Regional School District 17

Elementary School Handbook

Burr District Elementary School
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860-345-4534

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Regional School District 17 · Central Office
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REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 17

Elementary Schools

Dear Parents/Guardians:

On behalf of the staff and administration of the Regional School District 17 elementary schools, we welcome you and look forward to a wonderful academic year.

This handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with the general operation of our elementary schools. Please take some time to review the policies, procedures, and services that are outlined in this handbook. Though we have tried to cover many important items, please do not hesitate to contact the school or district staff with additional questions or for more information.

We value and encourage input from all members of our community. We believe that thoughtful communication and dialogue create a rich learning environment. We are all looking forward to working closely with you to provide an excellent educational experience for children.

Sincerely,

Brienne Whidden
Principal
Burr District Elementary

Dennis J. Reed
Principal
Killingworth Elementary

Regional School District No. 17 Website – www.rsd17.org
Visit us on our website for comprehensive information about our school system.

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 17
Board of Education

Mission Statement

The Mission of Regional School District 17 is to engage our students in an educational community that challenges students with high standards and builds their capacity to succeed and their aspiration to improve themselves and their society.

Core Values

Children
Guarantee a quality education based on the belief that all children have the natural disposition to learn.

Curriculum
Provide a curriculum that engages and challenges all students.

Responsibility
Foster a community that recognizes that education is a responsibility shared among students, families, and the schools.

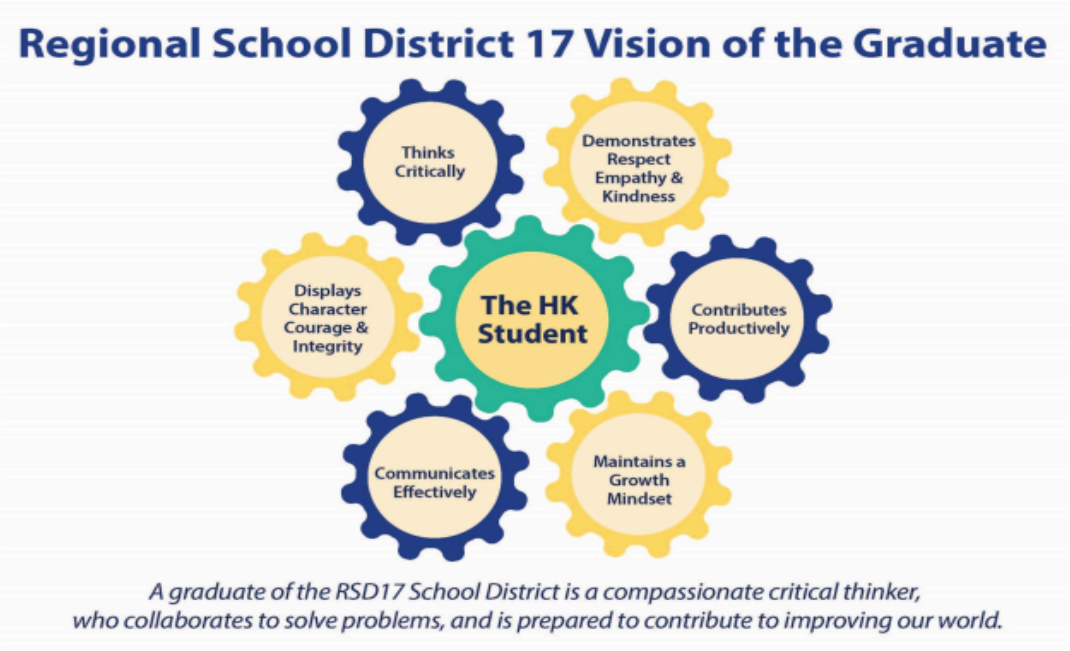
Ethics
Require all members of the school community to exhibit integrity, model responsible behavior, and show respect for others.

Safety
Maintain a safe environment for all members of the school district.

Stewardship
Ensure responsible stewardship to the communities for the resources and facilities they provide.

Communication
Build collaborative relationships with the entire community through ongoing and transparent communication.

Diversity
Provide an environment that respects diversity.



Contribute Productively includes the ability to:

- Take control of one's learning by planning and organizing oneself to complete tasks
- Demonstrate Independence and initiative in doing one's best work
- Collaborate positively on a team project or shared endeavor
- Seek leadership or take a supportive role within a group in a manner that works best for oneself, others and the outcome
- Think creatively and flexibility to design and develop innovative solutions, strategies, and outcomes

Think Critically includes the ability to:

- Inquire and formulate questions to gather information and expand upon ideas
- Research and distill information from reliable resources representative of multiple perspectives
- Evaluate information for credibility, bias, and point of view
- Analyze and interpret information and data to generate solutions to problems
- Reflect upon the accuracy or viability of solutions or conclusions

Communicate Effectively includes the ability to:

- Organize thoughts to articulate and justify one's position or perspective with clarity
- Construct, refine, and present arguments supported by evidence
- Actively listen to understand and interpret the ideas and reasoning of others
- Use a variety of verbal, written, or visual methods appropriate for the message and audience

Maintain a Growth Mindset involves believing in oneself, having an open-mind, and demonstrating perseverance and resilience. Examples of demonstrating a Growth mindset include:

- Apply sustained effort to understand concepts, acquire skills, and achieve to one's greatest potential
- Reflect upon feedback or mistakes as opportunities to adapt and improve upon learning
- Show determination to accomplish one's goals
- Explore ideas to expand thinking
- Encourage a growth mindset in others

Demonstrate Respect, Empathy and Kindness involves caring for and showing compassion for oneself and others. Examples include:

- Seek to understand one another's experiences, circumstances, and perspectives
- Embrace diversity and recognize the value of all persons by promoting equity and inclusivity
- Maintain self-respect and advocate for oneself and others
- Be kind and act to enhance the climate of our schools and community

Display Character, Courage, and Integrity involves having confidence in oneself to make sound decisions. Examples include:

- Do the right thing, even when no one is looking
- Take the initiative to provide or seek help for oneself or others
- Stand up for oneself or others when faced with unkind, disrespectful, or discriminatory behavior
- Actively engage in discourse that addresses difficult topics or situations to improve conditions for all

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HOURS

Grade K- 3	8:40 – 3:25
AM Preschool	8:20 – 11:10
PM Preschool	12:10 – 3:05
Bus Arrival	8:35 AM – See note below

All parents should be aware that teacher supervision begins with the arrival of the first bus (8:35 a.m.). NO CHILD should arrive at school, either by walking or being dropped off, before 8:35 a.m.

It is our school expectation that students remain in class until 3:25 p.m. for dismissal. Just as arriving late in the morning is disruptive to learning, leaving early on a regular basis is equally disruptive. Parents must communicate directly with the principal if there are special circumstances which warrant frequent early dismissal. We appreciate your cooperation.

Our doors will be locked from the time the final bus arrives until dismissal. Please utilize the intercom near the front door to gain admittance.

EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS 2025-2026

Grades K-3 will attend school on all scheduled early dismissal days from **8:40** – **1:05**.

Friday, September 26, 2025
Thursday, October 9, 2025
Wednesday, October 22, 2025
Thursday, October 23, 2025
Wednesday, November 26, 2025
Tuesday, December 16, 2025
Tuesday, December 23, 2025
Tuesday, January 20, 2026
Tuesday, February 10, 2026
Wednesday, March 11, 2026
Thursday, March 12, 2026
Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Last two days of school (**these could change due to snow days**)

Wednesday, June 10, 2026
Thursday, June 11, 2026

Preschool will operate on the following schedule:

AM classes only; No PM Preschool	PM classes only, No AM Preschool **(Will attend 8:20-11:10)**
September 26	October 9
October 23	December 16
December 23	January 20
February 10	March 12
March 17	June 11

INCLEMENT WEATHER SCHEDULE

Two Hour Delayed Opening

Grade K - 3	10:40 – 3:25
PM Preschool	12:10 – 3:05
No AM Preschool	

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

SNOW DAYS

The Superintendent of Schools or delegate, acting for the Board of Education, may cancel school because of bad weather. The announcements are made at approximately 6:00 a.m. to indicate the cancellation of school within the region. Announcements of cancellations or delays will be made using the School Messenger System. School Messenger can deliver a message to parents or guardians by telephone, cell phone, e-mail, and/or pager. School Messenger can also be used to notify you of a school closing due to inclement weather. Announcements will also be made via local radio and TV Stations.

Please **DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL** to determine whether school is canceled. If still in doubt after listening to the announcements, we will have a weather message on our website www.rsd17.org.

If school is not canceled, but a parent feels that weather conditions are too severe, he/she must make the decision whether or not to send the child to school. This freedom of choice applies to either a morning or an afternoon session, as well as the whole day.

Once it has begun, school should remain in session the full day unless the police, highway department or other officials specifically advise the Superintendent to the contrary. It is inadvisable to call school off before the regular dismissal hour because a number of children do not have a parent or neighbor to receive them directly after school.

Area towns often cancel together, but not always. Conditions may vary widely. Also, sometimes it is necessary to cancel on the day following a storm in order to give the highway department a chance to clear roadways, school entry ways and parking areas. We ask you to understand that there is always a reason for canceling.

School must be in session for a minimum of 180 days. The State Department of Education is extremely reluctant to grant exceptions and may withhold financial aid from towns violating the requirements. The Region 17 Board of Education has set its school calendar at 180. However, the safety of students is foremost on our minds. Please refer to the 2024-2025 school calendar for how days will be made up.

ATTENDANCE: ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF OBLIGATION

Connecticut laws require that Regional School District 17 provide you with this written notice of your obligations under Connecticut General Statutes. This law provides that each parent or other person having control of a child five through eighteen years of age (unless withdrawn with adult permission after age 16) is obligated to cause the child to attend school regularly during the hours and terms school is in session, unless such parent or other person shows that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction or the child is otherwise not required to attend school by statute. Connecticut General Statute 10-185 provides that each day's failure to comply with these requirements is a separate offense, punishable by $25.00 fine.

Parents are required to provide the school with a telephone number or other means of contacting the parent or such person during the school day. Forms for notifying the school of this information will be sent out at the beginning of each year and can be received from each school for new enrollees or for updated information.

Whenever a child is absent from school, a telephone call or an email to school is needed to explain his/her absence. The school nurse will call home if no information about the child's absence is received that day. A student is considered absent if he/she is not present for <u>at least half</u> of the school day.

Truancy, Excused and Unexcused Absences

Regular attendance at school is critical to students' success and is required by district policy and Connecticut law. Under Connecticut law, a "truant" is defined as any student who has four (4) unexcused absences in a month or ten (10) unexcused absences in a school year. Recently, the Connecticut State Department of Education established the following definitions for excused and unexcused absences.

Excused Absences

1. For absences one (1) through nine (9), a student's absence is considered excused when his or her parent or guardian provides a signed note stating the reason for the absence.

The school will be in contact with a family after the ninth (9th) absence.

2. For the tenth (10th) absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absence from school is considered excused only if his or her parent or guardian provides a signed note **and** the absence is due to one of the following reasons:

a. student illness (note: all student illness absences must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of absence);
b. a student's observance of a religious holiday;
c. death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
d. mandated court appearances (additional documentation required);
e. the lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation is required for this reason); **or**
f. extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

Each school will provide an opportunity at the start of each school day to allow those students and teachers who wish to do so, the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and to observe a moment of silence.

VISITORS

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit RSD #17 schools. **All visitors must first report to the main office**. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only through prior arrangement with the classroom teacher and/or the principal. Such visits shall be permitted only if their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment.

Unauthorized persons shall not be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds. School principals are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering the building or from loitering on the grounds. Such persons will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

SCHOOL CRISIS PLAN

Should an unexpected emergency occur, all schools have a detailed Crisis Plan and a Crisis Team in place. The school district works with the communities of Haddam and Killingworth to coordinate plans as well.

FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Fire drills are required monthly and may be substituted periodically with crisis response drills. Students must follow the exit directions posted in each classroom. Evacuation and inside safety drills will be held in accordance with the school's crisis management plan.

USE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

The school facilities of Regional School District #17 are available for use by non-profit organizations for special meetings or activities. The principal of each school has information regarding the use of facilities and should be contacted well in advance of the date desired.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

Directory information includes information not generally considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed, including, name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

There are times during the year when names, addresses and/or phone numbers of students are requested by certain parties: special events; parents to invite classmates to birthday parties; PTO members to inform parents of activities, etc. Such information is considered public information by law UNLESS you (as the parent) notify us otherwise. Please let us know, in writing, as soon as possible, if you do not wish such information to be disclosed.

In addition, photographs and videos are sometimes taken for educational and/or publicity purposes. Again, please let us know in writing if you do not want your child's photo/video taken as well.

COMMUNICATION (SCHOOL-TO-HOME)

Regular communication with parents and guardians is one of the keys to student success. Resources such as our district website, www.RSD17.org and School Messenger enhance our ability to communicate in an effective and timely manner. We strive as a school system to provide quality communications that are consistent, efficient and effective. Below is an outline of the many communication methods that our school system employs, communications you can expect to receive throughout the school year, and where you can turn for information.

District Information

- The **RSD17.org website** contains district announcements, calendar items, and other resources. School closings and delays are also posted on the home page. From this home page you can access websites for the district, department and the Board of

Education. Board of Education meetings, agenda, minutes, and policies are posted on their site.

- School Messenger is used to send home both emergency (phone and email) and routine (email only) district-wide information.
- Board of Education meetings are televised on Channel 18.
- *Board Update* is a newsletter published by the Board of Education monthly.

