DEERFIELD SCHOOL

Mountainside, NJ

STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR GRADES 6-8



(A GUIDE TO POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR)

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Deerfield School Principal

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Board of Education Policy 5512 – Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

I. MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT VISION

We continue to believe:

● that children are society's most valuable asset and every decision should be in their best interest.

● that schools should give all students opportunities to achieve and succeed to the best of their abilities.

● that schools should provide a safe, positive, and welcoming environment that emphasizes integrity, pride, acceptance, and mutual respect and will allow students to become responsible and caring adults.

● that students must understand the value of education and the opportunities it provides.

● that schools must address the needs of the whole child in areas such as: social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and civic preparation.

● that schools should create a comprehensive curriculum incorporating 21st Century creative and critical thinking, technology, communication, entrepreneurial, and problem-solving skills imperative to succeeding in a global society.

● that well-rounded academic and extracurricular experiences (athletics, fine arts, clubs) should be available and encouraged for all students.

● that parents are essential to the success of the educational process.

● that faculty and staff members should be knowledgeable in their subject areas, with a vigorous emphasis on professional development and creative, innovative instructional methods to ensure all students achieve at their highest levels.

● that when facing budgetary and economic issues, the district will find the best funding resources available to support its mission and to provide efficient, effective, and safe school facilities and infrastructure.

● that an excellent school system is crucial to the economic development and vitality of the community.

● that community involvement is critical in the educational process.

● that we must commit to continually improving communication and maintaining a strong relationship between the schools, residents, and the Mountainside community at large.

II. MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION

The Mountainside Public School District is committed to academic excellence and providing an equitable, whole-child education for all K-8 students to ensure they are well-prepared for high school, and empowered with the knowledge, literacy, and social and emotional skills needed to be lifelong learners and shape the world around them. The District promotes a collaborative and supportive learning environment, infusing a comprehensive curriculum with 21st century skills that encourages communication and innovative, creative and critical thinking. It is our goal that all our students become informed, empathetic and productive citizens who are responsible on a personal, community and global level. The Board of Education, administration, and staff, working together with students, parents and the community, are accountable for achieving this vision.

III. MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT GOALS

- <u>Student Achievement</u>

  By June 2027, at least 70% of K–5 students who are at-risk and receiving support services will meet or exceed their personalized i-Ready Annual Stretch Growth targets in Reading and/or Mathematics, achieved through targeted, purposeful instruction while restricting classroom and student technology use strictly to aligned, high-impact educational activities.

- <u>Community Relations</u>

  By February 28, 2027, the Mountainside Public School District will execute a comprehensive, multi-channel public information campaign to reach at least 85% of registered voter households,

hosting 3 town hall meetings and distributing bi-weekly informational updates to ensure the community is fully informed about the proposed facility improvements on the March 2027 referendum ballot.

- Staff Wellness & Development
  By June 2027, the Mountainside Public School District will reduce staff workload stress and increase instructional efficiency by implementing targeted AI/technology integration training, streamlining administrative duties (e.g., report card comments and meetings), and providing dedicated collaborative planning time, resulting in at least a 25% increase in staff agreement regarding workload manageability and adequate planning support on the annual staff climate survey.

IV. OVERVIEW OF STUDENT HANDBOOK COMPONENTS

Middle school educators are committed to pursuing and maintaining an academically excellent, developmentally responsive, and socially equitable learning environment for every student. Regarding this commitment, we have identified parents/guardians as partners in the educational process and have created the Student Handbook to inform you and your child of the various student rights and responsibilities pertaining to academics, attendance, and conduct. Disciplinary measures have been identified according to Titles 6 & 6A of the *New Jersey Administrative Code* and Title 18A of the *New Jersey Statutes*. We urge you to read and review this school document with your child so that your child's middle school experience is one rooted in clear expectations.

V. ACADEMICS

A. Homework Guidelines and Requests

Homework is an extension and reinforcement of what occurs in the classroom. It enables students to reflect upon and react to learning experiences in a meaningful way. We expect every student to accept the responsibility for completing homework neatly, accurately, and on time. While parents/guardians are supportive and encouraging, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to complete assignments that represent the student's best quality and effort. For more specific homework policy information, parents/guardians can contact individual teachers.

If a student is absent for any reason, it is the student's responsibility to gather missed assignments from teachers upon the student's return to school, complete missed assignments based on a schedule arranged by the teacher and student, and submit missed assignments to the teacher. In general, students will be allowed two days to make up missed work for each one day of absence. Teachers shall make reasonable accommodations to extend time for students.

In the event a student was or is going to be absent from school for two days or more **due to illness** the student's parent/guardian may notify the main office at (908) 232-8828, extension 300 or 301 and request work. For those students who were or are going to be absent from school for two days or more **due to illness**, we recommend that parents/guardians contact the main office before 11:30 a.m. so that anticipated missed assignments can be completed by students while they are absent from school (if possible). Once the main office has been notified, teachers will provide work for the student.

Parents/guardians are to allow 24 hours after notification for the work to be provided by the teacher(s). When students are absent for one day, students or parents/guardians can contact a classmate to obtain assignments rather than the main office or check the teacher's Google Classroom.

Teachers are not responsible to provide work to students who will be missing school for unexcused reasons. (i.e. family vacations scheduled during school hours). Student vacations are discouraged during the time school is in session and will not result in the provision of work to be completed while he/she is gone.

B. Grading

The following list provides guidelines for interpreting numerical grades on student report cards for academic content areas.

Grades

A+ =	100	**C+** =	77 - 79
A =	93 - 99	**C** =	73 - 76
A- =	90 - 92	**C-** =	70 - 72
B+ =	87 - 89	**D** =	65 - 69
B =	83 - 86	**F** =	64 and Below
B- =	80 - 82		

C. Genesis

Student grading and attendance information is available online through Genesis. Students and parents will be issued a Genesis Access Account using a SSO. Parents have 24 hour access to Genesis. A link to the Parent Portal can be found on the district website under Deerfield School or by clicking here. It is highly recommended that parents take advantage of the automatic email alerts and regularly check student progress in each class.

Progress Reports will be issued for students on an as needed basis by teachers.

Progress reports are issued at the midpoint of each of the three trimesters. The purpose of the progress report is to reflect student progress or lack thereof.

Trimester Marking Period	Trimester Dates	Genesis Portal Open to Families for Progress Reports
1st (T1)	9/8/26 - 12/4/26	Friday, October 23, 2026
2nd (T2)	12/5/26 - 3/12/27	Friday, January 29, 2027
3rd (T3)	3/13/27 – 6/22/27	Friday, April 30, 2027

Report cards will be available for viewing on Genesis. Questions related to report cards are to be directed to your child's teacher(s).

Trimester Marking Period	Trimester Dates	Genesis Portal Open to Families
1st (T1)	9/8/26 - 12/4/26	Friday, December 18, 2026
2nd (T2)	12/5/26 - 3/12/27	Thursday, March 25, 2027
3rd (T3)	3/13/27 – 6/22/27	Friday, June 25, 2027

D. Honor Rolls

- High Honor Roll - Students achieving a grade of A or higher in all graded classes.
- Honor Roll - Students achieving a grade of B or higher in all graded classes.

