authorizes or condones hazing.

Constitutionally Protected Speech:

It is the intent of the District to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with student rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The purpose of this policy is to (1) prohibit conduct or communication that is directed at a person's protected characteristics as defined below and that has the purpose or effect of substantially disrupting the educational learning process and/or access to educational resources or creates a hostile learning environment; (2) prohibit conduct intended to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate students in a manner as defined under this policy.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this policy and the accompanying procedures, the following definitions apply:

- A. **"Bullying"** means any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:
 - a. Is repeated over time;
 - b. is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
 - c. (i) occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity; or
(ii) does not occur during the school day on school property, on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity and can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's right to access educational programs.
- B. **"Complaint"** means an oral or written report of information provided by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment or bullying.
- C. **"Complainant"** means a student who has provided oral or written information about conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment or bullying, or a student who is the target of alleged hazing, harassment or bullying.

- D. **"Designated employee"** means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of hazing, harassment and bullying pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. 570a(a)(7). The designated employees for each school building are identified in Appendix A of this policy.
- E. **"Employee"** includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the District, an agent of the school, a school board member, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer. For purposes of this policy, "agent of the school" includes supervisory union staff.
- F. **"Equity Coordinator"** is the person responsible for implementation of Title IX (regarding sex-based discrimination) and Title VI (regarding race-based discrimination) for the District and for coordinating the District's compliance with Title IX and Title VI in all areas covered by the implementing regulations. The Equity Coordinator is also responsible for overseeing implementation of the District's Preventing and Responding to Harassment of Students and Harassment of Employees policies. This role may also be assigned to Designated Employees.
- G. **"Harassment"** means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct, including any incident conducted by electronic means, based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating hostile, or offensive environment.

Harassment includes conduct as defined above and may also constitute one or more of the following:

(1) Sexual harassment, which means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, that includes sexual violence/sexual assault, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and includes situations when one or both of the following occur:

- (i) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education, academic status, or progress; or
- (ii) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student.

Sexual harassment may also include student-on-student conduct or conduct of a non-employee third party that creates a hostile environment. A hostile environment exists where the harassing conduct is severe, persistent or pervasive so as to deny or limit the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program on the basis of sex.

(2) Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative

references to cultural customs.

(3) Harassment of members of other protected categories, means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.

H. “**Hazing**” means any intentional, knowing or reckless act committed by a student, whether individually or in concert with others, against another student: In connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the educational institution; and

(1) Which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, endangering the mental or physical health of the student.

Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, extra-curricular, or military training program goals, provided that:

(1) The goals are approved by the educational institution; and (2) The activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the educational institution, and normal and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.

With respect to Hazing, “**Student**” means any person who:

(A) is registered in or in attendance at an educational institution;

(B) has been accepted for admission at the educational institution where the hazing incident occurs; or

(C) intends to attend an educational institution during any of its regular sessions after an official academic break.

I. “**Notice**” means a written complaint or oral information that hazing, harassment or bullying may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to the hazing, harassment or bullying, another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred. If the school learns of possible hazing, harassment or bullying through other means, for example, if information about hazing, harassment or bullying is received from a third party (such as from a witness to an incident or an anonymous letter or telephone call), different factors will affect the school's response. These factors include the source and nature of the information; the seriousness of the alleged incident; the specificity of the information; the objectivity and credibility of the source of the report; whether any individuals can be identified who were subjected to the alleged harassment; and whether those individuals want to pursue the matter. In addition, for purposes of violations of federal anti-discrimination laws, notice may occur when an employee of the district, including any individual who a student could reasonably believe has this authority or responsibility, knows or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known about potential unlawful harassment or bullying.

J. **"Organization"** means a fraternity, sorority, athletic team, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, or other similar group, whose members are students at an educational institution, and which is affiliated with the educational institution.

K. **"Pledging"** means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.

L. **"Retaliation"** is any adverse action by any person against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment, hazing or bullying or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. Such adverse action may include conduct by a school employee directed at a student in the form of intimidation or reprisal such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action. Retaliation may also include conduct by a student directed at another student in the form of further harassment, intimidation, and reprisal.