School Information

- Curriculum Night is scheduled at the beginning of each school year.
- School orientations for parents of students entering kindergarten and the secondary schools are scheduled in the spring of each school year.
- School handbooks are posted on each school's website.
- School newsletters are published each month. Newsletters include information on events, meetings, instruction, volunteer opportunities, as well as grade level, team, specials, health office, sports, and PTO/Parent Group news.
- School websites include school contact information, addresses, phone numbers, etc., calendars of events, announcements, school procedures, schedules, school handbooks, and access to websites for the library, PTOs and parent groups, and for each teacher.
- School Messenger is used to send home both emergency (phone and email) and routine (email only) school information.
- Letters are mailed to parents/guardians and paper fliers are distributed as needed.
- School principals and school offices call parents directly when needed.

Classroom Information/Student Progress

- Teachers regularly send class information and updates via email and hard copy fliers.
- **Parent/Teacher conferences** are typically scheduled for October and March. However, conferences can be arranged with the teacher at any time during the school year.
- **Report cards** are distributed in December, March, and on the last day of school in June. Specific distribution dates will be posted on school websites and will be announced in school newsletters.
- Teachers send individual notes, emails, and call parents directly when needed.

PERSONAL CALLS AND MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS

Only emergency calls will be accepted for students during the school day. Personal messages cannot be transmitted through the school since they interrupt the learning process. If students have to make an important telephone call home, they must use the telephone in the Main Office. Students are not allowed to use the phone to call home if they forget homework or to make plans to visit a friend's house. The phone should be used only when it's an emergency.

COMPUTER USE

Internet access is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others in relation to school work. Students are expected to act in a responsible manner when using school computers.

Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be required to sign and abide by a user agreement regarding appropriate use of these resources. A parent and/or administrator may determine the restriction of computer privileges if any misuse has been determined.

For no reason should any remote/online or in-person teaching, staff member, student, or lesson be recorded, by a student or a parent, with a Chromebook or any other technology. Students must be on camera during remote/online learning if a remote format is offered at any point.

It is important that students and parents understand that the district, as the owner of the computer systems, reserves the right to monitor and review the use of these computer systems. The district intends to monitor and review in a limited fashion, but will do so as needed to ensure that the systems are being used for district-related educational purposes. As part of the monitoring and reviewing process, the district will retain the capacity to bypass any individual password of a student or other user. The system's security aspects, such as personal passwords and the message delete function for e-mail, can be bypassed for these purposes. The district's ability to monitor and review is not restricted or neutralized by these devices. The monitoring and reviewing process also includes, but is not limited to; oversight of Internet site access, the right to review emails sent and received, the right to track students' access to blogs, electronic bulletin boards and chat rooms, and the right to review a student's document downloading and printing. Therefore, all users must be aware that they should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of these computer systems.

Students are permitted to use the district's computer systems for legitimate educational purposes. Personal use of district computer systems is expressly prohibited. Conduct which constitutes inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to the following:

♦ Sending any form of a harassing, threatening, or intimidating message, at any time, to any person (such communications may also be a crime)
♦ Gaining or seeking to gain unauthorized access to computer systems
♦ Damaging computers, computer files, computer systems or computer networks
♦ Downloading or modifying computer software of the district in violation of the district's licensure agreement(s) and/or without authorization from a teacher or administrator
♦ Using another person's password under any circumstances
♦ Trespassing in or tampering with any other person's folders, work or files

♦ Sending any message that breaches the district's confidentiality requirements, or the confidentiality of students
♦ Sending any copyrighted material over the system
♦ Using computer systems for any personal purpose, or in a manner that interferes with the district's educational programs
♦ Accessing or attempting to access any material that is obscene, obscene as to minors, or contains child pornography, as defined above
♦ Transmitting or receiving e-mail communications or accessing information on the Internet for non-educational purposes
♦ Cyberbullying
♦ Accessing or attempting to access social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, etc.) without a legitimate educational purpose. In addition, as noted above, if a particular behavior or activity is generally prohibited by law, by Board policy or by school rules or regulations, use of these computer systems for the purpose of carrying out such behavior or activity is also prohibited. Misuse of the computer systems, or violations of these policies and regulations, may result in loss of access to such computer systems as well as other disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion, depending on the specific conduct.

Students and families are responsible for the care of Chromebooks and chargers entrusted to their use. Families will be assessed for damage to these items in accordance with state law and district policy. This may include paying for a replacement Chromebook, charger, screen or any repair fees associated with the damage.

CELL PHONES/SMART WATCHES

Students are not allowed to bring cell phones to school. This includes watches with the ability to make/receive phone calls or text messages. If such a device is brought/used in school, it will be turned into the office and parents will be called to pick it up. Any device used for safety/security (tracking your child on their way to school or home) must be removed and placed into their backpack during the school day or the calling and text features must be disabled during school hours.

TOYS, ELECTRONICS & OTHER ITEMS NOT TO BRING

Students are asked not to bring toys, electronic games, iPods, Pokemon cards, or other similar items to school as they could get lost or broken or be distracting to the learning environment. Teachers/the school are not responsible for lost or stolen toys or electronics. In addition, students are not to bring pocket knives, laser pens, bullets or toy guns to school.

Items that violate our rules will be confiscated and will not be returned to the student. Parents will be notified and will need to arrange pick up of the items.

ROLLING BACKPACKS PROHIBITED

For safety reasons, backpacks are not allowed to be rolled in the elementary schools. If students use a rolling backpack, they will be required to wear it on their shoulders while on school property.

FOOTWEAR

Students may not wear flip flops. Also, during parts of the winter and spring the surface of the playground is often muddy and/or wet, so we encourage students to wear boots or weather-proof shoes. Snow boots and snow pants are required for students to play in the snow.
In addition, sneakers are required in order for a student to participate in physical education class.

PETS AND ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

Students should not bring pets or other animals to school unless their parents have spoken to the classroom teacher and the teacher has secured permission from the principal. This policy is implemented to ensure the students' safety, as a precaution against allergic reactions and to prevent other potentially unsafe situations.

BICYCLES & WALKING TO SCHOOL

If children walk or ride bicycles to school, they must have written permission from their parents or guardians who have ensured that the route to school is safe, the child knows road and/or bike safety rules. Bikes should be locked at the bike rack during the school day.

MOVING IN OR OUT OF DISTRICT

Moving? Please notify us as soon as possible. Please provide your new telephone number and address, and present proof of your continued residence in Haddam or Killingworth.

HOMEWORK

The Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education recognizes that homework is an integral part of student learning. Assignments shall be appropriate in amount and degree of difficulty for student ages/grade levels. Literacy and math fluency and skill practice shall be the emphasis at the elementary level.

The purpose/benefit of a specific homework assignment may be to:

1. Strengthen basic skills.
2. Extend classroom learning.
3. Stimulate and further interests.
4. Reinforce independent study skills.
5. Develop initiative, responsibility, and self-direction.
6. Acquaint parents with the work students do in school.