High Honor Roll or Honor Roll achievement will be indicated on students' report cards when posted on Genesis each marking period. In addition, a congratulatory letter from the school principal will be mailed home each marking period to the honor roll recipients. Students who achieve High Honor Roll all marking periods will receive a certificate at the end of the school year to mark their achievement.

E. Standardized Testing

Standardized tests are administered in grades 3-8. The purpose of these assessments is to determine how well students have mastered the skills and concepts identified in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

Assessment	Grade	Administration Dates
NJSLA-A LAL & MATH	6,7,8	Anticipated 4/19/27-5/21/27*
NJSLA-S SCIENCE	8	Anticipated 4/19/27-5/21/27*

*These dates are tentative and subject to change.
Standardized test scores are mailed home once the district receives the results.

VI. ATTENDANCE

A. General Provisions

New Jersey state law requires that students attend school regularly, and it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to see their children attend school on every day that the public schools are in session (N.J.S.A. 18A: 38-25). In order to facilitate students' opportunity for success, staff will work cooperatively with parents/guardians to assure students attend school daily. In order to ensure students attend school on a regular basis, the following guidelines and protocols are in place:

- When a student is absent, notify school using the Genesis Parent Portal:
  - In the portal, note the absence under "Student Data >Attendance > Notify Office" tabs.
  - If a student is absent and the school has not been notified, the school will call the parent/guardian or emergency contacts provided to us in Genesis. If no one can be reached to verify the student's whereabouts, a police officer may be dispatched to the student's home to conduct a wellness check.
- Students must be in attendance for a **minimum of four hours** on a given school day in order to participate in or attend any extracurricular activities that are held that day.

Please note: **ALL STUDENT ABSENCES are "unexcused"** and count towards state monitored truancy/chronic absenteeism with these limited exceptions:

- Religious observances (pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16)

- Participation in Veteran's Day activities (November 11th) and/or Take Your Children to Work Day (4th Thursday in April)
- Closure of a busing school district that prevents a student from having transportation to the receiving school

All school districts are required to provide data to the NJ Department of Education to monitor attendance rates, specifically noting rates of truancy and/or chronic absenteeism. Please note:
-The threshold for truancy is defined as 10 or more unexcused absences within a school year.
-The threshold for chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or 18 days, excused or unexcused, within a school year.

You can monitor your child's attendance record in the Genesis Parent Portal. Your school Principal will also notify you and follow these procedures to prevent further absenteeism, ultimately to ensure students' right to education and prevent further truancy as outlined in District Regulation 5200.

# of Absences	Principal or Designee Action	Purpose
Up to 5	Letter to Parents/Guardians through Genesis	Alert families of the concern and (re)/educate about the attendance policy
Up to 9	Letter to Parents/Guardians through Genesis and potential meeting scheduled with Principal or designee	Collaborative review of the nature of the absences to determine the need for a student corrective action plan (CAP) based on the pattern of absences.
10 or more (truant and approaching chronic absenteeism which is 10% of school days).	Letter to Parents/Guardians through Genesis, meeting with Principal or Designee, Implementation of a student corrective action plan (CAP)	To avoid **any** further unexcused absences. If a student is chronically absent the Principal shall: ○ Meet with parents/guardians to adjust the CAP as needed ○ Determine need for a court referral for the truancy ○ Consider retention in cases of insufficient academic progress.

Please be aware of the following additional expectations and regulations:
- Students who have an extended or serious illness shall not be charged with absences provided they are under a doctor's care and are receiving home instruction.
- Students who are absent from school due to observance of a religious holiday shall not be deprived of any award or eligibility thereof or opportunity to compete for any award, or of

the right to take an alternate test/examination, as long as an absence note is submitted in Genesis.

- Teachers will cooperate in the preparation of home assignments for students who anticipate extended absence due to illness or family emergency.
- Students absent for any reason are expected to make up the work missed. The parent or student is responsible for requesting missed assignments and any assistance required. Teachers will provide make-up assignments as necessary.
    - In general, students will be allowed a reasonable amount of time as determined by the teacher to make up the work missed.
    - A student who missed a test or an exam shall be offered an opportunity to take the test, exam, or an appropriate alternate test.
- Scheduling vacations during the school year is strongly discouraged in that students miss valuable instructional time. **Teachers will not be able to provide a list of specific assignments in advance** but will make assignments available and set due dates for students within a reasonable amount of time upon return.

B. Late Arrivals/Early Dismissals

Students are expected to be in their homerooms by 8:20 a.m. Students who arrive late to school are to report directly to the main office upon entering the school. The main office will then issue passes to students who are late to school before they proceed to their classes.

Grades 6-8

Upon the 4th late arrival, the student will receive detention. Parents will receive a letter from the school with the details of the detention including the date, time, and location.
Upon every subsequent 4th late arrival, the student will receive an additional detention.
Upon the 8th late arrival, a conference with the parent and the school principal will be arranged.
Students' lates will reset on the first day of each marking period.

Early Dismissal

Students who wish to be dismissed early from school must have a written request to do so from a parent/guardian. Notes for early dismissal can be indicated in the attendance tab in Genesis. The request must state the reason and time for the early dismissal.

The parent/guardian who is picking up the student must personally sign out and pick up the child in the main office, at which time, he/she may be asked to display personal identification. This is for security purposes.

Siblings who are under the age of 18 will not be permitted to sign students out under any circumstances. Students being dismissed early from school will be called to the main office just prior to the stated dismissal time. If the student is returning later in the day, the student is to sign in with the main office upon arrival and receive a pass before proceeding to class.

VII. SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

A. Communication with Staff Members

Parents/guardians are partners in the educational process. It is essential for parents/guardians and staff members to communicate with one another in terms of student progress and behavior. Frequent contact through telephone calls, e-mail, conferences, and publications is vital in that the success of elementary school students is contingent upon continual communication.

Staff members can be contacted by telephone at (908) 232-8828 followed by the respective extension. A list of staff members, telephone extensions, and e-mail addresses is linked to the district website. In the event parents/guardians are contacting a teacher for the first time by telephone, parents/guardians are reminded that most teachers are required to arrive at 8:00 a.m. and are required to remain in the building until 3:20 p.m.

If a parent/guardian wishes to schedule a conference with a staff member(s), that parent/guardian is to contact the staff member(s). Parents/guardians of sixth, seventh and eighth grade students are to be aware that conferences can be scheduled. A conference is to be scheduled for the week of Parent/Teacher Conferences in November so that parents/guardians can meet with their child's teachers to review student progress for the first trimester. In most instances, the counselor and Principal are available to meet with parents/guardians in conference settings if appropriate.

Additional school information is available to parents/guardians through the district website (http://www.mountainsideschools.org).

B. Support Services

Counseling

Ms. Jessica Cronin, jcronin@mountainsideschools.org

Parents/guardians are to make every effort to contact the school counselor in the event they notice a significant change in their child's behavior and/or attitude. The counselor can be quite helpful regarding conflict resolution if a parent/guardian notices that students are having difficulty relating to one another. Our school counselor is instrumental in dealing with the many personalities and challenges associated with middle school as the counselor addresses various developmentally responsive themes. Specifically, the middle school counseling program focuses on the following areas: transition/orientation, character education, crisis intervention, problem solving, individual school-based counseling, small group counseling, classroom developmental counseling, parent/family involvement, and consultation/collaboration with staff members, parents/guardians, mental health professionals, and community members.