M. **"School administrator"** means a superintendent, principal or his/her designee assistant principal//technical center director or his/her designee and/or the District's Equity Coordinator.

N. **"Student Conduct Form"** is a form used by students, staff, or parents, to provide, in written form, information about inappropriate student behaviors that may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying.

Designated Employees (Are School specific)

Check with your school office for employees of the Washington Central Unified Union School District have been designated by the District to receive complaints of bullying and/or harassment pursuant to this policy and 16 V.S.A § 570a(a)(7) and 16 V.S.A § 570c(7) and under Federal anti-discrimination laws:

6. Procedures for Addressing Reports of Hazing, Harassment or Bullying (Refer to WCUUSD, C10-P for full procedures)

All reports of student to student misconduct are summarized in writing and submitted to the school main office. Each report is reviewed by the Student Support Specialist and Principal. The nature of the allegation is brought to the attention of the principal, and an initial determination is made as to whether the allegation may constitute bullying, hazing or harassment. This determination is made by considering the nature of the offense, and any past history of similar events, or history of conflict between the students. If it does meet the criteria to be investigated as HHB, the incident is followed up with according to the WCUUSD Comprehensive Discipline Plan. If the incident might constitute bullying, hazing, or harassment, then the designated employee will investigate the allegation as a team, making use of the principal designate when necessary. Once an investigation has begun, an attempt will be made to notify the parent/guardian of the alleged target(s) and the alleged perpetrator(s). If this contact is not made during the school day it will be made that evening or the following day, with letters sent within 24 hours. Students being investigated will have the opportunity to hear the allegation, express their side of the story, and suggest possible witnesses to the incident. In addition, school administration will interview relevant students, witnesses and bystanders. During this process all students and parents are advised that retaliation is not acceptable and can result in another infraction of the school code of conduct. At this point the

administration also looks at relevant evidence.

If a safety plan is required to keep students safe, school administration can institute the safety plan at any point in this process, which may include the use of increased supervision and zones at recess. A safety plan does NOT mean a determination of Bullying, Hazing or Harassment has been substantiated. It means that it is determined by the principal or the principal designee at the time that it is necessary in order to prevent further student to student misconduct. A parent request for a safety plan will be seriously considered, but not automatically honored. Within 5 school days from the assignment of an investigation, the investigation will be concluded and parents/guardians and students will be notified of the determination. The nature of consequences and other disciplinary actions is confidential and cannot be shared with other students/families. The school will take actions and assign consequences reasonably calculated to stop the bullying, hazing or harassment. Immediately following we look forward to working with families to begin the process of restoration with students so they may learn and grow from this incident in authentic ways.

For information on the appeal process, regarding HHB determination, please see the AOE model procedures at

<http://education.vermont.gov/documents/healthy-safe-schools-hhb-model-procedures>

7. Dissemination of Information, Training, and Data Reporting

A. Notice to parents and employees: Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and cocurricular activities, the School District shall provide notice to custodial parents or guardians, staff members, and contracted employees of its prohibition against bullying, the procedures concerning reporting and investigating bullying and the possible disciplinary consequences for bullying,

B. Notice to students: The superintendent shall develop and initiate age appropriate programs to annually inform students about the substance of the policy and procedures in order to help prevent bullying. Notice to students shall be in age appropriate language and will include examples of bullying. Such notice shall inform students and parents that bullying that does not occur during the school day, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored event still may be subject to disciplinary action, pursuant to 16 V.S.A. SS 11(a) (32) and 31 1162(a)(3), if the misconduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs. Notice to parents and students shall state that any student who knowingly makes false accusations regarding bullying may be subject to disciplinary action.

C. Training: The superintendent shall implement training for school staff within the context of an annual professional development program. Such training shall be designed to enable staff to prevent, recognize, and respond to bullying.

D. Data reporting: WCUUSD delegates the responsibility of data collection to the principal. They shall collect data on the number of reported incidents of bullying and the number of incidents that have been verified and shall make such data available to the Vermont Agency of Education.