Homework assignments shall be planned in accordance with the following principles:

1. If the homework is to have value, its purpose and relation to what has been learned or what will be learned in the classroom must clearly be understood by the student.
2. Students should understand not only what to do, but also how to do it.
3. Homework should grow from classroom studies.
4. The type of homework and the time necessary to complete an assignment will vary from Grade 1 to Grade 3. The frequency and regularity of homework assignments should increase as a student progresses through the grades.

The following is an approximate guide for the amount of time that children will be spending on homework on a daily basis. This may vary depending upon assigned projects and a child's work pace as well as individual needs. At Curriculum Night and through other teacher/parent/student communications, teachers will share specific expectations for homework.

Kindergarten – Parents read to or with their children each evening.

Grade 1 – Parents and children read together each evening. Children complete skill work as assigned for approximately 10 minutes.

Grade 2 – Children read independently each evening and spend approximately 20 minutes on skill work.

Grade 3 – Children read independently and work on assignments for 30 minutes.

SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE

Our elementary schools are child-centered learning communities where positive relationships are the basis of many successes. Behavioral expectations help set reasonable guidelines for an environment where all members of the school community are part of an emotionally supportive and safe climate. The district Safe School Climate Plan is posted on each school's webpage.

The guiding principles of the RSD 17's Elementary Behavioral Expectations are:

- The social skills approach is as important as the academic curriculum.
- There are social skills that children need to learn and practice in order to be successful academically and socially.
- Knowing the children we teach—individually, culturally, and developmentally—is as important as the content we teach.
- Partnering with families of the children we teach is as important as knowing the children we teach.
- How the adults in school work together enhances our individual and collective competence.

Some of the key steps in implementing this approach include:

1. Communicating clear and common expectations school-wide;
2. Using positive strategies to help children learn desired behaviors;
3. Establishing and maintaining a positive environment;
4. Teaching students how to respect and take care of one another;
5. Teaching students how to build and maintain positive relationships;
6. Reinforcing positive behavior;
7. Responding to inappropriate behavior.

GENERAL BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to behave in a courteous, respectful and responsible manner in the following ways:

1. Follow directions the first time asked.
2. Use appropriate language and gestures.
3. Ask permission to use things.
4. Use furniture, equipment and supplies appropriately.
5. Move about a room and the building in a quiet and orderly fashion.
6. Keep desk and other belongings neat and organized.
7. Do your own work (not copy the work of others).

RECESS EXPECTATIONS

1. Wear safe footwear; change into sneakers for recess if other shoes were worn to school (such as Crocs, clogs or dress shoes). Flip flops are not allowed in school or at recess.
2. Take turns, play cooperatively, and share equipment.
3. Include others.
4. Follow directions the first time asked.
5. Use appropriate language and gestures.
6. Use equipment properly and stay in designated areas.
7. Use hands and feet appropriately.
8. Run only where permitted.
9. When the playground is muddy or wet, students are encouraged to wear boots.
10. Snow boots and snow pants are required for play in the snow.
11. Coats, hats and gloves are highly recommended for cold days. We go outside for recess as long as the temperature is 20 degrees or above with wind chill. Sweatshirts are not warm enough on typical winter days without a coat or jacket.

TRANSPORTATION

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditioned upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Students will be advised that they may be suspended from transportation services for unsatisfactory conduct while awaiting or receiving transportation to and from school.

Video cameras may be installed in some Region 17 buses as a means of ensuring safety and security. Videos are kept for one week and are reviewed only by an administrator and only at times where a disruption or concern has been reported.

An incident report from a bus driver will result in contact by either the bus transportation director or school principal. Multiple offenses could result in a loss of transportation privileges.

Parents should advise their children to use the proper and safe practices while riding on the school buses. (See the following Bus Safety Expectations.)

BUS SAFETY EXPECTATIONS

1. Wait for the bus on a sidewalk or at a safe distance off the road.

2. Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before **walking** to board the bus.

3. Respond immediately to bus driver's directions.

4. Talk in an inside voice.

5. Help younger children as needed.

6. Stay in your seat facing forward. Remain seated while the bus is in motion. Leave your seat only when the bus arrives at your stop or when the driver or a school authority permits you to leave.

7. Keep hands, feet, and objects inside of the bus.

8. Hold books and backpacks on your lap; keep aisles clear.

9. Only students from the highest grade will sit in the two seats nearest the rear emergency door.

10. The rear emergency door is for emergencies only and should only be opened as directed by the driver.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers the students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced price lunches are available based on financial need. Information on this program can be obtained from the school office.

Students are expected to pay for their lunches each day. Lunch and milk prices are available on the monthly menu. Parents also have the option to pre-pay by sending a check payable to RSD # 17 Cafeteria. Students who forget their money will be given a lunch charge. They may charge their lunches this way three times. These charges should be paid as quickly as possible. Students will not be permitted to charge lunches after June 1.

Lunchtime is supervised by school staff.

LUNCH/CAFETERIA BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

1. Wait quietly in the lunch line.
2. Use good table manners; do not play with food.
3. Talk nicely with others and use an indoor voice.
4. Clean up your eating area when finished.
5. Follow directions the first time asked.
6. Treat fellow students, cafeteria staff, and lunch supervisors in a polite manner.

STUDENT DRESS CODE/DISTRICT POLICY

The dress code of Regional School District 17 is intended to support equitable educational access for all students designed in a manner that does not reinforce stereotypes. The Board of Education acknowledges students as individuals and students' dress should respect the District's intent and its responsibility to ensure the health, safety, and mental well-being of all students. To implement effective and equitable enforcement of its dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently and in a manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any person or group. At the same time, the Board expects that students will dress in a manner appropriate for the school day or for any school-sponsored event. Administrators shall use reasonableness and have discretion to determine the appropriateness of attire and grooming.

The Regional School District 17 dress code is designed to:

● Ensure that all students are treated equitably regardless of race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size/maturity.

● Maintain a safe learning environment for the "business" of school.

● Allow students to wear clothing that is comfortable.

● Allow students to wear clothing that expresses their self-identified gender.

● Allow students to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.

● Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories with offensive images or language, including profanity, hate speech, or pornography.

● Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that denote, suggest, display or reference alcohol, drugs or related paraphernalia or other illegal conduct or activities.

● Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that will interfere with the operation of the school, disrupt the educational process, invade the rights of others, or create a reasonably foreseeable risk of such interference or invasion of rights.

● Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that reasonably can be construed as being or including content that is racist, lewd, vulgar or obscene. Attire or accessories depicting or suggesting violence so as to disrupt the educational environment or that provokes others to

act violently or causes others to be intimidated by fear of violence or that constitute "fighting words," including but not limited to attire or accessories depicting the Confederate flag and/or the Nazi swastika.