RTI (formerly I&RS)

Mrs. Natalie Crisafulli, Curriculum and Instructional Support Coordinator, ncrisafulli@mountainsideschools.org

Deerfield also has a Response To Intervention team (RTI) team which is composed of the Guidance Counselor, teachers, and a school administrator. When a concern arises pertaining to the academic and/or social-emotional growth of a student, parents/guardians and/or staff members may share the concern with the building administrator. After the concern is shared, a recommendation may be made to schedule an RTI team meeting. The purpose of an RTI team meeting is often for teachers to communicate with the student's parents/guardians in order to identify the difficulties the student is experiencing and create an action plan to assist. When additional input is necessary beyond the provisions of a general education program, the Child Study Team (CST) may conduct a complete evaluation of the student to determine eligibility for special education support.

Child Study Team

Ms. Amy Giaccio, Supervisor of Special Services, agiaccio@mountainsideschools.org

Deerfield provides special education services to classified students through the Child Study Team (CST). The CST includes the Learning Disabilities Teacher-Consultant (LDT-C), the school

psychologist, the school social worker, and the school speech therapist. The LDT-C works directly with classroom teachers, observing and offering academic and classroom management strategies to assist students who are experiencing difficulties. The school psychologist is available to students for counseling purposes and to parents/guardians for additional support strategies relative to student behavior. In addition, the school social worker can guide the development of social skills. The CST may conduct an evaluation to determine whether or not a student is eligible for special education and related services. Each CST member may serve as case manager for students who are referred for evaluation or who are identified as needing special education services. The case manager coordinates the development, monitoring, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the Individualized Education Program (IEP). This staff member facilitates communication between home and school and facilitates the annual review and re-evaluation process.

Nurse
Mrs. Sonia Branco, sbranco@mountainsideschools.org
The Deerfield school nurse is a health professional whose responsibilities include providing basic health care for students, acting as a liaison to parents/guardians specific to student illness and absence from school, handling emergency situations, and serving as a resource person for the Child Study Team and RTI Committee.

AIM (Academic Intervention for Mastery)
Mrs. Natalie Crisafulli, Curriculum and Instructional Support Coordinator, ncrisafulli@mountainsideschools.org
Ms. Katie Blanco, Reading Specialist, kblanco@mountainsideschools.org
Deerfield has implemented basic skills instruction as one of its support services. This program, AIM, includes instruction in the content areas of language arts literacy and mathematics and is available to students during school hours. Students are eligible for this supplemental program based on teacher recommendations, assessment data, and the RTI Committee. The teachers who provide this instruction collaborate with the respective classroom teacher primarily through an in-class model and monitor student progress in a similar vein.

MLs (Multilingual Learners)
Mrs. Lori Topel, ltopel@mountainsideschools.org
Deerfield students whose primary spoken language is one other than English are tested to determine their level of English proficiency. During this process, state criteria are utilized to ascertain eligibility for assistance in language acquisition. Any student who falls below the cut-off score will receive direct instruction in English for one class period per day.

Gifted and Talented
Ms. Ashley Hines, ahines@mountainsideschools.org
Deerfield students are evaluated annually for acceptance and continuation in the District's Gifted and Talented Program. This program provided students identified with high abilities in one or more areas with opportunities that will challenge them in the regular classroom setting, as well as accelerated enrichment programs that will enable them to make continuous progress in school. All aspects of the programming and criteria will follow the Mountainside School District Board of Education Policy 2464.

C. Extracurricular Programs

Activities

The Deerfield activity program is designed so that middle school students can explore their interests. The activities for the school year are (but may not be limited to): Art Studio, AV Club, Ecology Club, Robotics Club, Literary Magazine, STEAM Club, and Yearbook. Some activities are available for different grade levels based on the nature of the activity.

Athletics

Students in grades six, seven and eight have an opportunity to participate on several athletic teams during the school year including, boys' and girls' soccer and girls' volleyball in the fall, boys' and girls' basketball as well as wrestling in the winter and baseball (grades 7 and 8 only) and softball in the spring. As representatives of Deerfield School, students are expected to uphold the school Code of Conduct at both home and away games and while utilizing school transportation. Student players must adhere to academic and behavioral guidelines to be eligible for participation on athletic teams.

Performing Arts

There are several opportunities for middle school students to participate in performing arts. These programs consist of the following: Deerfield School Band, Jazz Band, Chorus as part of the general music curriculum and Select Chorus, and possibly the school play production. Whole group instrumental and vocal instruction prepares our band and chorus students to perform at school concerts, community affairs, and additional school events.

Student Council

The Student Council is an active service association, which has made charitable donations as a result of its fundraising efforts. The Student Council is comprised of homeroom representatives, and eighth grade students serve as officers following an annual election. The officers are responsible for organizing, coordinating, and leading school spirit activities, projects, and assemblies.

Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students who do not meet the Participation Eligibility Standards of Deerfield School will not be allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities.

6th Grade Participation Eligibility Standards
7th Grade Participation Eligibility Standards
8th Grade Participation Eligibility Standards

VIII. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In the section that follows, we have provided an alphabetical listing of several guidelines parents/guardians and students can familiarize themselves with to better understand general school policies and procedures.

A. Assemblies

Assemblies may occur at various times throughout the school year. Any gatherings will follow health and safety guidelines to allow for proper distancing as necessary. When attending assemblies, students will be accompanied and supervised by staff members. Students are expected to proceed to and from assemblies in an orderly fashion with a minimum amount of noise. Audience members are to commend assembly participants through applause. There is to be no

whistling, booing, or excessive noise made during assemblies. Students who choose not to demonstrate proper behavior will lose the privilege of attending assemblies. Constant talking during assemblies will not be tolerated.

B. Bicycles

Students are permitted to ride bicycles to school. **Students must walk their bicycle on the sidewalk when other students are present during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up.** Students with bicycles must secure them in the racks with their own locks. One rack is located in the front of the school near the circle, and a second rack is located in the back of the school near the tennis courts or gym entrance. **E-bikes and/or electric scooters or batteries cannot be brought on school property.** The school is not responsible for bicycles that are stolen. Those students who ride bicycles to school are reminded that New Jersey state law dictates that individuals **14 years of age and younger are required to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle.** As such, students are to store bicycle helmets in their hallway lockers when they enter school. Students may not ride and/or bring skateboards, roller blades, or scooters to school for safety reasons and storage purposes. Parents/guardians are to remind their child to cross with the assistance of the crossing guard.

C. Books/Equipment

Students are responsible for the care of all books, equipment, and materials that are assigned or loaned to them during the school year. Fines will be levied in June for any marks, ripped pages, or additional damages inflicted by students. Parents/guardians and students are reminded that fine amounts may be for the replacement cost of the damaged or lost book based upon the level of damage.