8. Reporting to Other Agencies:

A. Reports to Department of Children and Families: When a complaint made pursuant to this

policy includes allegations of child abuse, any person responsible for reporting suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. § 4911, et seq. must report the allegation to the Commissioner of DCF. If the victim is over the age of 18 and a report of abuse is warranted, the report shall be made to Adult Protective Services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. § 6901 et seq.

B. Reports to law enforcement: Information obtained and documented by school administration regarding the school's response to notice of student conduct that may constitute bullying may constitute an "educational record" regarding the student or student(s) involved as defined by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Accordingly, such information may not be disclosed to local law enforcement without prior parent approval except in response to a lawfully issued subpoena, or in connection with an emergency if disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

1. Nothing in this policy shall preclude persons from reporting incidents and/or conduct witnessed first hand that may be considered to be a criminal act to law enforcement officials. Such conduct includes but is not limited to: physical attacks resulting in bodily harm, sexual assault, and simple assault.

C. Continuing Policy to Investigate: Reports made to either DCF or law enforcement shall not be considered to absolve the school administrators of their obligations under this policy to pursue and complete an investigation upon receipt of notice of conduct which may constitute bullying.

9. Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Students

All students need a safe and supportive school environment to progress academically and developmentally. Our school is committed to the following core principles:

1. All students have a gender identity which is self-determined.
2. All persons, including students attending school, have privacy rights.
3. All students have a right to feel safe at school.
4. All students have a right to a school environment free from discrimination.

10. Mandated Reporting

As educators and mandated reporters it is our duty to help protect students from abuse and neglect. Act 60 of 2015 provides that any mandated reporter who reasonably suspects abuse or neglect of a child shall report in accordance with the provisions of Section 4914 of this Title within 24 hours of time information regarding the suspected abuse or neglect was first received or observed.

11. New Americans

We have a responsibility to ensure that all of our students feel safe and supported. This occurs when we create school cultures that are responsive to the needs of the children in our care, and our families. Under Federal law, undocumented children and young adults have the same right to attend public primary and secondary schools as do U.S. citizens and permanent residents (*Plyler vs. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1982.)). And, under state law, all Vermont children, including undocumented children are required to attend school until the mandated age of 16. Meeting this obligation means going beyond telling families to enroll their student(s). It includes working proactively to ensure

they feel safe, supported and welcomed.

Public schools may not:

1. Deny or terminate a student's enrollment on the basis of actual or perceived immigration status.
2. Treat a student differently to verify legal residency in the United States.
3. Engage in any practices that have the effect of discouraging students from enrolling or attending school based on their immigration status.
4. Require students or their parents to disclose their immigration status or inquire of students or parents in ways that may expose their undocumented status.
5. Deny or terminate a student's enrollment due to the student's or parent's failure to provide a social security number.

12. Wellness Programs (See full WCUUSD policy, C9)

16 V.S.A. §216 requires the Secretary of Education to prepare and update a list of school and community programs which have the potential to improve childhood wellness and the list is to be made available to all school districts and community organizations that request it. Current information about Vermont wellness programs is available online. Resources can be found here <http://education.vermont.gov/student-support/healthy-and-safe-schools/health-services>

13. Periodic Release Time Courses

16 V.S.A. §1053 requires schools, at the request of a religious group, to publish "periodic release time religious education courses" to be "included in public school catalogs and listings of course offerings." It is not clear whether such a provision would be constitutional under current First Amendment analysis.

14. Periodic Hearing and Vision Screening

16 V.S.A. §1422 requires schools to test the hearing and vision of students pursuant to research-based guidelines.

15. Concussions and Other Head Injuries

Under 16 V.S.A. § 1431 the principal or headmaster of each public and approved independent school must ensure that statewide concussion and other head injury guidelines are provided annually to each youth athlete and the athlete's parents or guardians and that each youth athlete and a parent or guardian annually signs a form acknowledging receipt of the concussion and other head injury guidelines. There are training requirements for all coaches and referees of a contest on how to recognize the symptoms of a concussion or other head injury.

16. FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects an individual from having others share information that is unique to that person, and personally identifiable. Such information is considered personal property. FERPA requires that school personnel at no time share personally identifiable information with individuals outside of the school system unless the parent/guardian

has granted expressed, written permission to do so. School personnel include School Board members and anyone employed by the district to carry out the educational functions of the district. Parents have a right to:

- 1) inspect and review educational records,
- 2) request amendments to these records,
- 3) provide or withhold consent for sharing of these records,
- 4) file complaints with the United States Department of Education regarding failure to comply with the Act; and
- 5) review protocols and policy related to student records. Directory information, which includes name, address, date of birth, parent/guardian names and address, grade level, participation in school activities, and awards and honors received will be released unless a parent/guardian informs the Principal, in writing, that any or all of the information designated should not be released without prior consent.

Confidentiality, Directory Information and FERPA

*It is the policy of the WCUUSD to release Directory Information **without prior written consent unless a parent or guardian informs the Principal in writing** that any or all of the information designated below should not be released without prior consent:*

- *Student's name, town of residence and dates of enrollment;*
- *Student's grade (classroom grade level, not academic grades);*
- *Student's participation in school activities and sports;*
- *Weight and height if member of athletic teams;*
- *Student's diplomas, certificates, awards and honors received.*

As your Principal, it is my obligation to notify you of your rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974: You have the right to limit or deny the disclosure of any or all of the above, except when the school is obligated to provide information to a person or agency with a legitimate educational or safety interest; You have the right to inspect and review your child's records; You have the right to request an amendment to your child's records; You have a right to consent to the disclosure of your child's records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent; You have a right to file a complaint with the US Department of Education concerning alleged FERPA violations; You have a right to obtain the policy regarding the maintenance and release of student records and information.

The school may also release information, without consent, to officials of another school in which a child seeks or intends to enroll, or under court order or subpoena. Non-custodial parents or guardians shall have access to their child's records and information, except when prevented by a court order. It is the intent of the school to display, within and outside the school, photographs and/or video of our students engaged in learning, along with identifying information, samples of student work, and other relevant information, for the purposes of informing the larger community about our programs. We will do this without consent unless a request is made, in writing to the Principal, that we request consent prior to the release of such materials.

Your child's and family's confidentiality is important to us. Our staff received training on confidentiality and our obligations to FERPA.

17. Department of Education Rule 4500 - Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools

The Vermont Department of Education adopted a rule that became effective August 15, 2011, regarding the use of seclusion and physical restraint in all Vermont Schools. By seclusion, the rule is referring to the confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is prevented or reasonably believes he/she will be prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include time-out where a student is not left alone and is under adult supervision. By physical restraint the rule is referring to the use of physical force to prevent an imminent and substantial risk of bodily harm to the student or others. Restraint and seclusion will only be used as a last resort, in situations in which a student is at risk of harming themselves or others. This rule requires schools to have a crisis team that is trained in state-approved physical intervention techniques and inform parents' in the event that seclusion or physical restraint is required, and develop proactive and de-escalating interventions.

Our school maintains a "Handle With Care" team of personnel trained to respond to situations involving highly agitated students. These staff members receive regular training in both verbal de-escalation strategies and the safe and appropriate use of restrictive interventions. In keeping with Rule 4500 and best practice, this team uses seclusion and restraint extremely infrequently and only when there is no other way to protect the physical safety of a child in crisis and/or those around him or her. **For more information, please contact the Principal.**

18. Asbestos Management Plan

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (Title 40 CFR Part 763.93 [g][4]) requires written notification to families that the RMS has a management plan for the safe control and management of asbestos-containing materials. The plan is available at the school or by calling Washington Central Unified Union School District at 229-0553. There is an approved Asbestos Management Plan in the office of the Principal that is open for public inspection. The school has non-friable asbestos in the floor tiles. This receives the lowest priority for removal.