In order to maintain an environment conducive to the educational process, the Board of Education establishes the following specific regulations:

1. Outerwear shall not be worn during regular school hours. Outerwear includes heavy coats and jackets.
2. Head coverings shall not be worn, carried, hung on belts or worn around the neck during regular school hours. Head coverings include but are not limited to scarves, bandanas, masks, visors, kerchiefs, athletic sweatbands, caps, or hoods. Approved coverings worn as part of a student's religious practices or beliefs shall not be prohibited by this policy.
3. Sunglasses may not be worn within a school building.
4. Students may not wear see-through clothing that reveals the abdomen, chest, or undergarments.
5. Students may not wear spiked or studded bracelets, oversized or multi-finger rings, belts or any article of attire with spikes, studs attached, or any other clothing item that may present a safety hazard to the student, other students, or staff.
6. Students must wear a shirt (with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms, and pants/jeans or the equivalent (skirt, sweatpants, leggings, dress, or shorts), and shoes. Shoes should be appropriate for weather, course, assignments, athletic or other conditions. Slippers are prohibited. BOE Policy 5132(a)

CANDY, GUM, SODA

In the interest of good nutrition, students are urged not to bring candy or soda to school. Gum is not allowed in school.

FOOD ALLERGY MANAGEMENT

Regional School District No. 17 recognizes that some food allergies may be life threatening. For this reason, the district has developed strategies and practices to minimize the risk of accidental exposure to life-threatening food allergens and to ensure prompt and effective medical response should a child suffer an allergic reaction while at school. If your child has a food or other life-threatening allergy, please contact the school nurse. For more information, please visit www.rsd17.org and click on the "Health Services" link under the "District" menu.

We ask for cooperation from our students and parents in the following ways:

1) Consider bringing non-food alternatives into school for birthday or holiday celebrations. (Please see "Birthday Celebrations" below.)
2) Wash hands before and after eating.
3) Eat only in designated areas and at designated times.
4) Do not share or trade food with others.
5) Seek help when another student is in distress.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

For health reasons, we would prefer students celebrate their birthdays by sharing a craft, a book, or a healthy snack with the class. However, students are allowed to bring treats if they so choose to celebrate their birthday. A number of our students have food allergies that can be life threatening, therefore please remember to read the nutrition labels on the actual package and be mindful of all classroom food allergies if you plan to send in an edible item. **Please make sure any food treats are cleared with the nurse prior to bringing them to school.** Keep in mind that a food label is not always available on individually packaged candy treats yet many times those are sent in to be shared. Unfortunately these candy treats are often the source of hidden allergens like nuts and peanuts. This presents a challenge when managing classroom food allergies. We don't want any of our students to feel left out because they can't share in a classroom treat.

BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS

Students may distribute invitations to birthday parties in school provided they are inviting either the whole class or all students of the same gender from his or her class. If a child wants to invite only certain friends, parents should mail/email invitations home and not send them through school.

LABELING

It is very helpful if you label your child's belongings, such as lunch boxes, backpacks, raincoats, winter wear and footwear.

LOST AND FOUND

Any articles found in the school or on school grounds should be turned in at the main office or placed in the lost and found. Unclaimed articles will be disposed of or donated at the end of each semester.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (P.T.O.)

The main objective of the P.T.O. is to create and maintain a close relationship between the home and the school so that parents and teachers may participate together in the education of our children. The P.T.O. supports the school through many different activities such as: cultural arts programs, field trip scholarships, bake sales, technology, spring/fall clean ups, holiday workshops, etc.

P.T.O. membership is free and open to every family in the school. Meeting notices and newsletters are sent home with students.

FUNDRAISING

All fundraising activities must be approved by the Superintendent and consistent with all legal and code requirements of the district. Fund-raising activities will be designed and held to ensure that there is no unacceptable burden to staff or infringement on instructional time. (BOE 1324)

POSTERS

The building principal or designee must approve signs or posters that students wish to display. Posters displayed without authorization will be removed.

INSURANCE

School insurance is made available to families. Brochures are distributed to all students at the beginning of each academic year. While the program is not mandatory, it is suggested that parents take advantage of the opportunity to provide adequate protection for their children while in school. Any such arrangement is contractual between the parent and insurance carriers and Regional School District #17 assumes no liability from disputes arising from such contract.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Our schools are committed to effective instructional methods to ensure student learning. All Connecticut school districts apply a framework entitled Multi-Tiered System of Supports, which is designed to provide academic and behavioral instruction that is matched to student needs. Our MTSS process encompasses the SRBI components, including:

- High quality curriculum and instruction in the general education setting.
- Universal common assessments used to assess students' grade level progress.
- Research-based interventions for students who require additional academic or behavioral support or enrichment to make educational gains.
- Use of data to track student progress.

LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATH SUPPORT

Language arts and/or math support provides additional assistance to students who are having difficulty meeting grade-level expectations in these areas.

A plan is developed for the individual student based on information taken from standardized testing as well as district/school reading, writing, and math class work and assessments using varied materials and strategies. The plan is then implemented by our staff and data is collected on the response of the student to the intervention. Parents are updated on the progress of their child throughout the process.

A support plan is most often initiated by the school MTSS team, but if parents feel that their child is not progressing adequately at school, they should contact their child's teacher. The conversation or conference can be utilized to identify areas of concern, review existing background information, examine the student's current instructional program and discuss and/or select alternative instructional strategies for meeting the student's needs.

SECTION 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is federal civil rights legislation that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in any program receiving federal funds, including public schools. The purpose of Section 504 as it applies to public schools is to ensure that eligible students have educational opportunities equivalent to their non-disabled peers. A student is *disabled* within the definition of Section 504 if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as performing manual tasks, caring for oneself, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, and/or learning. In order to determine eligibility for Section 504 services, a student is evaluated by the school team in collaboration with the parent(s)/guardian.

COUNSELING AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The school provides support and professional services for children who are experiencing difficulty with academic work or need support in their relationships with others, as well as counseling on topics relevant to children.

Early intervention is key to promoting healthy social, emotional, and academic growth. Please call the school psychologist if you have any concerns about your child. Our school psychologist works to support students and teachers in the building. In addition to short-term aid, they also partner with agencies in the community to help families and can provide referrals to outside resources.

LEAP SERVICES

The LEAP program provides instruction to identified gifted and/or talented students in grades 4 through 6. Students in grade 3 are tested for the program using a standardized assessment. Identified students will then receive instruction beginning in grade 4. If you have any questions about the identification process, please contact your child's teacher.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT

The purpose of this support is to provide reinforcement for those students experiencing significant learning problems.

Eligibility is determined by a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) consisting of professional staff members and the child's parent(s). Parents and teachers who believe a child has a learning problem caused by a disability should notify the principal, who will begin the process. In order to qualify for services, a child must have a disability recognized by state and federal law.

Special education and classroom teachers work together to develop appropriate educational programs, implement special learning strategies and in individual cases, modify curriculum in order to ensure student success. In instances where specialized training or intensive instruction is needed, the special education teacher and/or other specialists works individually or in small groups with students.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

For a student eligible to receive Special Education Services, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed that outlines the services the PPT believes are necessary for the student to access a free and appropriate education.

HEALTH SERVICES

The Regional School District No. 17 health services are designed to provide care to students who become ill or are injured while in school.

A cumulative health file is maintained for each student. This file includes notations of past illnesses, results of physical examinations, and other pertinent health information.