D. Building Appearance

Deerfield School is kept very well by our custodial staff. Every student is to respect and care for the building with a great degree of enthusiasm in order to contribute toward maintaining a pleasant learning environment. Students are to take pride in the appearance of our school by refraining from defacing and vandalizing school property and by removing debris when appropriate.

E. Bus Evacuation Drills

New Jersey state law requires schools to conduct bus evacuation drills for all students. During a bus evacuation drill, students are to leave all of their personal belongings on the bus (should they have them with them) and exit the rear of the bus quickly, silently, and in a single file line. Upon exiting, students are to sit in the rear door exit and use their hands and arms to brace themselves as they get out of the actual bus. Students are not to jump out of the bus. Once students have exited the bus, they are to stand quietly and wait until the signal is given for them to return to the bus and gather their personal belongings. Students can then proceed to their classes in an orderly fashion.

F. Cellphones/Smartwatch Technology

Staff members recognize that students need to be able to communicate with their parents/guardians before, during, and after school hours about family obligations, after-school activities, jobs, appointments, carpooling, etc., therefore, students will be permitted to bring cellphones/smartwatches to school. **Hand held or wearable electronic devices capable of photographic, video, or telephone communication are not allowed to be used during the school day without permission from a staff member. Teachers/staff are NOT responsible for determining whether a device has the use of data or not. Therefore, all cell phones and**

wearable technology is required to be turned off and stored in a locker during the school day.

Students are not permitted to utilize these devices once entering the school building and cannot utilize them again until the school day ends. These devices must be turned off and stored in hallway lockers during school hours, unless specific permission has been granted by an administrator or staff member.

Any student who needs a communication device (Smartwatch/Cell Phone) for medical reasons as approved by the school nurse are allowed to have them in their possession during the day.

Students who are found to have a cellphone or wearable technology device in their possession during school hours is addressed in the Code of Conduct:

	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Cell Phone Not Properly Stored in Locker	WARN+CFS	WARN+CFS	D+CFS

Use of a cellphone or wearable technology device during school hours is addressed in the Code of Conduct:

	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Cell Phone Use During School Hours	CFS+D	CFS+D	CFS+ISS

All students are reminded that the cellphone and smartwatch technology use applies when riding the bus to and from school.

Students shall be personally and solely responsible for the security of their cell phones/smartwatches. The school is not responsible for theft, loss, or damage of a cell phone/smartwatch, or unauthorized calls made on a cell phone.

G. Computers (School)

Chromebooks serve as informational and instructional resources for students and staff members. Students are reminded that the equipment is not to be vandalized in any way, shape, or form. Students whose misuse of their Chromebook results in damage or repairs will be responsible for the cost of the repair per the Chromebook Protocol & Procedures. Absolutely no food and drinks of any kind are permitted near the equipment. Student use must follow all guidelines established in the District's Acceptable Use Policy.

H. Delayed Openings/Early Dismissals/Emergency School Closings

In the event of a delayed opening, Deerfield School will open at 10:20 a.m. This is 2 hours later than usual. Deerfield bus students will be picked up 2 hours later than their daily pickup time. When there is a delayed opening, parents/guardians will receive a call, text, and/or email from School Messenger, a service provided by the district.. The Mountainside School District website (www.mountainsideschools.org) is another resource for this information. Middle school students will have their regularly scheduled lunch periods when we have delayed openings.

Should an early dismissal occur, school will close at 12:50 p.m. with a limited lunch to be served, meaning a full, hot lunch selection will not be available. Parents/guardians will receive a call, text,

and/or email from School Messenger when there is an early dismissal. The Mountainside School District website is another resource for this information.

Prior to an emergency school closing, parents/guardians will receive a call, text, and/or email from School Messenger. The Mountainside School District website is another resource for this information. Parents/guardians are advised to plan ahead and to make arrangements for child care should no one be home during the school day.

I. Drop Off/Pickup

For students who are transported to and from school by car, the respective parents/guardians are to adhere to these guidelines to ensure their child's safety.

Arrival

The start of the school day is 8:20 a.m. With this in mind, parents/guardians are not to drop off students prior to 8:00 a.m. There is no supervision available for students dropped off prior to 8:00 a.m. Parents/guardians who are dropping off students at the start of the school day may use the Central Avenue entrance for the front of Deerfield School or the Sawmill Road entrance. The Sawmill Road entrance is for drop off in the back of Deerfield School during the **morning only** from 8:05 to 8:15 a.m. Once the doors close at 8:15 a.m. and staff is no longer supervising outside, drop off students **MUST** use the front entrance.

Students coming to meet with a teacher for extra help in the morning will be required to receive a pass from the particular teacher prior to arriving in the morning. Teachers will meet students in the foyer of the main entrance if they have made arrangements for morning extra help. If a student does not have a pass, he/she will have to wait in the main office.

Parking of cars is to be in parking lot spaces only so as to assist with the flow of traffic along the designated, coned off route. Parents/Guardians dropping off should pull forward as far as possible in the circle. **Students should exit vehicles as quickly as possible and enter the building using the entrance door nearest the car. Students who require additional time to exit a car should have parents/guardians park in a designated parking space and use the crosswalk.**

Dismissal

Students who are transported home from school by a personal vehicle will be dismissed at 3:00pm at the front of the school building. Parents/Guardians may park and walk towards the main entrance to meet students. Vehicles may also pull up along the sidewalk curb/coned off area for students who are present to enter the car. Vehicles are not to park or sit in the lane along the sidewalk curb or in the coned area and wait for students as this blocks traffic from leaving the area.

It is expected that students are picked up promptly at school dismissal. Staff is present from 3:00pm-3:15pm at the front building exits to facilitate dismissal. **Supervision is not provided for students waiting for pickup near the park or field areas.** If dismissal plans change for a child or there are unforeseen circumstances impacting timely arrival at dismissal time, please contact the main office at 908-232-8828 ext 300 or 301 so the student can be notified. **Students who are not picked up by 3:15pm will be asked to return to the building while a parent/guardian is contacted.**

Bus students are to meet at the designated location (cafeteria, gym or media center) promptly at

dismissal. The rear parking lot is for use of athletic bus transportation and buses with designated transportation routes for students.

J. Extracurricular Activities
Students are expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress while participating in extracurricular activities, athletics, clubs, and other school-sponsored activities.

Academic eligibility will be monitored in full-year academic courses. Quarter-length courses, including Art, Music, Health, and other related-arts courses, are not included in the academic eligibility monitoring process. These courses remain an important part of a student's education; however, their shorter duration may not provide sufficient time for a student to respond to an academic concern and demonstrate meaningful improvement before the course concludes. These courses will count towards the honor roll and a student's cumulative grade point average.

Students with a D (65–69)

At the beginning of each week, coaches and advisors will review the grades of students participating in their activities. If a student has a **65–69 (D) in a full-year academic course**, the coach or advisor will contact the student's teacher to discuss the student's current academic performance and any outstanding academic responsibilities.

The coach or advisor will then communicate with the student and parent/guardian regarding the concern and explain what the student needs to do to improve their academic standing.

Depending on the circumstances, the student may be required to:

- Attend Quiet Lunch to complete unfinished work;
- Meet with the teacher before or after school for additional assistance;
- Attend a designated Learning Skills/Opportunity Period;
- Complete specific missing or incomplete assignments; or
- Complete other reasonable academic requirements identified by the teacher.