19. Tobacco Prohibition (See full WCUUSD policy, B7)

In accordance with state law, it is the policy of the Washington Central Unified Union School District to prohibit the use of tobacco or tobacco substitutes on district or school grounds or at school sponsored functions. This ban extends to any student, employee or visitor to the school, and applies at all times, whether or not school is in session. Students are, furthermore, prohibited from possessing tobacco products, tobacco substitutes or tobacco paraphernalia at all times while under the supervision of school staff or at school-sponsored activities.

20. Drug Free and Alcohol Free Workplace (See full WCUUSD policy, B3)

It is the policy of the Washington Central Unified Union School District to maintain a workplace free of alcohol and drugs. No employee, volunteer or work study student [4] will unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use alcohol or any drug on or in the workplace. Nor

shall any employee, volunteer or work study student be in the workplace while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If there are reasonable grounds to believe that an employee, volunteer or work study student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on or in the workplace, the person will be immediately removed from the performance of their duties. (See full policy)

21. Alcohol and Drug Abuse (See full WCUUSD policy, C2)

It is the policy of the Washington Central Unified Union School District that no student shall knowingly possess, use, sell, give or otherwise transmit, or be under the influence of any illegal drug, regulated substance, or alcohol on any school property, or at any school sponsored activity away from or within the school. It is further the policy of the district to make appropriate referrals in cases of substance abuse. (See full policy)

22. Weapons/Firearms (See full WCUUSD policy, C5)

It is the intent of the board to comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994, and the Vermont state laws (16 V.S.A. §1166 & §1162) requiring school districts to provide for the possible expulsion of students who bring or possess dangerous weapons or firearms at school. It is further the intent of the board to maintain a student discipline system consistent with the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Vermont State Board of Education rules.

23. Free Public Education

All school age children have a right to receive an education. If there are school age children in any home in the Washington Central Unified Union School District who are not registered or attending school, please contact the Office of the Superintendent of Schools so that services may be provided.

The Washington Central Unified Union School District provides a free, appropriate public education at the elementary and secondary levels for each qualified handicapped person including extra-curricular services and activities. If you know special needs persons aged 3 through 21 who need services, please contact the Superintendent's Office at 229-0553.

24. Access to Information (See Student Education Records WCUUSD policy, C1)

As an eligible student or parent enrolled in the Washington Central Unified Union School District, you have certain rights concerning the education records which the school district maintains. These rights are afforded by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Education of the Handicapped Act (P6L.94-142) and policies and procedures of the individual school districts within the Washington Central Unified Union School District.

Parents and legal guardians have full and free access to information regarding their children collected by personnel in this district. The school district will assume that either parent of the student under the age of 18 has the right to inspect, review, and release the student's education records unless it is provided with evidence that there is a legally binding instrument which provides to the contrary.

In the Washington Central Unified Union School District, directory information which may be

released without parent or student permission is defined as student name, degrees and awards received, officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of the members of athletic teams, and dates of separation from the school system.

25. Equal Opportunity (1964 Civil Rights Act) 34 C.F.R. § 100.6(d)

The Washington Central Unified Union School District and its constituent districts of Berlin, Calais, East Montpelier, Middlesex, Worcester, and U-32 Middle & High School ensure equal employment and educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, special needs, age, national origin, or sex, in compliance with state and federal laws.

26. Title IX 34 C.E.R. SS 106.8 (b) & 106.8 (a) (1)

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination, on the basis of sex, for any person involved in any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

27. Act 1 Vermont is now among the many states that include definitions of sexual violence prevention in their health education statutes. Act 1 of 2009 amended the definition of "health education" in Vermont education law, 16 V.S.A. to include the study of: "how to recognize and prevent sexual abuse and sexual violence, including developmentally appropriate instruction about promoting healthy and respectful relationships, developing and maintaining effective communication with trusted adults, recognizing sexually offending behaviors, and gaining awareness of available school and community resources." In an effort to comply with Act 1, all school personnel will be trained in recognizing the signs of sexual abuse as well as the legal mandates for reporting to the Department of Children and Families. WCSU Guidance and Health Curricula will also include activities that promote healthy and respectful relationships. If you have any questions about Act 1 and how we are implementing it, please feel free to contact the principal.