Parents are notified of any deviation from the normal pattern of health and suggestions are given for follow-up. It is likewise important that parents notify the school nurse in case of a student's illness. If a student is to be excused or limited for an extended period from participation in school activities, he/she is required to bring a statement signed by a physician. The school nurse is available to parents and students for conferences regarding health issues.

Accidents

All accidents, no matter how minor, should be reported to the teacher, principal, nurse or office. When accidents occur in school, a school accident report form must be filled out.

Medications

If a student needs to take medication during the school day, the school nurse's office must have a signed form from the physician which includes the drug name and dosage. You may obtain these forms from the school nurse. The school nurse must keep the medication locked up in her office and will dispense medication at the proper time. We must emphasize that students are NOT allowed to transport medication of any kind and medication without physician's orders will not be administered.

Students taking improper amounts of a medication or taking a medication without proper notification and supervision of the school nurse or designee will be subject to the procedures for improper drug or alcohol use outlined in this policy.

Students who become ill at school will be under the care of the school nurse. The nurse may allow the student to rest in the clinic, or call the parents and ask them to come to the school for the student.

Communicable/Infectious Diseases

Students with any medical condition that may expose others to disease, or contagious and infectious conditions may be excluded from school and referred for medical diagnosis and treatment. Additional information concerning this may be obtained from the school nurse.

Before a student may return to school after an absence due to such condition, parents and students may be required to submit medical evidence that their child has recovered sufficiently to prevent exposing others.

Emergency Cards and Medical Treatment

Parents are required each year to complete an emergency information form for use by the school in the event of a medical emergency. Cards are sent home at the start of the school

year. This information is critical when a student is sick or injured. The school needs to be able to contact someone especially if a parent is unavailable.

Health Assessments/Physical Examinations

All students are required to have a health assessment prior to public school enrollment. Health assessments are again required prior to grade six and in grade ten. School nurses are required to administer the following screening procedures:

Vision:	K – 6 and grade 9
Hearing:	K – 3, grade 5, and grade 8
Postural:	Grades 5 – 9

DISTRICT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ADMISSION/PLACEMENT

Regional School District #17 provides free public education to all students whose legal residence is in the towns of Haddam and Killingworth. Tuition students are not accepted from outside the district without the approval of the Superintendent, or when necessary, the Board of Education. In all cases of residency verification, an affidavit will require a statement or statement with documentation that there is bona fide student residence in Haddam or Killingworth, that the residence is intended to be permanent, that it is provided without pay, and that it is not for the sole purpose of obliging school accommodations.

A student seeking enrollment in the Haddam-Killingworth High School for the first time or following attendance in another Connecticut public school district, out-of-state attendance, private school attendance or admission should contact the principal. A student who is transferring from non-public schools or schools outside the district will be placed at his/her current grade level pending evaluation and observation of the student. After such assessment and consultation with the parents, the principal will determine the grade placement of the child.

Students may participate in the inter-district public school attendance program called Open Choice. The Regional Educational Service Centers will determine which school districts are close enough to make transportation feasible.

Exchange students participating in a formal exchange program may be admitted by the Superintendent for no more than two semesters at no tuition cost. Admissions are dependent upon space available and must not lead to the hiring of additional staff. Exchange students will be accorded all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of a resident student during the period of enrollment.

USE OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

As part of our commitment to preparing students for the future, RSD17 supports the responsible, safe, and effective use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) in learning. When used thoughtfully, AI can help students explore ideas, practice skills, and enhance creativity. Students are expected to follow all guidelines, use AI ethically, and never use it to replace their own work. Plagiarism policies, guidelines, and consequences also apply to the use of AI.

Families and students are encouraged to review the full **RSD17 Effective Use of Generative AI Guidelines** to understand how these tools may be used in classrooms and the expectations for privacy, academic integrity, and digital citizenship. LINK

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The educational program shall provide for the continuous progress of children from grade to grade. Children shall be placed at the grade level to which they are best adjusted academically, socially and emotionally.

The overall best interest of the student will always be of prime consideration. Decisions to retain will involve collaboration with principal, parents and teacher; the final decision, however, will rest with the school administration. (BOE 5123)

EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION

As required by state statute, a student will be exempted from instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) or Family Life and Sex Education upon receipt of a written request for such exemption from his/her parent or guardian. The parent may also make a written request for an exemption from instruction or a school activity for a student based upon religious beliefs, which may be contrary to the content of the information being presented**.** (BOE 6144.1)

RESOLUTION OF PROBLEMS

Community Relations – Public Complaints – General Complaint Procedure:
The Board recognizes that situations may arise in the operation of the schools that are of concern to parents or the public. Such concerns are best dealt with through communication with appropriate staff. All complaints and grievances shall be handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible. The following guidelines are suggested as the proper procedure to be followed by persons with questions or complaints.

1. Letters concerning individual students should first be addressed to the teacher.

2. Unsettled matters from (1) above or problems and questions concerning individual schools should be directed to the principal of the school.

3. Unsettled matters from (2) above or problems and questions concerning the school system as a whole should be directed to the Superintendent. There is no statutory appeal process beyond the level of Superintendent except in cases involving expulsion, tenure, and school accommodations.

4. Should there be disagreement with the decision of the Superintendent; the concern may be put in writing to the Chairperson of the Board, who shall bring the concern to the attention of the full Board of Education. Except as Board action is required by statue (e.g. expulsion, tenure hearings, and school accommodations), the Board shall hear the concern (in open or executive session in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act) only if upon the motion of a member of the Board to hear the matter, the Board decides by majority vote to do so.

5. Exceptions to the above process are complaints that directly concern Board actions or policies.

The public should be advised that individual Board members are unable to respond or act on behalf of the Board except when attending a public Board of Education meeting.

Parents/community members who wish to pursue an issue will be made aware of the proper channels of communication and appeal if they so request the information.

FIELD TRIPS

The Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education encourages and sanctions student field trips that are of value in helping achieve each participating student's educational objectives. All student field trips shall require prior written approval by the building principal.

Field trips may be scheduled for educational, cultural or co-curricular purposes. Any student who is serving a suspension or an expulsion may not participate in any field trip. While on a trip, all students are considered to be in school. This means that conduct and dress standards will be appropriate for the field trip activity.

In the rare situation where a parent must take their child directly from a field trip a Parent Request Transportation from a School Sponsored Event form **must** be completed and approved by the building principal prior to the date of the field trip or the school sponsored event. The

parent will also sign the bottom section of that form at the time he/she picks up his/her child. Children are allowed to be picked up by their own parents only.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Students will not be denied the opportunity to participate in any class or school-sponsored activity because of inability to pay for material fees, transportation costs, admission prices, or any other related expenses. The parent/guardian of any student who needs financial assistance for school activities should contact the child's principal, social worker, school psychologist, teacher or anyone with whom the parent feels comfortable to request confidential help.