Students are expected to complete the identified academic requirements within the timeframe provided by the teacher or coach/advisor.

If a student does not complete the required work or does not meet the identified academic expectations, the student may be temporarily restricted from participating in the extracurricular activity, including practices, games, meetings, competitions, or performances, until the required academic responsibilities have been addressed.

Teacher Responsibilities

Because academic performance may affect a student's eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities, teachers are expected to maintain **accurate, timely, and sufficiently supported grades**.

When a student's grade falls within the 65–69 range, the teacher should be able to identify the basis for the current grade and provide the student with reasonable, specific steps to improve.

Grades used for eligibility purposes should reflect the student's **current performance** and should not be based on an outdated or incomplete gradebook. Teachers should enter grades within a

reasonable timeframe after completing assignments and assessments and should accurately identify missing or incomplete work.

Detention and Extracurricular Activities

Detentions take precedence over extracurricular activities and athletics. Detentions will not be scheduled around a student's extracurricular activities or athletic commitments.

A student who is assigned detention on the day of an extracurricular activity, athletic practice, game, meeting, competition, or performance **will not be permitted to participate in that activity.**

Students will be put on Academic Probation if they have a **current or cumulative** average below 65 (D) in any full-year academic class.

Sixth, seventh, and eighth-grade students who do not meet the Participation Eligibility Standards of Deerfield School will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities.

6th Grade Participation Eligibility Standards
7th Grade Participation Eligibility Standards
8th Grade Participation Eligibility Standards

K. Field Trips

Field trips are designed to stimulate student interest and inquiry. Field trips provide opportunities for social growth and development and are considered appropriate extensions of the classroom or school program. In order to attend a field trip, students must provide school officials with signed permission slips. All students will be required to follow any health protocols required by the location. As for conduct, students may be denied the privilege of attending a field trip if their behavior shows a negative pattern.

Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students who do not meet the Participation Eligibility Standards of Deerfield School will not attend field trips and/or other grade level activities such as (but not limited to) the eighth grade Washington, D.C. trip.

6th Grade Participation Eligibility Standards
7th Grade Participation Eligibility Standards
8th Grade Participation Eligibility Standards
8th Grade Eligibility Standards for Washington, D.C.

L. Fire Drills and Security Drills

New Jersey state law requires schools to conduct fire drills and School Safety Drills. Every classroom and shared space such as the gymnasium has posted drill procedures as well as a map of escape routes.

During a safety drill, students are to walk quickly, silently, and in a single file line from the classroom. Students who are not with their regular class when the fire alarm sounds are to report to the nearest staff member and give his/her name to that individual for attendance/security purposes.

While outside, students are to stand quietly and wait for the signal to return to the building. After the signal has sounded, students can return to their classrooms in an orderly fashion.

Students are to be aware of alternate routes to evacuate the building should designated escape routes are blocked. In collaboration with the Mountainside Police Department, staff and students will be trained and practice school safety drills on a regular basis. Students are to follow the lead of staff members and police during Safety and Security Drills. Parents will be notified of safety drills throughout the school year.

M. Hall Passes

If a student needs to use the bathroom while in class, the student must obtain permission to do so from the teacher and utilize the established classroom system. Students who wish to visit the nurse must have a staff member contact the school nurse prior to going; except in the case of a true emergency.

Students are not permitted to telephone parents/guardians to request to leave school due to illness. This must go through the nurse's office.

Also, students may request to see the counselor at any time for assistance with any school or personal difficulties. Students may ask their teacher to notify the counselor they would like to schedule a meeting. Before meeting with the counselor, students must report to their classroom teacher for attendance purposes.

Parents/guardians and students are reminded that each time a student leaves a class he/she is missing valuable instructional time. This being the case, students are to limit their visits to the bathrooms, etc.

N. Hallway Traffic/Backpacks and Book Bags

Students are expected to walk on the right side of the hallways. No running is permitted in the school building. Students are to be orderly and reasonably quiet whenever they are in the hallways in an effort not to disturb classes that are in session. To assist with the flow of hallway traffic, student backpacks and bookbags with wheels are to be kept in hallway lockers during the school day, unless other provisions have been approved by both the grade level team and building principal. Horseplay is strictly prohibited when students are moving through the hallways.

O. Lockers (Hallway)

Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students are assigned combination locks provided by the school for their hallway lockers. Students who choose to substitute those locks with their own locks will have substitute locks cut off immediately. The cost to replace lost locks will be $8.00 per lock and will be incurred by parents/guardians.

Students are required to utilize their lockers with their locks locked correctly at all times. Lockers left unlocked present a safety hazard for the school community. Empty lockers will either be zip tied or locked with a lock from the main office.

Students who are found to not have their lockers properly locked is addressed in the Code of Conduct:

	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense

Locker Not Properly Locked	WARN	WARN	D

Hallway lockers are designed to provide students with a safe place to store their books, cellphones, and clothing when they are not in use. Non-essential items such as jewelry, large amounts of money, and other valuables are not to be brought to school or kept in a hallway locker. The school is not responsible for items that are stolen or lost.

Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students are only permitted to visit their hallway lockers before homeroom, before lunch, after lunch, and at dismissal, unless teachers direct the students visit their lockers at other times during the school day.

Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students are responsible for their own combinations and are not to reveal or share them with other students. To properly maintain hallway lockers, students are to refrain from adding permanent fixtures to hallway lockers and defacing hallway lockers with writing. Students are expected to clean out hallway lockers on a regular basis and during the end of the marking period cleanouts. Also, hallway lockers are the property of the Mountainside Board of Education and are subject to periodic inspections by staff members and/or administrators.

For periodic locker inspections, the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution safeguards the privacy of individuals by protecting them from unreasonable searches and seizures by government officials. However, the New Jersey State Supreme Court has stated the standards applicable to school searches differ from those which apply to police searches of criminal suspects. Deerfield School reserves the right to reasonable searches of lockers and possessions within these guidelines.

The search will be justified before it is conducted. That is, the staff members conducting the search will have reasonable grounds to suspect that the search may reveal a student has violated a school rule and/or is jeopardizing the health or safety of students or staff members.The extent or scope of the search will be related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age of the student or the nature of the incidents.

P. Lunch Money

Deerfield families are encouraged to take advantage of the online lunch accounts, http://www.payschoolscentral.com/ to pay in advance for lunches. Should a student forget to bring a lunch, lunch money, or (point of sale credit) to spend, he/she may use the classroom telephone, with teacher permission, to call home. In the event no one is available to drop off a lunch or lunch money for a student, the student is to see the cashier in the cafeteria to obtain a meal. If a pattern emerges whereby a student is frequently taking advantage of this courtesy, the office will contact his/her parent/guardian. For safety reasons, students are not permitted to share food. Free and Reduced Price School Meals are available to students and families who qualify. To apply for the Free and Reduced Price School Meals, please click HERE. Additional a la carte items, such as other drinks and snacks will be available for purchase.

Q. Media Center

The media center serves as an informational and instructional resource for students and staff members. Students will have a quarterly Media Center Elective. In addition, teachers who provide instruction for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders will have students utilize the media center for certain class projects, research, collaborate on joint lessons,

booktalks, etc.