SCHOOL CLIMATE POLICY

The Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education (the "Board") is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment that promotes:

- A sound school environment that develops and sustains academic, social, emotional, ethical, civic, and intellectual skills.
- A restorative environment focused on overcoming barriers to teaching and learning by building and supporting meaningful school-wide relationships, and intentionally re-engaging any disengaged students, educators, and families.

To best promote this positive educational environment the Board has adopted the Connecticut School Climate Policy in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-222cc. The purpose of this policy is to support the needs of the students by reporting, assessing, and responding to challenging behaviors that, "negatively impacts the school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee." Please contact your teacher or building administrator if you believe your child is experiencing challenging behavior.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Safe School Climate Specialist who is the building principal or the District Safe School Climate Coordinator, Dr. Aaron Puzarne, at 860-345-4244. (BOE 5131.911)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated among students of the school district. It is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of sexual harassment is forbidden whether by students, supervisory or non-supervisory personnel, individuals under contract, or volunteers subject to the control of the Board. Students are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful and courteous to employees, to fellow students and to the public.

Definition

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following: (1) An employee of the Board conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the Board on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo); (2) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the Board's education programs or activities; or Page 2 of 24 (3) "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).

Procedure

It is the express policy of the Board of Education to encourage victims of sexual harassment to report such claims. Students are encouraged to promptly report complaints of sexual harassment to the Director of Student-Personnel or Superintendent. Complaints will be investigated promptly and corrective action will be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality will be maintained by all persons involved in the investigation and no reprisals or retaliation will be allowed to occur as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of sexual harassment.

The Regional School District No. 17 Public Schools administration shall provide training to Title IX Coordinator(s), investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process (as set forth in the Administrative Regulations) on the definitions of sex discrimination and sexual harassment, the scope of the Board's education program and activity, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process, and how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias.

Legal Reference: Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §2000-e2(a).

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Policy Guidance (N-915.035) on Current Issues of Sexual Harassment, effective 10/15/88.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 34 CFR Section 106.

Meritor Savings Bank. FSB v. Vinson, 477 U.S. 57 (1986)

Faragher v. City of Boca Raton, No. 97-282 (U.S. Supreme Court, June 26, 1998)

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 17 STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

In compliance with Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws prohibiting the exclusion of any person from any of its educational programs or activities, or the denial to any person of the benefits of any of its educational programs or activities because of race, religion, color, national origin, alienage, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability (including pregnancy), veteran status or gender identity or expression, subject to the conditions and limitations established by law.

Nondiscrimination

The conditions or privileges of employment in the school system, including the wages, hours, terms and benefits, shall be applied without regard to race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, intellectual disability, pregnancy or physical disability. The Board of Education seeks to extend the advantages of public education with full equality of educational opportunity to all students and personnel. The Board, any employee or any other person may not aid or compel the performance of an unfair labor practice as defined by law.

Regional School District No. 17 public schools shall be open to all children five years of age and over who reach age five on or before the first day of January of any year. Each such child shall have an equal opportunity to participate in the activities, programs, and courses of study offered in such public schools without discrimination.

Dr. Aaron Puzarne, Director of Student Services
Title IX Coordinator and 504 Coordinator
RSD17 Schools
57 Little City Road
Higganum, CT 06441
860-345-4244
Email: apuzarne@rsd17.org

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Pursuant to the IDEA, Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, no otherwise qualified individual with disabilities shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education.

MANDATED REPORTING/CHILD ABUSE

Teachers, principals, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receive yearly training in their use.

Reporting of child abuse and neglect is a responsibility that is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse or neglect a report will be made. The school will work with the parents and appropriate social agencies in all cases.

Child abuse is defined as any physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means or injuries that are not in keeping with the explanation given for their cause. Improper treatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivations of necessities, emotional abuse, cruel punishment or neglect are also considered child abuse.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education prohibits the unlawful use, sale, distribution or possession of controlled drugs, controlled substances, tobacco, drug paraphernalia, as defined in C.G.S. Section 21a-240, or alcohol on or off school property or during any school sponsored activity. School property means the land and all temporary and permanent structures comprising the districts' elementary and secondary schools, and administrative office buildings and includes, but is not limited to classrooms, hallways, storage facilities, auditoriums, gymnasiums, fields and parking lots. It shall be the policy of the Board to take positive action through education, counseling, discipline, parental involvement, medical referral, and law enforcement referral, as appropriate, in the handling of incidents in the schools involving the unlawful possession, distribution, sale or use of substances that affect behavior. (BOE 5131.6a)

In the event that a student is willfully under the influence of a drug or alcohol, or is engaged in any activity involving such substances as listed above, he/she will be suspended from school for up to ten days and referred to the appropriate treatment agency, unless otherwise prohibited by state and federal law. In all cases the parents will be notified, the police will be contacted and a referral will be made to the Board of Education for a hearing to consider expulsion, subject to state and federal law provisions to the contrary. The consequences of such violations may ultimately result in disciplinary action, including expulsion from school and/or criminal prosecution.

WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS

Possession of any weapon, weapon facsimile, deadly weapon, pistol, knife, blackjack, bludgeon, box cutter, metal knuckles, pellet gun, explosive device, firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, whether functional or not, or any other dangerous object is expressly prohibited. This also

includes pellet guns and/or airsoft pistols. Any student found in possession of a weapon is subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension or expulsion. BOE 5131

PARENTS RIGHT-TO-KNOW

As part of the federal 'No Child Left Behind Act' you may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teacher. You may do this by contacting the main office at the school your child attends.

STUDENT RECORDS

Educational records, defined as records directly related to a student, will be kept for each student and may reflect the physical, emotional, social and academic aspects of a student's development in the educational process.

The Board of Education recognizes the need to comply with the legal state and federal requirements regarding the confidentiality, access to and amendment of student records. The procedures for the confidentiality of student records shall be consistent with federal statutes, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, and its implementing and revised regulations, The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and the Connecticut General Statutes.

Safeguards shall be established by the school administration to protect the student and the student's family from invasion of privacy in the collection, maintenance and dissemination of information, and to provide accessibility to recorded information by those legally entitled thereto. Access to inspect or review a student's educational record or any part thereof may include the right to receive copies under limited circumstances.

A student's school records are confidential and are protected by law from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the district until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

If the parent or eligible student believes that information in the student's records is inaccurate or misleading or violates the student's right, he/she must request in writing that the school district make appropriate amendments. If the school district decides to amend the records, steps will be taken promptly. If the district decides that an amendment of data in accordance with the request is not warranted, it shall so inform the parent or eligible student and advise him/her of the right to a hearing. (BOE 5125.1)

ADVERTISING

The public schools maintain careful controls on the way in which students are exposed to materials and announcements, other than those directly related to school sponsored programs and activities. Caution is exercised to prevent exploitation of the system and its students. Fliers distributed in the district must have approval from the Superintendent prior to distribution and only non-profit organizations will be considered.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Fourth Amendment rights to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures apply to searches conducted by public school officials. A student and his/her effects may be searched if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The way the search is conducted should be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

Lockers, desks and other storage areas provided by the school system for use by students are the property of the school system. Such storage areas are provided for the temporary convenience of students only. The Board of Education authorizes the administration and/or law enforcement officials to search lockers and other school property available for use by students for the presence of weapons, contraband or the fruits of a crime if there are reasonable grounds at the inception of the search for suspecting that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. Moreover, the scope of the search shall be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and shall not be excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. If the school administration reasonably suspects that a pupil is not maintaining a locker or other storage area assigned to him/her in a sanitary condition, or that the storage area contains items the possession of which is illegal or in violation of school regulations or that endangers the health, safety or welfare of the student or others, it has the right to open and examine the storage area and to seize any such items that are found.