Students may come to the media center with a pass during open library times during the day to borrow items from the library in addition to homeroom and OP. Students may borrow up to two books on their account. Library items will be loaned to students for two or three weeks (middle school items). Items can be renewed if the student needs more time to finish reading the book. Books can be returned before and after school.

Overdue notices will be emailed to the student first. Parents/guardians will be notified if the overdue items are not returned. It is ultimately the responsibility of the student to pay for any media center materials that are lost or damaged. The library catalog is online and can be accessed at https://dfs-msd.kari.opalsinfo.net/bin/home

R. Medication Procedures/Notes for the Nurse

The school nurse must supervise the administration of any medication, prescription or nonprescription, to any student during the school day. All medications must be contained in original-labeled bottles, must be accompanied by a doctor's note, and must include written parent/guardian permission.

As for excuses from physical education classes, any student who receives an injury requiring doctor's care must submit a doctor's note to the nurse stating how long he/she will not be participating in physical education activities. Parent/guardian requests excusing students from physical education classes for more than three days of time will not be honored. Students with medical conditions that prohibit participation in physical education activities for the school year must submit new doctor's notes every September to the school nurse excusing them from physical education classes.

S. Nut Free Classrooms

A peanut and nut free classroom is a classroom where all food brought into the classroom is peanut and nut free. This includes not only food with explicit peanut and/or nut products listed in the ingredients, but also those that may contain a warning such as: "may be processed in a facility that contains nuts or peanuts". A nut free classroom pertains to snacks in the classroom, holiday treats, and food used in the classroom curriculum.

T. Personal Possessions (Lost and Found)

Personal possessions are brought to school at the student's own risk. Staff members are not responsible for any damages, thefts, or losses relative to personal possessions. This includes jewelry, money, and other valuables. Students may check the lost and found for missing items. The lost and found has four locations: the metal bins in the cafeteria, the box in the boys' locker room, the box in the girls' locker room, and the main office for valuables and items other than clothing.

U. Pets/Animals

No pets or animals are permitted in school given this may negatively impact students with allergies. If a student wishes to utilize a pet/animal as part of a presentation directly related to the curriculum, the student must obtain permission from the principal and school nurse in advance.

V. Recording Devices

Students are not permitted to take pictures or videos at Deerfield School except when it is part of a

teacher approved and school-related project. Cell phones and cameras will be confiscated by staff members if students are handling or using them during school hours. Once a staff member has confiscated a recording device, it will be turned over to the principal. The first time this occurs, the item will be returned to the student at the end of the school day. The second incident will result in the item being returned on the last day of the school year.

W. Telephone Usage

A student is permitted to use the classroom phone with teacher supervision to call home. Students are not permitted to use personal cell phones/smart watches upon entering the building during school hours. During the school day, the nurse or school staff member will contact parents if a child is to be picked up. **Students may not use electronic devices to make arrangements to go home during the school day without the knowledge of school personnel.**

X. Toys

Toys are considered to be disruptive to the learning process and are not permitted in school. **This includes, but is not limited to, action figures, slime, squishy toys, stuffed animals, trading cards, and laser pointers/pens.** Articles of this nature will be confiscated by staff members if students are handling or using them. Once a staff member has confiscated a toy or other disruptive article, it will be turned over to the principal. The first time this occurs, the article may be picked up by a parent or guardian. The second incident will result in the article being returned on the last day of the school year.

IX. CODE OF CONDUCT

At Deerfield School, we believe every student can learn from mistakes, make positive choices, and contribute to a safe, respectful, and supportive school community. Our approach to student discipline is intended to promote accountability, encourage responsible decision-making, and help students develop the skills necessary for success in school and beyond. Behavioral incidents are addressed in a fair, consistent, and progressive manner based on the severity and frequency of the behavior. Incidents are categorized as **Level I**, **Level II**, or **Level III**, with the corresponding procedures and possible consequences outlined in the Code of Conduct Table.

***** NOTE: The Code of Conduct applies to all students when riding on the bus to and from school or during any school- sponsored event.**

Level I Incidents

Level I Incidents are behaviors that are typically managed by the classroom teacher. Most Level I Incidents include a warning for the first offense. When a Level I Incident occurs, the teacher will:

- Complete the designated Discipline Referral Form, which is submitted to the administration for documentation.
- The parent/guardian will be notified through Genesis regarding the incident and any additional consequence.

Level II Incidents

Level II Incidents require increased parent communication and administrative awareness. For many of the Level II Incidents, students have been given multiple warnings about upcoming consequences by their teachers. Some Level II Incidents result in an immediate consequence and do not merit a warning. When a Level II Incident occurs, the teacher will:

- Contact the parent/guardian directly by email regarding the incident.
- Complete the designated Discipline Referral Form, which is submitted to the administration for review and documentation.
- An administrator and/or School Counselor will meet with the student(s) involved in the incident.
- Parents will be notified through Genesis of the assigned consequence.

Level III Incidents

Level III Incidents involve serious violations of the Code of Conduct and require immediate administrative intervention. When a Level III Incident occurs, the teacher will:

- Refer the student directly to the administration.
- Complete the designated Discipline Referral Form detailing the incident, which is submitted to the administration.
- An administrator will investigate the incident, determine the appropriate disciplinary response, and contact the parent/guardian regarding the incident and resulting consequences.
- An administrator and/or School Counselor will meet with the student(s) involved in the incident.

The consequence chart that follows outlines the range of disciplinary responses that may be assigned for each category of behavior. While the chart provides general guidelines, school administrators reserve the discretion to consider the individual circumstances of each incident, including the severity of the behavior, the student's disciplinary history, and any other relevant factors, when determining an appropriate response.

Please refer to District Policy 5600 for additional information and details regarding the district's Code of Conduct.

Chart Key

D	Detention/Remediation/Refocus
CFS	Confiscation
CIC	Change Inappropriate Clothing
ISS	In-School Suspension
OSS	Out-of-School Suspension
PC	Police Contact
R	Replace/Repair/Clean/Restore/Restitution
ROP	Removal/Suspension of Privileges
WARN	Verbal Warning
RE	Removal/Expulsion

CODE OF CONDUCT CONSEQUENCES

	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3+ Offense
Level I Incidents			
Cell Phone/Wearable Technology Not Properly Stored in Locker	WARN+CFS	WARN+CFS	D+CFS
Food/ Beverage (excluding water) outside of cafeteria	WARN+CFS	WARN+CFS	D+CFS
Gum Chewing During School Hours	WARN	WARN	D
Inappropriate Dress	CIC	CIC+D	CIC+D