When required by law and otherwise at the option of the building principal, items that have been seized shall be submitted to the police department for proper disposition. Items not submitted to the police department shall be disposed of as directed by the building principal. The decision to search shall be made by the principal or the principal's designee. The search

shall be made in the presence of at least one witness. Discovery of illegal or dangerous materials shall be reported to the Office of the Superintendent (BOE 5145.12)

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The school district recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Activities related to a religious holiday or theme will be planned to insure that the activity is not devotional, and that students of all faiths can join without feeling that they are betraying their own beliefs. Students shall be given the option to be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme that conflicts with their own religious beliefs. If a parent or student has any questions regarding the use of religious music, artwork and/or symbols in a particular course/activity, the building principal should be contacted.

SELECTION OF AUDIO VISUAL AND REFERENCE MATERIALS

A. Library Materials:

School librarians or media coordinators are responsible for implementing Board Policy, as pertains to library materials. In the event doubt may exist as to the appropriateness of the selection of, or use of, certain library materials, the librarian should indicate this reservation to the building principal. The building principal will review the material with other staff members (selected by the principal) and render a decision as soon as practicable.

B. General Instructional Material:

Each teacher has the professional responsibility to properly review all instructional material for fact and appropriateness prior to use in the classroom. In the event doubt may exist as to the appropriateness of certain material, the teacher should request the building principal should seek out the advice of other professionals as deemed appropriate.

On occasion, parental comments or questions may focus on the use of certain materials in our schools. When this occurs, principals are requested to take immediate action to ascertain the nature of the objection and to review the matter with appropriate staff members. Hopefully, the end result of this action will be the resolution of the issue.

Selection Of Instructional Materials

A. Procedure for Selection of Materials

Media Center Materials (Media)

1. In selecting materials for purchase for the media center, the media specialist will evaluate the existing collection and the curriculum needs and will consult reputable, professionally prepared selection aids and other appropriate sources. For the purpose of this rule, the term

"media" includes all materials considered part of the library collection, plus all instructional materials housed in resource centers and classrooms which are not text materials.

2. Recommendations for purchase will be solicited from faculty, P.T.O. and parents.

3. Selection is an ongoing process which shall include the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of loose and worn materials still of educational value.

4. Selections are forwarded to the principal's office.

B. Criteria for Selection of Materials

The following criteria will be used as they apply:

1. Materials shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the district and the objectives of specific courses.

2. Materials shall meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation.

3. Materials shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.

4. Materials shall have aesthetic, literary, or social value.

5. Materials chosen shall be by competent and qualified authors and producers.

6. Only grade appropriate G-rated library films will be shown. These films will be clearly curriculum related.

7. Biased or slanted materials may be provided to meet specific curriculum objectives.

8. Physical format and appearance of materials shall be suitable for their intended use.

9. Any exceptions to the above guidelines will be discussed beforehand with the school principal. All questions regarding misuse of audio-visual materials will be handled by the school principal.

PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION AND APPLICATION

As of July 1, 2000, only certified pesticide applicators shall be used in schools for any nonemergency pesticide use in school buildings or on school grounds. Areas to receive pesticide application will be posted and a written record of all pesticide applications will be maintained for five years. Parents/guardians and staff who want to receive advance notice of all pesticide use will be listed on a registry and such notice will be provided as required by law. Parents/guardians who want to be notified prior to pesticide applications inside their children's school assignment area may contact the Superintendent's office.

GREEN CLEANING

RSD 17 complies with the Green Cleaning Act. On or before July 1, 2011, each local and regional board of education shall implement a green cleaning program for the cleaning and maintenance of school buildings and facilities in its district. No person shall use a cleaning product inside a school unless such cleaning product meets guidelines or environmental standards set by a national or international environmental certification program approved by the

Department of Administrative Services, in consultation with the Commissioner of Environmental Protection. Such cleaning vii product shall, to the maximum extent possible, minimize the potential harmful impact on human health and the environment. (P.A. No. 09-81)

RECYCLING PROGRAM

RSD 17 complies with the Private and Municipal Recycling Act. An important step was taken toward changing the way we manage our municipal solid waste (MSW) when the Connecticut State legislature passed the mandatory recycling laws which required recycling of 25% of the state's solid waste stream by January 1, 1991. Over the past twenty years several updates to those laws, or new laws, have been passed to help increase recycling and address topics such as e-waste, deposit containers, rechargeable NiCd batteries, and grass clippings. (P.A. No. 10-87)

ASBESTOS

Legislation requires all school buildings to be reevaluated to determine if asbestos is present and if it poses a significant health hazard to the building's occupants. The District has on file plans showing the location of asbestos in each building and measures undertaken to comply with regulations to maintain a safe school environment. Requests to review these plans may be made in the school office.

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17

Contact Information

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Burr Elementary School 792 Killingworth Road Higganum, CT 06441	Brienne Whidden, Principal Sue Hall, Principal's Secretary Heather Strom, Secretary Telephone: 860-345-4584
Killingworth Elementary 340 Route 81 Killingworth, CT 06419	Dennis Reed, Principal Lee Kozlowski, Principal's Secretary Joyce Callahan, Secretary Telephone: 860-663-1121
Haddam-Killingworth Intermediate School 451 Route 81 Killingworth, CT 06419	Eric Larson, Principal Katie Gebert, Principal's Secretary Telephone: 860-663-1241
Haddam-Killingworth Middle School 451 Route 81 Killingworth, CT 06419	Heather Persson, Interim Principal TBA, Assistant Principal Lori LaBella, Principal's Secretary Telephone: 860-663-1241
Haddam-Killingworth High School 95 Little City Road Higganum, CT 06441	Donna Hayward, Principal Adam Apicella, Assistant Principal Diane Tourangeau, Principal's Secretary Telephone: 860-345-8541
Student Services 57 Little City Road Higganum, CT 06441	Dr. Aaron Puzarne, Director Tonya Gorgone, Student Services Coordinator Rebekah Templeton, Elementary Coordinator Jacqueline Morrow, Secretary Telephone: 860-345-4244
Department of Transportation (Student Transportation of America)	George Papadopolous, Branch Manager Telephone: 860-345-8228
Food Service	Sharon Shettleworth, Director Telephone: 860-345-4534 - Ext. 421

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2025/2026

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