Inappropriate Personal Belongings	CFS	CFS+D	CFS+D
Inappropriate Displays of Affection	WARN	D	D
Locker Not Properly Locked	WARN	WARN	D
Undirected Profanity	WARN	D	D
Tardy to Class	WARN	WARN	D
Level II Incidents			
Abuse of Pass or Privilege	D	D	ISS
Behavior Interfering With Instruction	D	D	ISS
Bus Violation	D	D	ISS
Cell Phone/Wearable Technology Use During School Hours	CFS+D	CFS+D	CFS+ISS
Cutting Class	D	ISS	ISS - 2 days
Defacing of School Property including Chromebooks	D/R	D/R	ISS/PC
Directed Profanity	D	ISS	ISS - 2 days
Disrespectful to Staff or Student	D	ISS	ISS - 2 days
Horseplay*	D	D	ISS
Lying, Cheating, Forgery, or Plagiarism	D/CFS	ISS	ISS - 2 days
Unauthorized Use of School Grounds/Property	D	ISS	ISS - 2 days
**Defined as rough or boisterous play or pranks that could lead to injury, disruption to learning or concentration, or create an unsafe environment.*			
Level III Incidents			
Computer Violation (see AUP)	ROP+D/ISS	ROP+ISS	ROP+OSS+PC
Endangering the Safety of Others	ISS	OSS	OSS+PC
Fighting or Assault	ISS/OSS+PC	OSS+PC	RE+PC
Gross Insubordination	ISS	OSS	OSS+PC
Inappropriate Dialing of "911"	ISS+PC	OSS+PC	OSS+PC
Inappropriate Use of Social Media	ISS/OSS+PC	OSS+PC	OSS+PC
Inciting a Fight or Threatening Harm	ISS	OSS	OSS+PC
Leaving School Without Permission	ISS+PC	ISS+PC	OSS+PC
Possession or Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, Nicotine (including electronic smoking devices & nicotine pouches)	OSS+PC	OSS+PC	RE+PC
Possession or Use of Matches/Lighters	ISS/OSS+PC	OSS+PC	RE+PC
Possession or Use of Weapons	OSS+PC	OSS/RE+PC	RE+PC
School Absence Without Parent/Guardian Permission	ISS+PC	ISS+PC	OSS+PC
Tampering With Safety Devices	ISS+PC	OSS+PC	OSS+PC
Theft	ISS + R	ISS + R	OSS+PC
Targeted Slur/Speech against a Protected Class	ISS	OSS	OSS+PC
Vandalism or Destruction	ISS+R	ISS+R	OSS+R+PC

Parents/guardians and students are to be aware that detentions take precedence over after-school activities and athletics. Detentions will not be scheduled around students' extracurricular activities. Parents/guardians and students are reminded that any student who has a detention or on the day of an extracurricular activity will not be permitted to participate in that activity.

If a student is more than five minutes late to an assigned detention, the student will be assigned a new detention date, plus an additional detention date. If a student does not show up for an assigned detention, and prior communication is not made with the principal, then the student will be assigned a new detention date, plus an additional detention date.

It is also essential for students and parents/guardians to have a clear understanding of the terms fighting and assault. Any student who physically assaults another student will be held accountable according to the consequences listed in the chart. **If a student assaults another student and the 2nd student retaliates by assaulting the 1st student, both students will be suspended.** If additional consequences are relevant both students will be assigned those consequences as appropriate.

For consequences indicative of Level III student incidents, parents/guardians and students are reminded that in the event a student exhibits an inappropriate behavior not identified in the Code of Conduct the principal reserves the right to determine an applicable consequence(s). Depending upon the severity of any inappropriate behavior exhibited, the principal reserves the right to impose consequences reflective of that severity by adjusting the leniency and/or harshness of listed consequences. The basis for suspensions and expulsions are outlined in Chapter 18A: 37-2 of the *New Jersey Statutes* and are representative of the following list:

- Continued and willful disobedience;
- Open defiance of the authority of any teacher or person, having authority over him;
- Conduct of such character as to constitute a continuing danger to the physical well-being of other students;
- Physical assault upon another student;
- Taking or attempting to take personal property or money from another student, or from his presence, by means of force or fear;
- Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, substantial damage to school property;
- Participation in an unauthorized occupancy by any group of students or others of any part of any school or other building owned by any school district, and failure to leave such school or other facility promptly after having been directed to do so by the principal or other person then in charge of such building or facility;
- Incitement which is intended to and does result in unauthorized occupation by any group of students or others of any part of a school or other facility owned by any school district;
- Incitement which is intended to and does result in truancy by other students;
- Knowing possession or knowing consumption without legal authority of alcoholic beverages or controlled dangerous substances on school premises, or being under the influence of intoxicating liquor or controlled dangerous substances while on school premises;
- Harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Acceptable Use Policy

Appropriate computer use is an expectation for six, seventh and eighth grade students. Recognizing that the Internet is neither a regulated nor policed entity, staff members require students to use this resource as an aid in the learning process according to the guidelines established in the Acceptable Use Policy.

Dress Code

At Deerfield School, we recognize that clothing is one way students express their individuality and personal style. Students are encouraged to dress in a manner that reflects their personality while also contributing to a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment. The purpose of

our dress code is not to limit self-expression, but to ensure that attire supports learning, promotes safety, and respects all members of our school community.

Students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate for a school setting throughout the entire school day, including during arrival, dismissal, assemblies, field trips, and school-sponsored activities. **As a matter of school tradition, safety, and respect, hats and hoods must be removed upon entering the school building and remain off during the school day unless worn for religious observance, documented medical reasons, or as part of a school-approved activity.**

Student Expectations

Students may choose clothing that reflects their individual style provided it:

- Covers areas of the body that would reasonably be considered private.
    - Just below the collarbone to the hip bone.
    - Fully covers the buttocks.
    - All shirts have straps or sleeves.
- Is worn as designed and does not intentionally expose undergarments.
- Allows the student to participate safely in all school activities.
- Does not create a disruption to the learning environment.
- Does not interfere with the health or safety of the student or others.

Attire That Does Not Meet School Expectations

The following examples are intended to clarify the expectations of the Deerfield School Dress Code. This list is representative and is not all-inclusive.

Students may not wear clothing, accessories, or personal items that:

- Display or promote profanity, obscene language, vulgar images, inappropriate gestures, sexually explicit content, or advertise or promote alcohol, tobacco, nicotine products, vaping devices, cannabis, illegal drugs, or drug paraphernalia.
- Intentionally expose undergarments or are worn in a manner that reveals private body areas.
- Are excessively sheer or transparent without appropriate clothing underneath.
- Include pajamas, slippers, or other sleepwear unless part of a school-approved activity.
- Include chains, spiked accessories, or other items that could present a safety concern.
- Include hats, hoods, ski masks, or other head coverings that conceal a student's identity or are worn inside the school building during the school day, except when worn for religious observance, documented medical reasons, or a school-approved activity.
- Include sunglasses worn inside the school building unless medically necessary or approved by the administration.
- Create a safety concern or substantially disrupt the educational environment.

Footwear and Specialized Attire

Students must wear appropriate footwear at all times. Footwear should allow students to move safely throughout the school building and participate in school activities. Certain courses and activities, including physical education, science laboratories, technology education, and

extracurricular programs, may require specific attire or footwear for health and safety reasons. Students are expected to comply with the requirements established for those classes and activities.

Administrative Discretion and Enforcement

Students may be asked to change or modify attire that repeatedly distracts from instruction or interferes with the educational environment, even if the item is not specifically listed in this policy.

Dress code expectations will be enforced consistently, respectfully, and without regard to a student's body type, gender identity, gender expression, race, ethnicity, religion, cultural background, or other protected characteristic. Whenever possible, concerns will be addressed privately, with the goal of helping students meet school expectations while preserving their dignity and minimizing the loss of instructional time.

The school administration reserves the right to determine whether a student's attire is appropriate for the school setting based on its impact on safety, the educational environment, and the well-being of the school community. Because fashion trends change over time, the examples above are not intended to include every item of clothing that may be inappropriate for school. School administrators retain the authority to determine whether attire is consistent with the intent of this policy and to address situations that are not specifically identified in this handbook.

Students who repeatedly or intentionally fail to comply with the dress code may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Deerfield School Code of Conduct.



Gum
Students are not allowed to chew gum during school hours.

Lunch
Our aim regarding lunch is to provide students with a pleasant dining atmosphere. This requires appropriate student behavior. As soon as students enter the cafeteria, they are expected to adhere to these rules. Should students choose not to adhere to these rules, consequences will be imposed.

Lunch Rules:

- Students must eat in the location that has been designated for their grade level.
- Middle school students may choose where they would like to sit in their designated location.
- Students must be seated at designated table spots at all times and may not stand in groups to socialize.
- Students must ask permission of the lunch supervisor if they need to use the restroom, or leave their designated area for any reason.
- Students must walk while in the cafeteria, particularly when entering the line for food.
- Students must wait until their tables are called in order to purchase lunch.
- Students are not to cut or engage in horseplay while in line.
- Every student is responsible for cleaning up his/her own garbage.
- Students may not throw food, or any other object, for any reason.
- Students may not share food or purchase snacks for another student.
- Students are to only use their own lunch code to purchase food. Students who use another student's lunch code will be reported as a code of conduct violation.
- Disrespect or insubordination toward cafeteria staff members/lunch supervisors will not be tolerated; cafeteria staff members deserve the same level of respect as do teachers and other staff members.

No food or open beverage container is to be taken out of the cafeteria unless the student has been given permission to do so by a lunch supervisor. On occasion, exceptions to this rule occur when students are receiving extra help from a teacher, are working on a project or school event, are making up schoolwork, or are serving lunch/recess detention. Although students are generally not permitted to take food out of the cafeteria, students are allowed to carry water bottles with them throughout the school day.
Students are not permitted to carry beverages other than water with them.

Consequences for Lunch Incidents:
If a student does not follow the lunch rules, a lunch supervisor will change the student's seat for an extended period of time after meeting with the student to identify and discuss the inappropriate behavior. If a change in behavior is not observed after these steps have occurred, the student will be assigned lunch detention. Parents/guardians will be contacted in regard to lunch offenses as needed.

Bus Behavior
The primary function of the bus driver is to transport students safely to and from school. If the driver is preoccupied with disciplining students, it increases the chance that an accident may occur. For bus safety purposes, a set of rules and consequences is listed below.

Bus Rules:

- Students are to remain in their seats for the entire ride;
- Cell phones and other electronic devices are not to be used on the bus and follow the same disciplinary actions as used in school. (See pages 12-13.) The taking of pictures and/or videos on the bus is strictly prohibited.
- Students are not permitted to eat or drink on the bus. This includes gum chewing, candy, water bottles, etc. Littering is not to occur either;
- Students are not permitted to use profanity or foul language on the bus;
- Students are not permitted to scream or make excessive noise on the bus;
- Students are not to be disrespectful or confrontational with the driver. Bus drivers deserve the same level of respect as do teachers and other staff members;
- Students must keep their hands and bodies inside the bus at all times;
- Students are not permitted to throw objects or spit out of the window;
- Students are not permitted to throw or shoot objects on the bus;
- Vandalism is not permitted on the bus. This includes writing on bus seats (floors, ceilings, sides, and windows) and/or ripping/cutting bus seats; and
- Fighting and horseplay are not permitted on the bus.

Students must ride the bus the transportation department has assigned for them. To be clear, a student may not ride on another student's bus to or from school at any time. Written and verbal requests to do so will be denied. Only those students who have been given permission to ride the bus may do so. Only routine, scheduled pickups and stops will be made. If a student needs to be dropped off at a stop other than his/her own, a note must be brought to the main office so that a staff member can fill out a bus pass for the bus driver.

Consequences for Bus Incidents:
If a student does not follow the bus rules, he/she will be referred to the principal. Students and parents/guardians are to note that appropriate administrative action will be taken which may include: **the issuance of a bus contract, lunch/recess detention, after-school detention, suspension or removal of bus privileges, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, restitution assignment, and/or police contact.** At all times, the principal reserves the right to intervene and take action if student behavior is deemed inappropriate or in violation of district-wide policies.

In addition, students and parents/guardians are to be aware of the fact that the school day began as soon as students reach the bus stop and does not conclude until students exit the bus on the ride home. This extends to after-school activities and field trips as well. **If students choose to misbehave at the bus stop on the way to or from school, they will be held accountable for their actions**. Parents/guardians will be contacted in regard to bus offenses as needed.

With respect to the suspension of bus privileges, **New Jersey state law permits staff members to deny bus transportation privileges if a student's conduct warrants such action.** If transportation privileges are denied, it becomes the responsibility of the student's parents/guardians to see that he/she arrives at school and is transported home at dismissal.

X. Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

The Mountainside School District is committed to providing an educational environment for all students, employees, and volunteers that is safe, civil and free from Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB). "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal

or physical act, or any electronic communication, as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, **whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents** that:

1. Is reasonably perceived as **being motivated by either an actual or perceived characteristic**, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic;
2. Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds, as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15.3;
3. Substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students; **and that**
    a. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; **or**
    b. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; **or**
    c. Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

HIB behaviors can take many forms including but are not limited to: slurs, rumors, jokes, demeaning comments, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, verbal, electronic, or physical actions. **Some of these behaviors may not meet the definition of the harassment, intimidation, or bullying law, but may violate building, classroom, or program conduct rules and will be dealt with by the building administration, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.**

After a full investigation has been completed, if it has been determined that an HIB act has occurred, counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the victim. False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation or bullying will also result in disciplinary action. District policy (Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying, File Code 5512) fully explains the HIB Law as well as interventions and remediation that building and district administrators may recommend. Please familiarize yourself with this policy by reading it in its entirety. The policy, procedures, and FAQs can be found on the district's website. Distinguishing between student conflict and possible HIB can sometimes be difficult. Please contact your school Principal to discuss any concerns, or report an allegation of HIB to the Principal using the HIB Reporting Form for Families. This can also be found on the district's website in English and other languages.

HIB allegations can be reported to classroom teachers, the principal, and/or the individuals listed below.

District Anti-Bullying Coordinator

Mrs. Jessica Vierschilling
908-232-8828 x201

Deerfield School Counselor
Ms. Jessica Cronin
908-232-8828 x307

XI. A FINAL NOTE

Thank you for taking the time to read and review the student handbook with your child. Please understand that each child's safety is our primary concern. We look forward to working with you. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns. As a reminder, this link to the district's general communication procedures and chain of command can help to point you in the right direction depending on the nature of your question or concern.

XII. APPENDIX

Board of Education Policy 5512 – Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying